

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 1986**

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## THURSDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 1986

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

### PRIVILEGE

#### Warning of Member for Ipswich under Standing Order No. 123A

Mr HAMILL (Ipswich) (11.1 a.m.): Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege. Last Wednesday, I rose on a point of privilege concerning the meaning and the operation of Standing Order No. 123A, in particular the following words, which are contained in paragraph (1)—

“... after warning such Member, order any Member whose conduct, in his opinion, continues to be grossly disorderly ...”

In the light of the true meaning of Standing Order No. 123A, the *Hansard* record and the correction of the Votes and Proceedings, No. 34, for Tuesday, 18 February 1986, I further ask for a ruling from you, Mr Speaker, in regard to your direction to me to withdraw from the Chamber.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, is the honourable member for Ipswich in order in asking you why you made a ruling?

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! No ruling has been made on this particular matter.

Mr HAMILL: My point of privilege concerned my request for a correction of the Votes and Proceedings, No. 34, for Tuesday, 18 February 1986, to reflect the *Hansard* record of what actually took place.

Although a week has now elapsed, no ruling has been given by you, Mr Speaker, in relation to these important matters of privilege, which affect all honourable members.

Mr Speaker, I find your silence on this matter somewhat disconcerting. I therefore ask you to rule upon these matters today in order to clarify the position for all honourable members for the remainder of the session.

**Opposition Members:** Hear, hear!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will look into the matter, and I assure the honourable member for Ipswich that my ruling will be given at some time today.

### LIFTS IN PARLIAMENTARY ANNEXE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, owing to a malfunction, there will be no lift control in operation in the Parliamentary Annexe during divisions this morning.

### PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

#### Australia Acts (Request) Act

From Mr White (72 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will repeal the Australia Acts (Request) Act and allow a referendum in terms of the Queensland Constitution.

**Griffith University Course in Family Relationships**

From Mr Wharton (31 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will establish an inquiry into the Griffith University course in family relationships.

[Similar petitions were received from Mr White (29 signatories), Mr Bailey (16 signatories), Mr Campbell (15 signatories), Mr Yewdale (15 signatories) and Mr Simpson (13 signatories).]

Petitions received.

**PAPERS**

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

Report of the Bundaberg Harbour Board for the year ended 30 June 1985.

The following paper was laid on the table—

Report of the Royal Women's Hospital Research and Development Foundation for the year ended 30 June 1985.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Retail Petrol Price, United States of America**

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Minister for Education) (11.4 a.m.), by leave: On Tuesday, 25 February 1986, the honourable member for Mount Isa (Mr Price) accused me of getting the current US petrol price “wrong”. He claimed—

“The retail price in the United States was 51c a litre. That is the ‘15’ quoted by the Minister for Education. He got it back to front.”

The *Australian* on Monday, 24 February 1986, under the heading “Oil prices sink below \$US14”, stated—

“Regular, leaded gasoline broke through the US40 cents a gallon mark, falling US2.37 cents to US39.83 cents a gallon.”

As there are 3.75 litres a US gallon, that represents a cost of US10.62 cents per litre. Allowing, as a conversion factor, 70c Australian per \$US1.00, the equivalent price of petrol, in Australian currency, is 15.17c a litre.

On 25 February, in the Parliament, the honourable member for Mount Isa stated that his source of international petrol prices was “. . . a document that shows indicative international retail petrol prices at the end of last year.” Clearly, the honourable member for Mount Isa is totally out of touch with the international oil scene if he believes that prices collated at the end of 1985 bear any resemblance to today's prices. That supports what I said about the Opposition's stance on petrol pricing. It, the Queensland ALP and the member for Mount Isa must agree with the Federal Labor Government that petrol is a legitimate source of revenue and that the price charged need not bear any resemblance to the cost of the commodity.

It is fairly clear that it is the member for Mount Isa, not I, who is dyslectic.

**Sale of Lindeman Island to East-West Airlines (Queensland) Pty Limited**

Hon. P. R. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts) (11.6 a.m.), by leave: As honourable members would be aware, the State Government has responded positively to try to bring about increased competition in air fares in Queensland. East-West Airlines has agreed to meet that challenge, and has been granted air routes in this State. In addition, that company has announced a \$340m tourist development on Lindeman Island.

East-West Airlines showed its confidence in Queensland through the purchase of leases that covered all of Lindeman Island and the existing tourist resort. The company's plan to provide tourist packages to Lindeman Island will ensure increased tourist packages

in Queensland and in the growing Whitsunday region. The proposed development will create thousands of jobs and will be a boost for service industries both locally and throughout the State. Other companies were given the opportunity to purchase the leases on Lindeman Island, and it is only natural that, having successfully purchased them, East-West Airlines would want security of tenure for such a huge investment.

Mr Speaker, I have informed the House previously that I would not table a proposal for the revocation of part of Lindeman Island national park unless I was convinced that the Queensland Government would obtain a good deal for conservation. I believe that that has now been achieved. Approximately one-third of the existing national park on the island will remain national park.

**Mr Casey:** 20 per cent of the island.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Again I issue the general warning that ministerial statements must be heard in silence.

**Mr McKECHNIE:** I heard the interjection, "20 per cent of the island." That is incorrect. My figure of one-third is accurate.

**Mr Casey:** One-third of the national park.

**Mr McKECHNIE:** That is correct.

**Mr Casey** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I have issued a general warning. I now warn the member for Mackay under Standing Order No. 123A.

**Mr McKECHNIE:** In addition, I wish to emphasise that no land on the island will be freeholded until stringent development conditions have been met.

East-West Airlines has agreed to provide up front \$1m as an advance on any possible future freeholding payment. An equivalent amount of money will be given to the National Parks and Wildlife Service from the Government, so the service may begin negotiating the purchase of additional national parks forthwith. Any possible future freeholding payments for Lindeman Island will also be applied to the National Parks and Wildlife Service as additional funds above the normal budget for the acquisition of the national parks estate in Queensland.

As well, the National Parks and Wildlife Service has been negotiating with the Lands Department for some time about declaring more islands as national parks. I am pleased to announce that the Government has agreed that a further 27 islands will be declared national parks. They are Sinclair, Milman, Aplin, Wallace, Boydong, Hannibal, Saunders, Bird Islets, Macarthur, Sir Charles Hardy, Quoin, Sandbank 8, Sandbank 7, Pelican, Burkitt, Cliff, Clack, King, Combe, Ingram, Bewick, Beanley, Howick, Newton, Noble and Hampton. Those islands are all situated in the area of Cape York Peninsula.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr McKECHNIE:** What is wrong with that? In response to the stupid interjections made by members of the Opposition, I point out that those islands are islands that the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service considers to be of particular significance to Queensland, and that it is my duty to look at the whole of Queensland.

**Mr Mackenroth:** We once thought that about Lindeman Island, too, didn't we?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the honourable member for Chatsworth under Standing Order No. 123A.

**Mr McKECHNIE:** The other island is Masthead Island, which lies off Gladstone. As well as the other islands that are to be found farther north, Masthead Island is considered to be of much more—and I emphasise "much more"—ecological value than the whole of Lindeman Island, which was formerly the subject of a grazing lease. Queenslanders can be assured that the State Government does care about conservation.

Mr Kruger interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Apparently, the charade is to continue. I warn the honourable member for Murrumba under Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr McKECHNIE: I repeat that Queenslanders can be assured that the State Government does care about conservation, as it has taken steps to expand the national estate by a very considerable degree.

There has been much media speculation about the possible freeholding of other national parks. I see the current decision regarding Lindeman Island as a one-off situation, as the chances of such a good deal for Queensland being offered again are highly remote.

The entire Lindeman Island will remain a fauna sanctuary, therefore ensuring the future protection of fauna. The proposed development will complement the natural environment of Lindeman Island. Developers world-wide are recognising the importance of building in harmony with the environment, and there will be no exception in this case.

The Government sees the Lindeman Island package as being good for Queensland, good for conservation and good for tourism.

## SELECT COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

### Resolution on Publication of *Hansard*

Mr NEAL (Balonne) (11.13 a.m.): In my capacity as chairman of the Privileges Committee, I lay on the table of the House a copy of the following resolution of that committee, which reads as follows—

“The Privileges Committee recommends to the House that the Printing Committee consider technological improvements impacting on the speed with which the authorised *Hansard* is published.”

*Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.*

## LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah): As the Business Paper is fairly light today, I seek leave to move—

“That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent me from moving forthwith without notice—

‘That this House records its concern at the failure of the Federal and State Governments to resolve their policy differences with regard to providing satisfactory long-term aid to the sugar industry with particular attention to—

1. An adequate price support scheme;
2. An acceptable level of deregulation;
3. Reducing costs of production; and
4. Improving marketing opportunities.’ ”

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

AYES, 35

Braddy	Scott
Campbell	Shaw
Casey	Smith
Comben	Underwood
D'Arcy	Vaughan
De Lacy	Veivers
Eaton	Warburton
Fouras	Warner, A. M.
Goss	White
Gygar	Wilson
Hamill	Yewdale
Innes	
Knox	
Kruger	
Lee	
Lickiss	
Mackenroth	
McElligott	
McLean	
Milliner	<i>Tellers:</i>
Palaszczuk	Davis
Price	Prest

NOES, 42

Ahern	Lester
Alison	Lingard
Austin	Littleproud
Bailey	McKechnie
Bjelke-Petersen	McPhie
Booth	Menzel
Borbidge	Miller
Cahill	Muntz
Chapman	Newton
Clauson	Powell
Cooper	Randell
Elliott	Row
FitzGerald	Simpson
Gibbs, I. J.	Stephan
Glasson	Stoneman
Gunn	Tenni
Harper	Turner
Harvey	Wharton
Henderson	
Jennings	<i>Tellers:</i>
Katter	Kaus
Lane	Neal

Resolved in the negative.

### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

Questions submitted on notice were answered as follows—

#### 1. Queensland Day Committee

Mr **WARBURTON** asked the Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to his ministerial statement on 18 February and to the ruling by the Speaker, which was endorsed by the Government in this House on that night, namely, that the allocation, spending, and audit of funds provided by the Premier's Department to the Queensland Day Committee are not to be considered sub judice—

(1) What financial and administrative controls were put in place for the Queensland Day Committee by its chairman, Sir David Longland?

(2) Did these controls meet with his ministerial approval?

(3) Does he accept that the Queensland Day Committee is directly responsible to Cabinet through its political head—himself, as the Premier?

(4) Will he, as the Minister responsible for the Queensland Day Committee and its financial administration, indicate whether financial reports covering the committee's income and expenditure were prepared on a regular basis?

(5) If so, were these reports forwarded to him and did he present them to Cabinet?

(6) What type of banking arrangements existed for financial transactions by the Queensland Day Committee (for example, cheque account, trust account and savings account) and what was the method of operation of such accounts?

*Answer—*

(1) The expenditure of funds appropriated on the Estimates of the Premier's Department for the promotion of Queensland Day is subject to the numerous controls prescribed by the Financial Administration and Audit Act, regulations and the Treasurer's Instructions. For the purposes of Queensland Day promotions, the expenditure of such funds requires the approval of an authorised member of the committee. Accounts paid from these funds are processed through the department's accounting system, which meets all the requirements of the law and the controls that it imposes. The expenditure of these funds is audited annually by the Auditor-General and reported to Parliament in the department's appropriation account.

(2) Yes.

(3) The Queensland Day Committee was established as an advisory committee to Cabinet to inform Cabinet on ways and means of promoting Queensland Day and to suggest appropriate functions and ceremonies which might be held.

(4 to 6) The expenditures incurred by the committee from funds appropriated on the Estimates of the department are brought to account in the books of the department. Expenditure reports are produced by the department on a monthly basis in respect of all funds appropriated to the department. This accords with governmental budget reporting processes set down by the Treasury Department.

I have previously indicated that all such expenditure forms part of the department's annual appropriation account, which is audited by the Auditor-General and tabled in Parliament.

The committee has reported annually to Cabinet on activities undertaken to commemorate Queensland Day. Cabinet will soon receive a report from the committee in respect of the 1985 activities.

The department operates an expenditure bank account at the Reserve Bank of Australia for the payment of its accounts. The expenditure of funds appropriated on the department's Estimates for the promotion of Queensland Day are transacted through this account. Appropriate controls as prescribed by the law are exercised by the department over the operation of this bank account.

As I have already said in my statement to the House on 18 February 1986, funds are allocated to the committee in the Estimates of my department, and these funds are audited annually by the Auditor-General. The audit has found no anomalies in the expenditure of these funds.

Certain other matters relating to expenditure by an officer to the committee are the subject of court proceedings.

## 2. Queensland Government Power Generation Investment in Turkey

Mr WILSON asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to recent reports that the Government is to be a participant in the construction and operation of a 1 400 MW power station in Turkey—

(1) What is the extent of the Government's financial involvement in this venture?

(2) Is the power station to be built at a place called Yumurtalik near Adana in Turkey?

(3) Is the 4m tonnes of coal a year to be initially supplied part of the coal that the Government is contracted to take for the deferred Stanwell power station?

(4) Is the Premier to sign the necessary contracts in Turkey on 25 April, the 71st anniversary of Anzac Day, and lay a commemorative wreath?

*Answer—*

(1) Financial arrangements for the proposal to construct a 1 400 MW power station in Turkey have not been finalised.

(2) Yes.

(3) There are no firm arrangements for coal supply to the proposed power station.

(4) Negotiations are proceeding in relation to the necessary contracts for the power station proposal. Insofar as Anzac Day is concerned—honourable members would all be well aware of this country's significant association with the memory of Anzac and would appreciate the strong ties that have developed between Turkey and Australia from the conflict of 71 years ago. I believe that the Turkish Government is to be congratulated on its wish to strengthen those ties further and, in particular, on the role that it played in last year's visit of Australian veterans to the shores of Gallipoli. Members will recall

that, to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the landing at Anzac Cove, some of those who experienced the trauma of 1915 returned to be a part of an emotional remembrance. There, men who were once enemies, embraced and confirmed a strong bond of friendship.

I can assure the House that the Queensland Government recognises and appreciates these personal and national relationships and is both earnest and sincere in its efforts to cement further the bond between our two countries.

### 3. Additional Staff, Department of Children's Services

Mr WILSON asked the Minister for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs—

With reference to the Cabinet decision late in 1985 to appoint an additional 40 staff to the Department of Children's Services, a decision which was in response to the public outrage following an admission by the Director of Children's Services that the Government could not meet its statutory obligations to protect children, and to the assertion that the 40 staff agreed to was well short of the Children's Services Department submission, which sought a minimum increase of 136—

(1) In view of the criticism of the Children's Services Department in the Sturgess Report, which stems largely from problems caused by chronic understaffing and under-resourcing, why has no action been taken to advertise the 40 positions agreed to by Cabinet?

(2) When will the positions be advertised?

(3) When these 40 staff members are appointed, will they be placed in the front line for child abuse work?

*Answer—*

(1) In replying to the honourable member's question, I point out, firstly, that Cabinet's decision in December to allocate 40 additional positions to the Department of Children's Services was definitely not in response to what he alleges was "an admission by the Director of Children's Services that the Government could not meet its statutory obligations to protect children".

If the honourable member had taken the time to look, in an unbiased manner, at the director's report, he would have noticed that it was a report for the year ended 30 June last year and was published some months after the close of the year reviewed. Long before the report became public, my predecessor had made a submission to the Public Service Board for additional staff which, of course, was subsequently successful. The honourable member should know that there are certain public service procedures that have to be pursued before decisions of this type are announced and appointments made.

(2) Thirty-six of the positions will be filled in the next few weeks. The department had a number of applications on hand for positions of child care officers and the applicants are being interviewed and assessed.

The appointments have taken a little time because my predecessor and I set out to ensure that the right people get the jobs. Where possible, my department and I want experienced people to be given the opportunity to serve the general public who may have been through the mill and could have encountered the problems in raising a family. In saying that, I mean that one does not learn everything from a book; one learns some things from experiencing problems.

It is expected that the applications on hand will be sufficient, but further advertising may be necessary in some instances.

The remaining four positions are set aside to man Australia's first Child Abuse Prevention Centre in Brisbane, to which I referred in this House earlier this week.

(3) Most of these staff will be allocated to front-line child protection work and the remainder will be engaged in either direct support work or the prevention of child abuse.

**4. Workers' Compensation**

Mr HENDERSON asked the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs—

(1) Are figures available to show the number of recipients of workers' compensation over the past 10 years, and what are those in relation to the total work-force and total unemployed?

(2) How many claims are made for injury sustained not at work but travelling to or from the work-place?

(3) As to the outcome, what percentage of recipients of workers' compensation (a) return to work, (b) receive a lump sum payment and (c) remain lifelong in receipt of compensation benefits?

*Answer—*

(1) Detailed statistics as to the number of recipients of workers' compensation over the past 10 years are not available. However, the estimated figure is approximately 850 000, which is an average of 85 000 per year. In January 1986, the work-force totalled 1 156 500 and the number of unemployed was 110 700.

(2) Statistics are maintained only in respect of those claims for injury which involved the loss of at least one full shift. Figures for the five-year period 1979-80 to 1983-84 are—

1979-80	2 662
1980-81	2 612
1981-82	3 328
1982-83	2 965
1983-84	2 964
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 531</b>

(3) (a) It is estimated that 98 per cent of all workers injured at work return to work.

(b) At this stage, figures are not available for the actual number of injured workers who received a lump sum payment. However, the total amount of lump sum payments made represents approximately 25 per cent of all compensation paid.

(c) Unlike other States, Queensland has no life-long recipients of workers' compensation. Naturally, there are some recipients who die while receiving benefits. Generally, the maximum period for which benefits have been paid would not exceed five years. The only exception is in the case of miner's phthisis sufferers, some of whom have been in receipt of benefits for periods in excess of 20 years. At present, there are 69 such recipients, and the number is steadily decreasing.

I take this opportunity to compliment the staff of the Workers Compensation Board. It is the best in Australia; in fact, it is the best in the world. It is doing much work towards the rehabilitation of injured employees. It is about time that members on both sides of the House got right behind the Workers Compensation Board. The care and attention that it gives to people in times of crisis is something for which all Queenslanders have a real reason to be proud.

**5. Australian Economy**

Mr HENDERSON asked the Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police—

(1) Is he aware of repeated claims by the Hawke centralists and socialists in Canberra and sections of the media that Australia has, and has had for the past year, the world's fastest-growing economy?

(2) Is he aware of a statement in the independent and celebrated international magazine *Time*, of 20 January, which, on page 13, in dealing with Canadian politics,

stated: "Though the Canadian dollar took a battering last week, falling to its lowest level ever (71c), the economy has been growing faster over the past year (4.1%) than that of any country except Japan."?

(3) Are not the claims by the Hawke socialists and the independent magazine *Time* in clear conflict?

(4) Will he suggest that Hawke call a summit between *Time*, Canada, Japan and Australia to resolve this conflict, hopefully through consensus?

(5) If not, how may the conflict be resolved?

*Answer—*

(1) I am certainly aware of the grand claims made from time to time by the Federal Government concerning the rate of growth in the Australian economy. In this regard, the Hawke Government appears to be preoccupied with growth. However, it apparently chooses to ignore, at its own peril, the potential recessionary effects of its current tight-credit/high-interest-rate monetary policy needed to prop up the Australian dollar.

(2) I am aware of the article in *Time* magazine to which the honourable member refers.

(3 to 5) There would appear to be some conflict between the Federal Government's arrogant boasting about Australia's economic performance and the statement concerning Japan and Canada in the *Time* magazine article.

The only aspect that appears certain is that time is running out for the Federal Government and its supposed world's greatest Treasurer. The time for Labor's grandstanding through various types of summits is past. It is time for Messrs Hawke and Keating to bite the bullet and take hard decisions in the interests of all Australians, not just their mates in the ACTU. They have short-changed Australian motorists on fuel price cuts; the housing industry is in recession, thanks to their taxation and monetary policies; business at all levels is battling record high interest burdens; and employers are looking down the barrel at a 3 per cent productivity claim, which has been backed by the Federal Government and the ACTU.

What a mess the world's greatest Treasurer has got this country into. There is no doubt that he is losing his cool. Any mention of his sloppy past causes him to throw a tantrum.

The only ways to resolve the conflict are to—

- (i) have Mr Keating resign and replace him with a Treasurer who will stand up to the ACTU; and
- (ii) vote Labor out at the next Federal election and give a Federal coalition Government the chance to wipe out Labor's new taxes and restore personal incentive and investment throughout Australia.

The second is the crucial one.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Lindeman Island

**Mr WARBURTON:** In directing a question to the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts, I refer to the Queensland Government's Lindeman Island deal with East-West Airlines (Queensland) Pty Limited. Today, the Minister said that one-third of the existing national park on the island will be retained as national park. That is in stark contrast to the claim made by the Premier and Treasurer that one-third of the whole island is to be retained as national park.

I ask: Will the Minister clarify the position by telling honourable members what percentage of the whole island is to be national park under the Government's deal with East-West Airlines? Does the deal allow that, when the conditions of the development

lease have been met, East-West Airlines will be able to sell or lease for residential or other purposes parts of the island that are currently national park? What are the names of those companies, which the Minister mentioned this morning, that were given the opportunity by Suncorp to purchase the leases on Lindeman Island? The Minister said that a number of people were given the opportunity. The Opposition wants to know the names of those persons. Will the Minister table today a detailed plan of the State Government/East-West Airlines development scheme for the island?

**Mr McKECHNIE:** In the near future, I hope to seek Executive Council approval for revocation of part of the national park. The map will be tabled in this Chamber. If the Leader of the Opposition is patient, he will see exactly what it is and where it is.

As to whether or not there will be a sale of residential lots or anything like that—I have said to the Leader of the Opposition in very clear terms that the island cannot be freeholded until a great deal of development takes place. That makes it very clear to the honourable member that nothing can happen for some time.

The Leader of the Opposition asked me to name the people who had been speaking to representatives from East-West. That is not a matter that comes within my portfolio, and the Leader of the Opposition knows that. It is on the form. It was on the open market.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned the East-West deal and the development proposal. It is well known that the company plans to make the proposal public. As usual, the Leader of the Opposition or one of his colleagues referred to stolen goods. Anybody can ask for anything. What people get is a decision of the Government.

As to the national park—a plan of the development will be tabled in the very near future. It is a matter for private enterprise as to who deals with somebody, who made offers or who did not make offers. That is their business.

**Mr WARBURTON:** It is hopeless asking reasonable questions in this place.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition will ask his next question.

#### **Hamilton Island Entertainment Pty Ltd**

**Mr WARBURTON:** I ask the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology: Has Keith Williams of Hamilton Island Entertainment Pty Ltd lodged an application for exemption from certain provisions of the Retail Shop Leases Act? Was the application accompanied by a statutory declaration indicating that other business operators on Hamilton Island have not objected to the Keith Williams application?

If the Minister has not received the application or the declaration, is he aware of Mr Williams's actions?

Is the Minister aware of claims that Mr Williams has intimidated and harassed the business operators on this issue?

Has the Minister done anything about the fact that Keith Williams is flouting the provisions of the Retail Shop Leases Act and, if not, will he arrange an immediate investigation?

In his capacity as a member of Cabinet, is the Minister aware that Williams is openly stating that he will be the next to get freehold title to a Barrier Reef island from the Queensland Government?

**Mr AHERN:** I am not aware of the latter issue referred to by the honourable member. No discussions on that matter have taken place, in my presence, in Cabinet.

As to the matter that comes within my portfolio—I understand that discussions have taken place between my departmental officers and Mr Keith Williams of Hamilton Island regarding a possible exemption from the provisions of the Retail Shop Leases Act. As yet, no decision has been made. However, I have communicated with lessees

of shops on the island, and they have indicated to me their concern in relation to the matter. Those concerns are being investigated.

I point out that, under the terms of the Retail Shop Leases Act, if any exemption is offered to the company, it must come before the Parliament and be subject to disallowance and, therefore, debate in Parliament. So, if the Governor in Council decides to entertain an exemption, an opportunity will be offered for full discussion of these matters.

**Mr Warburton:** Can't you give exemption by Order in Council?

**Mr AHERN:** No. It is subject to disallowance in the House and, therefore, debate in the House. My memory of the matter is quite clear. There will be an opportunity for discussion.

Presently, no Cabinet discussion has taken place on the matter. I am aware of the concerns, and those concerns are being examined.

#### **Assistance for Sugar Industry**

**Mr NEAL:** I ask the Premier and Treasurer: Can he outline the assistance measures that have been implemented by the Queensland Government for the sugar industry, and what further assistance measures are planned?

**Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The State Government has long recognised the economic and social importance of the Queensland sugar industry, and has responded positively to the industry's requests for assistance during the period of depressed world prices, and will continue to do so.

During the past three years, the State has made available approximately \$72m in direct assistance for the sugar industry. This has taken the form of concessional rural adjustment assistance and Agricultural Bank loans to growers, concessional loans to co-operative mills and grants to meet the cost of interest on first advances, industry research, the sugar industry review program, extension services, and so on. The sugar-growing regions have also benefited from very large State Government expenditures on water resource infrastructure projects and other State facilities and services.

The State is very aware that the effects of the present crisis may persist for a number of years. Accordingly, the State has proposed to the Commonwealth a \$400m assistance package for the sugar industry over the next three years. The package includes—

\$150m for price support of up to \$230 per tonne.

\$137m for concessional loans and interest subsidies for growers for debt-reconstruction, carry-on and household support.

\$100m for adjustment assistance for mills.

\$13m for industry research (for example, ethanol and kenaf studies) and interest costs on crop advances.

The State's commitment to the package will be approximately \$170m, mainly for adjustment assistance for growers and millers. In fact, the State Government has already firmly committed itself to the provision of funds for industry research, debt-reconstruction and carry-on assistance for growers and the interest cost on the increased first advance for the 1985 season.

In addition to these specific measures, the State will continue to maintain funding in areas assisting the sugar industry, including the Agricultural Bank, water resource projects, rural training, soil conservation, market and economic research, and so on. In total, it is estimated that, by 1987-88, these measures will take State Government funding for the industry to a total of about \$360m.

The State will also be contributing towards the cost of natural disaster relief assistance for growers affected by cyclone Winifred. This will provide growers with access to concessional loans and grants to alleviate personal hardship.

This clearly demonstrates the State Government's firm commitment to assisting the sugar industry to the maximum extent possible within the limit of its financial resources.

#### **Cyclone Winifred**

**Mr EATON:** In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to the cyclone that struck on 1 February. When did the Premier publicly declare cyclone Winifred to be a disaster? Did the director of the State Emergency Service or the Premier ask the Federal Government for assistance from the army, navy and air force? Did the Premier receive any request to bring in electricity line gangs as quickly as possible to restore power to the damaged and devastated areas? Did the Government ask for any military personnel or equipment to help in the clean-up operations in the areas affected by cyclone Winifred, and, if not, why not? Were any requests of the Federal Government by the State Government refused?

**Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Of course I did. I asked for aircraft and helicopters. I asked for air force and army personnel, as a result of which the area affected received a great deal of support. I have already expressed appreciation publicly to the army and air force for their support and assistance.

**Mr De Lacy:** You made a request to the army to assist in cleaning up?

**Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN:** We did; very much so. I spoke to the officers concerned. In cases like that, we invariably seek such assistance, as ought to be well known.

**Mr Scott:** What about the linesmen? Were requests made to fly them in?

**Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I know what the member for Cook is trying to get in. We did everything we had to do in that regard. He can put that in his pipe and smoke it.

#### **Pollution of Lake Tinaroo**

**Mr EATON:** I ask the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services: Has the Water Resources Commission relaxed any of the conditions imposed on the tourist project on the shores of Lake Tinaroo as proposed in an application by E. and M. Bruce Pty Ltd? Has the commission taken into consideration the effect of salinity and water quality as a result of the high number of septic systems being installed close to the shore? Has the commission met representatives of the shire councils that control the land zoning adjacent to Tinaroo Lake? If so, has the commission taken into account the need to maintain water of a high quality for the irrigation of tobacco, rice and other crops in the Mareeba/Dimbulah area?

**Mr TENNI:** I am not aware of a meeting that has taken place about the shores of Tinaroo. However, I am aware of the concern of the Water Resources Commission about pollution of Lake Tinaroo that may affect tobacco or any other crops downstream from the dam. I am aware of the deputation seven, eight or nine months ago by Mr Bruce to the late John Goleby, the Minister then responsible, about the development referred to in the question. I am not aware of the decision made following his deputation. However, I assure the honourable member that any decision that is taken by the Water Resources Commission will be on the basis that no pollution affects the dam or areas downstream of it.

#### **BMW Involvement in Queensland**

**Mr BORBIDGE:** In directing a question to the Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police, I refer to his visit last year to the BMW car-manufacturing plant in Munich, and I ask: Is there any indication that BMW will become involved in an enterprise in the State of Queensland?

**Mr GUNN:** As the honourable member is aware, the Surfers Paradise raceway is now being rebuilt to meet international standards. As a result, motor races of world

class will be able to be conducted on that track. Included in that rebuilding will be a large complex to house the JPS BMW racing team, which is to establish its Australian headquarters at Surfers Paradise. I am sure that the honourable member will be pleased to hear that. Custom-built cars and racing cars will be assembled by BMW at that plant. Also included in the complex will be a driver-education centre.

I thank Amatil, which has been involved in this, and the BMW company. I was approached by representatives of the companies a couple of days ago and received a telephone call from Sydney to verify the undertaking. The Queensland Government is delighted to have a commitment. The knockers opposite said after my trip overseas that nothing would happen. Contrary to their claims, there is now an indication that BMW will become involved in the State of Queensland. That is very pleasing indeed.

#### **Banning of South African Rotary Exchange Students from New South Wales State Schools**

**Mr BORBIDGE:** In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I refer to the decision of the Wran Labor Government in New South Wales to ban South African Rotary exchange students from Government schools in that State. I ask: Can he assure the House that such a stupid act of political censorship and a blatant insult to such an enormously successful program will not be tolerated in Queensland and that South African exchange students will continue to be welcome in Queensland schools?

**Mr POWELL:** I am happy to answer the question posed by the honourable member for Surfers Paradise, because I believe that any Government that uses students for political purposes ought to be condemned outright. That is what the New South Wales Government and other Labor Governments in this nation deserve. They are so narrow-minded that they have condemned a student for the way in which that student's country of origin is governed. Those Labor Governments are simply scared that students from South Africa will come to Australia and convince other students in Australia of what South Africa is like. No doubt Labor Governments would be afraid of that.

I also wonder whether those Labor Governments would prevent students from communist countries coming to Australia. Not that a communist country would allow students to come to a country similar to Australia; it would fear that when they returned, they would show the other students of that country what it is like to live in a free country. Despite that, the Labor Governments in Australia would not stop a student from a communist country coming here.

That type of action must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. There is no way in the world that the Queensland Government would stop students from any nation coming to Australia under the sponsorship of Rotary. The Rotary group study exchange and the Rotary student exchange programs are some of the best exchange programs that operate in the world. Everything possible is done to help students understand one another, which will help people understand one another. What greater goal can the people of Australia have for their country?

I can assure the honourable member and the House that this State will continue to support Rotary in its attempts to spread understanding throughout the world.

#### **Family and Community Development Bill**

**Mr JENNINGS:** In directing a question to the Minister for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs, I refer to reports that it was proposed to bring before the House the Family and Community Development Bill, and I ask: Would the Minister inform the House in regard to the progress of that Bill?

**Mrs CHAPMAN:** Because I expected to be asked this question by the Opposition, I am prepared.

This is a very important matter. The drafting of the new Family and Community Development Bill is nearing completion and could have been ready for introduction

later in this session. However, the Sturgess report has some implications that must be given very serious consideration in conjunction with the provisions contained in the proposed Bill. I have directed the staff of my department to give urgent attention to these matters prior to the final drafting instructions being given to the Parliamentary Counsel.

The legislation that will be presented will represent a complete rewrite of the Children's Services Act and will be one of the most important Bills to come before this House for many years. In its several aspects, it will lead the way in Australia.

**Mr Fouras:** This has been promised since 1977—10 years.

**Mrs CHAPMAN:** The honourable member for South Brisbane has not contributed much input into it. He has only put down everything that this Government has done.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I remind all honourable members that, although I will allow limited interjection—and I mean limited—persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

**Mrs CHAPMAN:** The honourable member is a naughty boy.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs CHAPMAN:** So that all possibilities are covered, I want the legislation to be presented in a complete and comprehensive form. I do not want to find myself in the position of introducing a Bill that will have to be amended soon after. I believe that another slight delay now will be worth it in the long run.

#### **Report by Queensland Teachers Union on School of the Air**

**Mr JENNINGS:** In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I refer to the February issue of the journal circulated by the Queensland Teachers Union as well as to recent misleading statements made by members of the Opposition concerning the costs associated with the trial period of the School of the Air satellite communications. I now ask: Would the Minister inform the House of the true cost of this exciting project?

**Mr POWELL:** I thank the honourable member for his question. In fact, I was reading that journal earlier in this Chamber. It evokes a fair bit—

**Mr Scott:** Will you table it?

**Mr POWELL:** I will be happy to table the document.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Honourable members will let the Minister reply.

**Mr POWELL:** Through you, Mr Speaker, I point out to the honourable member for Cook that, obviously, he has not had the opportunity of reading the latest joke in the *Queensland Teachers Journal*. I wonder if the poor soul can even read.

The 19 February edition of the *Queensland Teachers Journal* contains some interesting statements. It shows that the Opposition spokesman for education, who received headlines in that journal, is a typical knocker, as is the journal itself. Anybody in this State who knocks the satellite trial for distance education must be dumb.

**Mr UNDERWOOD:** I rise to a point of order. The Minister stated that the Opposition is knocking the satellite trial. Is that right, Mr Minister?

**Mr Powell:** You were listening.

**Mr UNDERWOOD:** The Minister said that the Opposition and I are knocking the satellite trial. That is totally incorrect. I ask that the statement be withdrawn. I have pointed out quite plainly through a number of media outlets that we support the satellite trial. What the Opposition is pointing out to the people of western Queensland is the

deception of the Government. In its publicity, it is promising them that they will all be getting it in the near future.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Ipswich West has objected to the words used by the Minister. I should like the Minister to withdraw them, if he will.

**Mr POWELL:** I am happy to withdraw the statements if the honourable member takes exception to them. I thought the member was going to complain because I said that he was dumb.

The words used by the Opposition spokesman, as printed in the journal, indicate that the member for Ipswich West has predicted that the trial could be scrapped on completion unless there is a massive injection of funds. The article then proceeds to use quite inaccurate figures.

As well, the article contains the statement, attributed to Mr Underwood, that it is the world's first distance education scheme. It is not. Schemes are operating in India and Alaska. This is the first occasion on which education has been beamed directly to a child's home, or to a particular location where only one or two children are gathered. In the other trials, the satellite beams to a group of people in a hall or some similar place.

The costs are interesting. For the calendar years 1985 and 1986, the costs to the Education Department are \$447,000. Aussat is contributing \$450,000. The costs quoted in the journal article are incorrect. Many once-only costs are involved. For example, the cost of software is \$20,000; the cost of videos is \$70,000; the cost of the film studios that are being used is \$60,000; and the cost of the computers is \$80,000. In other words, a total of \$230,000 is a one-off cost. I pointed out that the Queensland Education Department is unique in Australia in having film studios. They are used for many other educational programs as well.

I still believe that the Opposition and the teachers union are knocking the trial because they do not believe that it can be successful. In addition, they do not believe in the quality of education that this Government provides to the people in the far-flung, distant areas of the State. They are concerned not with the children but with the making of political points.

The editorial in the journal refers to the cost of education in Queensland and comes back to the hoary old chestnut of per capita spending on education. What it should be doing is congratulating the Government on the way in which it spends the education dollar.

The union should also be congratulating the teachers of this State on the way in which they are able to impart knowledge and to train children in this State so that they have the highest reputation of children anywhere in Australia. That is what the union should be doing. It should be congratulating the Queensland Government on its economies of scale rather than condemning it simply because of some fictitious figure that the union can dream up by fiddling with figures.

### **Housing Co-operative Funds**

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** I direct a question to the Premier and Treasurer. I do not know whether it is generally known, but \$5.7m has been made available to the housing co-operatives, for the provision of urgent housing in this State, at an interest rate of 13.5 per cent, which is a very favourable interest rate. Of that amount, \$3.7m comes from the housing co-operatives' own funds and \$2m from the Commonwealth Bank. The money cannot be released because the State Government has not given the necessary guarantees. I ask: Can the Premier and Treasurer advise why those guarantees have not been given? Can that decision be reversed?

**Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The housing societies indicated quite clearly that they operate without the Government's consent if the Government does not give its

consent. I understand that, in this instance, the honourable member is trying to say that the position is different. I am not aware of it. I believe that the societies can still operate. That is the information that I have. I am aware that that attitude has been adopted by this particular group. The matter is being checked to see whether what I say is correct.

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** Mr Speaker, can I put that question on notice for the next day of sitting?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! If it is the Premier's wish, the honourable member may do so.

**Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN:** If the honourable member wants to place the question on notice, I do not mind.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member may put it on notice.

#### **Offer of Help by Sacked SEQEB Workers Following Cyclone Winifred**

**Mr FITZGERALD:** I ask the Minister for Mines and Energy: Does he believe that the offer reportedly made by sacked SEQEB workers to help out in north Queensland following cyclone Winifred was a genuine offer? What role did the spokesman for the group, Mr Alan Doodney, play in the original strike by SEQEB workers?

**Mr I. J. GIBBS:** I thank the honourable member for that question. The recent cyclone disaster was based on areas between Cairns and Townsville. In the main, Innisfail was the problem area. During at least part of that period, I was in north Queensland and in close contact with our electricity people. It was quite a disaster, and an enormous number of electrical installations were destroyed and blown down, and there was tremendous interruption.

The Far North Queensland Electricity Board did a tremendous job. It was fully backed up by, and received the co-operation of, the North Queensland Electricity Board, which is based on Townsville. There was tremendous co-operation during that period. Damage occurred in many remote areas and it was impossible to get to them by road. In those areas, three helicopters were used constantly.

Firstly, I congratulate those electricity board people in north Queensland. The men out in the field did a tremendous job. They must be congratulated, along with the boards and the officers of those boards.

I refer to the offer by some of the sacked SEQEB workers in Brisbane, led by Mr Doodney. Under Mr Doodney, Mr Dinny Madden, with his crew, offered to go up and assist the people of north Queensland. Who would ever want the help of those men? Led by Mr Dinny Madden, they are the very people who would not connect power to 80 000 people in Brisbane when, early in 1985, they were without power. In Brisbane, 80 000 people, whose roofs were blown off, were without power. It was not a cyclone, but it did as much damage as one. The storm hit Brisbane at about 5.30 in the afternoon. At 9 o'clock that night, the union people were still in the arbitration court saying, "We will not go out and connect those 80 000 people."

On two occasions, one of the arbitration commissioners requested them to go out voluntarily and restore power. Mr Madden said, "No. Until we sort out this contractor business, we are not going to go out and connect those people." Finally, at about 9 o'clock at night, the commissioner ordered the men out to connect the power.

In the meantime, the State Emergency Service people—volunteers—were out working for nothing, putting roofs and tarpaulins up and helping people in general to be rehabilitated following this terrible storm in Brisbane. The same men who would not connect 80 000 people in their own back yard acted like hypocrites and offered to go to north Queensland to help people out. Who would ever want them in the system?

The sacked SEQEB workers who remain unemployed at present would be absolutely unemployable. Mr Doodney is a man who has been charged in the courts with harassing

people and attempting to run over a person who was trying to fix some electricity problems up. These are the same people who were hypocrites and offered to go to north Queensland to assist.

**Honourable Members interjected.**

**Mr WARBURTON:** I rise to a point of order. The Minister has mentioned Mr Alan Doodney. It is unreasonable for the Minister to tell only half the story.

**Honourable Members interjected.**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Would the honourable member for Sandgate keep to his point of order?

**Mr WARBURTON:** I will. It is only reasonable that the name of a person should be treated fairly. My understanding is that the courts found that Mr Doodney had no case to answer. It is only reasonable that I ask the Minister to correct his statement.

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

**Mr I. J. GIBBS:** I said only that he was charged, and he was charged. He is a member of the ETU. He is one of the grubs in the system and is one of the honourable member for Sandgate's old comrades.

**Honourable Members interjected.**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

#### **University of Queensland Union**

**Mr FITZGERALD:** I ask the Minister for Education: Has he read the 74th annual report of the University of Queensland Union? I am appalled that parents and students are required to pay a compulsory union fee of \$160 to fund activities that are contrary to their own beliefs and attitudes. In what way was the \$68,442 in legal aid and the \$78,445 for clubs and societies spent during 1985?

**Mr POWELL:** I thank the honourable member for the question. For some time, this Government has been concerned with the activities of student unions in the various colleges of advanced education and the three universities. Legislation is being prepared, as has been fairly widely publicised.

**Mr Scott:** You ought to go to school to learn how to become concise.

**Mr POWELL:** One of the things that the honourable member for Cook did not learn at school was listening skills.

One of the tenets of that legislation is to divide the genuine charges that can be requested of students for facilities from the amount of money paid into what can more properly be called a student association. The figures to which the honourable gentleman refers are for legal aid. The University of Queensland Union has a legal office. In the period covered by the report, \$68,442 was spent on legal aid. That was an increase of just more than \$11,000 on the figure for the previous year. Members who have children at university ought to be fairly concerned at the way in which that \$160, which is demanded of the students, is spent. As a parent, I object to money being spent to assist students to picket during the SEQEB dispute. That is exactly what was done with some of this money. I object to my money being spent to protect students who participated in the abortion law reform demonstrations.

**Mr De Lacy:** We object to the way money is being spent on cheap advertisements.

**Mr POWELL:** I have no doubt that the member for Cairns would object to any legitimate way in which money would be spent.

I object to the students' union spending compulsorily gained funds to assist students who participated in the demonstration against the former Governor of this State when

the Premier and Treasurer was to receive an honorary law degree. I do not believe that the funds that my student children are required to pay to that union ought to be spent in that manner. That is why this Government is looking at ways to legislate to make sure that students who are genuinely concerned with the way in which the money is being spent can ensure that it is spent according to their wishes.

In another case, \$78,445 was advanced to the 108 university clubs.

**Mr Mackenroth:** The member who asked the question has left the Chamber.

**Mr POWELL:** That shows how much notice the member for Chatsworth takes of the running of the House. The question was asked by the honourable member for Lockyer (Mr FitzGerald), who is still sitting in the Chamber and listening attentively.

**An Opposition Member:** You're a showman.

**Mr POWELL:** I can beat the honourable member every time, can't I?

Some of the clubs that received funding as a result of the Mayne Hall demonstration were the Resistance Club, the Democratic Rights Club and the Green Party. The vast majority of decent Australians and Queenslanders and I do not accept that the compulsory funds that we have to pay a university ought to be spent on such activities. This Government will be legislating accordingly at the earliest possible opportunity.

#### **Gateway Bridge Toll Charges**

**Mr McLEAN:** In asking a question of the Minister for Works and Housing, I refer to the unacceptably high toll on the Gateway Bridge for all classes of vehicles. I now ask: Does he agree that the toll is too high and that it should be reduced to a more realistic figure? If he does not agree, can he explain to the people of Brisbane why, because of the high toll, instructions have been given to truck-drivers of the Works Department not to use the bridge?

**Mr WHARTON:** The Premier and Treasurer made a full statement on this matter last week. I refer the honourable member to that.

**Mr McLean:** I referred to truck-drivers from the Works Department. Did the Minister hear the question?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister has answered the honourable member's first question. Would he put his second question?

#### **Community Employment Program**

**Mr McLEAN:** In asking a question of the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs, I refer to the statement of the Premier and Treasurer in this morning's *Courier-Mail* that the Commonwealth Government's Community Employment Program is a failure. I now ask: Is that his and the Government's opinion and, if so, when will he stop using the program to supplement the public service work-force and begin using State funds to employ young people?

**Mr LESTER:** The Community Employment Program is running out of money, as did the RED scheme under the Whitlam Government. I do not think that I need say anything more about that. The honourable member is not aware which Minister is responsible for running the Community Employment Program in Queensland. It is not the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs. That is where the honourable member made his first blunder. It is very clear that the CEP scheme is just like the RED scheme—it is running out of money. The long-term benefits of the RED scheme are not terribly good. It is not like the self-employment venture schemes operated by my department, which are doing a very good job in providing permanent employment to a large number of young people who have a great deal of expertise and enterprise. The scheme is keeping them in long-term employment and thereby doing a very good job.

Opposition members should not laugh when I refer to job-creation opportunities that the Government has provided on a permanent basis. The Opposition stands totally condemned for its actions that are against private employment opportunities being given to young people.

#### **Provision of Electricity to Country Areas; Statements by Federal Minister for Finance**

**Mr LITTLEPROUD:** I ask the Minister for Mines and Energy: Is he aware of the comments made in Sydney yesterday by the Federal Minister for Finance (Senator Walsh) in which he claimed that the Queensland Government was wasting public money in providing electricity to country areas?

**Mr I. J. GIBBS:** I am aware of the statements. I have the article that appeared in *The Courier-Mail* today, which is headed "MP attacks Nats over rural power". It states—

"The Federal Finance Minister, Senator Walsh, yesterday accused the Queensland Government of wasting public money to provide electricity to country areas.

Mr Walsh told a Sydney privatisation seminar that Queensland south-east and coastal consumers were paying excessive charges for electricity.

'This was to offset huge losses incurred constructing power lines to sprawling National Party farms. Electricity can be generated independently on farms and in small isolated country towns,' Senator Walsh said."

I will keep a copy of that article so that when Senator Walsh is out in the country areas telling the people what a great fellow he is, I can show it to him. I am used to reading such statements made by members of the Federal Government and by members of the Opposition in Queensland, as well as by the honourable member for Sherwood (Mr Angus Innes), who frequently makes uninformed statements.

I am surprised by the statements made by Senator Walsh. He lives in a country area in Western Australia and knows about the problems experienced in remote areas. I think that he is playing politics.

In the article, Senator Walsh referred to capital cities and coastal areas. I turn to the equalisation system in Queensland. In Brisbane, electricity consumers were paying a certain price for their electricity. In Mackay, which is a Labor seat, the people were paying an additional 40 per cent. The people of Rockhampton were paying 30 per cent more than the people of Brisbane. Over a 10-year period, the Queensland Government equalised the cost of electricity throughout Queensland. That was a major project undertaken by this State. About three months ago, the New South Wales Government made a statement that it was thinking of equalising its tariffs. That is 10 years after Queensland made its decision to equalise electricity tariffs. When electricity prices are quoted in New South Wales, reference is made to the centre of Sydney; the Government does not make any reference to the people in the western parts of New South Wales.

Queensland purchases power from New South Wales to supply electricity to St. George and other western areas. It cost the Queensland Government three-quarters of a million dollars to subsidise the electricity purchased across the border and to equalise the price with the average price in Queensland. New South Wales has only recently decided to equalise electricity charges. People in the remote parts of New South Wales, including pensioners, pay 30 per cent or 40 per cent more for their electricity.

Queensland's rural electrification scheme has been marvellous. The user pays. Some people have been paying up to \$28,000 for a connection. The Queensland Government is contributing some money, which is offset by the income it receives from electricity consumers. The rural electrification scheme has been necessary because of the high cost of diesel fuel. Senator Walsh says that power can be produced in remote areas and towns. There is only one way in which it can be produced, and that is by using diesel fuel.

Following measures imposed by Canberra, in rural areas the present cost of diesel fuel for a power plant of reasonable size is \$10,000. As the cost of diesel fuel for a small

power plant is \$5,000, it is worth while for people in remote areas to put in a sum of money based on the price of a group scheme to overcome that enormous cost for what is a second-rate service.

In western areas, power plants that used to be run on diesel fuel are now being replaced by the grid, because, these days, it costs 27c a unit to turn power out of a diesel plant, which is three times the cost of turning power out of the grid. That can no longer be allowed to continue.

**Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen** interjected.

**Mr I. J. GIBBS:** No, Mr Keating did not talk about the tax. Senator Walsh, as Minister for Finance, knows all about it.

Because of the cost of diesel fuel, the Government has had to electrify railways. Diesel fuel costs so much these days that even trains cannot be run on it. The electrification of the railway lines costs a great deal, but it pays for itself.

This Government is proud to say that it represents all Queenslanders. The Premier made the statement that the rural electrification scheme will be finished by 1988, and it will be pretty close to that. Today, 99 per cent of Queensland has electricity. Because of their remoteness, a few areas will never receive it. However, this Government will do its very best to represent all Queenslanders.

If the course of action suggested by Senator Walsh were adopted, it would cost four times as much to post a letter in Karumba as it would to post a letter in Brisbane. As far as I am concerned, rural electrification is a high priority. Under the equalisation scheme, everybody pays the same amount of money. This Government is proud of that fact.

In future, Senator Walsh ought to do his homework and stop playing politics.

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

### **TOOWONG RAILWAY STATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

**Hon. D. F. LANE** (Merthyr—Minister for Transport), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Toowong Railway Station Development Project Act 1985 in a certain particular.”

Motion agreed to.

#### **First Reading**

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Lane, read a first time.

#### **Second Reading**

**Hon. D. F. LANE** (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (12.23 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

The Toowong Railway Station Development Project Act has allowed redevelopment of vacant railway lands, a sawmill site and other private properties into a major shopping and commercial centre. Substantial public improvements in the form of roadworks and a new railway station are a feature of the development, with approximately \$5m worth of such improvements being provided by the developer.

Work is currently well advanced, and completion is expected in the second half of 1986. Total construction costs are estimated at \$52m, with significant employment opportunities created in the construction phase and upon opening of the centre.

One aspect of the public improvements was the provision of a pedestrian overpass from the development over a widened Benson Street so as to eliminate, for shoppers

and commuters, the pedestrian/vehicle conflict. It was originally intended to site the eastern abutment of the pedestrian overpass on property at 16 Benson Street, described as subdivision 2 of resubdivision 1 of subdivision A of part of allotment 25 on registered plan No. 18705. That private property was to be purchased by the developer and dedicated as public road to allow access to the overpass. Subsequent to assent of the original Act, an alternative site upon which to locate the eastern abutment was identified by the developer and acquired for that purpose. The alternative site at 18 Benson Street is adjacent to the previously nominated property.

The advantages of the second site are that it is immediately adjacent to a laneway providing a more direct access to the development from properties in Archer Street behind Benson Street, and it allows a better point of access for users into the railway station complex and community centre. The amendment to the Act allows for the alternative site to be used for locating the eastern abutment and approach ramps to the pedestrian overpass and for its dedication to public use as road.

Debate, on motion of Mr Milliner, adjourned.

### **SCARTWATER STATION TRUST EXTENSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

**Hon. W. H. GLASSON** (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Scartwater Station Trust Extension Act Amendment Act 1960-1981 in a certain particular.”

Motion agreed to.

#### **First Reading**

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Glasson, read a first time.

#### **Second Reading**

**Hon. W. H. GLASSON** (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying) (12.27 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

The Scartwater Station Trust Extension Acts 1941-1981 contain provisions under which the benefits of the trust property known as Scartwater Station shall be applied and extended to certain returned servicemen and their widows, children and other dependants.

In particular, section 4 (c) of the Scartwater Station Trust Extension Act Amendment Act of 1960 provides, in addition to the powers conferred upon the managing trustees by the original indenture, that the objects and purposes for which the managing trustees may manage and administer the trust include the grant of an educational scholarship, bursary or grant to any qualified child of the returned person. To date, in accordance with the existing legislation, the trust grants educational scholarships for assistance for university education and high school education to children of eligible ex-servicemen, but, owing to the passage of time since World War II, there are not enough applicants to utilise all the funds available.

The managing trustees saw the need for new scholarships to be granted on future scholastic results and they made representations to have amendments made to the legislation to provide for eligibility of grandchildren of returned servicemen as well as the children thereof, in respect of scholarships, bursaries and grants. The purpose of the Bill is to extend to grandchildren of qualified ex-servicemen the benefits of scholarships, bursaries and grants available under the existing Act. The proposal has merit and is supported.

The Bill is brief. Clauses 1 and 2 deal with the short title citation and collective title. Clause 3 has the effect of including grandchildren in the scheme.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mackenroth, adjourned.

### **MINERS' HOMESTEAD LEASES ACT AND MINING TITLES FREEHOLDING ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

**Hon. W. H. GLASSON** (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Miners' Homestead Leases Act 1913-1982 and the Mining Titles Freeholding Act 1980-1983 each in certain particulars and for other purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

#### **First Reading**

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Glasson, read a first time.

#### **Second Reading**

**Hon. W. H. GLASSON** (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying) (12.30 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

The Bill encompasses two Acts, the Miners' Homestead Leases Act and the Mining Titles Freeholding Act. The main thrust of the Bill is to introduce amendments that cater for the formalisation of the transfer of the administration of the Miners' Homestead Leases Act, the Mining Titles Freeholding Act, residence areas, business areas and market garden areas from administration by the Honourable the Minister for Mines and Energy (Mr I. J. Gibbs) to my present portfolio, and for the administration of such Acts and tenures and the registration of dealings with such tenures to be maintained by the Land Administration Commission, not the Department of Mines. Another clause in the Bill corrects anomalies in the present legislation and a minor drafting error which have become apparent during the preparation of the Bill. It is considered that, as all tenures dealt with under the legislation subject to this Bill are for residential and other purposes not necessarily directly associated with the mining industry, the role of providing such tenures and administering the relevant legislation could more appropriately be handled by the Land Administration Commission. Initially, all applications, registration of dealings and filing of notices associated with the respective tenures are commenced with the relevant local mining warden at the court house for the mining district in which the subject land is situated, and the only change to be caused by the proposed transfer of administration is that the mining warden will now refer all matters relative to these tenures to the Department of Lands instead of to the Department of Mines.

The present legislation makes reference to records of the Department of Mines where, in fact, because of the uniqueness of the Miners' Homestead Leases Act, the actual register of miners' homesteads and dealings therewith is kept by the relevant warden. This amendment corrects that anomaly.

At present, the Miners' Homestead Leases Act is read as one with the Mining Act of 1898 and does not contain a definition of “Minister”. The amendment provides that definition.

A miners' homestead perpetual lease may only be applied for, purchased and/or granted over land situated within the boundaries of a proclaimed mining field. In 1979, a section was inserted in this Act to protect and continue miners' homesteads and the rights and liabilities of lessees, applicants and purchasers thereof, should the boundaries of a mining field be varied and land subject to miner's homestead tenure be excluded from the boundaries of a mining field so varied. In more recent times, a number of mining fields within the State have been abolished, and the amendment will provide similar protection in such instances. Also, as some fields on which miners' homesteads

were situated have already been abolished, it is necessary for this amendment to have retrospective operation.

The Bill substitutes the Chief Commissioner of Lands, Land Administration Commission, for the Director-General, Department of Mines, wherever necessary in both Acts under consideration. These amendments are necessary to formalise the transfer of administrations.

At present, the Miners' Homestead Leases Act allows the Minister to authorise officers of the Mines Department, other than the relevant warden, to endorse the instruments of lease of miners' homesteads as to transfers thereof. At present, public servants employed in the various wardens' offices throughout the State are, in fact, employees of the Justice Department. The Minister for Mines has already authorised at least one such officer of the Justice Department. The amendment corrects the anomaly and validates any prior authorisation.

The present provisions provide that, if the instrument of lease of a miner's homestead becomes mutilated or contains so many endorsements that it is incapable of bearing necessary or further endorsements, the Minister may, upon lodgment of such instrument with the Director-General, Department of Mines, cause a new instrument of lease to be issued. The amendment, as well as substituting the "Chief Commissioner of Lands, Land Administration Commission" for the "Director-General, Department of Mines", continues any application made through the Department of Mines prior to the transfer of administration of the Act but not finalised as at the date of such transfer.

Presently, the Act provides for the registration of Orders in Council correcting instruments of lease in the register kept in the Department of Mines. As stated previously, the proper register is kept in the relevant warden's office. The amendment corrects this anomaly. Also, the present provision of the Miners' Homestead Leases Act provides for the entering of transmission, in respect of a miner's homestead, by the warden and the Department of Mines. The amendment corrects this anomaly.

Besides substituting the "Chief Commissioner of Lands" for the "Director-General, Department of Mines", the amendments to the Mining Titles Freeholding Act amend the definition of "Minister" to formalise the transfer of administration of the Act and correct a minor drafting error that occurred during a previous amendment to this Act.

Residence areas, business areas and market garden areas are tenures granted under the now repealed Mining Act. No new tenures of these types may be granted now. Residence areas and business areas are capable of being converted to freehold, pursuant to the Mining Titles Freeholding Act. Market garden areas cannot be converted. The registration of any dealings with all these tenures is handled solely by the relevant warden, except when applications for conversion of residence areas or business areas to freehold are made. No amendment to legislation is considered necessary.

I consider this to be a good Bill containing desirable and necessary amendments to formalise the transfer of administration of the two Acts and the other tenures.

I should explain to the House that, as this legislation cannot be invoked prior to 1 May 1987, it will require amendment. I therefore foreshadow the following amendments—

“At page 2, omit all words comprising lines 7 to 9”;

“At page 2, line 11, omit the expression ‘3’ and substitute the expression ‘2’ ”;

“At page 2, line 13, omit the expression ‘4-12’ and substitute the expression ‘3-11’ ”;

“At page 2, line 15, omit the expression ‘13-16’ and substitute the expression ‘12-15’.”

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mackenroth, adjourned.

**PAPER**

The following paper was laid on the table—

Proposal to revoke the setting apart and declaration as national park under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984 of all that piece or part of National Park 274, parish of Shaw as shown on plan N.P.W. 201 prepared by the Department of Mapping and Surveying and deposited in the office of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife and containing an area of about 390 ha.

**LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE**

**Mr WARBURTON** (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition): Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a shame that the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts (Mr McKechnie) did not have the fortitude to make that announcement this morning when all honourable members were in the Chamber and when he had the opportunity to do so.

I seek leave to move that so much of the Standing Orders be suspended—

**Mr McKECHNIE:** I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition said it was a shame that I did not do certain things. I do not think that he understands the position. I could not pre-empt the Governor's doing certain things. Because I was abiding by what is the due process in the parliamentary system, I do not accept the implication in the honourable member's remarks.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Row): Order! The Minister does not accept the implication. Will the Leader of the Opposition withdraw the implication?

**Mr WARBURTON:** Yes.

I seek leave to move that so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would allow an immediate debate on the revocation order covering the Lindeman Island National Park.

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 34		NOES, 40	
Braddy	Scott	Ahern	Lester
Campbell	Shaw	Alison	Lingard
Comben	Smith	Austin	Littleproud
D'Arcy	Underwood	Bailey	McKechnie
De Lacy	Vaughan	Bjelke-Petersen	McPhie
Eaton	Veivers	Booth	Menzel
Fouras	Warburton	Borbidge	Miller
Goss	Warner, A. M.	Cahill	Muntz
Gygar	White	Chapman	Newton
Hamill	Wilson	Clauson	Powell
Innes	Yewdale	Cooper	Randell
Knox		Elliott	Simpson
Kruger		FitzGerald	Stephan
Lee		Gibbs, I. J.	Stoneman
Lickiss		Glasson	Tenni
Mackenroth		Harper	Turner
McElligott		Harvey	Wharton
McLean		Henderson	
Milliner	<i>Tellers:</i>	Jennings	<i>Tellers:</i>
Palaszczuk	Davis	Katter	Kaus
Price	Prest	Lane	Neal

Resolved in the negative.

**STATISTICAL RETURNS 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 Statistical Returns Act of 1896 as subsequently amended 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) (12.51 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

In recent years, some problems have arisen with long-standing arrangements for the release of statistical records to Queensland Government departments and bona fide researchers. These problems originated from 1983 amendments to the Federal Government's Census and Statistics Acts 1905. These amendments prevented the Australian Statistician from releasing information to researchers and to State Government departments. In many cases the information which could not be released to Queensland Government departments was information which had actually originated in those departments.

The appointment of the under secretary of my department also as Government Statistician for Queensland prevented the confidentiality provisions of the Federal legislation from applying to Queensland Government statistical records. This allowed the provisions of Queensland's Statistical Returns Act of 1896 to be used to provide statistical information to Government departments and also to bona fide researchers.

The Government Statistician for Queensland has been reluctant to release statistical information to researchers outside of the Queensland Government, no matter what their bona fides. The Government Statistician is concerned that the preservation of confidentiality of statistical information must be treated as a matter of utmost importance. In this context the lack of adequate legislative protection for the confidentiality of information is the major factor preventing the release of such information. This is despite the fact that this information can provide researchers with vital links in such important areas as the fight against disease, and accidents in the home, work-place and on our roads. Indeed, I am told that it was Queensland statistical data about deaths that was used extensively in establishing the relationship between German measles during pregnancy and subsequent birth deformities.

Therefore, while the preservation of confidentiality of statistical information remains a central concern of this legislation, it is nevertheless considered that in certain circumstances bona fide researchers should continue to have access to statistical records.

The proposed amendments to the Statistical Returns Act will provide an adequate penalty of a \$5,000 fine or two years' gaol, or both, for persons who divulge confidential information obtained under this Act, whether they be employees of the State Government or researchers to whom information has been supplied under proposed new section 7 in the Bill. The penalties described in this Bill are similar to those included in Federal Government statistical legislation.

Another provision of the Bill will delete all reference to the Director of the Bureau of Industry as Government Statistician. The Bureau of Industry no longer exists, and its statistical functions have been absorbed by the Government Statistician's Office in my department.

It is also intended to update those provisions of the Act that provide penalties for the refusal to provide information collected under the Act or the deliberate supply of false information. The existing penalties were last reviewed in 1935 and therefore do not reflect current values. The penalties described in the Bill for these offences are in line with those applying in Federal statistical legislation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr McLean, adjourned.

**INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE TRAINING 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 Industry and Commerce Training Act 1979-1985 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)  
(12.57 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

When I introduced amendments to the Industry and Commerce Training Act on 27 November 1985 to facilitate the introduction of traineeships in Queensland, those amendments were part of a larger package of amendments to the Act that I was having prepared.

The Industry and Commerce Training Act, since its proclamation on 20 September 1979, has provided an effective vehicle for the administration of apprenticeship and other industrial and commercial training programs in this State.

The Bill will further improve the operation of the industry and commerce training legislation in Queensland and ensure that, where appropriate, effect is given to improve further the decision-making in the apprenticeship and traineeship field.

Under the ambit of the Industry and Commerce Training Commission, a network of industry and commerce advisory committees and regional advisory committees has been established. The Bill will provide for more direct input in apprenticeship administration by regional advisory committees, including the supervision over the allotment of apprenticeships and consideration of matters arising throughout the apprenticeship of a young person. Additional representation on the Industry and Commerce Training Commission will be made from industry, from the post-secondary education field and from the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Industrial Relations.

The appointed membership of industry and commerce advisory committees and regional advisory committees is drawn from bodies representative of employers and employees. There are instances, however, in which additional representation is appropriate. The Bill will provide for an appropriate amendment to the legislation to provide for this additional membership.

Under the current legislation, the commission and industry and commerce advisory committees may only establish subcommittees from within their membership. To ensure that a full input from industry is allowed in certain instances, but not to the extent that a permanent increase in membership of the committees is warranted, the facility will be made to appoint members to subcommittees for specific purposes.

Under the existing provisions of the Act, where an employer is unable to provide work for an apprentice, after alternative employment is unable to be found for the apprentice, the commission has little alternative but to cancel the indenture.

However, many apprentices and their parents express concern that the indenture has been cancelled, with the word “cancellation” implying some finality. Provision is made in the Bill for the stand-down of apprentices in such situations.

The Act requires amendment to ensure that the Minister may exercise a discretion, on his own initiative, in the administration of the legislation. I refer to matters such as

variation of the attendance of apprentices at technical college where the Minister is clearly satisfied, from industry representations, that change is required, and establishment of industry and commerce advisory committees where the Minister, after having considered industry representations, is of the view that a committee should be established. The Bill gives effect to this amendment.

When the Industry and Commerce Training Act was introduced in 1979, the recognition of proficiency for apprentices was changed from the former 5 per cent bonus salary payment to a reduction in duration of the apprenticeship where the apprentice obtained an average of 75 per cent or more in all subjects at his annual examinations.

The Government has accepted the commission's recommendation that amendments should be made to the Act to provide for the commission to set a standard of proficiency in individual trades, against which proficiency will be evaluated.

The introduction of a variety of pre-apprenticeship and pre-vocational courses of training in colleges of TAFE after evaluation by the commission has been well received by employers and employees alike.

Where a graduate from such a course subsequently obtains an apprenticeship, the determination of the periods of reduction and the stage at which the reduction is granted during the apprenticeship is vested with the various industry and commerce advisory committees. This has resulted in a variety of arrangements being applied, though all have the effect of providing for a reduction in the apprenticeship period.

The commission has recommended that the determination of the period of reduction and the stage of the apprenticeship at which it should apply should rest with the commission, after consultation has been made with the appropriate industry and commerce advisory committee. An appropriate amendment has been included in the Bill.

Action has also been taken in the Bill to repeal certain obsolete sections in the Act which had effect only during the transition arrangements when the legislation was introduced in 1979.

Other minor amendments are proposed to give better effect to the administration of apprenticeships and traineeships in the State, which I do not propose to deal with at length.

The Government is committed to the promotion of employment and training opportunities in Queensland and is whole-heartedly behind the traineeship program, which was the core of the Government's submission to the Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs.

This Bill will further enhance the effective administration of apprenticeships and traineeships in Queensland and ensure that maximum flexibility is provided to give effect to better job opportunities, particularly for young people.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr McLean, adjourned.

*Sitting suspended from 1.3 to 2.15 p.m.*

#### LIFTS IN PARLIAMENTARY ANNEXE

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row):** Order! I advise honourable members that the priority system that operates the elevators in the tower block of the Parliamentary Annexe is still not functioning and members should be aware of that fact in the event of the division bells being rung.

## PROPOSED DEVIATIONS—NORTH COAST LINE, CABOOLTURE TO GLADSTONE

### Initiation

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport): I move—

“That Mr Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution—

‘That the House approves of the working plans and sections and books of reference of the proposed deviations of the North Coast Line at Eumundi, Gympie, Oakhurst-Aldershot and Benaraby-Parana.’ ”

Motion agreed to.

### Committee

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (2.16 p.m.): I move—

“That the House approves of the working plans and sections and books of reference of the proposed deviations of the North Coast Line at Eumundi, Gympie, Oakhurst-Aldershot and Benaraby-Parana.”

Honourable members may recall that, approximately 12 months ago, I announced to the Chamber that approval had been given for the preparation of a detailed scope of work, estimates and economic evaluation of the proposal to electrify the railway between Caboolture and Gladstone as stage 4 of the main line electrification project.

I am pleased to be able to say that the project, which involves electrifying 475 route kilometres of railway between Caboolture and Gladstone, has now been approved by Cabinet and will proceed forthwith.

The estimated cost of the project, in total, is \$307m, and this expenditure is expected to generate about 300 000 man-weeks of employment in Queensland during the construction phase.

The scheme will take advantage of the traditional benefits of electric traction compared with diesel traction, as well as the effects of advances in technology. These traditional benefits include high performance locomotives and electric multiple units, lower maintenance costs and shorter maintenance times, as well as lower operating costs in terms of energy consumption.

As with stages 1, 2 and 3 of the main line electrification project currently under way in central Queensland, stage 4 will take advantage of modern technology, such as microwave radio and optic fibre communications systems, as well as state of the art electronics in both the new locomotives and the electric multiple units.

Recent events in the oil market only go to show the volatility of prices for oil and, while there is what may amount to a decrease in oil prices in the short term, there could quite easily be an increase in prices of a similar magnitude.

The central Queensland electrification project will reduce the State's dependence on diesel fuel by 90 million litres per year, while stage 4 will see a further reduction of 28 million litres per year, giving a total saving in diesel fuel consumption of almost 120 million litres by the year 1990, which is 60 per cent of railway fuel needs.

On completion of the project, Queensland Railways will be able to offer an improved service for both passenger and freight customers, at the same time continuing along the path of improved efficiency, with a significant reduction in operating costs and a further reduction in the State's dependence on liquid fuels as an energy source.

Queensland will be the first State in Australia to have not only most of its major mineral railways electrified but also to electrify a significant portion of its general freight and passenger trunk route.

To achieve these improvements, it is necessary to improve the route of the railway between Caboolture and Gladstone in a number of locations where very steep grades

and sharp curves have plagued railway operations for many years. Three of these locations are the subject of the documents that presently lie on the table of the Chamber, with the fourth location—Oakhurst to Aldershot—included as a means of avoiding a long-standing operational constraint at Baddow.

The Eumundi deviation is almost 10 km in length. The deviation passes through an area of deep valleys and high, steeply sloped hills and escarpments, and enables the steepest grades on the section to be reduced from 1 in 50 to 1 in 90.

The new route crosses the Maroochy River and Yandina Creek. All road/rail intersections will be grade separated. Eumundi and Nandroya crossing loops will be eliminated by the deviation. A new crossing loop and passenger shelter will be constructed part way along the deviation, and access to the station will be from Sunrise Road.

I place on record my appreciation and that of the Railway Department for the co-operation extended by the local member (Mr Gordon Simpson) in locating the route and ensuring that it was a practical and suitable route that caused the least possible interference to local landholders.

The Gympie deviation is almost 8 km in length, commencing just south of Monkland station. As with the Eumundi deviation, all road/rail intersections will be grade separated. Two crossing loops will be provided on the deviation. A station building will be provided on the northernmost loop to provide facilities for Gympie passengers. Gympie railway yards will be retained to provide goods facilities for the area.

The Benaraby-Parana deviation, just south of Gladstone, is almost 16 km long, commencing just north of Benaraby station and finishing near the junction of the North Coast Line and the Moura short line at Parana. All road/rail intersections will be grade separated. The existing Toolooa crossing loop will be eliminated and a replacement loop will be provided on the deviation.

The Oakhurst-Aldershot deviation commences just south of Oakhurst station. The deviation is almost 7 km in length. The present Baddow station will be bypassed and a new station complex provided on the deviation at a site north of the present Oakhurst station. I assure the Committee that, as a result of the deviation, the service to the people of Maryborough will be improved.

The estimated cost of the four deviations is \$54.6m. This expenditure will produce immediate benefits to the region in terms of employment generation as well as the long-term benefits associated with the achievement of the long-term goals of the electrification project.

I point out that with stages 1, 2 and 3 of the electrification project, civil engineering work amounting to many millions of dollars has been successfully undertaken by local contractors, which is a credit to those organisations. Again with stage 4 of the project, every endeavour will be made to ensure that local contractors are given the opportunity to participate in construction work for the deviations as well as other works associated with the electrification scheme.

Finally, I place on record my thanks to all honourable members who have shown an interest in the first three stages of the main line electrification and in the potential of the stage now under discussion, stage 4. I thank all those who have ensured that the best interests of the local community will be served by the construction of the deviations at the various points along the line.

I commend the proposals to the Committee.

**Mr MILLINER** (Everton) (2.23 p.m.): The Opposition does not oppose the motion moved by the Minister.

**Mr Davis:** Another election gimmick.

**Mr MILLINER:** It may be an election gimmick. Obviously, the railways play a very important role in the development of Queensland by transporting both produce

and passengers. One of the strongest criticisms of the railways over the years has been in relation to the section of line between Caboolture and Gympie. Recently, I travelled to Townsville on the Sunlander and found that that was the slowest part of the entire journey. Therefore, I am pleased to see that steps are being taken to rectify the problems experienced on that part of the North Coast Line.

I suggest that the Railway Department give consideration to forward planning and devise a development strategy for the railway network for the years to come. Regularly, the Parliament has before it working plans and drawings from the Railway Department. It would be desirable to have a long-range plan for the railways tabled so that members of the public are able to ascertain the areas in which the Railway Department is likely to resume land for deviations and other work.

It should be remembered, however, that not all resolutions of this Parliament come to fruition. One only needs to recall what occurred during the campaign for the Redcliffe by-election in 1978. The announcement was made that electrification of the rail line would take place. I suggest that if anyone was to contemplate waiting for the electric train at Redcliffe, he should prepare himself for quite a long wait.

**Mr Davis:** What if I bought a ticket now?

**Mr MILLINER:** If the honourable member bought a ticket now, it would be out of date by the time electrification of the railway reached Redcliffe.

I digress to raise the topic of the provision of facilities for rail commuters. In the Ferny Grove area in my electorate of Everton, I have noticed that the Ferny Grove railway station is not up to standard when it comes to meeting the needs of today's travellers. The railway station office is located in an extremely old building. Quite a number of commuters use the Ferny Grove station daily, but it is on Monday morning, when people queue up to buy weekly tickets, that the lack of facilities becomes evident, particularly in wet weather. No protection against wet weather is afforded. I hope that, in the very near future, the Minister for Transport (Mr Lane) will take steps to provide adequate facilities for railway commuters, especially those who use the Ferny Grove Railway Station.

While perusing the working plans of the proposed deviation, I was interested to note that in the area round Gympie, the proposed deviation will go right through the middle of a rifle-range. Because that could lead to a very dangerous situation, I hope that the Minister has taken the appropriate steps.

**Mr Comben:** The course of the deviation has obviously been influenced by the honourable member for Cooroora.

**Mr MILLINER:** The gun lobby might have had something to do with it, because it would provide some good moving targets.

However, as I indicated, the Opposition does not oppose the motion before the Committee, and looks forward to the day when construction of the deviations is completed.

**Mr SIMPSON (Cooroora) (2.27 p.m.):** It is with pleasure that I rise to support what will be heralded as one of the major advances attributable to this National Party Government and one that highlights the positive thinking of the State Government.

**Mr Campbell interjected.**

**Mr SIMPSON:** Now honourable members are hearing from the don't-do-its and the jelly-kneed knockers on the Opposition side who would never undertake anything, because they are too scared. Obviously, members of the Opposition are not concerned about creating employment. They have failed to recognise the opportunities associated with large-scale electrification of rail lines. Queensland is the first State in Australia to undertake long-distance, main-line rail electrification that involves major expenditure of the order of \$307m—at least, that is the official estimate. Of course, it will cost more

than that when resumptions and so forth are taken into account. However, it must be remembered that this project will create thousands and thousands of jobs.

**Mr Campbell:** Have you taken over from the Minister?

**Mr SIMPSON:** The estimates presented by the Minister for Transport would be right, of course. However, there are some things that it would be difficult to be definite about. How could anyone be definite when negotiations have to take place to arrive at a value for compensation of resumed properties? An estimate has to be made, and I am merely forecasting that the final cost will be slightly more than the estimate.

**Mr Davis** interjected.

**Mr SIMPSON:** I am pleased that the honourable member for Brisbane Central has acknowledged that the project will involve major expenditure. I ask the honourable member to consider the advantages of this proposal. For example, upon its completion, a person will be able to travel directly from the Sunshine Coast to Expo 88 in 1½ hours.

Despite the fact that preparation of the Expo site is well under way on the south bank of the Brisbane River, members of the Opposition do not believe that the exposition will actually take place. All they can do is knock it.

**Mr Milliner:** What about the Federal Government?

**Mr SIMPSON:** The Federal Government? What garbage! The honourable member for Everton knows that the Federal Government has not contributed a cent towards Expo 88. Despite that, I am confident that Expo 88 will prove to be a financial success. Electric trains will convey passengers to the Expo 88 site from Nambour on the Sunshine Coast in an hour and a-half, and that reflects the positive approach taken by the Government.

The advantages associated with the transportation of freight make the proposal even more attractive because the costs will be more competitive. The more competitive the railways can be, and the better the use to which our resources can be put, the more the balance will shift in favour of rail transportation as opposed to road transport, which is a drain on Government funds.

This proposal has become feasible only through tremendous teamwork. The Railway Department has been working on it for years. In the early days, the steep grades on the range between Eumundi and Cooroy posed major problems for the railway engineers. They got the line to Eumundi only by undertaking formidable constructions through the hills near Eudlo and Nambour. After that, they struck an escarpment, which had to be cut across to reach the plateau at Cooroy, which is about 450 feet higher. They faced difficulties because of the number of cuts that had to be made in the escarpment, and that meant cutting and filling in rocky country. They also ran into areas containing hundreds of feet of pure clay. Clay is not stable and that may result in slips. On one occasion, after heavy rain, about a half a mile of the track slipped down a hill. Another shorter, steeper section, with a grade of one in 50, replaced that section. In adverse conditions, even trains with an all-up limit of 760 tonnes cannot climb the steep grades to get to Cooroy. That is one major problem. The steep grades down the range also pose major problems in keeping the trains to a safe speed on the winding track. Those problems restrict the efficiency of the railway system.

The honourable member for Gympie will refer to problem sections in his electorate. In the Gladstone and Maryborough districts, realignment of the track will be necessary to improve the grade for electrification.

On the Eumundi section, the train line will make a major deviation through properties miles away from the existing line. As a result of the major deviation, people miles away from the existing line will have trains running through their properties and close to their houses. I have arranged public meetings to outline the concern that a good Government has for people who are affected by the upgrading of a railway line for the

good of the public. Most of them have understood what is necessary. I am sure that they will be appropriately compensated for the problems that arise.

The Government is unable to compensate people if their property is not directly affected, although their houses may be only a chain or two distant from the railway line. At one point, the line will go through a 70-ft cutting in the old range section of the Bruce Highway. The train will leave the cutting, travelling on 60 feet of fill, at about the same level as a young couple's house only five chains away. Because their property is not directly affected, they cannot be compensated. That is a weakness in the compensation guide-lines when improvements are being effected in the interests of the public. The owners of properties who are directly affected will be compensated. Fortunately, few ongoing grazing properties are involved. Most of the affected properties are held as rural residential blocks.

The railway engineers and the department's consultants have been very helpful in trying to find a route that will least affect the lives of people but still be suitable for a 1 200 tonne electric train. Once the line is built, locomotives have to be constructed to pull certain loads under all weather conditions and to keep to a timetable.

The engineers have been most helpful. With the assistance of the Minister, they have been able to change the route so that efficiency can be maintained and as few people as possible will be affected. I appreciate what the engineers have done. That is good government. There was good co-operation in that area.

The saving in fuel will help to overcome the problems facing Australia today. Under the shocking management of the Federal Labor Government in Canberra, the trade balance is getting worse. That is happening mainly because the Federal Government is kicking primary producers in the teeth. The saving in fuel will help Australia's balance of payments. The railways will use a resource, coal, that is already available in Queensland. The electricity generated from that coal will save liquid fuel and provide an efficient electric rail system to carry both passengers and freight between Brisbane and Gladstone.

The saving in travelling-time will make the railways more competitive with road transport. The railways will be used much more for carrying goods. With that greater use, more profits will flow to the Queensland Government. The Queensland railway system is the only railway system in Australia that runs at a profit. That is something of which the Queensland Government can be proud. No other State railway system can run at a profit. The fact that the Queensland railway system runs at a profit reflects the private enterprise/cost-efficient way in which the Queensland Government looks at public instrumentalities, such as the Railway Department. The Minister is to be commended for the action that he has taken to make the railways efficient.

Over the years, the railways have developed this State. People have told me about the important part that the railways played during the war. If the North Coast Line had not carried the goods and troops that it did during the war, it would not have been possible to defend Australia. The road structure was not available to carry the goods and troops to defend Australia. Everyone connected with the railways should receive credit for the goods and troops carried on that line during the war. Time and time again, I have heard stories about the way in which the fettleers and other people kept that line open.

The line was taken first to Eumundi. It took several years to get the line through that very difficult country. Stories have been told of the way in which the line opened up Queensland and brought development to the State.

The railways are most up to date. With electricity, new fibre optic communications, microwave—

**Mr Prest:** Ovens?

**Mr SIMPSON:** The Opposition knows all about microwave ovens. The last division before the luncheon recess was called to bring Opposition members into the Chamber

from lunch. They were having their lunch, and that is why they were missing from the Chamber.

The railways are right up with the latest technology. They will continue to be competitive.

It was interesting to hear the savings in fuel that have been projected to the year 2020. The Minister and I look forward to watching that efficiency being achieved.

The railways in Europe and in other countries are used to carrying the tourist traffic. I think that the Queensland railways will be able to be used to continue the development of tourism in Queensland. This transportation system uses electric multiple units (EMU). The train will probably be nicknamed "The Fast Emu". The Minister is not impressed by that remark. He is probably thinking of a far better name than that; perhaps "The Fast Brolga", which does not sound too good, either. No doubt, the train will be given a name that will typify it as moving into the modern age in rail transport. The trains are anticipated to be six-carriage units transporting about 300 people.

People living on the Sunshine Coast will commute to Brisbane using this efficient rail service. The Government cannot continue to pour money into roads other than two-lane, divided highways, so there will be greater use of the railways. Alternative efficient forms of transport will get the people off the roads. People who would have travelled by air or bus will prefer a faster rail system. More Queenslanders, visitors and tourists will end up using the railways. I hope that package tours will utilise the improved facilities.

The Minister referred to Yandina Creek and Maroochy River being crossed in the new deviation. I believe that Yandina Creek flows over a range and runs in a different direction; however there may be more than one creek, so that is of no consequence. There will be a major crossing of the North Maroochy River and that will mean the provision of many jobs in my electorate. The construction estimate is \$23m. I am sure that the Minister will use as much local labour as possible, so that the project will be an advantage to Queenslanders. That is what this Government is about—providing real jobs and not artificial ones. What the children of Queensland need is real jobs. What this community needs is real jobs, not artificial ones—

**Mr Prest:** You think there will be ongoing construction, do you?

**Mr SIMPSON:** There will be jobs while the construction is continuing.

**Mr Prest:** What happens then?

**Mr SIMPSON:** I have explained that. Perhaps the honourable member for Port Curtis has not been listening. It will mean increased activity and development in Queensland, which the railways of Queensland have provided from the beginning. If the Opposition had its way, there would never be a railway.

**Mr Kruger:** We would have had it years ago.

**Mr SIMPSON:** No, the Labor Party would not. The Government is going to upgrade the service and provide 300 000 man-weeks of employment. The Opposition is knocking this proposal. May it stand condemned for not being interested in providing jobs for the jobless. The Opposition has criticised the project by asking what the Government will do after the construction is completed.

Because we on this side of the Chamber are forward thinkers, there is no limit to the future development and increased productivity of this State. We on this side of the Chamber are not knockers. That is the problem that members of the Opposition have. Their tunnel vision leads to the gutter and will result in more unemployment. One of the problems that the Government faces in this State is that, at times, it has to deal with people who have the same type of thinking as honourable members opposite. This is a positive move by the Minister for Transport to provide a very important improvement for the State. I support the motion before the Committee.

Mr KRUGER (Murrumba) (2.44 p.m.): I agree with the Opposition spokesman's statement that this is an acceptable project, but I want to sound a note of warning. Is this proposal just another vote-catcher?

I shall make some comments about what has happened to the proposed Petrie-Kippa-Ring spur. At the time it was proposed, it was obviously a vote-catcher. Not very long ago, as another vote-catcher, the Government announced the proposal for the Gold Coast railway line. I am very doubtful as to whether the project under discussion will go ahead full steam, as was claimed by the member for Cooroola (Mr Simpson), or whether it is political propaganda.

The member for Cooroola spoke about the savings in liquid fuel that electrification would bring about. If the Kippa-Ring spur had been built when it was suggested some time ago, it would have brought about quite a saving in liquid fuel. A letter, written to me by the former Minister for Transport on 8 March 1978, reads—

“Thank you for your letter of 17 February 1978 expressing your interest in the feasibility study of public transport connections between Redcliffe and Brisbane, now being completed on behalf of the Metropolitan Transit Authority.”

He went on to explain that he was saddened by the fact that certain information had been leaked but stated that, as soon as enough work had been done on the proposal, he would give me a copy of the study. I was pleased that it eventually came to hand, as it enabled me to negotiate on behalf of my constituents. At that time, it appeared that the rail link would go ahead within a short time. I reiterate that that was 1978.

I have before me a document that resulted from a deputation to the then Minister for Transport by the then member for Redcliffe (Mr Houghton), the mayor of Redcliffe (Mr Frawley), the Rail for Redcliffe Committee and me. For many years prior to my involvement, the Rail for Redcliffe Committee had been trying to get something done for the Redcliffe area. The line-up of people in that deputation proves that it was not a political stunt and that it was a definite attempt by the then member for Redcliffe, the mayor of Redcliffe and me to try to obtain a rail link into the area. Because the member for Cooroola mentioned the savings in liquid fuel that can be brought about by electrification, I hark back to the fact that an electrified rail link to Redcliffe would have brought about considerable savings in liquid fuel.

The editorial in *The Courier-Mail* of 28 August 1979—and that newspaper is not known to be a Joh-basher—stated—

#### “Redcliffe rail link

Obviously, no matter how often the Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) denies it, the public will see his latest interest in a Redcliffe-Petrie rail link as a bid for votes in Saturday's Redcliffe by-election.”

After all these years, it is obvious that that was a by-election campaign stunt and that is why I sound a note of warning about the proposal now before the Committee.

*The Courier-Mail* of the same day contained a photograph of the then Minister for Transport (Mr Tomkins) showing people where to get on the railway to Redcliffe. I can assure the Chamber that some of the blokes who bought their tickets and are waiting for the first train are quite disappointed. Because of the number of years they have been waiting, they are becoming quite old and decrepit. That article stated—

“Plans for a Redcliffe rail spur, from Petrie to Kippa-Ring, were unveiled yesterday by the Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) and the Transport Minister (Mr. Tomkins).

The Premier denied that the proposal was a panic measure designed to win Saturday's by-election for the National Party's Mr. John Houghton.”

He was the son of the previous member for the area (Mr Jim Houghton), whom honourable members knew so well.

The article continues—

“The line could be completed by 1982, although it could not be electrified until 1984.”

The Government expected that the line would be electrified by 1984. To date, not one sleeper has been laid, let alone any consideration being given to electrification of the line.

I notice that the Minister for Transport (Mr Lane) is now speaking with the Minister for Health (Mr Austin). I tell both of them that, if somebody in Redcliffe was sick and was waiting for the rail line to get him to hospital, he would be in dire straits. Although the resumptons have been made, no other moves have been initiated. I could go on to tell the Chamber what the then Liberal candidate for Redcliffe (Mr Terry White) said. As time went on, he got some nasty bumps from the Minister for Transport.

I have another press cutting, which contains a photograph of those on the Rail for Redcliffe Committee and various people from the political arena, who were trying to make sure that the construction of the line went ahead. They were concerned that promises had been made prior to the 1979 by-election. At the time, the following article appeared in the press—

“State Labor Member for Murrumba Mr Joe Kruger has accused Transport Minister Mr Ken Tomkins of playing petty politics over the proposed rail link to Redcliffe.”

Nobody inside or outside this Chamber can say that I was wrong then. I set out to make the point that it was political grandstanding.

At the time, a meeting of the shadow Cabinet was held in Redcliffe. The then Leader of the Opposition (Ed Casey) and I inspected what I believed would be the ultimate route for the railway. The Opposition would certainly have gone ahead with it. The people of Redcliffe were denied a rail link. At the time, I asked, “If John Houghton were to become the member, would that be the only chance of obtaining the rail link?” I also asked whether, if he was defeated—as he was by Terry White—the Government would pull out of its commitments made prior to the by-election.

Neither the Premier and Treasurer nor the Minister for Transport has given a reason why the proposal has not proceeded. The project has been delayed. I contacted the Minister for Transport (Mr Tomkins) to find out what was happening. However, I did not receive a satisfactory answer from him. I might point out that I have not since received a satisfactory answer from the present Minister for Transport.

In the local press, under the heading “Rail line ‘gimmick,’ says National MP”, the following article appeared—

“National Party backbencher, Mr. Bertoni (Mt. Isa), said yesterday his party was promoting the Redcliffe railway link as a by-election ‘gimmick’.”

It is very serious when a member of the National Party says that it was a gimmick. It has proved to be a gimmick, and nothing else.

Honourable members have before them another example of the Government’s political grandstanding. It is dangling a political carrot before the people in an election year. I want an honest answer from the Government as to whether the Redcliffe rail link will go ahead and, if so, when it will be completed.

Recently, I received a letter from the Redcliffe City Council, which has been in touch with the Minister for Transport about the same railway line about which I have been speaking. The Minister, in a letter to the Redcliffe City Council, stated—

“A commencement on construction must necessarily await the availability of funds for the balance to complete this project.

Given the limited funds available, and the competition for such funds from other high priority projects, it has not been possible to date to allocate sufficient funds to progress this project to the construction stage, and ensure its timely

completion once commenced. At this moment I can give no commitment as to when such funds can be made available."

He could not make a commitment to provide the \$32m required to construct the Redcliffe rail link. However, a certain high-ranking member of the National Party will have the value of his property enhanced by a rail link passing through that property. I name Charlie Holm as the person to benefit most from that rail link.

Recently, doubt was expressed in the media about the Gold Coast railway line because of the proposed electrification of the main coastal railway line between Brisbane and Rockhampton. I am not knocking that project. However, I want an honest answer to the questions I have asked about the commitments made to construct other railway lines.

A recent article in the press, under the heading "No guarantee rail link timetable will be met", stated—

"Transport Minister Don Lane says he cannot guarantee the Gold Coast railway line will be completed by 1989."

I believe that the construction will reach a certain stage to help a certain person in sufficient time, but there is no guarantee when the railway line will be completed.

The State Government has suddenly found \$307m to electrify the railway line between Brisbane and Rockhampton. However, recently, the Minister for Transport wrote to the Redcliffe City Council and said that he did not know when \$32m would be made available to complete the Redcliffe rail link. The Government has not been fair with the people of Redcliffe. It has not been fair dinkum about the number of people on the roads. The railway link was used as a lever not to construct a four-lane bridge on the Houghton Highway. The reason given was that the rail link would overcome those problems.

It appears that the Queensland Government is putting forward projects that may or may not be completed at any time. Although the Opposition looks forward to the completion of the electrification of the railway line between Brisbane and Rockhampton, I want some clarification as to how, suddenly, without any speculation in this place, \$307m is made available when only a few weeks ago the Minister told the people of Redcliffe, through their council, that the Government could not find \$32m that was required for the construction of the railway link to Redcliffe.

If the Government was fair dinkum and considered the fuel savings and the various other things that the railways would make savings on, it would give the deserving people of Redcliffe the rail spur that was promised in 1978 as a lead-up to the 1979 by-election.

I ask for a statement on the future of a Redcliffe line. I challenge the Minister to make quite clear to this Chamber the intention of the Government.

Will the Government, just prior to the next election, dangle another carrot in front of the people of Redcliffe, and say, "OK, we have found a bit more money. We might go ahead at this stage."?

**Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (2.56 p.m.):** I have pleasure in joining in the debate on the railway proposal. I noted with interest that the main topic of the speech by the honourable member for Murrumba (Mr Kruger) was that the Redcliffe line has not eventuated. I can assure honourable members that the line to Redcliffe is no gimmick.

**Mr Davis:** One of those low acts by a National Party Government that continues to break its promises.

**Mr STEPHAN:** The Government is not breaking any promises at all. I repeat that the line to Redcliffe is no gimmick. I ask honourable members opposite whether the electrified lines in existence are gimmicks.

The main line project will result in more than 2 000 km of electrified line, stretching from Brisbane to Caboolture, up to Gladstone and Rockhampton, west to Emerald, on

to Goonyella and, finally, on to Hay Point. I ask the honourable member for Brisbane Central whether that line is a gimmick. I wonder whether the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who is so vocal, knows what is going on in other parts of Queensland.

A distance of 475 km of line between Caboolture and Gladstone will be electrified at a total cost of more than \$300m. The honourable member for Coorooora (Mr Simpson) made the point that that could possibly be an overestimation. That may well prove to be the case.

What is of interest is the 300 000 man-weeks of employment that will be created in Queensland during the construction phase. That is a very important aspect of the project.

**Mr Davis:** Why do you think they broke their promise on the Redcliffe line?

**Mr STEPHAN:** No promises are being broken. Once again, the honourable member for Brisbane Central, by saying that promises are being broken, is grasping at straws. I wonder what his reaction will be in 1989 when the line is in operation and the trains are running. When that happens, will there be a retraction from the honourable member for Brisbane Central? No! He will disappear through a haze and a smoke-screen, as he so often does. There is no rhyme or reason to the comments that the honourable member for Brisbane Central has been making.

Queensland is the first State in Australia not only to have most of its major mineral-carrying railways electrified but also to electrify a significant portion of the general freight and passenger trunk route.

In so many areas, Queensland is leading the way. The knockers will not recognise that; they will not give the Government any credit for it.

In Queensland, vast distances must be travelled. Various means of transportation are at the people's disposal. I mention in particular the great system for the transportation of fruit and vegetables. The RACE container, for example, has proved to be tremendously successful in long-distance transportation, not only from the south-east corner and from Gympie and Bundaberg but also from farther north. That method of transport allows a quality line of fresh fruit and vegetables to be taken to the markets. The RACE containers are a very efficient means of transporting such goods, and that has been appreciated by the producers, distributors and consumers of better-quality market produce. However, little is heard from metropolitan members about the benefit that they receive from such a service.

Electrification will provide a fast rail service. The bonus will be twofold. The express freight train between Brisbane and Rockhampton, which is as far north as the electrification is presently proposed, averages between 14 and 16 hours. Following electrification, that journey will take 12 hours. In addition to that difference of up to four hours, the gross freight load will increase by more than 50 per cent from the present 760 tonnes to 1 200 tonnes. Those increases in efficiency will assist the railways to match competition from other forms of transportation.

The speedier service will allow freight trains to leave up to four hours later or, preferably, arrive at the destination that much earlier. That is of particular significance in the arrival times of fruit and vegetable trains.

**Mr Davis:** Do you know what amazes me about you Country Party people? You all talk about the trains, but when was the last time you were on a train?

**Mr STEPHAN:** Certainly, I do not travel by train very often. I am not sure that the member for Brisbane Central does, either. His need for rail transportation would certainly be far greater than mine. However, I use rail transport very regularly, principally for the transportation of freight. Let it not be forgotten that people in country areas use rail transportation to a very great effect and to the benefit of the community as a whole. The income received by the railways from its freight section results in a profit being made, whereas the transportation of passengers results in a loss. If anyone wishes me

to come down to tin tacks, I suggest that, once again, people in the country are subsidising city dwellers.

The Gympie bypass is one of the four deviations dealt with in the motion. The Minister said—

“The Gympie deviation is almost 8km in length, commencing just south of Monkland station. As with the Eumundi deviation all road/rail intersections will be grade separated. Two crossing loops will be provided on the deviation. A station building will be provided on the northernmost loop to provide facilities for Gympie passengers. Gympie railway yards will be retained to provide goods facilities for the area.”

Gympie has extensive railway yards which are kept very active. It is my hope that that activity will increase following the completion of the proposed deviation.

I understand that the cost of the work is close to \$20m. I am particularly concerned about land resumptions. I have received numerous deputations seeking information about the exact location of the deviation and when the work will be completed. It has not been known for very long where the deviation would be positioned. In fact, before it was known that the railway work was proposed, a subdivision was undertaken in the area in which it is intended that the deviation be constructed.

Some of the property that has been bought is the subject of the proposed deviations, and the owners want to know whether the property will be resumed or whether they should go ahead and build. Some of the property-owners want to know whether compensation will be payable in respect of the subject land. Because those people are anxious about such matters, I ask the Minister to expedite the processing of resumptions so that compensation can be paid to the people concerned. I ask the Minister also to bear in mind that, when the properties I have referred to were purchased, they were purchased with a view to enjoying peace and quiet away from other developed areas, and it was not known at the time of purchase that, two or three years hence, electrification of the rail line would take place.

The honourable member for Everton mentioned that part of the proposed deviation will involve construction of a line through the rifle-range. The rifle-range has a long history, and discussions about resiting it have gone on for a considerable period. A decision as to its future has involved the Federal Government since the time of the Fraser administration, yet no final decision has been made as to the use to which that land will be put. Both the Widgee Shire Council and the Gympie City Council are interested in taking up the challenge to keep the land available for present and future generations. Because the proposed deviation will involve construction of a railway station on the land, the basis for discussions about the ultimate use of the land has changed.

There is a small bore gun club in the same area. During the last 18 months, the gun club has spent a considerable amount on the construction of buildings and facilities, such as traps for releasing clay pigeons. Small bore and large bore rifle clubs have been operating in that area since World War II.

The proposed deviation leaves a bad taste in my mouth because the rifle clubs have operated in that area for such a long time and, for the past five or six years, negotiations about the use of the land have continued without final resolution. That is a matter of which I am aware, and I am sure that the Minister is giving it his full consideration.

As I mentioned earlier, the size of the work-force involved in the construction of the deviations is something about which honourable members can be pleased. I would also like to think that, as a result of the Government's electrification program and the provision of modern carriages and wagons, an increase in the use of rail services will occur. If that happens, the challenge of being able to provide more employment may be able to be met. In a large number of cases, the people who live in my electorate rely on the railways for employment. Provided that they work efficiently, I see no reason why they cannot maintain that employment. I can also see no reason why the railways would wind down the commitment to providing the required number of services.

I believe that, through no fault of any individual or section, that has been a problem and that the railways have not been able to meet the challenge presented by alternative road transportation. It should be remembered that, at varying times during the day and night, buses travel from Brisbane to the north coast. Because bus services provide something like 14 different timetables, they are able to meet the individual needs of people who travel at unusual times. In contrast to that, if trains run on a limited schedule, there will be fewer passengers using the service. Having said that, I acknowledge that the modern electric trains in Queensland are among the best in the world, which will mean that train travellers arrive at their destination in a more relaxed state of mind.

I compliment the Minister on bringing this proposal before the Chamber. I ask him to expedite it as much as possible and to use his influence in matters of compensation. I make the point that the travelling-time for the rail journey between Gympie and Brisbane will be about 2½ hours, which is similar to the time taken by road transport.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (3.11 p.m.): I am pleased, as a member of the Opposition, to support the Minister's proposal. However, I agree with the Opposition spokesman that the long-range plan rather than a hotchpotch should be presented to us. It would be worth while if members whose electorates will be affected could see the plans that are involved in the expenditure of \$307m. Today, we are dealing only with the plans associated with the expenditure of \$54m.

This proposal is somewhat different from the proposals presented in the past few years. It is concerned with upgrading existing track, whereas other proposals have involved resumptions to replace land that the Government had sold. In that context, I refer to the Redlands and Gold Coast lines, which the Government, ill-advisedly, tore up.

The Minister referred to the benefits to be provided by the construction of this line. He said that the traditional benefits included high-performance locomotives and multiple electrical units. I am pleased that an announcement has been made that this work will be given to Walkers of Maryborough. It is appropriate that this engineering work be performed by engineering shops outside Brisbane.

The Wide Bay/Burnett area has a very narrow economic base. Projects such as this are needed to widen the economic base of the local industries. A 1977-78 report by the Co-ordinator-General's Department on the resources of the Wide Bay/Burnett area recommended that projects should be undertaken to provide industries with a greater range of activity. Although work is to be channelled to Maryborough, the Railway Department should be looking at providing work for technical engineering companies such as Versatile Toft of Bundaberg. That company has a rating for high-quality engineering for defence contracts. It is one of the few large engineering firms with that rating.

The Railway Department should be trying to give more work to country areas. Indeed, it should be providing more decentralised services than it has in the past. Many of the jobs lost in the past few years because of rationalisation in the Railway Department have been lost in country areas. The Railway Department has been short-sighted in allowing its operations to run down in country areas. The railway system in the metropolitan area has not been affected in the same way.

It is very important that these projects provide jobs in the Wide Bay/Burnett/Bundaberg area, because the latest report of the Bureau of Statistics revealed that 60 per cent of the shires in that area had suffered a drop in population. In other words, there was a drift of population from those areas into the cities. It is important that that drift be halted and that people be encouraged to move back into country areas. Positive decentralisation policies are needed to do that, and the railways should be included in those policies.

One of the good aspects of upgrading the North Coast Line is that it will reduce the travelling-time between Brisbane and Rockhampton. That will be an added advantage. It will bring people back to the railways. The railways have been using 1910 and 1920

technology to transport people in the 1980s. It is good that the railways are being brought into the technology of the 1980s.

It is also good that the new technology in the railways is to be used to carry passengers and not just to move more coal.

I would like to know whether the Bundaberg Railway Station is to be upgraded. As far back as 1928, there were moves to build a new railway station at Bundaberg. If the on-track facilities in the railways are to be upgraded, the facilities to cater for the passengers who alight from the trains have to be upgraded also. If upgraded trains, such as the Queenslander, are to be introduced, the people who alight from those trains should not have to do so at antiquated stations that have poor facilities. Many stations lack toilet facilities and areas in which people can wait in comfort.

An undertaking has been given that a new railway station will be built at Bundaberg. I would like an assurance that that will become a reality and be part of the upgrading of the North Coast Line.

The electrification program will involve part of the railway line going through the centre of Bundaberg. I refer to the railway line that runs along Perry Street. I would like an assurance that that area will be safe for the public and that problems will not arise. I hope that the technology is there to ensure that safety will be provided when that railway line passes through the centre of Bundaberg.

To sum up—the Opposition welcomes these changes, simply because they will reduce the travelling-time between Rockhampton and Brisbane. That will lead to an increase in passenger usage. The passenger services provided by the Queensland Railways will be brought into 1980 technology. I hope that when tenders are let for the work connected with this project, they are let to industries in areas such as the Wide Bay/Burnett area.

**Mr ALISON (Maryborough) (3.19 p.m.):** It is with a great deal of pleasure that I take part in this debate this afternoon. Firstly, I congratulate the Premier and Treasurer (Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen) and the Minister for Transport (Mr Lane) on this very courageous decision. It is the type of decision for the development of this State that the people of Queensland have come to expect. It will provide far-reaching benefits for the whole of Queensland, not just for the south-east corner.

I congratulate the Minister, in particular, on what he has done since he took over his portfolio. He now has the pleasure of saying that he is in charge of the only State railway system in Australia that has converted a deficit into a surplus. That is quite a feather in the Minister's cap. He has done a tremendous job. He has taken up the recommendations in the management consultant's report that was prepared a couple of years ago. That has resulted in tremendous improvements in the service and in efficiency and has cut costs and generally smartened up the Railway Department, making it more competitive with other forms of transport.

Recently, the Brisbane electrification scheme has improved tremendously the suburban and inner-city railway service. I do not know offhand the percentage increase in the number of passengers, but I believe that it is quite significant. That takes more people off the roads and makes the roads less hazardous.

The Premier and Treasurer and the Minister pointed out in their joint statement that this project would create 300 000 man-weeks of employment in Queensland, and that by 1987 2 500 Queenslanders would be employed on the job. Of course, that is in spite of the world's greatest Treasurer, Mr Keating, and the Hawke/ACTU coalition in Canberra.

**Mr Lee:** He was falsely labelled the world's greatest Treasurer.

**Mr ALISON:** I will come to that. Under the so-called accord, those gentlemen, in cahoots with the ACTU, are gradually strangling Australia through high interest rates and an inflation rate in excess of 8 per cent. Australia's two major trading partners have

a lower inflation rate: America, 3.6 per cent; Japan, 2.8 per cent. How can Australia compete with those two countries? So that is the world's greatest Treasurer. In two years he has wrecked the Australian economy. He will do an even better job over the next 12 months.

**Mr Lee:** He should be called the world's worst Treasurer.

**Mr ALISON:** That is not a bad idea. Henceforth, when I am making a speech in the House, Mr Keating will be known as the world's worst Treasurer.

The Minister for Transport and the Premier and Treasurer pointed out that this new project will include the construction of twenty 110-tonne main line electric locomotives designed to haul passenger and freight trains from Brisbane to Rockhampton, and eight two-car inter-urban air-conditioned electric multiple units for passenger use. Clyde, ASEA and Walkers should benefit from this, and I hope that they do. Walkers and ASEA, which are in Maryborough, have certainly proven what they can build in terms of the world-class trains that are running on railway lines around Brisbane. I am sure that the honourable member for Brisbane Central (Mr Davis) would agree with me on that. They really are world-class trains.

The all-electric service between Brisbane and Rockhampton, when completed, will take only eight and a half hours, compared with the current 14 hours and 10 minutes. That is a tremendous saving in time. The Minister pointed out also that the time for express freight services from Brisbane to Rockhampton will be reduced by up to four hours, and that the powerful electric locomotives to be built will increase load capacity from 760 tonnes to 1 200 tonnes, which makes rail transport a better proposition.

The task for Queensland Railways is increasing year by year. For example, in 1969-70, 13.5 million tonnes of goods traffic was hauled; last year, nearly 65 million tonnes of goods traffic was hauled over the system. To meet the challenge, the rail network must be upgraded, which means better track and better locomotives. That is what the Minister is trying to achieve.

In Brisbane, the Government has taken advantage of the challenge and has begun a number of development projects that illustrate the new approach to railways and transport generally. Examples of these projects are the Brisbane transport terminal at Roma Street Station, providing for the integration of interstate and intrastate long-distance trains and buses, and the Toowong station development, providing a new station complex, car park, commercial offices and retail stores. Other projects are the new Beenleigh station, electrification of the Petrie-Caboolture line, construction of the Thornside-Wellington Point line and the redevelopment of railway land on the corner of Edward and Turbot Streets. Those are just a few of the major projects currently under way in the Railway Department.

April this year will see the inauguration of a new long-distance train service. The Queensland, as it will be known, will run between Brisbane and Cairns three hours faster than the Sunlander. The standard of service and appointments on the train will be first class.

In recent years, much has been heard about new technology such as computers. Modern railways seem to be all computers and sophisticated engineering. Electrification is another example of Queensland's modernisation of its railways.

Progressive thinking in the 1970s has given Brisbane one of the best suburban rail systems in Australia, a system that was able to cater for the massive number of people who travelled to the Commonwealth Games and one that will service the needs of Expo 88. People are returning to the railways not only in the suburbs but also for long-distance travel.

Inter-urban travel is the thing of the future. The Gold Coast railway and electrification of the route north of Brisbane are sure to bring an increase in development in those areas. The north coast centres of Nambour, Gympie, Maryborough and Bundaberg and the surrounding catchment areas are sure to get a boost from the fast travel-times that

will result from upgrading and electrification. Examples are Brisbane to Nambour in 90 minutes and Brisbane to Rockhampton in 8 hours 30 minutes. Those times can be achieved by using the most modern railway technology in rolling-stock, telecommunications, signalling and tracks. Upgrading the steep, winding track is important to achieve the benefits from electrification.

The four deviations under discussion will ensure that the objectives of the electrification scheme can be met. Construction will provide an opportunity for the employment of local labour. Throughout the construction phase local businesses can expect to benefit by providing support to the major contractors. The construction work will involve the use of many skills—plant-operators, concretors, carpenters, steel-fixers, mechanics and all the other supporting trades. In an engineering sense, these works are very significant undertakings. In conjunction with the Queensland Railway Department, Queensland-based engineering consultants will be in charge of the work.

The modernisation and updating of the railways that the Minister has brought about over the last few years has given a great impetus to the economy of Maryborough. That has been directly through Walkers Ltd and ASEA. A few years ago, we saw the construction of approximately 50 diesel/hydraulic shunters. I understand that they are giving excellent service in the shunting yards of Queensland. Their construction created a good deal of employment in Maryborough. By December this year, Walkers Ltd and ASEA will have built 252 electric multiple units, at a total cost of nearly \$200m. That contract has stabilised the work-force at Walkers Ltd. The people of Maryborough, particularly the employees of Walkers Ltd, are very grateful for that.

July last year saw the awarding of a big contract for the supply of heavy-duty electric trains for the central Queensland coal line electrification scheme. The construction of 70 heavy-duty locomotives, at a cost of \$90m, was awarded to Walkers Ltd and Clyde/ASEA. I understand that the first locomotive resulting from that contract will be seen on the lines in the middle of this year.

The former Leader of the Opposition (Mr Keith Wright) rubbished the awarding of that contract for the 70 heavy-duty locomotives. He is on record as saying that there was a Stanwell-type smell hanging over the awarding of the contract. That went over like a lead balloon with the union-leaders and the workers at Walkers Ltd. That gentleman, who is no longer a member of this Assembly, is very good at throwing words round, casting aspersions and making smears; but I have yet to see him nail one to the mast. Nothing came out of his allegations. He was just talking about a smell; that was all. He should be made to apologise to the people of Maryborough, Walkers Ltd and ASEA.

**Mr De Lacy** interjected.

**Mr ALISON:** If he would come to Maryborough, I would like him to explain his actions to the people at Walkers Ltd. I wish he would take up my offer. I will even subscribe to his air fare, as long as he will give me notice so that I can arrange a meeting with the people at Walkers Ltd.

I am sure that, if Queensland had an ALP Government, very little work, if any, would come out of the Railway Department for private enterprise firms, such as Walkers and ASEA. One has only to refer to the ALP's policy on transport and communications to which I have referred on a previous occasion. However, I remind honourable members that an ALP Government would establish a commission that would modernise railway workshops to enable the manufacture of locomotives, rail motors and rolling-stock. That is the old socialist philosophy coming through. It has not worked anywhere and it will not work anywhere. It would mean that Walkers Limited or any other firm in Brisbane and other places would not get any work. It is worth repeating that the ALP's policy is socialisation of everything that moves.

The people of Maryborough do not want an ALP Government. If there were an ALP Government, Walkers Limited would go down the tube. It certainly would not get any work out of the railway system.

I congratulate the Minister on the proposal that he has presented. I look forward to the work being carried out. I hope that Walkers Limited, ASEA and Clyde receive their share of the railway contracts for rolling-stock and so forth.

I am sure that the people affected by the Maryborough-Oakhurst deviation will be compensated properly for the resumption of their land.

I look forward to further developments in the railway system overseen by the Minister for Transport.

**Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (3.31 p.m.):** I have great pleasure in joining the Opposition in supporting the proposal to electrify the section of railway line between Caboolture and Rockhampton and its associated works. The project has caused concern to the people in the area affected by the project. Two or three years ago, when it was first claimed that land would be resumed in the Benaraby area, the people were told that that was not so and that they had seen an old plan. They were told that there was nothing on the drawing board about resuming properties or doing any major railway work. Of course, those people continued to develop their properties.

Some people were notified—others were not—that surveyors would enter upon their properties to insert pegs. When people saw surveyors and asked them what was going on, they were asked by the surveyors, "Can we do the work?" One woman received a letter in which she was thanked for her co-operation in giving authority to the surveyors to carry out the work. However, that woman had no prior knowledge that the work would be carried out.

When local authorities are shown a plan of the intentions of the Railway Department, they are told that, as the matter is strictly confidential, they should not tell any land-owners in the area what is going on. The Opposition does not believe in such behaviour. The Opposition believes that there should be open government and that land-owners should be told exactly their rights and the intentions of the Railway Department concerning their land.

At present, those people deserve adequate compensation. The project, which will cost \$307m to electrify another 475 km, is something with which I heartily agree. Having spent 29 or 30 years in the railways, I know what a wonderful job railwaymen have done with steam trains and heavy loads. It is pleasing that the day is approaching when the life of the railway worker may be made a little easier. The Minister said that the project, costing \$307m, will create 300 000 man-weeks of work.

That may be a slight exaggeration. The project has been allocated only \$307m, that is, only about \$1,000 per man per week. Everybody is always talking about how high wages are. That sum does not leave much for materials. A total of 475 km of electrified track with great deviations will be laid, 20 new 110-tonne electric locomotives will be built, and eight two-car inter-urban, air-conditioned electric multiple units for passenger use will be built. Much of that \$307m will be spent on materials. I doubt whether that will allow for 300 man-weeks of work.

There will be larger and faster trains. The freight trains will increase from 760 tonnes to 1 200 tonnes. I foresee a diminution in employment opportunities, because there is only a certain amount of freight to be hauled, whether it be by rail, road or sea. Someone must be affected. The size of the freight trains will increase by almost 100 per cent. It must not be forgotten that the railways now have two-man crews. The employment opportunities for railwaymen may be somewhat diminished over a period.

If—and I repeat "if"—the tonnage of freight hauled by rail increases significantly as a result of the bigger trains, and if the same number of railwaymen are employed on those trains, people engaged in road transport and other forms of transport must be affected. Employment opportunities may be increased in the railways, but that may be to the detriment of other industries.

The Government expects a 20 per cent increase in the number of passengers travelling by rail. That could well be the case. As I have said, in the past, people have

become used to very good service from railway personnel, the railway workers. I am certain that if a faster air-conditioned service is provided, many more people will choose that means of transport in preference to buses, aeroplanes and even private transport. However, if people revert to rail transport, other forms of transport must be affected. If people travel by rail even in preference to their own private vehicles, that must have an effect on the motor industry.

As I said, people are having their land resumed. According to information received by the Opposition, one person owned a 2.518 ha block of land, and the area of land required is 2.518 ha. Such people will lose all of their land.

Some time ago, when it was predicted that the population of the city of Gladstone would grow to approximately 60 000 or 80 000, some people thought, "City living is not for me. I'll buy a block of land in the country." At that time, the price of real estate was at a premium. It was at an all-time high.

Some people who moved to the country to get away from the noise and the hustle and bustle will now have a railway deviation or a railway line alongside their houses or through the centre of their properties. Obviously, that is an unplanned intrusion and will interfere with their future lives, especially in retirement. People are willing to accept such a sacrifice, provided that they are adequately compensated. It is incumbent upon the department to compensate those people adequately for their inconvenience.

The Marist Fathers own a block approximately 6 ha in area of which approximately 6 ha is to be resumed. In view of the predicted growth of Gladstone, they may have had great plans for the future of that land. I do not know where the deviation will pass through their property, but the loss of that area for railway purposes will cause them to alter their plans.

Another property mentioned frequently is the land owned by Hooker-Rex Pty Ltd, which, in 1974, paid a large sum of money for land for residential development, again on the assumption that the area of Gladstone would continue to boom. Quite a considerable area of that land is being resumed for railway purposes. Of course, a railway in close proximity to a property detracts from its value. When the land is resumed, all of those affected will be quite happy if settlements can be effected out of court.

The member for Bundaberg spoke about improved facilities, particularly railway stations. For years, Gladstone also has been promised a new railway station. The old building has been altered so many times and has so many nails in it that carpenters have difficulty finding a board that they can guarantee is secure. In a letter last year, the Minister told me that plans were being drawn up for a new station and that Gladstone might receive the nod for a new station when loan funds were allocated. It has been stated that the electrification project to Rockhampton will be completed by 1989. I sincerely hope that, in conjunction with a new, electrified system and new trains catering for fast travel, which will encourage many more passengers to the system, the Minister is able to allocate funds to construct a new railway station at Gladstone. In fact, it is my hope that the railway workers and passengers do not have to wait until 1989. I ask him to honour his promise to build a new station as soon as funds are available, which I hope is in the very near future.

The Opposition has great pleasure in supporting the proposal before the Committee. I was gratified to hear the Minister's comments that consideration would be given to the employment of local contractors for the work. Over a long period, contractors such as Cyril Golding Earthmoving Pty Ltd and Grahame Allen Truck Hire have carried out a great deal of work for the railways in the construction of track foundations and deviations. Because of the economic circumstances of the present time, any contract work that might be forthcoming from this project would be advantageous and would be of great assistance in keeping local people employed.

I am pleased that the Minister for Transport (Mr Lane) sees the position in that way also. If it is possible, I would ask the Minister to introduce some flexibility into the tendering process so that if local contractors submit a tender that is a little higher

than those submitted by some of the larger contracting firms—though not too high—allowance may be made for the fact that the contractor is from the local area.

Mr McPHIE (Toowoomba North) (3.45 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I rise to support the proposal that has been put forward by the Minister for Transport (Mr Lane) and, I note, supported by members of the Opposition. It is most unusual for a motion or legislation to receive the support of all members of the Parliament. It is encouraging that members of the Opposition support the proposal for a developmental project that will benefit all Queenslanders. It is a pity that members of the Opposition do not support some of the other more enlightened projects proposed by this Government for Queensland, some of which were aired in this House quite recently.

I turn now to trace the history of railways in Queensland. Locomotive power arrived in Queensland in the late 1800s in the form of steam locomotives that faithfully served Queensland for over half a century. The history books and records of World War II would show what a magnificent record was set by Queensland Railways during that period. I acknowledge that that fact has already been referred to by the honourable member for Cooroola (Mr Simpson), and I point out that the record of the Queensland Railways has never been matched by that of any other railway system in the world in times of similar emergency.

The introduction of diesel locomotives occurred in 1952 with an initial purchase of a few diesel-electric locomotives. So great were the benefits of diesel power as against steam power, that steam was phased out progressively and diesel-electric locomotives were phased in, with the purchase of diesel locomotives continuing for the next 30 years.

Today, Queensland Railways has a fleet in excess of 550 diesel locomotives. Anyone who takes an interest in the progress and development of the railways in Queensland would be well aware of the record that has been set. During the current year, the profit that has been recorded by the Railway Department has been significant; and Queensland is the only State in Australia that is operating a railway system at a profit. The record haulage of freight tonnages in coal and grain cannot be matched anywhere else in the nation.

With the introduction of diesel locomotives, the transportation system in Queensland entered a boom period that was marked by increases in trainloads and improvement in speed. In addition, extensive employment was provided during the construction stages of its implementation, and a similar boost to employment can be expected during the initial stages of the electrification program.

It is true that the initiatives associated with the electrification program that is presently before the Committee are not the only initiatives that the Government has undertaken, and it is certainly the case that they will not be the only initiatives for which this Minister is responsible. I hope that it will not be long before he introduces legislation to provide for the construction of a tunnel under the Great Dividing Range near Toowoomba, which would result in a significant reduction in cost and delay associated with transporting goods from the Darling Downs and the south-western region.

By the introduction of electric locomotives, a new era has commenced. The benefits associated with electric multiple units have been well publicised, and have already been mentioned by previous speakers. Notwithstanding that, let me again mention a few. For example, minimal dependence on fuel and oil supplies will, despite the present reduction in the world price of oil, prove to be a cost saving in the future. It should be remembered that the drop in world parity prices is temporary, and I am sure that in the future, everyone will be grateful to the Minister for proceeding with the electrification program. The savings in the cost of fuel and maintenance will be monumental, because the locomotives and rolling-stock are much easier to maintain than any previous equipment has been.

The improved track capacity and improved reliability will make it a far more cost-effective and viable service for the State. The service will place a steady demand on the electricity generation system. The vast power stations built throughout the State and the

grid set up by the Government will provide electricity on demand at competitive prices. People interested in conservation and pollution control understand that electric locomotive systems mean far less pollution of the atmosphere than comes from diesels.

There will be many other benefits, not the least of which is the significant gain in employment during the developmental stages by way of work on the track, facilities and rolling-stock. Significant gains will be made by the work-force in Toowoomba by the Toowoomba Foundry participating in this work. That company provided part of the overhead gear for the electrification of the railway line in Brisbane and in the central part of the State. No doubt, that firm will be participating in the work when the line is extended to Rockhampton, and later to Townsville.

The first electrification scheme was undertaken in the Brisbane suburban area. It required the construction of 258 electric suburban passenger cars. A great deal of that work was done in Queensland by Queenslanders. That is a further example of the Government's providing work for the people.

The second scheme involves the electrification of the line between the central Queensland coalfields and the ports. That will provide two well-respected Queensland companies, to which the honourable member for Maryborough referred, with many thousands of man-weeks of employment constructing 146 electric locomotives for use on the high revenue-earning coal railways. Again, that means work for Queenslanders.

**Mr Davis:** What about women-weeks? Are they included?

**Mr McPHIE:** Of course, they are included. We do not have any affirmative action problems. We employ women as well as men in the work-force. When I refer to man-weeks, I include woman in the people who are doing the work. Everyone knows that the Queensland Government believes in equal opportunity. Everyone is treated in the same way. We do not want anything to do with the rot in Canberra about affirmative action and the Human Rights Commission.

Only this week, Cabinet approved another stage of the electrification scheme. It will require the initial supply of 20 electric locomotives and 16 long-distance electric-powered passenger cars. That will mean more work for Queenslanders in the construction of the rolling-stock.

Stage 4, initially, is the line from Caboolture to Gladstone, and later, from Gladstone to Rockhampton. The estimated completion date is September 1989. The first part of that stage involves the line from Brisbane to Nambour, which is to be finished by March 1988, the bicentenary year. That is not far away.

Following the projected expenditure of \$307m, Queensland will have more than 2 000 km of electrified track. That record cannot be challenged by any other State.

The passenger cars used on the new stage will be high-speed inter-urban vehicles, capable of 130 km/h. They will provide exceptional comfort for passengers, who will be transported from Brisbane to Rockhampton in 8 hours 30 minutes, compared with 14 hours 10 minutes by diesel-electrics.

**Mr Davis:** Are you going to use the XPT-type trains that the New South Wales Government is using?

**Mr McPHIE:** Queensland could introduce some of the XPT-type trains, but I should think that the ones we will be using will be updated, superior models. If the honourable member cares to look at the afternoon edition of the *Telegraph*, he will see a photograph of the monorail system to be set up on the Expo 88 site. That technology will be available. After the new tunnel to Toowoomba is completed, it may well be that the railway line to Robina can be constructed as a monorail similar to the one to be used on the Expo 88 site. I say that because the Government, the Minister for Transport and the department are progressive. They are forward-thinking and grasp the opportunity when new technology becomes available.

**An Opposition Member interjected.**

**Mr McPHIE:** It is probable that, on the drawing-board, we have already surpassed the XPT-type trains used in New South Wales.

The electrified track to Rockhampton will provide a greater service for tourists and residents wishing to travel long distances in comfort, in a time that will be very competitive with bus or car transport. With electrification, of course, the freight train loads will be increased substantially from the present maximum of 760 tonnes to 1 200 tonnes—an increase of over 50 per cent. It will also reduce trip times, which is a point made by the honourable member for Port Curtis. However, as is typical of him, he began knocking the project. He cannot accept progress. Because the railways will be able to haul larger tonnages faster, he immediately says, “No, we don’t want it because some people will have to be relocated into other jobs.” That is just not the way in which the Government works in Queensland. Queensland is a State of progress. The Government will look after those people.

**Mr Prest** interjected.

**Mr McPHIE:** I point out to the member for Port Curtis that those people will not lose their jobs. They will be redirected into other jobs; they will be taken care of. This progress will continue. The trains will carry twice the load at twice the speed. The job will be done far more efficiently and quickly.

The motion that is before the Committee provides for deviations at Eumundi, Gympie, Oakhurst-Aldershot and Benaraby-Parana. They are necessary to straighten the track. They will provide a track that will permit the fullest and most economical use of the new locomotives and passenger trains at their most efficient and economical speed. The deviations will correct the steep grades and sharp curves that were built into the railway line many years ago, when all work was carried out with a minimum of heavy earth-moving equipment. In those days, there were no bulldozers. It was not possible to move large quantities of earth and to cut into big hills in reasonable time. The equipment needed is available today. The railway line is being moved to areas that require the least earth-moving work. It will be put straight through to Gladstone, the city that the member for Port Curtis represents.

I know that the mayor of Gladstone will be very impressed with what the National Party Government is doing to facilitate the provision of improved services into his city. He will be very impressed with what the Minister is doing—in contrast to what he thinks of the member for Port Curtis. I do not know whether that honourable member has ever done anything constructive for the people of Gladstone or for that city. He comes into this Chamber and knocks, knocks, knocks. No matter what the Government does in his area, the honourable member gets up in this Chamber and bellyaches and makes a vindictive attack upon the mayor of Gladstone.

**Mr Prest** interjected.

**Mr McPHIE:** Why don’t you do something constructive? Today, you came into the Chamber and said that the Government must begin paying compensation to the people who moved out into the country and speculated. They were speculators. The city of Gladstone did not expand at the rate that they thought it would, and they got caught. Why should the Government compensate them?

**Mr Prest** interjected.

**Mr McPHIE:** If Gladstone had expanded and they had made a bit of money——

**Mr Prest** interjected.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth):** Order! Persistent cross-firing in the Chamber will cease, and the honourable member for Toowoomba North will address the Chair.

**Mr McPHIE:** I was making the point that the people in Gladstone who were speculating are not entitled to any compensation. Gladstone has developed at a great rate, but it has not developed as fast as the speculators expected.

**Mr PREST:** I rise to a point of order. Is the member for Toowoomba North saying that the people will not be adequately compensated? Is that the opinion or policy of the National Party? If these people are termed "speculators", they will not be compensated?

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! There is no point of order. I am sure that the member for Toowoomba North will put the member for Port Curtis straight.

**Mr McPHIE:** No, I am not saying that there will be no compensation. I am saying that the honourable member for Port Curtis came into this Chamber and asked that compensation be paid. The reasons that he advanced are not valid. The people about whom the honourable member was speaking were speculators. He told honourable members what they were.

The development in Gladstone will continue. This progressive National Party Government will ensure that further development takes place. Other projects are in the pipeline. Pipelines will carry gas to Gladstone; chemical plants will be built in that city. If the member for Port Curtis looked at what has happened in Gladstone over the years, he would be as impressed as I am with the development. More development will occur. The people of Gladstone who have moved out into the country will find that, eventually, they will be situated in the built-up areas of Gladstone.

The present is the most opportune time to correct the track alignment and to optimise the use of the rolling-stock in the operation. That is exactly what the Minister's proposal will do. I congratulate him on his initiative and I congratulate his staff on their forward planning.

**Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (4 p.m.):** The Opposition is always in favour of progress. If a Labor Government had still been in control of this State, electrification would now be in operation in Cooktown. Unfortunately, this Government was elected by misadventure, and the people of this State have had to suffer as a result. It just so happens that 1986 is an election year.

**Mr Ahern:** It might be next year, yet.

**Mr DAVIS:** I do not think so; I will settle for 1986.

This proposal has put forward big plans, surveys and figures and it will generate much publicity in the next few days. The best part of the proposal is the figures that are mooted. I have never seen so many millions come from out of the air. This proposal will cost \$307m. The honourable member for Cooroora (Mr Simpson) said that it will probably be more than that. In addition to the cost of this proposal, there is the proposed Gold Coast railway line, which, allowing for the development of a couple of stations, is of the order of a couple of million dollars, and there is also the proposed electrification of the central Queensland line. Because the Toowoomba seats will be a little bit wonky before the end of the year, the next thing to be announced will be the construction of a tunnel to Toowoomba at some magical cost. Trains will be coming from Warwick and Toowoomba at about 250km/h, which will cost another \$400m or \$500m.

The most amusing part of this week has been the hypocritical way in which this Government has had the audacity to attack the Federal Government on its world parity pricing policy on fuel and the fact that it broke an election promise. That was explained, and I will not repeat it.

For the benefit of the new members of the National Party, I inform the Committee that one of the most blatant breaches of policy concerned the proposed railway line to Redcliffe and Kippa-Ring, which was promised in September 1979. In that year, when Ken Tomkins was the Minister for Transport, he put on a marvellous performance on television. When he was challenged by the Labor Party that perhaps the Redcliffe train was only a "ghost train" and it possibly would never come to fruition, Mr Tomkins

went on television and pointed out the stations, although he did not know their names. When the Labor Party challenged him on this matter, the Minister and the Premier said, "We will deliver this line to Redcliffe, and it will be built by 1982." Honourable members on this side of the Chamber have been waiting to use their gold passes to visit Kippa-Ring. Unfortunately, that has not come about. I ask why it has not come about.

**Mr Newton** interjected.

**Mr DAVIS:** Deception Bay is one of the fastest-growing centres in the region, but after the next election it will not be represented by the honourable member who just interjected. He is a goner.

Although Deception Bay is one of the fastest-growing areas of the State, the member for Caboolture (Mr Newton) has not mentioned one word about it in this Chamber. He has never challenged the Minister for Transport to tell the Chamber where that line is to be built. That is why he will not remain as the member for Caboolture.

**An Opposition Member:** He is too frightened to go back to Deception Bay.

**Mr DAVIS:** Yes, that is right. That is because he has never represented Deception Bay and he has not said one thing about that area. That is another classic example of what can be called a broken promise.

I ask honourable members whether they remember the Redlands by-election campaign.

**Mr McPhie:** We did you like a dinner there, too.

**Mr DAVIS:** Yes, by about 2 per cent.

For six months, honourable members have been waiting for the member for Redlands (Mr Clauson) to say a few words, which is what he did yesterday.

Another classic example of a broken promise was the proposed bridge to Stradbroke Island.

**Mr Campbell:** It was to cost only \$81m.

**Mr DAVIS:** Yes, another \$81m.

Suddenly, it is not to go ahead. The Government has allowed all its real estate mates to sell off their land there. They urged people to buy before the bridge is built. That is another great broken promise.

**Mr Lee:** They tell me you had a lot of land there and sold it.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth):** Order! I have allowed the member for Brisbane Central to wander to some extent to make his point about broken promises. However, this is a debate about proposed deviations on the North Coast Line. I ask him to return to the subject.

**Mr DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr Booth. However, I am sure that you would agree that a great number of Government members, including the member for Maryborough, got stuck into Labor Party policy on foundries. I am sure, Mr Booth, that you appreciate that leniency is given to members.

I had intended to answer the interjection from the Queen Street farmer, the member for Yeronga, but I will not worry about that.

The simple facts of life boil down to this: the Labor Party supports the proposal, but it has doubts as to how it will be financed. When railway deviations are debated, the Committee is presented with plans and a final cost figure, but it is not told how the work is to be financed; whether out of bicentennial road funds or otherwise. Time and time again, funding for State Government projects comes from the Federal Government.

**Mr Hamill:** Sometimes the projects don't materialise.

**Mr DAVIS:** That is what I mentioned before. The classic example is the railway line to Redcliffe. I am sure that all honourable members appreciate that that railway line will not be built until the Liberal member for Redcliffe (Mr White) is tossed out and replaced by a member of the Labor Party who, of course, will be a member of the Government.

Mr Booth, I am sure that you will allow me leeway to mention another factor associated with the North Coast Line—Boondall. A classic example of bad planning by both the Railway Department and the Brisbane City Council, the latter being run by a pitiful administration, is the Boondall Railway Station. The appearances by Torvill and Dean at the Boondall complex have highlighted the bad planning. The life-style of residents in the area has been interfered with by traffic. The Railway Department has tried to organise co-ordinated bus/rail transport, but the problem is that the railway station platform cannot cope with a sufficient number of people.

The Opposition hopes that the North Coast Line will be electrified to the far north of the State. Everyone is looking forward to the new train, the Queenslander, because the Sunlander has obviously outlived its purpose in many ways, particularly the last section of it, which is used purely and simply as a mail train and a train to pick up milk and so forth for the country people.

Millions of dollars is put forward for different projects. The Opposition supports the proposals, because they are of benefit to the State. The proposal presently before the Committee will result in a saving on diesel fuel costs. Because of the present world problems in the supply of oil, one day there can be plenty of oil and the next day there could be a struggle to obtain it.

It amazes me that, although millions of dollars can be found to be spent on capital works in the Railway Department, the Queensland Government is so lousy and mean that it cannot afford to provide concessional railway fares for the unemployed in this State. All other States in the Commonwealth provide concessional railway fares to the unemployed. Those concessions allow the unemployed to find jobs. However, the Queensland Government adopts a mean attitude and deprives those people of that facility. I am always surprised that millions of dollars can be found for capital works projects. However, the Queensland Government wants nothing to do with the small person, the unemployed, the battler and the pensioner. That is a feature that distinguishes the two sides of this Chamber. The Government is happy to support the big money people of this world while the Opposition supports the caring people.

**Mr COOPER (Roma) (4.11 p.m.):** It is with pleasure that I take part in the proposal before the Committee.

**Mr Lee:** Your train's a bit early.

**Mr COOPER:** The honourable member is correct. My train usually leaves at 4.16. However, I will see whether I can catch up some time.

It is always depressing and disappointing to listen to Opposition members. I know that Government members frequently mention the constant knocking from the Opposition. When the Opposition disagrees with something or prefers to knock something, perhaps it should put up some alternative ideas. It does not matter how many millions of dollars are involved, if the Opposition does not like it, perhaps it could suggest some other project that might be worth implementing. If the Opposition could adopt a more constructive approach, the debate might be more interesting.

Projects such as the present proposal before the Committee, the central Queensland main line electrification scheme and the implementation of the PA Australia report that was produced a few years ago, have resulted in a considerable falling off in industrial strife in the railways. Efficiency has improved and profits have increased. Last year, the operating profit of the railways was \$107m. The railways are certainly going well this year. Morale is high and development is expanding.

The electrification of the central Queensland main line is the largest electrification project in the world. It is something that is really worth talking about. There is definitely a story to tell about it. The talk about the hundreds of millions of dollars involved gives people an idea of the scope of the project. I suggest to members of the Opposition that they should go to central Queensland to see what is happening. Stages 1 and 2 of the project involve the electrification of 1 500 km of railway line. That will eventually be followed by stages 3 and 4. It is the biggest project of its kind in the world. Australia has never seen anything like it. Coal trains 2 km in length will use the line. They will move faster than the present trains, and many benefits will be derived.

Members of the Opposition should visit central Queensland. During the last few months, I undertook a three-day inspection tour of that region with the Minister for Transport (Mr Lane) and the honourable member for Ithaca (Mr Miller). Rail transport was used for most of the trip. My colleagues and I saw first-hand the beginning of the electrification program being carried out by Electric Power Transmissions and Citra.

**Mr Davis:** The member for Ithaca isn't a member of the National Party. How did he get invited?

**Mr COOPER:** The honourable member for Ithaca does not have to be a member of the National Party. He took a very keen interest in what is going on. It is a shame that members of the Opposition do not bother to do the same. If they saw the work that is going on, they, too, would be impressed. One could not fail to be impressed.

The companies carrying out the electrification work—EPT and Citra—have a proven record and a great deal of experience with electrification projects. EPT is an Italian-based company, and Citra is a French-based company. Those companies established operations in Australia roughly at the time of the Snowy River project and have remained here ever since. Undoubtedly, both companies have a very good reputation.

Honourable members should not forget the employment opportunities that will be provided by this project. I think it has already been said that 1 000-plus jobs will be created. Honourable members have heard also that Queensland Railways uses about 90 million litres of fuel. There will be immense savings in that regard.

Of course, Queensland coal and Queensland power will be used in the electrification program. That is bound to result in savings and benefits, not to mention the fact that 146 of the electric locomotives will be built in Queensland by Clyde/Walkers.

As far as I am concerned, the knockers can knock all they like; a hell of a lot of constructive work is going on, and the people of Queensland realise that.

I make no apology for mentioning figures. Stages 1 and 2 of the project will cost about \$600m. Undoubtedly, the project is a leap into the future. It takes a great deal of courage and foresight to make such decisions. I commend the Minister, his department and the Government on their foresight and courage in making them.

On the figures available, it is a fact that coal exports are increasing. The electric trains will certainly make the transport of coal to the ports faster and more efficient. The exporters of coal will benefit. I do not know whether freight rates will be reduced as a result of that; I doubt very much that they will.

**Mr Vaughan:** I bet that they won't.

**Mr COOPER:** Certainly, cartage will be more efficient. Even if freight rates are not reduced, it could be that the rates will not rise or that, if they do, the rise will be a great deal less than it would have been under the present system. Quite obviously, it will be beneficial from an efficiency point of view.

The personnel of Queensland Railways will tell honourable members that the Railway Department used to be the Cinderella department of all Government departments. The morale of Queensland Railways personnel is now high. The staff admit that, undoubtedly, Queensland Railways has entered the twentieth century. The men involved are eager for business.

There is tremendous momentum of development in the railways. The personnel are very keen. Projects such as the one being debated will maintain that momentum. That is what this Government is all about.

For the benefit of the honourable member for Brisbane Central, I will mention a bit of history—although, no doubt, he knows it all. The electrification of suburban Brisbane was first proposed in 1950. Am I correct?

**Mr Davis:** Dead right.

**Mr COOPER:** That is good. The honourable member for Brisbane Central must know his history.

It was first proposed in 1950. However, a 1 500-volt direct-current system was to be implemented. That was found by Queensland Railways to be unsuitable, and it was not until 1971 that the first steps were taken towards electrification and a 25 000-volt alternate-current system was accepted and construction was approved.

The first construction work on Brisbane electrification, which was approved in 1974 and completed in 1979, was on the section from Darra to Ferny Grove. Brisbane now has a network of electrified rail lines, and I have used the service, especially during the Commonwealth Games. I stayed for the full 10 days of the Games and used the train each day. I found the service to be very fast, clean and efficient. It is an absolute credit to all who have been involved.

The impact of electrification on passenger usage is interesting. The number of passengers using the railways in Brisbane has risen dramatically. Prior to the electrification of the first section in 1979, passenger journeys had fallen to 26 million. The figure now is 38 million, and the number of journeys is rising by 3 or 4 per cent each year. That is certainly an indication of the success of Brisbane rail electrification.

Two more electrification projects begin this year—from Petrie to Caboolture, and from Thorneside to Wellington Point. I have no doubt that the member for Redlands (Mr Clauson) is extremely pleased about the latter. Obviously, since he has been the member, he has been pushing very hard to make sure that the new electrified section from Thorneside to Wellington Point is completed. Due to begin shortly is the construction of a new section from Wellington Point to Cleveland.

Anyone who lives at or visits the Gold Coast will appreciate the proposed electric rail link from Brisbane. That will make an enormous difference to the volume of traffic on the Pacific Highway. Again, that fast, clean and efficient service will be a boon. The additional 46 km of electrified track will add further to the rail network, and Queensland already has the most extensive electrified system of any Australian State.

Queensland also has the most economically viable rail system in the Commonwealth. I have mentioned already last year's operating profit of \$107m. That may be compared with the loss in New South Wales of \$462m. That is indicative of the efficiencies implemented as a result of the PA Australia report.

**Mr Vaughan:** Is that New South Wales figure an operating loss?

**Mr COOPER:** Yes.

**Mr Vaughan:** Year by year?

**Mr COOPER:** That is last year.

**Mr Vaughan:** It is definitely an operating loss only?

**Mr COOPER:** Yes.

**Mr Vaughan:** Are you sure of that?

**Mr COOPER:** As sure as I can be.

Since becoming a member of Parliament, I have taken a keen interest in the railways and have spoken at length with the Minister and the managers of the various divisions. At one time, the Railway Department was the Cinderella department. I have been particularly impressed by the efficiency and keenness of its officers. I have had much to do with officers of the department in Roma as a result of my being on the Minister's committee. One could not fail to be impressed by their interest in the railways.

I am in constant touch, also, with railway people in Bluff and Blackwater. Anything that can be done toward improving their lot would certainly be greatly appreciated. They are bucking in and doing an excellent job, seeking to maximise the return to the department by improving its competitive edge and seeking new markets. They are as flexible and as efficient as is possible. The Railway Department is preparing itself for the twentieth century and will be able to compete with road transport.

On 5 April, on behalf of the Minister, I will be opening new superintendent's offices in Roma. The superintendent, Bill Hayward, and his staff have been working in very ordinary conditions for well over 20 years. They are extremely appreciative of the improvements that have been made. The Minister and I have worked very hard for the last two or three years to bring the project to fruition. It will be with great pleasure that I perform the opening ceremony.

It is because of the forward thinking of the Minister that project proposals, such as the one presently before the Committee and the central Queensland mainline electrifications program, have been made possible, and I am sure that more proposals will be brought forward in the future. The people of Queensland and the Queensland economy will benefit from these projects. I will support the continuation of such projects in the future, and I support this resolution.

**Mr NEWTON (Caboolture) (4.25 p.m.):** I rise to speak to the proposal for the electrification of the rail line to Gladstone, which is stage 4 of the program. For the benefit of the honourable member for Brisbane Central (Mr Davis), I point out that electrification of the rail line to Caboolture has brought more benefit than would electrification of the rail line to Redcliffe. The introduction of a bus-rail service will also be of great benefit to my electorate.

I commend the Minister for his initiative in extending the electrification program north. The proposal for the deviations of the rail line to the north coast shows that the Government believes in giving the people of Queensland the benefit of a better means of travel. In addition to that, the work that will have to be carried out on the deviations will provide opportunities for real employment. I cite the benefit that the electrification program has so far brought to Caboolture. Extension of the electrification program will also provide an impetus for the building construction industry because of the improvement in transportation services. Because of that, businesses and residents of the area will gain some benefit from such progress.

I have inspected the work carried out so far on the straightening of dangerous curves in the rail line, and the upgrading of sections of the line north of Caboolture. That work has been complemented by the construction of new concrete bridges to replace the old wooden ones. Most of that construction work has been let to private contractors, but I must commend employees of the Railways Department and the contractors for a job well done so far.

Construction of the proposed deviation is another plus for the National Party Government in Queensland and demonstrates its far-sighted views on providing more employment. More employment opportunities are being provided also by extension of the electrification program and by meeting the demand for the electric power that will be required to service the railways in years to come.

Today, as I travelled to Brisbane, I saw being put in place the last pylons that will carry the transmission lines for the electric power for the rail line to Caboolture. The electricity substation that will supply electric power for the line on the northern side of

Caboolture is also almost complete. As I said previously, many contractors have been involved in the project, and a large number of firms has been able to win contracts to carry out the construction work.

The provision of increased employment opportunities is the key to greater prosperity for the whole community, and that has been borne out in my electorate of Caboolture. When the electrification program is completed, the time it takes to travel from Caboolture to Brisbane will be reduced by 20 minutes which, over a period of a week, will add up to a good deal more free time for commuters. The views I express are based on the observations that I have made in my electorate so far.

Last November, the upgraded facilities of the Caboolture Railway Station were officially opened. I commend the Minister and his engineering staff for a job well done. With the construction of overbridges and other facilities, the railway station at Caboolture is now one of the most modern in Queensland. It is hoped that that standard of facilities will be maintained as the program is extended north. By virtue of the electrification program, more than \$30m has been spent in the area from Petrie to Caboolture on the construction of overbridges and costs associated with work carried out by engineers in the Main Roads Department. Overbridges that span highways and arterial roads are a good thing, and result in a reduction in traffic hazards. Moreover, the appearance of modern bridges and the upgrading of roads add to the attractiveness of that area.

I look forward to seeing the electric train running to Caboolture in July. Many commuters have asked me whether the electrification will be completed on time. I have assured them that it will be. I hope that many people take advantage of the opportunity to travel by electric train to witness the event. It will be a plus for the area.

The Minister told us that the line will be electrified to Gladstone, and then to Townsville. If work proceeds in the same way as the electrification of the line to Caboolture, it will be a credit to the Railway Department, the Government and Queensland as a whole.

I commend the Minister and his staff for a job well done on the electrification of Queensland's railways. It will bring about a reduction in fares and modern methods of travel. As the Minister said, it is the shape of things to come.

**Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport)** (4.31 p.m.), in reply: I have listened to an interesting debate on a subject that marks a time in history for the State of Queensland. In the last few years, very few matters that have come before us have affected the history of Queensland so markedly as will this railway proposal.

The contributions made by honourable members on both sides of the Chamber reflect the impact of a rail development on communities during the construction of the project and thereafter. The many requests for local contractors to be used highlight the need for more work and business activity, and for opportunities to display initiative in construction and manufacturing. The requests also highlight honourable members' realisation of the need for new, large projects to make an impact on the economic downturn.

Years ago, I urged many Ministers in the Fraser Government, in the same way as I have urged Ministers in the Hawke Government, to accept responsibility and to make a significant impact on the economy by launching major national projects. One of the employment-creating projects I have mentioned so often that they could have accepted, in the same way as they accepted the Snowy Mountains scheme many years ago, was the major upgrading of our main line railways to north Queensland. However, neither the Fraser Government nor the Hawke Government was interested in the idea.

The national Treasury advised that it was not a good idea, that economic problems could be created by borrowing to do this work and by increasing the deficit.

I believe that the only way to sop up unemployment, keep open the doors of manufacturing industry and keep high technology working, is to have a large number of national projects similar to the Snowy Mountains scheme. This is one such scheme

that the Federal Government could have taken up. Both the Fraser Government and the Hawke Government stand condemned for not supporting this or a similar project.

**Mr Davis:** Where is the money coming from for the electrification to Gladstone?

**Mr LANE:** I am coming to that.

The project will provide employment opportunities in the construction field, the civil engineering field, and the high-technology field, with the use of electronics, fibre optics and the microwave communications. In addition to employment opportunities in the manufacture of all those articles on the ground adjacent to the railway line, employment opportunities will be provided in the manufacture of rolling-stock. Over the last few years, the work-force at such great establishments as Commonwealth Engineering (Qld) Pty Ltd at Rocklea has been downgraded considerably. Just a few years ago, up to 500 people worked in that factory. Today, fewer than 200 people work in it. That means that 300 or 400 metal trades workers are out on the street without a job. If it were not for this project and the earlier stages of the same project, those couple of hundred people who are still employed at that factory would be out on the street without a job. In launching these big projects, I am spurred on by the realisation that industry is kept alive and people are kept in jobs.

At present, 2 500 people, in addition to the railway personnel, are employed on stages 1, 2 and 3 of main line electrification in central Queensland. They are working for contractors on that 1 500-km route. If it were not for the first stages of main line electrification, those 2 500 people would be out of work and not receiving an income.

**Mr Vaughan:** Which stages are they on the main line?

**Mr LANE:** From Gladstone to Rockhampton, Rockhampton to Emerald and round the Goonyella section to Hay Point and Dalrymple Bay. They are stages 1, 2 and 3.

**Mr Vaughan:** You are not talking about up the coast?

**Mr LANE:** I am talking about up the coast in the context of stage 4.

**Mr Vaughan:** They are not main lines.

**Mr LANE:** They are main lines. Many people in Emerald think that the railway line between Rockhampton and Emerald is a main line.

**Mr Vaughan:** Just as long as we know what you are talking about.

**Mr LANE:** Is the honourable member having some difficulty?

**Mr Vaughan:** Just as long as we know for the record what you are talking about when you talk about a main line.

**Mr LANE:** The honourable member has always had some difficulty in understanding anything positive that has been said from this side of the Chamber. Most of his activity has centred on causing strikes in the electricity industry. The honourable member was out there stirring, waving banners and leading workers into strikes in the electricity industry. Something that he will have on his conscience is the number of workers who were short of food, sustenance and income for so many years while he was a party hack and a trade union hack causing industrial trouble in this State and trying to bring the State to its knees. The honourable member will carry that on his conscience for the rest of his life.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth):** Order! The Committee will come to order and the cross-firing will cease. I ask the Minister to continue with his summing up.

**Mr LANE:** I am talking about the employment that has been created so far by stages 1, 2 and 3 of main line electrification and the additional 2 500 jobs, making a total of 5 000 jobs, that will be created by stage 4. That is 5 000 jobs in rail development

alone. I have not mentioned the 400 people working on the Brisbane Transit Centre at Roma Street or the 300 people working on the development project at the Toowong Railway Station. Those are the employment figures that I am taking about. I am not talking about the funny-money employment that is created by some of the Opposition's friends in Canberra; I am talking about real positive jobs that have some lasting impact.

The honourable member for Nudgee asked me to explain about the funding of stage 4. Although I do not expect him to understand it, simple as it is, perhaps some other Opposition members are interested. I am quite happy to inform honourable members that stage 4 of main line electrification will be funded by special loans arranged by the Queensland Treasury, probably off shore, to the extent of \$277m. The interest and redemption on those loans will be paid off between 12 and 15 years, depending on the increased traffic and the additional usage on the track. Over the next five years, the other \$80m required will be taken out of normal loan funds and made available to the Railway Department, meaning that about \$16m a year out of railway loan funds will go towards the project. Is the honourable member for Nudgee keeping up with me?

**Mr Vaughan:** It will all be going on the record, and that is what we want.

**Mr LANE:** I have nothing to hide in this place, because this is good stuff. This is good news, and the honourable member cannot knock it.

The other \$80m will come out of normal loan funds over the next five years. Any saving on the project due to low prices on the contracts, any savings that are negotiated along the line, and any efficiency measures that will reduce the overall cost from \$307m—and I am quite convinced that it will be less than \$307m in the end—will be savings to the Railway Department.

**Mr Vaughan:** You had better talk to the honourable member for Cooroora; he said it would be more.

**Mr LANE:** I am not interested in the honourable member's cheap little interjections. He is very upset about the fact that the Government is creating jobs and building a reputation for doing real things for the work-force of this State. The honourable member just does not like it. He has always been a person who has stopped people working; we are people who start people working. That is the distinct difference between the honourable member for Nudgee and me. He cannot wear it. However, he will have to put up with it here today.

**Mr Vaughan:** I only hope that it comes to fruition, not like the Redcliffe railway line.

**Mr LANE:** All honourable members who spoke on this proposal and made a proper contribution—rather than yelling from over the other side, as the honourable member for Nudgee did—supported the project, as they should. I thank all honourable members for their very positive attitude. I thank even those members of the Opposition who tried to damn the proposal with faint praise. All honourable members praised the project and recognised it as a very good project. Long after I have gone, they will all take pride in it, and so will their children and their grandchildren.

**Mr Vaughan:** You will be gone after the next election.

**Mr LANE:** That is the sort of contribution the honourable member for Nudgee makes. I am talking about a \$307m project creating 2 500 jobs, and that clown over there from Nudgee, that nasty little trade-union hack from Nudgee, the fellow who put so many of his mates out of work when he was causing the strike, makes inane little political comments. What a cheap little bit of business he is! Go back to the swamps of Cribb Island where you belong!

**Mr Vaughan:** Wait till the Liberals get hold of you.

**Mr LANE:** I will not grapple with the honourable member any longer; he is not worth it. I do not think he is worth the powder and shot. I do not know why I bothered with him.

Motion (Mr Lane) agreed to.

Resolution reported and agreed to.

## SANCTUARY COVE RESORT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 20 February (see p. 3714) on Mr Harper's motion—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

**Mr GOSS (Salisbury)** (4.45 p.m.): The Opposition accepts the advice of the Solicitor-General on the need to amend section 15 of the Sanctuary Cove Resort Act.

**Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General)** (4.46 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for his support of the Bill before the House.

Motion (Mr Harper) agreed to.

### Committee

Clauses 1 and 2, and preamble, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

### Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Harper, by leave, read a third time.

**Mr HAMILL:** I rise to a point of order. This morning, Mr Speaker undertook to give a ruling on a matter of privilege. Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw that to your attention.

## PRIVILEGE

### Warning of Member for Ipswich under Standing Order No. 123A

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Ipswich has again raised in the House his withdrawal from the House under Standing Order No. 123A on 18 February last.

I inform the House that the matter was discussed with the honourable member in my office, which I believe is the correct procedure for raising matters not suddenly arising.

I have studied the records and no amendment is necessary to the Votes and Proceedings entry, which accords with the *Hansard* record of debate.

I am sorry that I have delayed the proceedings of the House.

## SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House):** I move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday, 11 March 1986.”

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4.51 p.m.