

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 1986

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

THURSDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 1986

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

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Industrial Relations Legislation, Guarantee of Basic Rights

From Mr Innes (5 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will provide legislation to guarantee basic rights to every Queensland citizen regarding industrial relations.

Electricity Industry Inquiry

From Mr Innes (55 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will provide for an inquiry into the electricity industry to ensure efficient services.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Queensland Science and Technology Council for the year ended 30 June 1986

Department of Welfare Services for the year ended 30 June 1986.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Proclamation under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984

Orders in Council under—

Grammar Schools Act 1975-1984 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984

Jury Act 1929-1982

Supreme Court Act of 1921

Land Act 1962-1986

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984

Regulations under—

Small Claims Tribunals Act 1973-1985

Censorship of Films Act 1947-1984

Report of the State Stores Board for the year ended 30 June 1986

Statements of Account of "The Coal Mine Workers' Pension Fund" for the year ended 30 June 1986.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Australia's Credit-rating**

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (11.3 a.m.), by leave: The long-awaited, long-term credit-rating review of the Australian Government by the United States credit-rating agency Moody's was released in New York last night. As I feared, Australia has been downgraded from AAA to AA1 status.

This downgrading by an independent, international body is clear evidence that the Australian economy is being damaged by the Hawke Labor Government.

The implications of that downgrading are serious. Overseas investors who are required to invest only in AAA paper will have to sell their holdings of Australian paper. New overseas investment will fall. As a result, Australian currency will come under renewed downward pressure. Indeed, since the announcement, the dollar has fallen by 50 points, despite heavy Reserve Bank intervention. Interest rates will have to rise even further to support the currency.

The Reserve Bank will be forced to spend more of Australia's dwindling international currency reserves to prop up the Australian dollar. A horror mini-Budget is now certain. Senator Button has of course already let the cat out of the bag about that, and the Labor Party Left has responded by relegating him to an unwinnable third spot on the Victorian senate ticket. For political reasons, however, Mr Hawke will not announce the mini-Budget until after the Queensland election.

Despite the downgrading of the Commonwealth by Moody's, I am confident that Queensland will maintain its AAA long-term credit-rating in Japan and its A1+P1 rating in the United States, which honourable members would be aware is the maximum short-term credit-rating available in that country.

Proposed Space Launch Facility, Cape York Region

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (11.6 a.m.), by leave: I take this opportunity to inform the Parliament of an exciting and major initiative being undertaken for the benefit of north Queensland, world space technology and indeed our own technological and employment base.

Queensland, because of its geographical position, stability of Government and strong support for the innovative objectives of private enterprise, is in a strong position to establish a space-launch facility in the Cape York region. That will involve the creation of a city, international airports, industries and so on. This is a very important announcement, and one of the most important that has been made in Australia for quite a long time.

Australia, which in 1967 was the third country to launch its own satellite from its own territory, has gone steadily backwards, in space. It is currently the only developed country which does not have a space policy, a space program and a national space organisation.

Opposition Members: Ha, ha!

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Of course, that is a laughing matter to Opposition members.

I deplore that decline and submit that new, capable and collaborative space-launch and landing facilities are needed for many reasons in this part of the world. The major existing launch facilities in the world are disadvantaged by being so far from the equator. A location near the equator would enable larger payloads to be carried by existing launch vehicles.

As honourable members would be aware, at the Equator there is an additional push of 1 100 mph to any object that is launched into space. That is a very important aspect of space-launch facilities. That facility is available in the Cape York region.

Although it may appear illogical to consider space-launch facilities in Australia, where space programs are almost non-existent, a deeper examination of the problem alters that perception. I tender for consideration that other countries that are active in space need improved launch facilities for operational reasons, such as limitations of terrain, weather, air traffic and other locational restrictions. I believe that there is scope for Australia to investigate versatile facilities, which could be used by those countries that are developing space programs today.

A launch site established in Queensland would exploit our unique advantages of stable political environment, developed industrial and transport infrastructure, favourable geographical location, reliable weather, good radar coverage and efficient air-traffic control measures. In the light of that, I have considered a proposal for a study to investigate the possibility of establishing a major international spaceport in northern Queensland. The objectives of the feasibility study will be to examine the present space-launch facilities in the world, and the requirements for the establishment of such a station in the Cape York region.

I have commissioned an initial study to be carried out by the Institution of Engineers Australia, in conjunction with representatives of the University of Queensland, British Aerospace Australia, Hawker De Havilland, Aussat and CSIRO. I recall that an early attempt to establish launch facilities was made in the '60s, when Australia was providing launch facilities to the forerunner of the European Space Authority, the European Launcher Development Organisation.

Even today, when all the developed countries, and some less developed, such as India, China, Brazil and Indonesia, have thriving space programs, Australia has none. I question a situation in which, 18 months after the release of a Commonwealth Government-sponsored study on the subject, the Madigan report, the Commonwealth Government has still not set up the recommended space authority.

This year may be the last opportunity to act. I understand that discussions are already being held between the People's Republic of China and Indonesia on joint equatorial launch facilities somewhere in Indonesia, and between Japan and the USA, about facilities in Hawaii. However, the French are looking for a possible landing-place in this part of the world for their new minishuttle, the Hermes. Also, I note that the European Space Authority has no back-up for its main launch site at Kourou, French Guyana, in the politically unstable South American continent.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Perhaps you could be Queensland's first astronaut.

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

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: This is a very serious matter and one of the most far-reaching announcements that the State Government has made for a long time.

Launch facilities located somewhere on Cape York Peninsula may cater for all those needs on a collaborative basis and would become the beginning of a major international spaceport for the twenty-first century. I hope that it is realised that the proposed facilities would be used exclusively for civilian and scientific activities, without any military connotations.

It is appropriate to think now of developing major facilities, since future plans of all major countries active in space involve plans for recoverable space vehicles, space stations in earth orbit by 1994, moon bases by 2005, a base on Mars by 2020, and the mining of asteroids. All these activities will need spaceports to service the operations. Honourable members would realise the enormity and the tremendous benefit of the proposal to Queenslanders. I am sure that the development of such facilities would generate a high-tech industry in Queensland, which would be of immense value to the economy.

I commend this significant initiative, involving senior personnel from virtually all organisations involved in space technology in Australia, which could result in the highest form of technology being established in Queensland. I have asked the Co-ordinator-General to meet representatives of the Institution of Engineers Australia, University of Queensland, CSIRO, Aussat, British Aerospace Australia and Hawker de Havilland on Thursday, 18 September 1986, to commence the feasibility study. The feasibility study will cost \$93,000 and results will be available in five months. These results will be assessed before further action is taken.

CEP Funding for the Control of Feral Animals

Hon. N. J. TURNER (Warrego—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.12 a.m.), by leave: I refer to the personal explanation given yesterday by the honourable member for Bundaberg (Mr Campbell), who claimed that he was personally offended by my answer to a question without notice from the honourable member for Toowoomba North (Mr McPhie) on CEP funding for the control of feral animals in the Warrego electorate. I stand by everything I said in my answer to the question, which was based on a statement attributed to Senator John Black.

I made the point that I was not in any way opposed to employment-creating projects. However, I did stress that, if the ALP wished to employ the people specified in the proposal, it should provide them with meaningful, worthwhile employment—not with jobs that would put them at personal risk. It was for that reason that I accused the Labor Party of lack of knowledge about the problems caused by feral animals in that part of Queensland.

I repeat that, if the Labor Party wants to help employment in the Charleville region, it should give top priority to lifting the quota on kangaroos, which are in plague proportions. By doing that, it would enable highly skilled professional shooters to resume their occupation and drop off the dole queue. Such a move would be a boon to primary producers, whose flocks and herds have to compete with vast kangaroo populations for dwindling pastures. In addition, the \$163,000 that the honourable member for Bundaberg cites could be allocated to people skilled in the eradication of feral pests with a view to cleaning up the dog problem within the barrier fence.

I totally reject his claim that I should apologise; no-one need apologise for speaking common sense. Nowhere in my reply did I make any specific or implied attack on the officers of the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board, and I am confident that my colleague the Minister for Lands and Forestry would be aware of this. I remind honourable members that my remarks were made in reply to a question without notice, and applied only to statements attributed to Senator Black and the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (Mr Willis).

Mr Prest: Not very convincing.

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

Mr TURNER: Vince Gair once said about an honourable member that he would not make an impression on a soft pillow; that applies to the honourable member for Port Curtis.

Subsequent inquiries of the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board——

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Cairns under the provisions of Standing Order No. 123A for constant interjection.

Mr TURNER: Subsequent inquiries of the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board reveal that the work to be carried out by the nine-member task force is confined to the barrier fence and does not apply to the trapping or shooting of dingoes or other feral animals.

It is regrettable that Senator Black and the Federal Minister for Employment did not mention that in the newspaper article on which I was asked to comment.

Payment of Compensation by Water Resources Commission for Land Resumptions

Hon. M. J. TENNI (Barron River—Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services) (11.15 a.m.), by leave: The allegations made by the honourable member for Rockhampton (Mr Braddy) in this House yesterday, concerning land sales in the Burdekin, once again show the true colours of Opposition members in this State. While their

Federal colleagues in north Queensland attempt to take full credit in the media for the Burdekin scheme, saying what a wonderful project it is, the members of the ALP in this State have an entirely different set of priorities. They are so small-minded and negative in their approach to sound development in north Queensland that they would rather use every opportunity to smear the good name of people who are prepared to invest in and pioneer this very important agricultural area of our State. The honourable member for Rockhampton may have passed his apprenticeship in character assassination in the ALP with flying colours, but he has shown himself to be completely ignorant of the processes of negotiation which occur between land-holders and the Queensland Water Resources Commission.

Mr David Cox first became aware of the commission's future intention to resume land for irrigation purposes in March 1980. As any prudent land-holder would be, he was faced either with the prospect of seeking to sell this land to the commission as soon as possible or having continually to invest heavily in this land which would one day be resumed for water resource development.

The decision to sell his two parcels of 850 ha and 776 ha to the commission was an economic one based on the advice of his bankers, and not on the political advice or influence of his sister, the former member for Mourilyan (Mrs Vicki Kippin). Contrary to the smear made by of the honourable member for Rockhampton, Mrs Kippin played no part in the sale negotiations. Mrs Kippin had no financial interest in the land owned by Mr Cox.

The valuer at the time for the commission, Mr Gary Rosser, made not just one but several valuations of Mr Cox's land using different methods of calculation. The honourable member for Rockhampton makes much of the fact that Mr Rosser arrived at the valuation figure of \$1,228,413. I point out that that was the lowest of a number of valuations by Mr Rosser, and represented only a starting-point for future negotiations with Mr Cox. Several valuations were much higher.

The sale price of \$2,448,000 paid by the commission to Mr Cox in 1982 took into account the very pertinent fact that over \$1m worth of improvements had been made to the land in question. The National Party Government treats people the same in respect to valuations, including supporters of the Australian Labor Party who have had land resumed. In case members of the Opposition do not know, I point out that people are entitled to be compensated for the value of improvements they have made to the land. Members of the Opposition may not think so, but that is a principle that is acceptable to the Government. The member for Rockhampton must be exceptionally ignorant or naive about land negotiations if he thinks that any seller would accept the lowest of several valuations tendered by the commission's own valuer as a suitable sale price.

Unfortunately I am unable to discuss the land values in the Cox settlement in detail because it is relevant to a notice of appeal which was lodged in the Land Appeal Court on 8 September 1986 by Mr and Mrs Zandonadi concerning a recent compensation settlement in the Burdekin district between the Zandonadi family and the Queensland Water Resources Commission. The notice of appeal lodged by the family says—

“The Land Court erred in finding that it could not derive any benefit from the sale of land by Cox to the Commissioner of Water Resources”.

It is not my intention to prejudice the fair hearing of that appeal by now discussing land values in the Burdekin River Irrigation Area. The Commissioner of Water Resources has a long and proven record of dealing fairly and impartially with land-holders in this State irrespective of the colour of their politics.

The honourable member for Rockhampton, through his gutter-style politics, owes an apology to both the Cox family and the commissioner. I have complete faith in the commission, which is doing a tremendous job to develop the \$457m Burdekin Dam and irrigation project. The State Government is meeting the lion's share of that cost with an investment of \$329m.

Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen: Who is the man who made those accusations?

Mr TENNI: He is a former solicitor from Rockhampton—a Labor Party member.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Minister.

Mr TENNI: It is a great shame that the Opposition does not put its energies to more constructive purposes, such as seeking to increase the \$128m funding from Canberra towards the scheme. It is about time that Opposition members told Canberra that the Federal Government has to put some more money into irrigation schemes in this State and country.

The Federal Government has withdrawn from all future irrigation schemes in this State. If instead of guttersniping and getting as low as a snake's belly, Opposition members did something about getting Canberra to put some more money into irrigation schemes in Australia, which is one of the driest continents on this earth, they would be doing some good for the people whom they supposedly represent. It is about time that Opposition members woke up to themselves.

Of course, it would be asking too much even of the member for Rockhampton (Mr Braddy) to do something like that.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (11.22 a.m.), by leave: Yesterday in this House, the Premier and Treasurer (Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen) saw fit to repeat claims that the political party that I represent in this Parliament encourages and supports terrorist groups operating in Australia.

As an elected representative of the Australian Labor Party in the Queensland Parliament, I find his comments grossly offensive.

There is widespread public concern about propriety and honesty in the Queensland Government and the low standards of Government exhibited in this House by the National Party. The Premier's recent irresponsible and untrue statements can only increase that community concern.

The Premier has seen fit to cast a slur on myself, my colleagues here and at the Federal level, and on every rank-and-file member of the Australian Labor Party. Therefore, I believe it to be in the public interest for me to table in this House information that I believe sheds a great deal of light on the Premier's recent behaviour. Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table a special report by two eminent British researchers that analyses and highlights the Premier's rapid and public mental disintegration.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Labor Party Involvement with Terrorist Groups

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (11.24 a.m.), by leave: The honourable member for Wolston (Mr R. J. Gibbs) himself has again raised this question of the Labor Party's involvement with the terrorist groups that have offices, facilities and quarters, whatever they might be termed, in Australia. The honourable member says that the Labor Party is unaware of such terrorist groups. One day, the Labor Party says that those groups do not exist; next day, it says they do exist but that they are a non-event.

In response to the remarks of the honourable member for Wolston, I want to read a letter that shows that the Labor Party has not only condoned and verbally supported those groups, but also, since 3 February 1984, has been financially supporting such groups.

The letter, which commences with the words "Dear Colleague", was no doubt to Labor colleagues in Canberra. It clearly sets out an appeal for funds for the African National Congress and SWAPO, two blood-thirsty groups with blood on their hands.

The letter reads—

"We understand that you have recently received a request for assistance from the African Liberation Trust Fund.

We appreciate that you receive many such requests for aid because it is widely understood that the unions are key supporters of the struggle for human rights and liberation from oppression. But we would ask you to give a very full consideration to the appeal for financial support for the African Liberation Trust Fund. With the struggle in southern Africa moving towards a climax our support can help reduce the length and intensity of the conflict.

The Federal Government has given its blessing to the establishment of an Information Office for the African National Congress and SWAPO. It remains for us to provide the support that will sustain this office and make it effective."

The interesting point is that the letter has been signed by Neal Blewett, the Federal Minister for Health; Greg Crafter, the Minister of Community Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs, South Australia; and Mr John Scott, the member for Hindmarsh.

Naturally, I ask the gentlemen who signed the letter to verify it. I suppose I could ask for an assurance that the funds are to go only to support the office. I want an undertaking from them that the letter does not mean that other funds will be sent over to Africa to help to kill people. Those people are an example of the hypocrites who try to make out that they do not know that these terrorist groups are operating in Australia. They have been caught red-handed. I table the letter.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the document on the table.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

Questions submitted on notice were answered as follows—

1. Queensland Kangaroo Management Program

Mr NEAL asked the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts—

"With reference to the case initiated by Fund for Animals Limited dealing with the 1985 Queensland Kangaroo Management Program which case was determined against the Commonwealth Government—

What was the decision of the tribunal and what action has been taken by the Commonwealth to implement that decision?"

Answer—

The decision of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal regarding the 1985 Queensland Kangaroo Management Program is quite concise and I can quote it in full—

"The tribunal sets aside the decision under review and remits the matter to the respondent for reconsideration in accordance with the recommendation contained in paragraphs 97 to 99 inclusive of the tribunal's reasons for decision."

The second part of the question cannot be dealt with quite so easily. As far as I am aware the Commonwealth Minister, Mr Barry Cohen, has totally ignored the decision. No approach has been made to me or to the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service to implement the decision, and I am not aware that any such approach is intended.

Although this is disappointing, it is not totally unexpected. How the Commonwealth lost the case in the first place leaves plenty of room for speculation on its motives. Just let me quote a few facts and see how they hang together.

The case was started on 24 September 1985 and was stood over on 26 September. The reasons for this adjournment were given on 4 October 1985 and simply amounted to this: No-one could discover what the Commonwealth Minister had decided. This is where the comedy of errors commences.

Mr Cohen got his act together on 18 October 1985. Or at least he thought he had, but alas again there was a hitch. It was finally in the *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* of 30 October 1985—on the third attempt—that his decision, the one to be challenged, was made known. How one challenges a decision that is not even known—a Claytons decision—is one matter that, unfortunately, I will not have time to go into now. All Barry Cohen had to do on 30 October 1985 was publish the management program that Queensland had followed, and followed to the knowledge of his office in Canberra, and all would have been in order. Did this happen? No! He published the 1984 Queensland management program with 1985 quota figures inserted. The 1984 program was superseded. It was an outdated program. It certainly did not reflect the substantially improved program to which Queensland had worked.

The tribunal obviously took all this into consideration, and its decision suggested how Mr Cohen could finally get his act together. The tribunal said that he could either go through the procedures set forth in section 44 of the Wildlife Protection Act which requires a public notice procedure—and which, incidentally, the tribunal did not recommend—or, alternatively, retrospectively approve the Queensland management program made pursuant to section 10 of the Act. This was the tribunal's preferred option. In fact, it is where he should have started in the first place on 30 October, or even on his first attempt.

So, the short answer is: No, Mr Cohen has not taken any action to implement the decision of the tribunal. His only action to date has been to suspend the issue of export certificates, creating an uncertainty in the overseas export market and, once again, further placing Australia in the predicament of being labelled an unreliable export-supplier. The fact that he subsequently renewed export permits does not excuse him for giving the wrong management program to the tribunal—that is, the 1984 program instead of the 1985 program.

2. Liberal Party's Campaign, Mansfield Electorate

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

“(1) Is he aware of the following letter which appeared in *The Southern Star*, a suburban newspaper?

Freeloading on Taxpayers

Dear Sir,

The advertised use of a parliamentarian's office and phone to support the National Party campaign for political novice Craig Sherrin in Mansfield is a blatant mis-use of tax-payers' dollars.

The National political campaign in Mansfield will now draw office rental, phone and salaries from our State budget. What gross free-loading!

Our Liberal campaigning costs tax-payers nothing and we don't flex off, either.

Leo White
Liberal Candidate for Mansfield

(2) Is he aware of the following letter which appeared in the letterboxes of homes in MacGregor?

Dear MacGregor Resident

There is a lot of concern in the community about the manner in which Government at State and Federal levels is being conducted. If you share this concern, and wish to know more about Liberal Party Policies, the MacGregor Branch of the Liberal Party would like to meet you.

Please feel free to contact any of the people listed below, or come along to the monthly Branch Meeting at 8 Brooklands Drive, Eight Mile Plains, at 7.30 p.m., on the first Monday of every month. The next meeting will be on August 4, and the Guest Speaker will be my Parliamentary Colleague, Angus Innes.

| | | |
|------------------|----------|----------|
| Bob Davie | (Home) | 343-7674 |
| Ald Graham Quirk | (Office) | 343-7622 |
| Kris l'Anson | (Office) | 343-3605 |

Yours sincerely,

Bill Knox,
Liberal Party Leader.

(3) Is he aware that two of the phone numbers on Sir William Knox's letter are phone numbers of ward offices of Liberal Aldermen, namely 343 7622 (Ward Office of Liberal Alderman Graham Quirk) and 343 3605 (Ward Office of Liberal Alderman Gail Chiconi)?

(4) In view of Sir William's letter and the time-honoured maxim that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones, what can we assume about Mr Leo White's letter?

(5) How does he react to Mr White's comment, 'Our Liberal campaigning costs tax-payers nothing?'

Answer—

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Yes, that appears to be so.

(4 & 5) It is quite obvious that the Liberal campaign in Mansfield is so weak that its candidate cannot find any real issues, so he has attempted to invent one. In doing so, as the letters show, the Liberals have been caught out by their own propaganda. In other words, the Liberal candidate, Mr White, has shot himself in the foot.

The Liberal campaign obviously is utilising the resources of two Brisbane City Council ward officers, so the Liberal candidate's letter is quite hypocritical.

When the Liberal Party was reduced to its present six-pack at the last State election, the word was that they would hold meetings in a telephone booth. Those facilities have glass walls, so the Liberals are the last people who should be throwing any stones.

3. Sites for TAB Facilities

Sir WILLIAM KNOX asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing—

“Following his announcement that TAB facilities will be widely available in hotels before Christmas, will he consider including licensed clubs as suitable sites for TAB facilities?”

Answer—

The best way of undertaking a study is, as I have suggested, to have a three-month trail period. If my memory serves me correctly, the honourable member for Nundah

was very much in favour of club TABs and pub TABs when he was the responsible Minister.

Sir William Knox: I still do.

Mr HINZE: And he still does.

All honourable members must understand that I have only one desire—a very simple one—and that is to——

Mr R. J. Gibbs: That is to win the Cox Plate.

Mr HINZE: Amongst other things.

Answer (continued)—

My desire is simply to provide everyone in this State with an opportunity to see or hear a race meeting on which a legitimate bet has been placed through the TAB in this State.

For five years I have tried to obtain a radio service for the people of Mareeba. I have not been able to do so. As a result of this proposal, it could be that people who live in the far-flung parts of this State will be provided with a service to which I believe they are justly entitled.

It is of concern to me when I see in the newspaper that the chairman of the QTC is mentioned in an article headlined, "Country clubs say 'no' ". That, of course, is most definitely wrong, because the country clubs stand to gain more from my proposal than anything that has ever been suggested to them. It simply means that the service will be provided under the auspices of the country tracks in any part of this State. Honourable members can imagine what benefit that will be to country clubs and the TAB in those areas.

All I am asking for is a three-month trial period in which consideration can be given to the proposal. I believe that television coverage will have the same effect on racing as it has had on tennis, cricket, football and many other sports. Interest in racing will be increased.

Although all the clubs are talking about a drop in attendance and the book-makers are complaining of a reduction in turnover, I believe that this proposal will stimulate interest in the racing industry. I would not put forward a proposal in this Parliament that I did not believe was for the benefit of the industry.

4. TAB Facilities in Hotels

Sir WILLIAM KNOX asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing—

"In view of his announcement that TAB facilities will be widely available in hotels before Christmas, will he publish any studies that have been made as to the effect this decision will have on racecourse attendances?"

Answer—

See answer to previous question, No. 3.

5. Silica Production; Shelburne Bay Project

Mr VAUGHAN asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

"With reference to 1985/86—

(1) What was the tonnage of silica produced in the State and the value of that production?

(2) Where was that silica produced and what tonnage was produced at each location?

- (3) What tonnage was exported and what was the value of silica exported?
- (4) What royalty did the State receive from silica mining?
- (5) What is the proposed production of the planned Shelburne Bay silica project?
- (6) What companies are involved in that project?"

Answer—

(1) For certain mines, complete returns for the year ended 30 June 1986 have not yet been lodged with the Department of Mines. However, from information to hand, it is estimated that silica, produced pursuant to the Mining Act 1968-1986, will total approximately 828 811 tonnes in 1985-86. The amount of silica sold or used is estimated at 808 611 tonnes for 1985-86 with value of approximately \$7,718,265.

(2) Estimated silica production for 1985-86 was—

| Area | Tonnes |
|--------------------------|---------|
| North Stradbroke Island | 120 125 |
| Brisbane and Moreton Bay | 15 901 |
| Cooktown | 631 180 |
| Bundaberg | 2 825 |
| Cloncurry (Silica Flux) | 28 865 |
| Gladstone | 29 915 |

(3) Silica exported in 1985-86 totalled an estimated 619 253 tonnes with a value of \$6,134,006.

(4) Total royalty received by the State or assessed as receivable for 1985-86 was an estimated \$205,057.

(5) The proposed production from the Shelburne Bay project is initially 250 000 tonnes per annum increasing to 400 000 tonnes per annum in five years' time.

(6) The companies involved in the Shelburne Bay Project are—

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Shelburne Silica Pty Ltd (a subsidiary of Pacific Mining Ltd) | 51 per cent |
| ASP Resources Qld Pty Ltd (a subsidiary of Toyo Menka Kaisha Ltd. (50%) and Nippon Sheet Glass (50 per cent) | 49 per cent |

6. Queensland Power Workers Association

Mr VAUGHAN asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

“(1) Have Queensland Electricity Commission funds been used to assist financially the unregistered body calling itself the Queensland Power Workers Association?

(2) If so, how much financial assistance has the Queensland Electricity Commission to date given to this association?

(3) Did he authorize the expenditure of Queensland Electricity Commission funds to assist this association financially?

(4) If not, who authorized the expenditure of Queensland Electricity Commission funds to assist this association financially?

(5) Has this financial assistance been paid directly to the Queensland Power Workers Association?

(6) If so, what form of receipt has been received from the association for such financial assistance?

(7) If not, how has this financial assistance been given to the Queensland Power Workers Association?

(8) Are there any conditions applying to the financial assistance given to the Queensland Power Workers Association?

(9) If so, what are they?"

Answer—

(1 to 9) The Queensland Government has approved of sufficient financial assistance being granted to the Queensland Power Workers Association to ensure that it can proceed to obtain access to the democratic process for its members through proper legal representation.

7. Association of Drafting Supervisory and Technical Employees

Mr BORBIDGE asked the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs—

“(1) Has he seen a log of claims by a Federal union called ADSTE for an award to be known as ‘The ADSTE Building and Construction Industry Award’?”

(2) Is he aware that this union has made a deal with the Victorian Government banning architects from Government construction sites unless they are members of ADSTE?”

Answer—

(1 & 2) Yes, I have seen the log of claims that the Association of Drafting Supervisory and Technical Employees (ADSTE), a Federal union, served on employers, including some in Queensland.

It is an ambit claim, but even so it is totally extraordinary and a sign of things to come that the union, strongly supported by the ALP, intends to pursue that claim. This crowd has asked for a minimum wage of \$7,000 per week, plus extra payments of \$700 per week, a site allowance of \$700 per week, a district allowance of \$700 per week and a special rate of \$700 per week. This is a total of \$9,800 a week in cash, plus free clothing and other amenities. The ALP is not denying that that is happening. It is giving that outrageous claim its total support.

In addition the union wants a meal allowance of \$70 per meal when working overtime. Let us look at working hours. Everyone agrees that the 40-hour week should be reintroduced, but these characters want a maximum of 20 hours' work per week. Again the ALP is supporting that claim. Is it any wonder that Australia's credit-rating has gone down the chute? They are asking for meal breaks of two hours after four hours' work and a rest pause of one hour in the first and second halves of the daily work.

That is not all. Employees are to be allowed half an hour for washing before each meal break and finishing-time. After the meal break has been allowed for, no hours are left to compensate the workers for rest pauses and washing-time. In other words, their claims are so high that there are no hours left to work. It is most incredible. I suppose that the employer would have to pay for that. I am amazed how they could expect to be paid when no work had been done.

The leave claim is even sillier. It includes eight weeks' annual leave, 20 public holidays, unlimited sick leave and so on. The employees will not have to work at all.

Opposition Members: Sit down.

Mr LESTER: There is nothing to sit down about. I am referring to a claim that has been lodged in the industrial courts. It is a very serious matter. The ALP does not treat the matter seriously; Opposition members have said that I should sit down. The claim has been registered.

Answer (continued)—

Ambit claims should be wiped from the Federal arbitration system. Such claims have brought the nation to its knees and are ridiculing the Federal arbitration system.

The union, ADSTE, has been trying to force architects to join its ranks. The deal between that union and the Cain Labor Government in Victoria is part of a move to make all practising architects join the union. The ALP is saying, "Join this union or else." It has been happening in Victoria and other places, particularly in the building industry.

I am reliably informed that the secretary of the Victorian branch of the union is Judith Bornstein, who was a former secretary to none other than Norm Gallagher of the Builders Labourers Federation. The ALP in Victoria is supporting that claim. The reaction of Opposition members makes it apparent that they also support that claim.

I say here and now that no deals will be made with that union in Queensland that will hurt the well-being of practising architects and other professionals in this State who obviously do not want to become involved. Employers who have been served with the log of claims should oppose it very strongly. But it is there. It is ridgy-didge. That is what has happened. The Queensland Government will stand up and fight those outrageous claims so that each and every one of our children and our children's children can obtain jobs in the future.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts Portfolio, Fraud Investigation

Mr WARBURTON: In directing a question to the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts, I point out that, as all honourable members are well aware, the Minister has presided ministerially over a department that has been the subject of a public funds scandal. I now ask: Apart from those matters related to the previous head of his department and the Queensland Film Corporation, is he aware of any other fraud that has taken place within his area of responsibility that involves a fictitious claim for funding and subsequent payment of a Government grant of some thousands of dollars? If he is aware of a further case of misappropriation of public moneys, what action has he taken at this stage?

Mr McKECHNIE: It is rather interesting that the Leader of the Opposition has asked me a question. Before he asked his question, I was reading a file about him. During the period earlier this year when certain things were happening, the Leader of the Opposition endeavoured to create mischief and to make very unfair comments about people by asking questions instead of being game to make his statements outside the Chamber. He has tried to get away with the bully-boy tactics that he got away with when he was a trade union official.

The file that I have here relates to the electricity industry dispute that occurred in Queensland during 1966 and 1967. I was informed about this particular matter many years ago. However, it was again brought to my attention recently. I believe that that dispute is relevant to the question that the Leader of the Opposition has asked, because it demonstrates the tactics that he is trying to introduce into this House.

I have evidence to show that the Leader of the Opposition was deeply involved in that dispute. At that time the workers of the Warwick and Stanthorpe area refused a direction by the union to strike.

Mr WARBURTON: I rise to a point of order. I have no objection to the Minister's continuing with his answer. He can tell his story as long as he likes. However, I point out that under the Standing Orders there is a requirement that an answer have at least some relevance to the question that has been asked. I asked him, as the responsible Minister, whether he knows of another fraud within his department.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Again I point out to the Leader of the Opposition that it is the prerogative of a Minister to answer a question as he chooses.

Mr McKECHNIE: At the time of the dispute, the workers within the electricity industry at Stanthorpe and Warwick—and I believe another depot may have been

involved—stated that they would contact SEA and ascertain the reason for the requested strike. The very next day, an officer of SEA was sent to the area to explain the position to those workers. I believe that both the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Nudgee (Mr Vaughan) were involved in that dispute.

Let me get back to the point. The ETU and those men who attempt to create so much smear and innuendo in this Parliament refused to reply to the workers. Consequently, those men did not strike.

A special State council meeting of the ETU was held in Warwick. Mr Neal Kane and the present Leader of the Opposition attended that meeting. The Leader of the Opposition attempts to bully people around the place.

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Port Curtis under Standing Order No. 123A for his contempt for the Chair. I will take no more comments from him, whether they are under his breath or otherwise.

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warned the honourable member for Port Curtis under Standing Order No. 123A. He will now leave the Chamber.

Whereupon the honourable member for Port Curtis withdrew from the Chamber.

Mr McKECHNIE: At that meeting, both Mr Warburton and Mr Kane attempted to get those workers to promise that they would never again disobey an order to strike.

Mr Warburton: I rise to a further point of order. Mr Speaker, I respect your ruling in regard to this matter. However, I point out that Standing Order No. 70 of the Standing Rules and Orders states that "The following general rules shall apply. . .", and states in (ii) that "An Answer shall be relevant to the Question."

If that rule is contained within the Standing Orders of this Parliament, surely the Minister can answer whether or not he is aware of another fraud within his department.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the Leader of the Opposition that also under Standing Order No. 70 an answer cannot be insisted upon.

Mr Warburton interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! That is exactly what I said to the Leader of the Opposition. I again point out that the way in which a Minister chooses to answer a question is his own prerogative.

Mr McKECHNIE: I am informed that the Leader of the Opposition was one of the leading bully-boys at that meeting of the State council in Warwick. Both Mr Kane and the Leader of the Opposition attempted to obtain a promise from those men that they would never disobey an order to strike again. What happened? At the time, Mr Kane was ill and did not take much part in the discussion, but the Leader of the Opposition was packed off back to Brisbane. Those were the sort of tactics that he adopted as a union-leader, and they are the sort of tactics that he has demonstrated this year.

I am not aware of any fraud in my department. However, quite obviously, I will have the matter checked out.

Building Industry

Mr NEAL: In directing a question to the Minister for Works and Housing, I refer to an article in today's *Daily Sun* in which Senator Gerry Jones claims that the Queensland building industry is on the point of collapse. I ask the Minister to outline the present situation.

Mr WHARTON: I have seen the claim by Senator Jones in the paper. As usual, Senator Jones said that the situation is due to the mismanagement of the State's economy

by the Queensland Government. He is wrong. He is trying to turn the situation around. The problem is created by the Federal Government.

Last night, I was at a Queensland Master Builders Association dinner at which Mr John Beech, the retiring president of the association, said that the decline in the State's building industry would have disastrous consequences for the industry, associated industries and the community generally. An analysis of the June quarter shows——

Mr Burns: This is a question without notice.

Mr WHARTON: That is all right. I learnt the pattern from the honourable member for Lytton. He has a book of clippings. I have only one article from today's paper. The honourable member has a sugar-bag full of them. He has so many that he cannot handle them and does not know anything about them.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There should be no debate in the House at this stage.

Mr WHARTON: I will show the House the attitude of the famous Tom Burns, and honourable members will see how he goes. I will be fair to all concerned.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Goss: Why don't you get the facts later?

Mr WHARTON: No, I could not. The article about Senator Jones states——

“He called for immediate action to save the flagging industry from total collapse.

‘In the last six months we have seen a rapid decline in building activity and immediate action must be taken,’ he said.

He blamed the Federal Government's changes to negative gearing, the introduction of capital gains tax and failure to give building societies the same support as banks for the building crisis.

Mr Beech said the capital gains tax had forced many investors to withdraw from the market causing a shortage of rental property.

He attacked the Federal Government's \$150 million subsidy of Australian Banks.

‘In Queensland, the permanent building societies were the main source of finance for the housing sector and we believe the Federal Government should have given them equal assistance,’ he said.”

Have honourable members ever heard the likes of that! Senator Gerry Jones, of all persons, who used to be in this House, claimed that it is the Queensland Government's fault, whereas it is all the fault of the high-interest-rate policy of the Federal Government. Its policy is causing unemployment.

Certainly, the building industry has declined. In fact, only Victoria and the Northern Territory show any increase at all. Senator Jones agrees with that. Therefore, it has been shown clearly that the country as a whole has been mismanaged. The responsibility for that mismanagement rests fairly and squarely with the Commonwealth Labor Government's high-interest-rate policy and anti-investment policy, which are scaring investors out of the building industry.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Would honourable members please settle down and be quiet.

Peace Movement in Australia

Mr NEAL: I ask the Minister for Education: Is he aware of a report in today's *Australian* stating that the Prime Minister was last night criticised from within the ALP after suggesting that elements of the Australian peace movement were under the influence

of the Soviet Union? What are the implications of Mr Hawke's suggestion concerning a peace studies course in Queensland schools?

Mr POWELL: I am very interested in the article in today's *Australian*. I have always tried to convince people of the therapeutic value of Queensland, and particularly my electorate. It seems that, as a result of his visit, Mr Hawke has improved, because at long last he is saying the same thing as I have been saying, that is, that there is a link between the peace movement and the Soviet Union.

I wonder whether the ALP in Queensland today will follow that latest lead by "Mr Charisma" as he tries to defend his falling popularity, which is going down faster than the Australian dollar. I understand that, in Victoria today, a Button is worth more than a Halfpenny.

The link provided by the Prime Minister between the peace movement and the Soviet Union confirms what the Queensland Government has been saying all this year on the subject of peace studies in schools. There is no way that the Government will waste the time of schoolchildren in Queensland by introducing a subject called peace studies. In Queensland, the Government ensures that children understand what peace is all about by commemorating Anzac Day and Remembrance Day. Schoolchildren are reminded of what real peace is all about and how hard it is to win. I am certainly delighted that the Prime Minister has come out in support of the Queensland Government in that fashion.

Contract Tenders for Prison Construction Projects

Mr BURNS: In directing a fair dinkum question to the Minister for Works and Housing—bearing in mind that he answered his Dorothy Dix question earlier—I refer to an admission made by the Minister for Corrective Services, Administrative Services and Valuation (Mr Muntz) that the Department of Corrective Services and the Department of Works have been working with Thiess Watkins on plans for the construction of new prisons, and I ask: Is it correct that the Government has already decided that any gaol construction work will be carried out by Thiess Watkins? Whatever happened to the contract tender system that gives all Queensland building contractors a fair chance to gain Government contracts?

Mr WHARTON: That is a very good question. Surely the honourable member would know the difficulties that relate to accommodation in prisons.

Mr Burns: Is Thiess Watkins going to get it all?

Mr WHARTON: The honourable member has asked me the question, and he should allow me to answer it. He should be quiet for a moment.

All members of the Opposition know—or at least they should know—of the need for prison accommodation. It is a very important matter. As all honourable members would know, there is a pressing need for accommodation in prisons in Queensland. If members of the Opposition do not know, they should know; if they do not know, I am telling them now.

Obviously, any Government worth its salt would be planning to construct prison complexes. Such matters need to be considered well in advance. The process is protracted and involved, and it is not just a matter of picking out a plan and calling tenders. A great deal of documentation has to be prepared.

Mr Burns: Is Watkins going to get it all?

Mr WHARTON: The honourable member should know that the documentation is being prepared and that the matter is under consideration.

Mr Burns: Will tenders be called?

Mr WHARTON: Tenders? When the stage is reached at which assessment of the documentation is to be made, of course there will be consideration of that documentation. There will be consideration of the matter.

Mr Burns: Is Thiess Watkins going to get it all?

Mr WHARTON: The honourable member is so argumentative. I say this to the honourable member: the Government embarked on a \$600m Special Major Capital Works Program, which was not supported by the Opposition. The Opposition has criticised the Government about the program.

During implementation of the \$600m program, the projects were controlled by project-managers. The honourable member knows that the term "project management" means that an invited contractor submits a tender for management of the project for a fee. The contracting process depends on subcontractors. It is the subcontractors who really make the contract.

Mr Burns: No.

Mr WHARTON: They do, and the honourable member knows that. The \$600m Special Major Capital Works Program will be completed this year. It has been a wonderful exercise in development on the part of the Government. The Opposition should give credit to the Government for spending such a large amount of money. Monuments to the Government's building program are spread throughout the State. One only has to look at George Street and Queen Street. In addition, the Government has provided 37 new schools throughout the State, as well as new court houses.

Mr Burns: Thiess Watkins is going to get it all. You won't answer the question.

Mr WHARTON: I draw that to the honourable member's attention because the Special Major Capital Works Program was carried out in a project-management style. It has long been accepted by honourable members that the Queensland Government has done a great job. All the workers involved in the Special Major Capital Works Program were employed by private enterprise. Private enterprise has shown the way, and it will do so again in the construction of prison accommodation.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! This being a day allotted to Supply, the time for questions has now expired.

Mr CAMPBELL: I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CAMPBELL: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

At 12 noon,

In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, the House went into Committee of Supply.

SUPPLY

Resumption of Committee—Estimates—Third and Fourth Allotted Days

Estimates-in-Chief

Water Resources and Maritime Services

Queensland Water Resources Commission

Hon. M. J. TENNI (Barron River—Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services) (12.1 p.m.): I move—

"That \$43,366,400 be granted for 'Queensland Water Resources Commission'."

I now present the Estimates of the Queensland Water Resources Commission and the Department of Harbours and Marine.

Before dealing with them, I wish to acknowledge the great contribution to the development of water resources and maritime services in this State made by the late John Goleby.

As Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services, John Goleby had a keen appreciation of the needs and aspirations of that portfolio. In particular, he saw an urgent need for the injection of additional funds to allow the early completion of a number of major water resource projects in Queensland. It is to his lasting credit that the 1984-85 State Budget included an additional \$100m for water resource development through the Special Major Capital Works Program.

I also pay tribute to the excellent service given by the former commissioner, Mr Don Beattie, who retired this year. I am very confident that the new commissioner, Mr Tom Fenwick, will give long and capable service to this State in water resource development.

I am sure that honourable members will be pleased to see the extensive works program planned by the commission for 1986-87, involving an expenditure of \$178.6m. That is clear evidence that the Queensland Government is as strongly committed as ever to the development and conservation of Queensland's water resources. In fact, it is true to say that Queensland has by far the most active water resource development program of any State in Australia. As the projects currently under construction are completed, the State's capability to supply water for irrigation, mining, power generation and urban purposes will be significantly increased.

At present, the commission owns, operates and maintains 21 dams and 84 weirs with a storage capacity of 4 200 000 ML. With the completion of the giant Burdekin Falls Dam, and other dams and weirs now under construction, the capacity of commission storages will increase to almost 7 000 000 ML within the next four years.

The commission provides water to irrigate 128 000 ha of agricultural land. In addition, water is supplied to power stations at Collinsville, Callide, Tarong and Swanbank; to the Barron Falls hydro-electric station at Kuranda for power generation; to 40 cities and towns for urban purposes and to 14 mining projects.

The total volume of water supplied for urban and industrial purposes in 1985-86 was some 370 000 ML while some 465 000 ML were supplied for irrigation purposes within the seven constituted irrigation areas and 13 irrigation projects.

The commission enters 1986-87 with storage in its major dams and weirs at an average of 74 per cent of the total designed capacity, compared to 86 per cent at this time last year. In south-east Queensland, a number of storages serving the Gold Coast and Albert shires are well below 50 per cent of capacity, and restrictions are already in force. Honourable members will also be aware that about 20 per cent of the State has been declared drought-stricken.

The works undertaken by the commission range from major projects, serving both well-established and developing communities, to the development of improvements to individual holdings. They include all aspects of water use, including stock, domestic, urban, irrigation, mining and power generation covering both surface and ground-water supplies.

The total expenditure by the commission from all sources amounts to \$240m. This is provided from the following—Consolidated Revenue Fund, \$43.3m, Loan Fund, \$291,005 and Trust and Special Funds, \$196.6m. Expenditure from the Trust and Special Funds includes \$2.5m from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

A major feature of the funding is an allocation of some \$52m to bring expenditure for the last three financial years to \$100m under the Special Major Capital Works Program. This program has allowed work on eight projects, namely the Eton and

Bundaberg Irrigation Areas, the Lower Mary River Irrigation Project, the Mareeba-Dimbulah Irrigation area, the Barker-Barambah project, Callide Dam Stage 2, Leslie Dam Stage 2 and the access road for the Burdekin Falls Dam to be accelerated.

The additional funding has also allowed work to be started on eight new projects, including the Gylanda Weir on the Dawson River, Proserpine Dam, the Lockyer Valley recharge weirs—of course, there has been strong representation from the member for Lockyer (Mr FitzGerald) for those recharge weirs—the Tartrus Weir on the Mackenzie River, the John Goleby Weir on the Burnett River, Dyers Lagoon near Laidley, a recharge weir in the Callide Valley and Lake Clarendon near Gatton.

Of those projects, the access road to the Burdekin Falls Dam, two recharge weirs in the Lockyer Valley and the installation of radial gates on Leslie Dam have been completed. It is expected that Callide Dam Stage 2, John Goleby Weir, Gylanda Weir, Lake Dyer, the Lockyer Creek Weirs and Tartrus Weir will be completed in 1986-87.

Significant progress has also been achieved on the remaining projects. Depending on the level of future funding, the Lower Mary River project should be completed in 1987, the Eton Irrigation Area in 1990 and the Bundaberg Irrigation Area in 1991.

Mr Randell: Hear, hear!

Mr TENNI: I hear the support from the member for Mirani. He has been very, very supportive of the Eton scheme.

The other major sources of the trust funds are \$33m from non-repayable Commonwealth grants, comprising \$29m for the Burdekin Falls Dam and \$4m for the Bundaberg Irrigation Area.

The electricity industry has provided \$18.6m for water supplies to the Callide Power Station, while debenture borrowings accounted for \$65m.

Cyclone Winifred, which crossed the far-north Queensland coast last February, caused damage estimated at \$370,000 to the assets of the Herbert, Mulgrave and Johnstone Shire River Improvement Trusts. Extensive damage was caused, particularly by fallen trees blocking watercourses. Financial assistance under the natural disaster relief arrangements has been provided for the restoration of the damaged assets.

A \$1m allocation has been provided under the natural disaster relief arrangements for the clearing of trees in those watercourses in the river improvement trust areas of Johnstone, Mulgrave and Cardwell shires. I am sure that the honourable members who represent those areas—I see the member for Mourilyan (Mr Bill Eaton) is in the Chamber—would appreciate the value of clearing out those rivers before the next floods hit the area.

I now turn to the major works to be undertaken in 1986-87.

Burdekin project

Work on the giant Burdekin Falls Dam and irrigation area, south of Townsville, continues to dominate the program. The State Government remains strongly committed to this project, which is currently Australia's largest water resource development.

The lion's share of the cost of this vital north Queensland development is being met by the State Government. Queensland is meeting the full cost of \$302m to develop the irrigation area to serve some 500 new farms, which will be progressively phased into service from 1988.

To date, \$49.5m has been spent by the State Government to construct some 32km of main channels. During 1986-87 a further \$30.1m will be spent on extending the main channels a further 18km, and a start will be made on the reticulation and drainage works and the first pump station.

The State Government has also met the \$28m cost of the access road to the dam, which has now been completed. It is a beautiful road.

The Federal Government is meeting the full cost of \$128m for the main dam wall and two saddle dams. This year, funds from Canberra will total \$29m. It should have been \$30m.

It is essential that the Commonwealth continues to honour that commitment.

Callide Dam

During 1986-87, \$18.6m provided by the electricity industry will be spent to bring the project virtually to completion.

In association with the construction of the Awoonga-Callide pipeline, the storage capacity of the Callide Dam is to be increased by the installation of radial gates. Civil works have been completed and a contract awarded for the fabrication and installation of these gates, which will be completed in 1986-87 at a cost of \$2.7m.

Bundaberg project

Good progress is expected in 1986-87 on the Bundaberg Irrigation Scheme, which will supply water to one of Queensland's most important sugar districts.

The 1986-87 \$27.1m program will include the construction of the new Gayndah Weir on the Burnett River, the Bucca Weir on the Kolan River and the extension of the Isis irrigation system as far as the Gregory River.

Again, Queensland is meeting the lion's share of the cost, with \$23.1m from the State Government and \$4m from the Commonwealth in 1986-87. The entire project is scheduled for completion in 1991.

Barker-Barambah project

All preliminary work for the Barker-Barambah irrigation project near Kingaroy should be completed in this financial year.

In addition, the Redgate diversion pipeline will be built and a contract will be awarded for the construction of the Bjelke-Petersen Dam, which should be completed in 1988.

In 1986-87 expenditure will total \$9.9m.

A total of \$17.2m has been spent on resumptions for the dam, construction of the Joe Sippel Weir and on investigation, design and preliminary site works. I should imagine that the honourable member for Rockhampton (Mr Braddy) would not agree with the resumption of land for the purpose of building dams.

Eton irrigation project

Good progress has continued on the construction of the Kinchant Dam and Mirani Weir, as well as associated channelworks to provide water to some 250 cane farms in the Eton mill area near Mackay.

Temporary pumping facilities on the Pioneer River, Stage 1 of the Kinchant Dam and Mirani diversion channel, have also been completed at a cost of \$53.6m.

Mr Randell: Very good.

Mr TENNI: The honourable member for Mirani says that that is very good.

During 1986-87, \$12.6m will be provided to complete the raising of Kinchant Dam and Mirani Weir and to construct further reticulation works.

Lake Dyer project

Construction of the \$8.7m Lake Dyer project in the Locker Valley has commenced.

That project will provide supplementary surface water supplies as well as supplies to assist ground-water recharge in the Lockyer Valley. To date, \$651,000 has been spent on investigation and design.

In 1986-87, \$6.8m from the Special Major Capital Works Program will be expended to construct the Lake Dyer embankment and pipeline to divert water into and out of the lake.

Lower Mary River Project

The Special Major Capital Works Program will provide \$2.5m in 1986-87 for the Lower Mary River Project, which should be completed late next year. A total of \$5.5m will be spent this year to complete the Owanyilla diversion channel and the Walker Point reticulation system and to commence work on the Main Roads reticulation system.

Proserpine Dam

There has been a growing need to provide secure water supplies for Proserpine, Bowen and the coastal resorts of Airlie Beach, Cannonvale and Shute Harbour. The introduction of the Special Major Capital Works Program has allowed a start to be made on the Proserpine Dam, which will ensure that abundant water supplies will be available for irrigators, urban residents and tourists.

During 1986-87, \$4.6m will be spent on building the access road to the Proserpine Dam and the site village. In addition, foundation stripping and the construction of the diversion conduit should be commenced. The project is scheduled for completion in late 1989.

Other projects

Other projects which will be funded from the Special Major Capital Works Program during 1986-87 include the following: \$3.1m for the Gylanda Weir, \$2.6m for the John Goleby Weir, \$2.1m for the Tartrus Weir, \$998,000 for the Callide Valley recharge weirs and \$952,000 for the Lockyer Valley recharge weirs. All these projects will be completed in 1986-87.

In addition, \$2m has been set aside for the continuation of works in the Upper Condamine to make use of water stored by the Leslie Dam Stage 2 project. Although progress has been delayed because of difficulties in obtaining the agreement of land-holders to aspects of the diversion into the north branch, it is hoped that construction of the diversion works will commence this year.

Drainage investigations in the super-wet belt of north Queensland have been continued. Presently, there are 18 schemes in operation, draining a total area of 31 000 ha on 429 holdings. A further two schemes have been advertised recently before being formally constituted. At the present time, a number of drainage schemes in the Innisfail, Tully and Mackay areas are under active investigation.

The commission has a heavy responsibility to fairly and equitably distribute the State's water resources. In these times of increasing costs and competition for increased supplies for urban, industrial and rural use, a constant review of water management and project operation techniques is very necessary. The trend in recent years towards greater use of water-harvesting from natural stream flows is becoming even more widespread.

There has been significant private capital investment in water-harvesting installations in many parts of the State. These activities have been closely monitored by the commission to ensure that this investment is not jeopardised by uncontrolled over-use.

The commission clearly recognises the need to ensure cost increases and that increases in water charges are kept to an absolute minimum. In this way, the burden on water-users, faced with many cost increases in almost every sector, can be minimised. The operation and maintenance of works are financed from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and this year will require expenditure of \$13m.

In recent years, the commission has utilised semi-Government borrowings to finance the construction of some permanent works. The interest and redemption payments on these borrowings will also be covered by \$13.2m provided from the Consolidated Revenue Fund in 1986-87.

As in previous years, the Consolidated Revenue Fund will contribute funds for water resources assessment, which includes the preparation of a comprehensive record on the quantity and quality of Queensland's water resources. The commission maintains a program of measuring, recording and analysis of stream flows and water-level monitoring in a large number of ground-water areas. In 1986-87, the Consolidated Revenue Fund will contribute \$1.9m of the \$3.5m needed for water resources assessment.

Other sources of funds include \$1.1m in debenture-borrowing and \$118,000 from the Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission. It is disappointing to note that the Commonwealth has discontinued funding for this program. This decision by the Hawke Government fails to recognise the important role that water resource assessment plays in the development and conservation of our future and present water resources.

Salaries related to the operational activities, licensing, services and administration of the commission will require \$10.1m this year. The Consolidated Revenue Fund will provide \$5.6m for such outlays as incidental expenses, equipment, pay-roll tax and the cash equivalent of long service leave.

The revenue from the operation of irrigation areas and projects for 1985-86 amounted to \$13.3m, giving a surplus of \$1.4m over the actual costs of operation, maintenance and administration. The charges for these areas and projects are designed to cover the costs for the year and to provide a small surplus for the recoupment of the capital costs of various projects. However, the Government is very conscious of the effect increased water charges can have on farm overheads.

After taking local and market conditions into account, during the year the commission provided rebates to irrigators and sugar-millers in the Burdekin, Eton, Bundaberg and Mary River irrigation areas. In addition, rebates were also given to rice-growers in the Burdekin and Mareeba-Dimbulah irrigation areas. More recently, rebates of increases to water charges for the 1985-86 year were given to all cotton-growers in the Emerald, Dawson Valley and St George irrigation areas and coffee-growers in the Mareeba-Dimbulah irrigation area.

Cash receipts for 1986-87 are expected to be as follows—

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Water and drainage charges | \$14.9m |
| Other charges | \$1.3m |

Those receipts compare with actual receipts during 1985-86 of \$12.4m and \$1.3m respectively.

During 1985-86, 1 622 applications for technical and financial assistance were received and 1 643 were finalised under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Scheme. Because of drought conditions, advances during the year totalled \$1.6m, an increase of \$802,000 on the previous year. It is anticipated that up to \$1.6m in loans will be required for assistance with farm water supply works in 1986-87.

The Water Act provides for the creation of water boards, drainage boards and bore-water supply boards. Queensland currently has 22 water boards, six bore-water supply boards and 18 drainage boards, which are commonly referred to as quangos by the Labor Party in this State. However, those boards are doing an extremely good job at very low cost. Those boards, which generally are composed of local people elected by the rate-payers, together with a Government representative, are some of the most democratic and valuable bodies in the water industry in this State. Little or no public funds are involved, as rates are raised in the area from those people directly served by the boards. However, the boards are eligible for a subsidy on the cost of new capital works within their area. For 1986-87, \$90,000 has been provided for this purpose.

As honourable members would be aware, the commission's activities are spread widely throughout the State. The local needs of water-users are satisfied by country offices as well as a number of construction site offices. Following an examination of the commission's structure, a two-tier structure of regional and district offices has been adopted from 1 July. This will allow for greater decentralisation and the delegation of responsibility and decision-making to local areas in which the problems exist.

I turn now to the Department of Harbours and Marine. That department has the very important responsibility of ensuring that our ports and harbours are developed and maintained for the benefit of all Queenslanders and the economic development of our State. In addition, the Department of Harbours and Marine has the responsibility of ensuring the safety of life and property on our waterways and the conservation and protection of one of Queensland's most important natural assets, our beaches.

The department operates the following funds:

- the Consolidated Revenue Fund;
- the Beach Protection Authority Fund;
- the Harbours Corporation Fund;
- the Quarantine Incineration Fund; and
- the State Loan Fund.

I turn firstly to the Consolidated Revenue Fund, which amounts to \$36,957,471 for 1986-87. That allocation comprises special provisions for the Beach Protection Fund and for small-craft facilities within the Harbours Corporation Fund; provision for cash equivalent of long service leave payments on retirements during the year; provision of \$350,000 for the publication of two books, namely *Guide to Fishes and Harbours and Marine—Port and Harbour Development in Queensland from 1824-1985*; and operational provisions including salaries and contingencies. A further \$20,000 is provided towards the initial costs of the book *Seafoods of Queensland*.

Those operational costs are met to a significant degree by the amount of revenue that is expected to accrue to the State as a direct result of the department's activities. On all shipping using Queensland ports the department levies conservancy dues to finance the provision and maintenance of all navigational aids within those ports. Those dues, together with pilotage charges, are estimated to reach \$18.6m during the year; motor boat registration, licences, and survey fees, a further \$3.5m; engineering and administrative services, \$3.3m; and sundry collections, approximately \$2.8m.

Trade through Queensland ports totalled 88.2 million tonnes of cargo with 3 477 ships calling at those ports during 1985-86. Hay Point handled the largest quantity of cargo—30 million tonnes—with Gladstone handling 24.3 million tonnes, Brisbane 13.1 million tonnes and Weipa 8.4 million tonnes. Developments at Gladstone, Hay Point and Abbot Point have had a significant effect on the State's exports.

The first stage of the Dalrymple Bay coal-export facility at Hay Point has been completed and that facility, together with the existing Hay Point facility, will have an annual export capacity of 40 million tonnes. To cater for new mine developments, provision has been made for further expansion of those facilities as required.

The Abbot Point facility will initially provide for an export capacity of 6.5 million tonnes per annum. The port of Gladstone has a coal-export capacity of 27.5 million tonnes.

The port of Hay Point now has two coal-loading facilities. The original facility was developed for the export of coal from the fields of the Central Queensland Coal Associates. It is owned and operated by those associates for the export of their own output. Last year, 16.5 million tonnes of coal was exported from that facility.

The second facility, known as the Dalrymple Bay coal terminal, is committed to the export of coal that is mined by four companies at German Creek, Oaky Creek, Riverside and Blair Athol. A total of 13.5 million tonnes of coal was exported from that terminal last year. Hay Point is the first port on the eastern seaboard to export more than 30 million tonnes in one year.

The development of the new port of Abbot Point, which cost about \$180m, will provide for the berthing of vessels up to 165 000 tonnes dead weight for the export of coal initially from the Collinsville and Newlands mines.

Honourable members are aware that the rapid development of the vast natural resources of this State requires tremendous amounts of money to be invested in port development.

These recent port developments will play a very significant part in the economic activity of the State for many years to come. The growth in port facilities is placing increasing demands upon our pilotage service and navigational aids branch. It is essential that safety of life at sea receives a high priority both in the development of technical skills and equipment and in providing the finances for such developments to take place.

I turn now to the department's Marine Affairs Division, which is financed through the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the State Loan Fund. The outlay from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the 1986-87 financial year is \$17,922,750, comprising \$7.1m in salaries and \$10.7m in contingencies. In addition, \$6.1m has been allocated in the State loan budget for capital expenditure. Included in that amount is \$4.3m for expenditure on navigation aids, marine complexes, radio communications and vessels.

An amount of \$1.7m is to be spent on capital development works in Cairns and Thursday Island under the Torres Strait fisheries management program. Of that, \$658,483 is to be provided for a vessel and the balance on a depot and houses at Thursday Island. That operation is fully funded by the Commonwealth Government under the Torres Strait agreement.

During 1985-86, the department's pilots performed 5 378 pilotages and 407 intraport movements, which produced revenue of \$9.1m. Income from pilotage charges for the current year is estimated at \$10m.

The Pilot Service, which has a complement of 53 marine officers as harbour-masters and pilots, services 14 ports and supplies a 24-hour on-demand service 365 days of the year, regardless of weather. In addition, radar and signal station crews at Caloundra and Lytton maintain a 24-hour watch for shipping in the port of Brisbane.

The development of all ports is a continuous process to cater for the needs of the larger vessels coming on to the coast, the increasing trade tonnage, and shipping volume of the future. Because of the advent of larger, faster and better-equipped vessels entering Queensland ports, over the last two years the department has commissioned four new 15-metre high-speed fibreglass pilot vessels that are also designed for search and rescue purposes. The vessels, together with a large navigational aids vessel, cost some \$2m. Those developments, together with a program of overhaul to existing vessels of the pilot fleet, will allow the Pilot Service to maintain its high standard of efficiency and service.

During the past financial year, a helicopter pilot transfer service was introduced to the ports of Hay Point and Gladstone. At Hay Point, that will dispense with the traditional use of a pilot vessel and provide a faster and more efficient method of putting a pilot on board large bulk-carriers. Likewise, that method of service will supplement the launch service at Gladstone for use on bulk-carriers.

Revenue for the maintenance of navigation aids throughout Queensland is raised by conservancy dues levied on shipping. Conservancy dues income for the current year is estimated at \$8.5m. Income of \$7.8m was received in 1985-86.

The department, which maintains the navigational aids system in all Queensland ports, is now responsible for over 2 200 navigational aids throughout coastal waters. Navigational aids along the Queensland coast are being regularly upgraded in order to maintain a highly efficient service to shipping.

The Brisbane River leads system is currently being rationalised and upgraded at a cost of \$750,000. The cost of upgrading beacons at the port of Weipa will be in the vicinity of \$300,000. A program costing \$2.3m is continuing in Moreton Bay to replace buoys with beacons within the shipping channels to provide more accurate navigation for shipping.

During the year, a new \$365,000 navigational aids vessel, the Douglas Cairns, was stationed at the Southport marine complex. The vessel, the first to be built exclusively for that type of work, will be put to maximum use to maintain local navigation equipment.

Additional navigational aids and improvements to existing navigational aids were carried out at the Mary River, Snapper Creek at Tin Can Bay, Townsville, Port Douglas and Cooktown during the year.

During 1985-86, the \$1.7m Department of Harbours and Marine complex at Townsville was completed. This new complex will accommodate staff from all sections of the department, as well as a pilot launch wharf.

Commercial vessels in Queensland including hire-dinghies, ferries, tourist launches, intrastate cargo vessels, sea-going fishing vessels, harbour and river ships, and tugs and lighters are required to be inspected annually by shipwright or engineer surveyors. Those surveyors are employed by the department, and are stationed at Brisbane, Bundaberg, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns.

During the last financial year, the field staff made 5 810 individual survey inspections. Income from survey fees is estimated at \$548,000. Surveys of ships are a safety measure for the protection of life and property at sea, and must be regarded as an essential community service.

Over 91 000 private pleasure vessels registered in Queensland are now using the waterways.

Mr Simpson: That is a tremendous number of vessels.

Mr TENNI: It is a tremendous number.

Boating and fishing activities continue to be a major recreational pastime for Queenslanders and for many interstate and overseas visitors. Queensland's ideal climate and accessibility to productive fishing grounds make our unique coast the water sport playground of Australia. With that in mind, the department is working very hard to impress upon the boating public the need for safe boating practice.

Provision of \$251,000 has been made in the Budget for the 1986-87 boating education program. The Government believes that is very important. In the interests of all boat-owners, the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol plays an important role in policing the requirements of the Fisheries Act and regulations. During the last financial year, action was taken or was pending on 1 983 breaches of the Queensland Marine Act, the Fisheries Act and the Fishing Industry Organization and Marketing Act. Penalties imposed by the courts for breaches of those Acts during 1985-86 totalled \$164,653.

The taking of female and undersized crabs is still the most prevalent offence among amateur and professional fishermen. A total of 553 illegal nets, crab-pots and dillies were seized during the year, and their users were prosecuted.

The Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol will be further involved in surveillance of fisheries in the Torres Strait and along the east coast of Queensland as part of a Commonwealth-State funded program under the Torres Strait Treaty between Australia and Papua New Guinea. However, I must say how disappointed I am that the Hawke Government has still not seen its way clear to accept the tender proposed by the State Government for a new patrol boat for Torres Strait duties. In 1986-87, there is a total operating budget of \$800,000 for the program, which is shared equally by the State and Commonwealth.

An amount of \$90,000 has been provided in the 1986-87 Budget to allow the department to police the management plan for the East Coast Trawl, extending over 3 400 km of coastline incorporating Queensland, New South Wales and Commonwealth waters to 200 nautical miles in some areas. The program will seek to maintain a balance between catching capacity and yield within the area.

The Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol is continuing air, coastal and land surveillance of the Queensland barramundi set-net fishery. Maximum surveillance is required during the closed season between November and January. The barramundi set-net fishery in the Gulf and Cape area is valued in excess of \$9m. During the last closed season, 50 illegally used nets were seized by the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol.

The netting of sharks off popular beaches was commenced in 1962, and continues to provide protection at 62 beaches using 46 nets and 201 drumlines.

Mr Simpson: It has been extremely effective.

Mr TENNI: I thank the honourable member for Coorooora. I agree that it has been very, very effective.

During the 1985-86 shark-fishing season, a total of 983 sharks were taken by net and drumline. The total catch, excluding pups, since the start of the program, is 28 770 sharks.

Although the shark-meshing operations cannot be claimed to be an infallible method of protection from individual shark attack, it is significant that no attacks have occurred in protected areas since the program commenced. An amount of \$709,000 has been allocated to continue the program.

The next Vote within the Consolidated Revenue Fund for consideration is that of the administration division of the department. That division provides administrative and clerical support for the whole of the department in the areas of accounts, records, correspondence and management organisational services. The services performed by that division and by the works division for the branches of the department funded from Trust and Special Funds are recovered by raising internal charges on the funds for credit to consolidated revenue receipts.

The proposed expenditure of the works division is next to be considered. That division is a service unit supplying engineering services to the other divisions of the department and to harbour boards and local authorities. An amount of \$7.8m, comprising \$3.3m in salaries and \$4.5m in contingencies, has been provided from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for 1986-87. Included in those salaries is an amount of \$666,400, which is provided for those officers who administratively come under the works division but who are employed in the small craft facilities branch and the Beach Protection Authority.

Also included in the contingencies is the publication cost of the books *Guide to Fishes* and *Harbours and Marine—Port and Harbour Development in Queensland 1824-1985*, and the initial preparation costs of the book *Seafoods of Queensland*—three wonderful books. Proceeds from the sale of those publications will be credited to consolidated revenue.

There are two further provisions from the Consolidated Revenue Fund—an amount to be credited to Beach Protection Fund and an amount to be credited to the Harbours Corporation Fund. Those two items provide for transfers to the Trust and Special Funds to meet the operational commitments of those special funds. That expenditure will be further explained later in the presentation of my Estimates.

The main expenditure commitment dealt with so far has related to navigation and engineering activities of the department. I turn now to the activities of the Harbours Corporation of Queensland, which is responsible for those harbours for which no harbour boards are constituted.

The Harbours Corporation is charged under the Harbours Act with the management and control of the harbours of Hay Point, Abbot Point, Bowen, Weipa, Lucinda, Innisfail, Mourilyan, Thursday Island and Maryborough and the boat harbours of Mooloolaba, Rosslyn Bay, Urangan, Snapper Creek and Bowen. Control of expenditure for this part of the department's activities is provided through the Harbours Corporation Trust Fund. Income to the trust fund is generated from such charges as harbour dues and berthage charges levied on the users of each port. Development within each port is financed from

surplus revenue, loan raisings and, in some instances, port-user capital contributions. Income from all sources for 1986-87 is estimated at \$184.9m, while expenditure for 1986-87 is estimated at \$205m.

The budget for the corporation for 1986-87 is \$205m, of which \$114.6m constitutes transfers and special payments, leaving \$90.4m for expenditure on the operation, maintenance and development of ports and boat harbours. The main source of income for the Harbours Corporation to meet that expenditure is from special harbour dues collections at both Dalrymple Bay and Abbot Point coal ports, as well as harbour dues from all harbours administered by the Harbours Corporation and interest earned on surplus funds.

At the harbour of Abbot Point, the onshore infrastructure costs will be met by contributions from the coal company, while the remaining offshore works will be funded by the Harbours Corporation.

In June 1985, the Harbours Corporation entered into agreements with the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal Pty Ltd and Utah Development Company Limited joint venture for the development of a tug harbour and associated facilities adjoining Half Tide Island at Hay Point, at an estimated cost of \$21m. Construction of the first stage of the tug harbour, which will be completed in early 1987, proceeded satisfactorily, at an expenditure of approximately \$10m last year.

In addition, \$3m has been allowed for dredging maintenance at Weipa harbour in anticipation of a requirement to remove silt in the channel. The extent of the dredging program will be dependent on weather conditions experienced in the Gulf during the cyclone season.

The Harbours Corporation interest and redemption commitments for the servicing of loans raised over the years is estimated to be \$4.5m for 1986-87.

Of that, about \$545,000 is in respect of loans raised for the provision of mooring facilities in boat harbours. A levy is made on each boat harbour management authority to partly defray the cost of servicing those loans. A further \$536,000 of the interest and redemption is met by contributions from CSR and the Sugar Board in respect of loans raised for the construction of bulk-handling facilities for molasses and sugar at the Mourilyan and Lucinda harbours.

Included in the Harbours Corporation Trust Fund are grants from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and State Loan Fund towards the cost of construction and maintenance of small-craft facilities throughout Queensland. Those facilities include breakwaters, boat ramps, public jetties and access dredging to the facilities. A total of \$1m has been provided in 1986-87 for those facilities. The provision of small-craft facilities within the State is a most important issue, both for our boating public and for our tourist industry. There are now 220 public boat ramps, 71 public jetties and 14 Crown boat harbours throughout Queensland.

Expenditure on small-craft facilities in 1985-86 amounted to \$3.1m, of which approximately \$860,000 was spent on public jetties and \$1m on the maintenance and development of existing boat harbours. More than 20 years ago the Queensland Government commenced construction of the Manly Boat Harbour in Moreton Bay, which was the first of a series of boat harbours designed to foster recreational boating. The intention of the Government has been to set in place a basic infrastructure for a viable, thriving harbour. This has already been achieved for 10 harbours. Further development of other boat harbours in Queensland will be carried out progressively, either as part of a future capital works program or by a private developer's being encouraged and permitted to invest in a harbour.

At present, Crown boat harbours provide approximately 2 000 moorings for use by the boating public and facilities for commercial fishermen, areas for boating clubs and rescue organisations and lease areas for marine-based commercial operators and industries, in addition to launching ramps and car and trailer parking areas. The cost involved in maintaining and developing boat harbours has grown significantly. The State Government's

policy of encouraging the participation by private enterprise to develop new boat harbours and marinas for the public will continue.

Although it is not directly controlled through parliamentary provisions, the development of the harbour board ports remains a prime consideration of my portfolio. There are eight harbour boards or port authorities in Queensland.

During the year the Port of Brisbane Authority has continued its development of Fisherman Islands with the construction of the No. 3 container terminal. The terminal, which is due for completion in October 1987 at a cost of \$14m, will increase the overall container capacity by about one-third. The construction of the Sunstate cement facility, which includes the commissioning of a \$4.5m bagging plant, has now been completed. Last year saw the expenditure of \$571,000 on a start to the Whyte Island tug base, which will provide modern facilities near Fisherman Islands. A total of \$140,000 was spent in 1985-86 on the North-east Channel study involving investigations into the feasibility of establishing a new entry channel across Moreton Bay to Brisbane.

At Gladstone, 1985-86 saw the completion of the Auckland Point No. 2 wharf grain terminal and storage areas, at a cost of \$7.2m. During the year, \$2.8m was spent on a 1 200 tonnes per hour ship-loader and wharf extensions at Auckland Point.

At the Clinton coal facility, construction is almost complete on the \$4.8m extensions to service much larger vessels. Stockpile No. 8 was completed, at a further cost of \$2.8m, during the financial year. The board is also investigating the deepening of the outer harbour so that vessels of 200 000 tonnes dead weight will be able to sail from the port fully loaded. That would be a great achievement. It is expected that over the next two years an initial \$5m will be expended on a new 100-berth marina for Gladstone harbour.

In 1985-86, the Mackay Harbour Board continued with the construction of the northern breakwater wharf and associated dredging, at a total cost of \$2.3m.

The Townsville Harbour Board has now completed the removal of 275 000 tonnes of rock from Magazine Hill and the construction of an 1 800 metre breakwater off Benwell Road, enclosing 100 ha for future port industries, at a cost of \$1.8m.

During the year, the Cairns Port Authority continued construction of the commercial fishermen's wharf and associated land-based facilities in Smiths Creek, at a cost of \$1.4m. A total of \$600,000 was spent by the authority on dredging the shipping channel and swing basin, on additional mooring piles in Trinity Inlet and on foreshore reclamation.

Although not a harbour board in the traditional sense, the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, constituted by the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act of 1979, has the powers and functions of a harbour board. It has assumed management and control of the harbour functions in the waterways from the Logan River to the New South Wales border. By far the largest project undertaken by the authority was the new Gold Coast Seaway, which was officially opened last May.

Mr Jennings: It is a great asset.

Mr TENNI: As the honourable member for Southport says, it is a great asset. It is doing a wonderful job.

The long-term funding arrangements for the construction of the Gold Coast Seaway require a large annual contribution by the State Government towards the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. The authority itself will be required to make only a nominal contribution of \$200,000, escalated in line with the Consumer Price Index, towards the annual amortisation costs of the sea-way. In 1986-87 an amount of \$5.8m has been made available by the department for assistance to the authority for the amortisation of borrowings for capital expenditure on the sea-way entrance. It is a fact that south-east Queensland will reap enormous benefits from this safer and more reliable deep-water entrance to the Gold Coast and to the southern end of Moreton Bay, contrary to what all the knockers are saying. There is no doubt that, thanks to the sea-way entrance, the Gold Coast will become a major national as well as international boating destination. A comparison of surveys conducted on 20 May 1986 and recently shows clearly that

the entrance, in scouring itself to the designed depth, is acting exactly as engineers predicted.

The Consolidated Revenue Fund provides just over \$2m for the operation of the Beach Protection Authority, which is responsible for overcoming erosion problems along our vast coastline. An outlay of \$1.5m is provided for investigation into coastal behaviour and technical advice, mainly to local authorities, on measures to combat erosion. A total of \$400,000 has been provided for research and management of coastal sand-dunes. The balance of the funds, approximately \$120,000, provides for the day-to-day cost of running the authority by the department.

Between three and six years are required to collect sufficient data on the behaviour of any particular section of coastline and the ocean forces acting upon it, which vary from season to season. Investigation of ocean and coastal behaviour, therefore, forms a major portion of the work of the authority. This year, \$550,000 has been provided for data collection and data-processing alone.

As the ocean makes great demands on both the staff and the equipment involved in that form of data collection, the costs of investigating coastal behaviour are invariably very high. An amount of \$132,000 has been provided for the maintenance of existing equipment and the purchase of new equipment to be used for that work. That equipment includes electronic wave, wind and current recording systems as well as computing facilities designed to process the collected data. Nevertheless, the State Government believes that the protection of the State's beaches, one of its most important natural assets for recreation and tourism, is of the utmost importance.

I turn now to the Quarantine Incineration Fund which covers the expenditure on the operation of incinerators at 13 Queensland ports. The Commonwealth reimburses the operating, maintenance and administration costs incurred by boards and the Harbours Corporation of Queensland in the collection and disposal of garbage from ships.

In summary, the total outlay of the department in 1986-87 for the five funds I have discussed in detail is \$251,613,413.

In closing, I mention that the annual report of the Department of Harbours and Marine, which I tabled yesterday, does not on this occasion contain the usual financial certificates by the director and accountant of the department and the audit certificate by the Auditor-General for the Harbours Corporation Fund. That is due to the fact that at the time of the completion of the printing of the report for tabling, the cash transactions had been audited but the audit of the balance sheet allowing for accruals, depreciation, etc., had not been finalised. However, the audit has now been completed and the certificates issued.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I desire to inform honourable members that on the Vote proposed I will allow a full discussion on all of the Minister's departmental Estimates (Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund Account). For the information of honourable members, I point out that the administrative acts of the department are open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply.

Sitting suspended from 12.57 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (2.15 p.m.): I agree with many of the issues raised by the Minister in his presentation of the Estimates. Opposition members support many of the projects that are being initiated and carried out by the Government. However, the Opposition is concerned about the length of time that it has taken to implement some of them. The Minister said that Queensland has the largest number of water resources projects of any State in Australia. The reason for that is that Queensland is so far behind the other States. I do not blame the present Minister for Water Resources for that because he has been thrust into his job only recently. Queensland is going ahead in leaps and bounds in the development of water resources projects only because it is behind the other States.

In the six years that I have been a member of this Assembly I have found that in the Budget the Water Resources and Maritime Services portfolio has been given a minor role. It must be made known to Cabinet that more money must be made available in that area. After finance, water is the greatest need in this State. In the present economic climate, the most urgent problem that needs to be solved is a lack of finance. I would make a good Minister or a good Premier if somebody gave me all the money that I needed. There is a difference between Governments and political parties. They have different philosophies on how problems should be handled.

Governments are charged with that responsibility and they must show initiative. The Queensland Government has fared badly because of its failure to attach to water resources in this State the importance that should be given to it. After finance, the greatest shortage in this State is water. Queensland is a very large State and the greatest need in most areas is water. Town water should be provided in as many areas as possible. In some parts of the State that is a responsibility of local government. In many instances the Water Resources Commission is charged with the responsibility of conducting the initial investigations. Upon the completion of large projects undertaken by the Water Resources Commission or the Co-ordinator General, the responsibility for them is handed over to local authorities. Most of the major projects that have recently been completed are located in south-east Queensland. They are worthy projects and I do not knock them.

Despite the many millions of dollars that have been spent on projects in south-east Queensland, not far from this Chamber serious water shortages are occurring. The reason for that shortage is a matter of economics. I know that, at present, inquiries are taking place about the proposed Wolffdene dam. I have been informed that it will be 2005 or 2010 before that scheme can be initiated.

The Gold Coast is proclaimed as one of the world's greatest tourist areas. Some places on the Gold Coast do not have sewerage. Because of the critical water shortage on the Gold Coast, restrictions have been imposed. That has occurred because the Government has not looked ahead. The Queensland Government continually tells the people about the progress and development that is taking place in this State. Even though that development is taking place, the Government cannot sit back and allow Queensland to look after itself. The Government will need to show initiative and increase the water resources budget. I will certainly support the Minister in any efforts he makes to upgrade his portfolio so that more money is made available.

When I was appointed shadow Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services, I wrote to every local authority in Queensland informing it of my appointment in Queensland. I received a reply from about 95 per cent of shire councils. I said that should I visit those areas I would like to meet with representatives of those local authorities. I said that I would take on board any problems that had confronted them. I asked them specifically to inform me if a water supply shortage existed so that I could gauge the money that was required in a particular area. I think that I wrote to 134 local authorities in Queensland. The cost of bringing up to present-day standards the water supply scheme in those local authorities was more than \$200m. When I tell people about that, they often laugh at me and say, "That is not right." Over two years ago between \$30m and \$35m was spent on the Baroon Pocket Dam, which is on Obi Obi Creek. Honourable members know that the final cost of such projects is much larger than the estimated cost. That dam will service three local authority areas on the Sunshine Coast.

During the last 12 months the Proserpine Dam was constructed at a cost of \$35m. I believe that \$300m will need to be allocated for the dams and projects that are envisaged within the next few years.

Many of the centres in western Queensland, in particular the Cloncurry area, are suffering a severe water shortage. Although the costs involved in constructing dams in those western centres may not run to \$35m, millions or at least hundreds of thousands of dollars will be required to update their water supplies.

In my own electorate of Mourilyan, in particular at Mission Beach, a severe water shortage exists because of the development that is taking place. I am sure that the Minister is aware of that shortage.

Severe water problems also exist from time to time within the Herberton shire. The Mount Garnet area has other water supply problems. Almost half a million dollars is required within the Herberton shire to allow it to meet present-day demands. However, that sum does not cater for future development. I am concerned not only for my own electorate but for many other parts of the State as well. I realise that the Minister must cater to the needs of the whole State, and that is why I cannot emphasise too strongly that the Government must take cognisance of the fact that if an adequate water supply cannot be maintained—and I am asking only for an adequate water supply—future development cannot be expected.

The Bowen area also has water supply problems. I visited that area approximately 18 months ago, both before and during the drought. Because of problems associated with the water supply, a large alumina development project did not go ahead in the Bowen area. The local council could not come to agreement with the developer, who wanted to control the water supply. All honourable members would be aware that local authorities cannot allow development to go ahead and then hand over control of the water supply, because, after all, the local authorities are the custodians of the welfare of the rate-payers.

Those problems are some that I wish to point to in the short time that I have available. I now wish to indicate several ways in which the Government can save the people of Queensland money. On several occasions I have visited the site of the proposed Blacks Creek dam in the Pioneer Valley. That proposal will be a costly exercise. It will cost approximately \$165m. The Finch Hatton dam is also located in that area.

The Mackay City Council is presently undertaking a program in relation to town water supply for the Mackay city area. That program involves Stage 2 of the Dumbleton Weir. In the initial stages of the planning for that weir, the estimated cost was approximately \$8m. However, if that program were to be undertaken today, it would cost more than \$12m.

If the State Government initiated a project in the Finch Hatton Gorge and began building that dam, the dam would provide an additional water supply to the Mackay city area. That would represent a saving of \$12m to both the Mackay City Council and the rate-payers of Mackay. Because the Government is too slow in its implementation of the programs that have already been drawn up, the shire and city councils have found it necessary to borrow money in order to implement their water supply programs. They cannot afford to wait for the Government to act. Those local authorities have to borrow money and put themselves into debt, and at the present time, because the Government is so far behind in its programs, it is very difficult to service debts in local authority areas.

If that \$200m that I mentioned earlier could have been injected into the local authority areas two years ago, the water supplies within those areas would only be meeting present-day requirements. Therefore, even if \$200m is allocated, those local authorities will still be two years behind.

The majority of the projects that I have mentioned are three to five-year projects. As a result, the Government must look into the future and plan ahead. The Water Resources Commission has the manpower and the equipment available to go ahead with those programs if sufficient funds are provided. The commission provides a tremendous service to many communities.

I have travelled through many of the irrigation areas of Queensland, in particular those in the Emerald area and the Dawson Valley. The construction of a dam is presently being undertaken in the Dawson Valley in order to meet the irrigation needs of the area. Salinity problems arise in that area. The farmers are calling on the commission for

advice. Giving that advice takes time and also takes men away from the other jobs that they are required to do.

Mr Tenni: Do you agree that, in that case, not only should we put in more money but also the Commonwealth Government should put some money in, as it used to?

Mr EATON: I agree. More money should be collected for that.

The Government has a cargo-cult mentality. It wants someone else to put the money in. As I said earlier, I would be a good Minister or Premier if I could obtain all the money I wanted. Anybody could be. That is how the men are sorted out from the boys. It can be seen in the way they administer their departments and get across to the Treasury and the Cabinet that more money is needed for their departments. How they then initiate the projects will sort the men from the boys. The Minister and the Government should take note of that so that the money can be channelled into the projects.

In his report, the commissioner mentioned Mr Beattie, the retired commissioner. I had a good relationship with him and I look forward to a good relationship with the new commissioner and his staff. Quite often, constituents come to me with problems and I have to approach the commissioner and his staff for assistance, which I appreciate.

Page 11 of the commissioner's report, under the heading "Assessment", says—

"New investigation work was limited because of financial constraints."

That backs up what I have been saying. Financial constraints have been placed upon the department. The problem exists not only for water resources but also for maritime services.

I made a trip along the Queensland coast from Brisbane to Cairns and I noted that the majority of the projects that have been carried out are in the south of the State. I know that Brisbane port has a very high tonnage throughput. Beef and other produce pass through Brisbane from the Darling Downs and other areas. I am not arguing that the Government should not have spent as much money as it did in developing those projects, but it ought to create projects in the other ports.

Grain is being carted from my own electorate on the Tableland to be loaded in Mackay because the Cairns Port Authority is not prepared to expand. I can understand that attitude, because Cairns does not have enough throughput to warrant a multimillion-dollar grain-loading facility. Maize is being carted from the Tableland, and a possibility exists that sorghum will be carted, as its production is increasing on the Tableland, particularly in my electorate. In future, the tobacco industry might require a loading facility at the Cairns port.

The producer is always the first person to be hit by freight charges. Although it might be more efficient and increases the Railway Department's revenue, the cost to the producer of transporting grain from the Atherton Tableland to Mackay has to be looked at. If the producer cannot produce, the Government will lose revenue as well.

Other ports have to be serviced. The Government should create subsidies to allow that to take place and maintain not only the work-force but also the facilities in the far-flung areas. That would help with decentralisation. Other areas along the Queensland coast suffer from the same problem.

The Minister is from the north, so I know that he is fully aware of the capabilities of North Queensland Engineers and Agents (NQEA). I discussed this matter with the previous Minister. Because of the dredging needs along the Queensland coast, particularly central Queensland and north Queensland, the State Government should purchase a dredge. NQEA is quite capable of building a dredge designed for the specific purposes of river-dredging and beach erosion. If there were a dredge that could work close to the beaches, a number of eroded beaches could be replenished. At the moment, the beaches are disappearing. Although the Government is allocating money to stop beach erosion, or maintain it at its present level, a dredge would be a tremendous help. If the Minister

were to discuss the matter with NQEA, I am certain that he would be informed that the company is capable of building a suitable dredge.

The Minister has erosion of the beaches and rivers in his own electorate. I am sure that from time to time he has been approached about dredging those areas. The Queensland coastline is roughly 2 600 km long, with many rivers; so the Government has to face up to the problems that will occur from time to time through seasonal conditions. No-one can forecast the extent of the damage that will be caused by cyclones. When cyclone Winifred struck, Queensland was rather fortunate that it did not cause greater damage. There is no way anyone can predict whether or not one cyclone or more will occur next year. All that can be said is that history has a habit of repeating itself.

The Opposition applauds the work that has been done to improve facilities in boat harbours. Queensland has beautiful harbours. One that springs to mind is Bowen. It is not good enough for the Government to sit back and rest on its laurels and cite the harbour development that has already been carried out.

I mentioned previously the length of Queensland's coastline. That factor alone should make it obvious to the Government that increased expenditure on harbour facilities will be required in the future. Queensland cannot sell itself. A day of reckoning will come, and the Government will be found wanting if it rests on its laurels. The Government should promote the scenic areas of Queensland, and it should make facilities available that will attract tourists and commerce to coastal communities.

The Government has neglected jetties, piers and boat-ramps in popular tourist areas. The Government is inclined to allow private enterprise organisations to develop facilities in scenic areas. That could be detrimental for the individual tourism operator, who would otherwise have sufficient opportunity and incentive to service the tourism industry. If the Government allows private enterprise exclusive rights to provide facilities, the result will be that the smaller tourist operators will be restricted. Some of the people involved have pioneered tourist development. A case in point is the Clump Point jetty at Bingil Bay. I am informed that a deputation has met the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Tenni). I understand also that the problems associated with expansion of the tourism industry have extended to the Whitsunday area.

Although the Government should be credited with having established such facilities as piers and jetties, control has passed out of its hands. The expansion that has taken place has not provided for the needs of tourist operators. Tourism is a very competitive industry.

The Government has seen fit to develop the tourism industry over the years, and I have no doubt that tourism has a great future in Queensland. Because the Minister represents a northern electorate, he would be aware of the development that has taken place to which I refer. Development has also taken place in areas of my electorate, such as Mission Beach and Bingil Bay. It has extended beyond my electorate to electorates such as Hinchinbrook and Mulgrave.

Tourism development has brought with it a few obstacles that must be overcome. The Government ought to address that problem immediately, and make an accurate assessment of future needs. In addition, the Government should be prepared to make adequate funds available to carry out its plans. If the Government fails to take the appropriate action, not only will it be found wanting but also Queensland will miss out on opportunities to establish tourism projects. Business organisations will establish themselves in other areas of northern Australia.

Three years ago I travelled to Western Australia, where I had a discussion with tourism promoters. The remark was made to me that 90 per cent of that State's tourists are Western Australians. Their enthusiasm for travel includes a mania for coming to north Queensland. On two separate occasions, when I was visiting tourism offices in Kunningarra and Manjimup in the south-west portion of Western Australia, people came in and wanted to know the name of a good caravan park near Cairns that would cater for children and pets. I was able to make a telephone call and have arrangements made

for their accommodation. Throughout Western Australia, I was impressed by the strong desire people had to visit north Queensland.

I note that a bitumen road has been completed between Perth and Cairns. The section that remained unsealed—148 km—has been sealed. Tourists can travel from Perth to Cairns along a bitumen highway, and that should open up scenic areas to tourists. Irrespective of a tourist's mode of travel—air, road or sea—the Government has an obligation to encourage the development of tourism projects by the provision of adequate harbour facilities. If the Government fails to take the necessary action to cater for tourism, the industry will not develop.

There can be no better recommendation than word of mouth. If the Government is able to attract tourists to the scenic areas, the information will pass from person to person. Queensland has many areas of scenic beauty, especially along the coastline. If the Government can provide adequate facilities to cater for tourism, it will not only be a boon for the projects associated with the Minister's portfolio, but will also bring benefit to people throughout Queensland. That is a point that cannot be over-emphasised. The Queensland Government should be trying to promote Queensland, and it should be prepared to provide adequate facilities if it expects development to take place.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (2.35 p.m.): I am pleased to be able to take part in this debate today. In particular, I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate both the Minister and his department in respect of the work that they have done. One of the few good things that Malcolm Fraser did was plan and institute the program for putting together a tremendous amount of money to be spent on water resource programs right throughout the length and breadth of this country.

Mr Davis: One a week.

Mr ELLIOTT: I would suggest to the honourable member for Brisbane Central—the babbling brook—that he might like to talk to his Federal counterparts. All Opposition members should hang their heads in shame because the Federal Government dropped the program entirely—just gave it all away, the whole lot of it. If the Federal Government had continued with the program, dams would have been built in areas that needed them. Instead, the program has gone down the spout. The Federal Government gave the whole thing away.

Mr Scott: What about the Burdekin Dam?

Mr ELLIOTT: Every time Opposition members speak about these matters, the only thing they can say is, "What about the Burdekin Dam?" The Burdekin Falls Dam is the only thing for which the Federal Government has been responsible.

The State Government deserves a tremendous amount of credit for in fact having the fortitude to stand up and carry the program. That is basically what happened. When the Feds pulled out the State Government put in about \$100m out of consolidated revenue to improve the capital program in respect of water resources. I suggest to the Committee that that was a great step forward for this State. I have been fortunate enough, as you have, Mr Booth, to have seen the completion of the Leslie Dam Stage II in our area. That dam has made a tremendous difference to the electorate of Warwick and also my own electorate of Cunningham.

Mr Davis: It is in the Warwick electorate.

Mr ELLIOTT: Once again I will have to give the honourable member for Brisbane Central a geography lesson. I gave him one yesterday; unfortunately, he needs another one today. He does not understand that the Leslie Dam not only feeds the electorate of Warwick but it also feeds the irrigators in my electorate. I plan to say quite a few words—

Mr Davis: Cecil Plains.

Mr ELLIOTT: Cecil Plains, and right up through Millmerran, Brookstead, Pittsworth and all of those areas that are very much dependent upon the incomes of farmers who are producing irrigated crops along the Condamine River. It is very important that that be understood.

Not too long ago, everyone was pleased to see the Minister officiate at the raising of the radial gates on Stage II of the Leslie Dam. That has meant that the dam's storage capacity has more than doubled from about 47 100 ML to 107 600 ML. When one considers how much the radial gates and the abutments cost at the time, one can now realise the tremendous value that has been achieved by carrying out those works. All that is needed now are some decent seasons to fill the dam and farmers will be off and running again. At the moment, as far as the weather is concerned, things could not be more disastrous. The area is dry. A lot of rain is needed to fill that dam. While I have been a member that dam has overflowed a good few times. In the wetter years the dam could have been filled a couple of times over. Once it is full again things will improve. It is important to realise that the Government should not rest on its laurels in that respect.

I was interested and pleased to hear the Minister mention the diversion scheme. I am delighted that common sense has prevailed because the first scheme proposed to divert water from the Condamine proper into the north branch of the Condamine was, quite frankly, a little bit gung-ho.

That first scheme tended not to look at the problems upstream and the possible and potential flood problems that could be caused to many land-holders who would not have benefited from any irrigation. I felt that it was fraught with tremendous difficulties and problems, and I am very pleased that the commission adopted the attitude that it should reconsider the whole of that feasibility study. A pumping scheme was considered and it now looks as if a pumping scheme from near Pampas across to the north branch of the Condamine will go ahead. I believe that history will show that that was a very wise decision.

Some of the potential problems in running water by gravity feed from that top weir down to the north branch had not been considered. Because of the work that would have to be done to the upper parts of the north branch and on other weirs and so on, I think that in the long run this scheme will be far more practicable. I am sure that it is far more acceptable to the community. In fact, it has been accepted by the irrigators of the area, who, after all, are the ones who will have to foot the bill in one way or another. That decision has been a win for common sense and practicability. It demonstrates that the Minister has a practical attitude. He sat down, looked at the problem and had consulting engineers talk to him. He talked with his own people, and everybody has looked at the schemes. Common sense has prevailed on this problem. Certainly it is a win for common sense and for good government, and it also is looking after the interests of all of the people, not just those who wanted the water.

Mr Davis: What about the Bradfield scheme proposed by that fool of a Minister, Mr Katter?

Mr ELLIOTT: That is the sort of remark that one expects from the honourable member. That is not a very charitable remark at all. Those who are ahead of their time are often looked upon as being prophets of the unusual.

I am about to launch into another scheme, one that is perhaps a little less costly than the Bradfield scheme.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: Somewhere along the line, I might have been tarred with the same brush.

It is very important that consideration be given to the diversion of water from the northern rivers of New South Wales into the border rivers and into the Condamine. I am sure that you, Mr Booth, will back me up on this.

Mr Smith: What would that cost?

Mr ELLIOTT: It has been costed on a number of occasions. It depends which scheme is being considered. About four different costings have been done and they are dependent on whether the dam is located close to the source of the river or further downstream. The further downstream the dam is located, the bigger will be the catchment area, the more reliable will be the water supply and the greater will be the volume of water that can be diverted without problems. With the construction of a dam closer to the headwaters, costs are decreased because the pumping heads will not be so great.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: At this stage the costings are only very rough. I do not believe that anyone is truly in a position to be able to say what are the dollar values of the water that would be provided.

Another consideration is the salinity problem right down into South Australia and throughout the Murray/Darling system. Opposition members' colleagues in those States are screaming blue murder for more water to come through. Aspects other than straight dollar terms, the benefits to Queenslanders and the water that might be able to be used in the Condamine, have to be looked at. In fact, the water could be put into the Mole River or one of those other rivers on the New South Wales border. One must look further afield than at what is to be done with that water in the short term for irrigation. Such a scheme would have a far bigger impact. It is a very real problem, one that all people will have to come to grips with and look at over the years. If I had adopted the sort of attitude that my colleague—I should not call him a colleague——

Mr Davis: Call me a friend.

Mr ELLIOTT: I will call him a friend.

An Honourable Member: "Comrade" will do.

Mr ELLIOTT: I will call him "Comrade Brian".

It is very important that honourable members do not become too parochial and get carried away about the cost of providing water. It is very, very important that a broad attitude is adopted in respect of the provision of water.

Mr Smith: It has not been taken seriously enough; it has not been costed.

Mr ELLIOTT: The honourable member is wrong. It has been costed. The Minister's advisers would be able to tell the honourable member that it has been costed.

Mr Smith: The Minister can tell me in his reply.

Mr ELLIOTT: The Minister probably does not have the figures at his finger-tips. The costing was done a number of years ago. I would be surprised if the Minister carried those figures around in his hip-pocket. The honourable member can ask him that question if he wishes.

If, however, the Queensland Government is not prepared to get serious and work with the New South Wales Government to introduce a diversion scheme, it should be considering the possibility of providing its own storage facilities. This State is always short of water; that is a fact. As Australia is the driest continent on earth, lack of water is its No. 1 problem.

As I said, I hope that the Minister will keep that diversion scheme on target so that it can be operational by 1987 or by 1988 at the latest. The Minister would realise that the ring tanks of many dams are presently empty. People desperately need water. The price of cotton has kicked a little bit. If water can be provided for those ring tanks, the financial problems that could occur because of low commodity prices and poor economic conditions brought on by drought and lack of water might be able to be averted.

I will deal with a matter that, although not affecting my area, is very important to the whole region. I refer to the potential for taking water from the Severn River into the Glenlyon Dam. Although the Glenlyon Dam is a very fine dam and the actual site is tremendous, the catchment area of Pike Creek and the Glenlyon Dam leaves something to be desired. Of course, it has been full a number of times. Over the years, it has proved its worth. At the moment the water level is fairly low; the dam is about 40 per cent full or even less. That is a bit of a worry for everyone who is irrigating in the border rivers region.

At one stage I lived in that area. I know the site intimately. I have ridden horses and mustered sheep in the area around the site. I also had something to do with it when I was the Minister responsible for national parks. I suggest that that site continue to be considered and an investigation undertaken into the feasibility of putting a pipeline through to Glenlyon Dam, perhaps by tunnelling. That is a much better catchment area than the Glenlyon Dam area. It would catch all of the water along the eastern rainfall belt from the national parks on the other side of Ballandean, right up onto the range. It is a high-rainfall area with good catchment and good run-off.

I believe that the potential for bringing that water into the Glenlyon Dam should be considered. Obviously, once the water can be got into the border rivers region, it will have tremendous potential for irrigation.

Rather than getting involved in the short term in major dams such as the Burdekin Dam, perhaps the Government should give serious consideration to spreading the available money around, if the Treasury can continue to provide that sort of money under the Capital Works Program. A tremendous amount could be gained by building small weirs and dams throughout the State. In some cases, perhaps the private enterprise schemes should be supported. Perhaps the Government could assist private enterprise by providing low-interest loans for people who are adventurous enough to consider irrigation in some northern areas, such as the Gulf country.

I am in the process of building a ring tank at home. When one becomes involved in irrigation, one sees sights that one has never seen before when flying round the Gulf and various other areas.

Mr Davis: How do you have the time to work on your property and be a parliamentarian?

Mr ELLIOTT: The difference is that I am a little bit smarter than the honourable member for Brisbane Central. He puts everyone in his own mould because he spends so much time down at the pub, at faction meetings and talking to his left, right and centre wing mates. I do not have to do any of that and therefore I have more time to do other things.

Unlike the ALP, the National Party believes in private enterprise, initiative and incentive and people getting out and doing things. It is important to realise that if a person has traditionally been associated with an area over a long period sometimes it is not possible for him to see the wood for the trees. Once a person has been involved in a scheme such as this, where water is being diverted, it is possible for him to see potential in areas where other people do not see it. I suggest that there are a tremendous number of areas that are potentially suitable for such schemes right throughout the length and breadth of this State. I refer to high rainfall areas that feed into areas of lower rainfall but which have a better type of country with good soil. At the moment Queensland has an over supply of grain, and no-one would suggest that this Government is attempting to set up new grain-growing areas at the moment.

The Queensland Government can never afford to take the attitude that no more irrigation schemes should be established. That is a negative outlook and, if the Government were to think along those lines, in the long term it would stymie the development of this State. It is most important that the State's development does not stand still but progresses all the time. Queensland will be able to find new markets in Asia for new

crops, and a great deal of work has been done by the Queensland Government in regard to the exporting of fruit, vegetables and flowers to the Asian region. I believe that more research should be done along those lines.

Where possible, the Minister's department should be looking at the efficiency of different methods of irrigation and should be carrying out research in my electorate and other areas in regard to the most efficient way of supplying water. At times water is being wasted, and there will always be a water shortage.

I have had pleasure in speaking to these Estimates, which relate to matters that are very important to my electorate and to the electorate of Warwick.

Mr SCOTT (Cook) (2.52 p.m.): I am pleased to have the opportunity of taking part in this debate. I have a few things to say to the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services. It is good to see that the Minister is in the Chamber with an expectant look on his face.

Mr Elliott: All nice, I hope.

Mr SCOTT: Not this afternoon. I am not in a very nice frame of mind this afternoon. I have some plain truths to impart. I am not going to be really unkind in my remarks regarding the previous speaker, the honourable member for Cunningham, because my expectations of his performance were not very high. He measured up to those very low expectations. I have never heard such a poor speech. He is a poor advocate for his electorate because all he talked about was growing and exporting flowers. That is not unimportant in itself, but it is certainly not very big potatoes. He failed the major test. He did not praise the Minister. He is very envious of a man who has been able to keep his bottom on ministerial leather. He was not even charitable to the Minister.

The Minister is trying hard but he is not doing a very good job. He was downgraded from his previous portfolio and he has been imposed on the very important area of water resources.

Mr Palaszczuk: The most junior Minister.

Mr SCOTT: Yes, the most junior Minister.

The only thing that has kept him in that position is that there had to be someone coming in under him. That kept the Minister in his place in the ministerial pecking order. He was given a portfolio gratuitously. This a portfolio requiring a Minister with a degree of competence and Queensland is not going to benefit——

A Government Member: You'll never get there.

Mr Menzel: Martin will have the last say.

Mr SCOTT: The Minister is lining me up regarding the Cooktown water supply. I will have something to say about the Cooktown water supply and I am not worried about anything the Minister might tell me about it.

I know that you will bring me back into line if I overstep the mark, Mr Booth, but I would not do the personally destructive jobs such as those done by the honourable member for Mulgrave (Mr Menzel) in this Chamber. He has put forward material about the Labor candidate for Tablelands that is totally untrue. He will get his come-uppance. He would not be game to make those statements outside this Chamber. The matters he raised in this Chamber the other day were totally scurrilous. All he is doing is denigrating a good man.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order!

Mr SCOTT: Mr Booth, I think that you should bring me back to the debate, because I have been distracted just by the sight of the Minister.

Port development is very important. The Queensland Government is not doing enough in that area. I would like to know why some of the money that is being received by the Government from coal rail freights and from port charges cannot be used to build ports in other parts of the State. I refer particularly to north Queensland and to my electorate, in which improvements are needed urgently. The Minister will not get a vote in Cooktown and Karumba, because the Government has done nothing for those areas.

Much has been said about the need to develop the north. Real development can take place if ports are built. The Minister for Northern Development and Community Services made a great issue of the establishment of barge services in the Gulf of Carpentaria to effect the very much needed reduction in charges faced by the people living in remote areas. The Minister was totally unsuccessful because the area has no port facilities. A barge service operates between Karumba and Weipa. It is doing a very good job. However, it is receiving no Government assistance. The Minister for Northern Development used some information to which he was privy as a Minister and he spread it amongst the competitors of the operators of the barge service. That is the sort of action one sees from the National Party, particularly from the Minister for Northern Development. His actions were scurrilous. I am sure that Mr Tenni would not be a party to that sort of traitorous behaviour. It was scandalous.

A better port is needed at Karumba to enable that and other barge services to operate in the Gulf. The Minister has not done that. He has not been there in a dog's age.

Mr Tenni: Three times.

Mr SCOTT: How long is it since the Minister was over there?

Mr Tenni: Five years ago.

Mr SCOTT: That is right. The local people have forgotten his last visit. I urge the Minister to have a look at the barge operation between Karumba and Weipa. He should look at both the Weipa end and the Karumba end.

Mr Tenni: I was there only last year.

Mr SCOTT: I recall that the Minister made a fleeting visit to the area.

Mr Tenni: I went up there to open something that they wouldn't let you open.

Mr SCOTT: The Minister should not worry about that. I am well respected in the area.

Container-handling facilities are needed in Karumba. The Queensland Government should provide them. The revenue received from coal freight should be used. I have spoken frequently about the condition of the port at Cooktown and the fact that there are just bare boards——

Mr Tenni: You have never spoken to me about it since I have been Minister—since February!

Mr SCOTT: Mr Tenni has been the Minister since February.

Mr Tenni: Not one letter!

Mr SCOTT: The Minister's predecessor was so lousy and so stingy about it that I thought it was a totally hopeless case.

Mr Tenni: You have not said anything about it for five or six months.

Mr SCOTT: I am happy to accept the Minister's challenge. I will certainly fill that very small gap.

Mr Tenni: I had to get the school and the hospital up there.

Mr SCOTT: The Government has done nothing about port facilities in Cooktown.

The reason the school and the hospital were built was that I made full and proper representations about them. I made the strongest possible representation. The Government grudgingly came to the party and provided them. I had to get the whip out to get it done.

If the Minister is going to back up the barge service, he should do something about the port.

Mr Tenni: The Labor Party branch in Cooktown has gone. The president came out and made a statement and said exactly what he thought about you.

Mr SCOTT: The National Party branch in Cooktown is not going too strongly. We do have our little personality problems.

Mr Tenni: You had better say what you want to now because you won't be able to say it after the election.

Mr SCOTT: The Minister can tell me what has happened to the National Party in Normanton, Georgetown, Mount Surprise, Weipa and on Thursday Island. He should tell honourable members about the National Party enterprise in those places.

I have a matter that I wish to raise with the Minister. Earlier this year, after he took up his new and reduced portfolio, I took up with him the matter of a special lease of irrigation land for Mr E. F. Parise, who came to me and made very proper representations about his need for additional tobacco lands. He knew that portion 141 was vacant Crown land and was available for him to use. He had a special problem with irrigating his own block. He had to pay for a pipeline for the channel and rising main for some considerable distance. Several kilometres of pipeline and many thousands of dollars were involved. I wrote to the Minister about it.

The Minister referred to my writing to him about Cooktown. I will be wasting my time, but I will refer to it. I will be wasting my time because the Minister will not accept personal representations and a properly written letter setting out the case. I saw the Minister personally about Mr Parise. Does the Minister remember that? Does he remember the incident?

Mr Tenni: Yes.

Mr SCOTT: Does the Minister remember what he told me?

Mr Tenni: The case was pretty weak.

Mr SCOTT: No, his case was quite strong.

Does the Minister remember what he told me at that time? He stated that it was the department's policy to auction such land, that Mr Parise should contact his officers in Mareeba, that the land would be auctioned and that he could probably benefit from it. Is it still the policy of the department to do that?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! The Minister will have an ample opportunity to reply to those matters. I suggest that the honourable member for Cook continue with his speech and not demand replies across the Chamber.

Mr SCOTT: Thank you, Mr Booth, but you were allowing the Minister to interject, and I ask you out of courtesy——

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I believe that there has been too much cross-fire in the Chamber.

Mr SCOTT: I agree with that. However, I would appreciate it if the Minister could make one quick interjection to my question as to whether it is still the policy of the department to auction those irrigation blocks.

Mr Tenni: I will reply to everything later.

Mr SCOTT: I ask the Minister to answer me now.

Mr Tenni: No.

Mr SCOTT: The Minister does not want to answer my question because he has given special consideration to a member of the National Party on Chewko Road. The Minister gave two special blocks to that man, who told the Minister how poor he was and how much he needed that other land. However, the man did not need the land at all. Because I do not wish to bandy names around, I will refer to him as Mr X, although privately at a later stage I will inform the Minister of the name. By the time I am finished, the Minister will know to whom I am referring.

Mr Smith: Did he kick into the party funds?

Mr SCOTT: That is what I am hoping to find out. I am sure that he did kick into the party funds.

Mr Menzel: You prove it; say it outside.

Mr SCOTT: It is so well hidden that it is almost impossible to prove. However, I ask the Minister not to worry. That is how the incident occurred.

A supplicant of mine applied to the department for a special lease over portions 404 and 405 of the parish that covers Chewko Road. He needed that land because the area that he owns is subject to run-off from other land, as a result of which he found it necessary to build a special drain. He had a good case. The tobacco soils on his block were barely sufficient to cover his quota.

The Minister would be aware that within the tobacco industry it is a case of get big or get out. That man to whom I am referring is a capable tobacco-grower and deserves the extra land. He actually put forward quite a good case. In fact, at the time that he made the application for the additional land, he was a constituent of the Minister. That land is situated in the new seat of Tablelands—which the Minister is not going to win at the next election, despite the denigration of the Labor candidate.

Mr Menzel: That is a joke.

Mr SCOTT: If the honourable member for Mulgrave would like me to digress and speak about Mr Gilmore, who is the National Party's candidate for Tablelands, I could go on for half an hour. However, I will not denigrate Mr Gilmore, as the honourable member for Mulgrave attempted to do to the Labor Party's candidate.

I am informed that the National Party candidate for that area is bad news. The National Party should consider changing candidates for that area if it intends to put up a reasonable show in Tablelands. It certainly will not win.

Mr Smith: Is his name Gilmore or Dillmore?

Mr SCOTT: I am not sure how he spells his name. However, I should know that because his father was a two-time loser. Eddie Wallis-Smith beat him, and he was beaten in the Federal seat of Leichhardt. I hope that the son is a little better than his father was. Whereas the father was a two-time loser, I believe that the son will be a one-time loser, because the National Party does not endorse too many losers—as has happened in the electorate of Cook on numerous occasions.

Mr Tenni: Like Mr De Lacy.

Mr SCOTT: Was there an interjection there? Is the Minister referring to the estimable member for Cairns, Mr De Lacy? The Minister should not worry about Mr De Lacy, because he will hold that seat for a long time to come.

As I was saying, my supplicant went to the Minister about those portions and his application was refused. The next thing that happened——

Mr Tenni: Are you talking about Mr X?

Mr SCOTT: No, I am referring to Mr Y, my supplicant. Mr X is the man to whom that land was given.

The next thing that my supplicant found out was that the Minister had personally granted a special lease to Mr X, who happens to be a National Party supporter and who informed the Minister how poor he was. He did not tell the Minister the truth, because he does have a tobacco quota, although the income may be held in his school-age son's name in a trust. He has two or three shoddily built houses on his land. Approval has not yet been received from the council for those houses, but he receives rentals of approximately \$300 per week; so his income is quite large. However, the Minister did not look into the matter. He took the man's word for it that he was poor, and consequently gave him the land. That shows how incompetent the Minister is.

I ask the Minister whether he will give proper consideration to the matter. I intend to write to the Minister about my constituent, if I do not have the opportunity to speak to the Minister later.

Mr Tenni: Which one is it now? Is it Mr Y or Mr X?

Mr SCOTT: I am now speaking about the good man, Mr Y. Mr X is the National Party supporter. Actually, I am not aware as to how Mr Y votes. He could well vote for the National Party also. However, the National Party is on the verge of losing Mr Y. Mr X is a committed National Party supporter. He is the one to whom the land was given.

Mr Tenni interjected.

Mr SCOTT: I would not know how he votes. The man who came to me had to spend money to build a drain to shed water that did not come from his own land. His access has been compromised by the granting of the special leases and he will have to build a new road.

The Minister has done something for a National Party supporter. Now I ask him to do something for a good, ordinary farmer up there on portions 402 and 403, which are apparently still available. The farmer cannot grow the additional quota that he needs because of his limited soil, and he needs to expand.

Mr Tenni: He is a member of your party.

Mr SCOTT: He is not a member of the party.

Mr Tenni: Yes he is.

Mr SCOTT: Well, the Minister is holding out against a member of the Labor Party, once again. The Minister knew that all along. I wondered why he would not give him due consideration.

I turn to the Cooktown water supply. The Federal Government has come to the party to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars. It provided the money for the high-level reservoir in Cooktown, which has allowed the people of that town to get some water. The Duck Farm bore field was established. The Minister would not know about that, because he is not au fait with the general range of his portfolio. That bore field was established as a stop-gap measure to provide the town of Cooktown with a water supply, which, unfortunately, has proved inadequate.

Even though it is common knowledge, the Minister would know about the dam that leaked in Cooktown or about the additional money that is needed to effect repairs to that dam. The Cook shire will not get the money out of the State Government. The National Party will never win in the electorate of Cook, because it constantly tells people to go to the Federal Government for the money. It says, "We would like to be able to help you, but we haven't got the money to help you in this case." The constant cry in the Cook electorate is, "Go to the Feds." The Federal Government does come to the party. It spent immense amounts of money on Aboriginal affairs in far-north Queensland.

Of course, the Queensland Government is reducing its expenditure on Aboriginal affairs. It is trying to go out backwards.

Mr Tenni: You will go out backwards.

Mr SCOTT: No, the Government is going out backwards.

Mr Tenni: You will go out at the next election.

Mr SCOTT: In fact, I doubt whether the Minister will even hold Barron River. The Labor Party candidate has an excellent chance in that electorate. That area will have a couple of new members. There will be a new member in the Flinders electorate and a new member in the Barron River electorate. That will be two ministerial scalps that the Labor Party will take. I give the Minister an undertaking that that will be the case.

Mr Borbidge: You are conceding defeat; you are conceding you won't win the election.

Mr SCOTT: No. We will be over the other side of the Chamber. I will take on a ministerial portfolio.

The Federal Government has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars, first of all, for the high-level reservoir, secondly, for the augmentation of the Duck Farm bore field at Cooktown and, thirdly, for the Cook shire's water supply at Coen. That has been a great thing for the Cook shire.

When the new high school was opened at Cooktown, a wonderful situation prevailed. The Premier, the local school principal, who is an excellent man, the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services (Mr Katter) and I were all sitting on the platform and in the front of the audience there was a fellow floating around and purporting to be the National Party candidate in the Cook electorate. He had also been at the opening of the new Cooktown hospital earlier in the morning, the provision of which I was happy to fight for in the good town of Cooktown.

Instead of making complimentary remarks about the work that had been carried out by the p. and c. association and by the principal and the teachers at the school, the Premier stood up and said, "I want to talk about a water supply for Cooktown." In his ignorance, he did not know that Cooktown had a water supply and that it was inadequate. He said to the National Party candidate, who was sitting down the front, "So-and-so, should we go and have a look at some new sources of water for this town? I'll order the helicopter." He pointed over to the audience and asked, "Oh, John, has the helicopter been fixed up?" John, who is the Premier's secretary, put his hand up very dutifully and said, "Yes, Mr Premier, the helicopter will be here at 4 o'clock."

The Premier and his party were going to the high tableland because one of the old stalwarts in Cooktown had said, "There is a possibility of providing a water supply for Cooktown by damming certain streams on the high tableland." So, off they went, whirring away in the helicopter. The candidate was there wondering what it was all about, trying not to look like a stunned mullet.

Next, the Premier came back and spoke to the Chamber of Commerce in Cooktown, saying, "Yes, we've fixed up the water supply for Cooktown." What he did not say is that he would have to go cap in hand to the Federal Government again under COWSIP, which does not come within the Minister's portfolio. But, as he has been saying so much in the Chamber today about all the good things that the Government has done for water supplies in Queensland, it is quite legitimate for me to continue along this line.

The Premier has conveniently forgotten to inform the good people of Cooktown that the Federal Government has provided vast amounts of money under the COWSIP program. Enormous sums have been provided for the construction of dams. The bulk of that money has been applied to the construction of Dalrymple Lake, and I am not knocking that. It is quite a good scheme. A considerable sum has also been allocated

for the provision of an adequate water supply for Karumba. I was finally able to induce this Government to recognise the need of the good citizens of Karumba for a water supply, and the Queensland Government came to the party, as it were, with 40 per cent of the necessary funds.

Obviously, the Government did so as an election gimmick. I have no doubt that the Minister thinks that the Government will win my portion of the vote in Karumba, but that will not be the case.

Mr Tenni interjected.

Mr SCOTT: It is not necessary for the Minister to apologise, because I know that no inroads at all will be made on my vote.

By the provision of the water supply at Karumba, the Government has alienated the people who live there, as well as the people who live in Cooktown. The reason for that is that the Government took far too long to provide the water supply system. When it was finally made available, the residents responded by saying, "Well, it is about time, too!" Because of the designs that the Government has on the next election, additional funds will be provided from the COWSIP scheme to speed up the implementation of the water supply system. I am not unhappy about that, but the picture I want to paint depicts the Federal Government as having already played its part by providing huge sums of money.

The Premier went cap in hand to the Federal Government, which finally agreed to the acceleration of the project. In spite of the fact that the Premier constantly denigrates the Federal Government, he will again go cap in hand to Canberra for more funds. Unfortunately, the funds are not available because the Queensland Government has already dipped into the Federal Government's coffers by constructing water resource projects such as the dam situated near the Premier's son's property west of Rockhampton. A large portion of COWSIP money will be expended on that project.

I am eager to have a water supply system made available in Cooktown, and I will do everything I can to influence the Federal Government to provide the funds. Nevertheless, I am sick and tired of making requests of a Federal Government that is so strongly denigrated by the Queensland Government. It is difficult to request additional funds on the basis that the Queensland Government has messed up the provision of a water supply for Cooktown. Although the Federal Government has done its best by making funds available to provide the good people of Cooktown with a water supply and the other schemes I outlined earlier, what credit is given? None at all.

The Minister is signalling to me that I should wind up. I know that he does not like me getting up his ribs about water resources. My comments highlight the fact that the Minister is incompetent. I have no doubt that the Minister's day of reckoning will come.

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (3.12 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I join in the debate on the Estimates presented by the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Tenni). It should be noted that this is the first occasion upon which the Estimates of this portfolio have been presented to the Committee.

I pay tribute to some of the senior officers of the Queensland Water Resources Commission. I would like to thank Mr Don Beattie for his friendliness and courtesy over a long period. Mr Beattie recently retired from the position of Commissioner of Water Resources. In the past, when I have needed advice and assistance because of the various problems that confronted the Lockyer Valley area of my electorate, he has been very helpful. I take this opportunity to welcome the new commissioner, Mr Tom Fenwick, and I congratulate him on his appointment. Through my membership of the parliamentary committee on water resources, I met the Director of the Department of Harbours and Marine, Mr John Leech. Through my association with those officers, I have gained an insight into the wide variety of problems that exist throughout Queensland that have been mentioned previously in the debate.

The honourable member for Cook (Mr Scott) referred to the problems of providing a water supply system in Cooktown. When I visited the area last May or June, I attended at the council chambers. I noticed an old notification to the residents that had been put up in October 1985, warning them to boil the town water before it was consumed. Obviously, there were major problems associated with the water supply in Cooktown.

The honourable member for Mourilyan (Mr Eaton) listed several towns in Queensland that experienced similar difficulties. I point out that, although these are not matters for which the Minister is directly responsible, there is a connection between that problem and the Minister's portfolio because of the expertise that exists in the Queensland Water Resources Commission that can be provided to shire councils and local authorities to resolve the problems.

In some cases weirs and dams are constructed on behalf of local authorities. Where some of the water is provided for irrigation and some of it is used for town and urban consumption, arrangements are also made with local authorities to share a dam or a weir. That is the link between the town water problem and the Minister's portfolio. I appreciate there is a difference. However, as other members have been speaking about town water problems, I also, as the member for Lockyer, would like to make this Committee aware of the problems that exist in my electorate.

I would like to pay a tribute to those officers of the department who have prepared such detailed reports and who were responsible for the studies that were carried out into supplying water to the Lockyer Valley, which I know will continue for some time.

In August this year, a seminar was held on the Gold Coast, and although I did not attend it, I obtained a copy of its findings and the papers that were discussed. I find that the papers make a lot of common sense. Anybody who is prudent and concerned about what is happening in regard to water, particularly in south-east Queensland, would find a lot of interesting points in those papers. One of the things that I found quite interesting was where the water is available and how much of it is still running out to sea from south-east Queensland. One point was that the mean annual run-off from the whole of the south-east Queensland area is estimated at 7.96 million megalitres, or approximately 21 per cent of the long-term average annual rainfall. That means that quite a significant amount of water is still running out to sea. I do not suggest for one moment that all of the water can be stopped from running into the sea; naturally, at times, some of it will have to run out to sea. It would be imprudent to suggest that 100 per cent of that water could be retained.

However, the significant point that the reports indicate is that a fair amount of water in the streams is not being utilised. The reports refer to the Brisbane River and the Wivenhoe Dam. Even though the Wivenhoe Dam has a lot of water available at present, if that water was used there would not be much water in the Brisbane River.

The Mary River basin is one area where a large amount of water is available to be harnessed. I do not think that too many people would realise that. According to a report, at present an estimated remaining divertable resource of 441 700 ML per annum is available from the Mary River basin. Although all of that water would not be available to be harnessed, I suppose that a fair percentage would be. In the future, after the Wolffdene Dam and other dams on the Albert and Logan Rivers and other southern coastal rivers have been built, the Mary River will need to be looked at as a site to construct some form of water storage, whether it be for supplying cooling water for coal-fired power stations or, if the population in that area increases significantly, water for domestic purposes.

The provision of water is always a vexed matter. Some people believe that, if water is put into an area, the population will automatically follow. I believe in that line. Unfortunately, in places such as the Lockyer Valley, towns that are servicing the rural community are having massive problems in trying to provide an adequate water supply. In the township of Gatton, which is my home town, the use of hand-held hoses to water lawns has been banned since October 1985. It is now September 1986. That shows the critical shortage of water in that town. The council is very, very concerned about it.

A number of reports have been done on the problem. I cite the report that was prepared by the engineering and technical services division of the Department of Local Government on the bulk water supply to the Moreton, Laidley and Gatton shires, with particular consideration to supply from the Wivenhoe Dam. That report was printed and presented in August 1983. Among other things, it said that, if a pipeline scheme was commenced at that time, the earliest possible time for completion of its construction was 1986. 1986 has arrived and the Lockyer Valley has a drought on its hands, but it still does not have a pipeline.

I do not lay blame on anyone, but the fact is that the provision of water supplies to the towns in rural areas has primarily been the responsibility of local authorities. The State Government has initiated a subsidy scheme but, as has already been heard in this Chamber today, town after town and local authority after local authority has problems with the provision of water.

Mr McElligott: I thought the National Party looks after those country areas.

Mr FITZGERALD: There are problems throughout Queensland. There are problems in many of the cities in Queensland.

The Premier has instigated a study into the future water supply problems in south-east Queensland. The provision of water into areas such as the Gatton shire is beyond the financial capacity of the rate-payers of that shire, particularly in view of the current high interest rates. I lay the blame for those fairly and squarely at the feet of the Canberra colleagues of honourable members opposite, who must share responsibility for that. While they continue with their present philosophies and while their colleagues in Canberra continue to sanction abnormally high interest rates, they are doomed to stay on the other side of the Chamber. While interest rates are so high, local authorities such as Gatton are not able to finance water supply schemes. The rate-payers of Gatton could not meet the commitments.

The figures in the report I have show that rate-payers in the Gatton shire would have had to pay approximately \$500 per annum each for the provision of a domestic water supply. That is an astronomical figure. In addition, the property-owners have to pay their current water rates and for the other commitments on loans that the council has raised to provide the present water supply. I need not go into the problem too deeply at the moment because I notice that the member for Brisbane Central and his colleagues on the other side of the Chamber are talking amongst themselves. Although they are not interested, my colleagues on this side of the Chamber certainly are interested in what is happening in the township of Gatton and its water shortage.

The towns in the Lockyer Valley are presently using ground water, which also supplies the farms that are the life-blood of the towns, anyway. As one aquifer is pumped out—for example, the Redbank Creek aquifer—bores have been sunk closer to Gatton. The water quality has been extremely poor. The quality of water in Gatton at present cannot be described as other than terrible. I defy anybody who has not been used to the water to drink tea made on it. Those people who enjoy a cup of tea either have their own tanks or are able to acquire tank water.

One of the major problems is financing water supply schemes and pipelines. Because of the high cost, the proposal for the pipeline has been placed in jeopardy. An alternative scheme for the Gatton shire is the Lake Clarendon scheme. Although I have stated in this Chamber that I support the pipeline scheme, I have an open mind on the provision of water. If the estimates for the Lake Clarendon scheme show that, as well as providing an assured water supply, it will be cheaper per head of population and cheaper per megalitre, I will certainly be willing to welcome it with open arms. I know that it will conflict with the interests of those farmers below the lake who require water. However, the provision of water for the town of Gatton is very, very important and must take precedence in the mind of the Government.

I pay tribute to the present Minister and the previous Minister, the late John Goleby, for the sympathetic hearing that has been given to the provision of weirs in the

Lockyer. Many critics say that the weirs are absolutely useless in dry weather. I have to agree with that. The weirs are absolutely useless in times of drought. However, undoubtedly the trial weirs that were built in 1974 or thereabouts have proven that, when there are minimum flows in the streams, they are of enormous benefit.

The farmers who live in the vicinity of the trial weirs swear by their effectiveness. I think that the importance of those weirs has been exaggerated, thereby creating quite a deal of expectation in the minds of the people who now border on those 11 weirs in the Lockyer Valley. Over the last couple of years \$5m has been provided for the weirs. Although that is not an enormous amount of money, I do appreciate the expenditure. The weirs are very, very effective.

I am very pleased that the commission is still considering the provision in the Lockyer Valley of major dams, which will be very, very costly. However, I am aware that investigations are taking place into providing dams on a modified scale to ascertain what amount of available water can be obtained from the dams to feed the weirs at present in the valley.

Before concluding, I pay tribute to the farmers and the Minister's department for administering the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Scheme. I am a firm advocate of that scheme. I believe that it needs more promotion. The honourable member for Condamine (Mr Littleproud) spoke about the large ring tanks on the Darling Downs. The Lockyer Valley has a couple of ring tanks and some major dams. On our farm, my brother and I have a dam that is of enormous benefit. If it had more water in it, it would be of even more benefit than it is at present.

The provision of loans under the assistance scheme needs to be advertised more widely. The more people who can provide their own water at no cost to the Government, other than through approved loan interest subsidies, the better. That would benefit the whole State. It is the type of activity that should be encouraged. Because of the downturn in the economy in the Darling Downs and areas adjoining the Lockyer Valley, which causes the farmers to lose confidence in the future, the offer of loans is not always availed of.

It is true that at times the ring tanks on the Darling Downs are well and truly full and there is a vast quantity of water available to flow down the Condamine. I believe that the area is becoming over-committed. A person would have to really consider carefully the economics of putting in a ring tank along the Condamine now, because the number of days available for pumping is very few. On average, water could be pumped on probably only a couple of days a year. That becomes quite uneconomical. As I said, the area is fully committed.

I pay tribute to the Minister for the tremendous job that he does in providing the ports and keeping them and their facilities functioning. It is a major commitment. The Department of Harbours and Marine really has three basic objectives to carry out. One of those is to ensure that Queensland ports and harbours, and the facilities therein, are developed, maintained and managed for the benefit of Queensland and for the economic development of the State. Recently I spoke in the Chamber about the port of Brisbane and the problems associated with that port from time to time, particularly because of the striking habits of the maritime unions on the waterfront, which causes inconvenience for any exporter trying to develop a market in South East Asia.

The second objective of the department is to ensure the safety of life and property on the navigable waters in Queensland. Everyone knows how sensitive Queenslanders are when a ship runs aground on the Queensland coastline. A problem has occurred along the Queensland coast around the Great Barrier Reef. The reef has only a few channels, most of which are fairly narrow, even though they are fairly well defined. This is and will continue to be a challenge to the department.

The third objective of the department is to ensure the conservation and protection of Queensland's beaches and foreshores.

Mr Borbidge: Hear, hear!

Mr FITZGERALD: I hear the honourable member for Surfers Paradise saying, "Hear, hear!" I pay tribute to those officers.

Queensland is developing. As John Brown, the Federal Minister for Tourism, recently said, Queensland is the fastest-growing State in Australia. He was dead right and, being the Federal Minister for Tourism, he knows how important tourism is to the development of this State and Australia. In Queensland we are selling our sunshine, beaches, outback and Great Barrier Reef. The beaches and the reef come under the control of the Department of Harbours and Marine.

I would like to pay tribute to the department for the amount of work that is being done in the protection of Queensland's beaches. Much research has been carried out and holiday-makers can see the walkways to the beaches, the regrassing of the sand-dunes and the establishment of vegetation along the sand-dunes. All of those improvements enhance the scenic splendour of Queensland's wonderful coast. Those improvements are also a nice backdrop when the holiday-maker is on the beach enjoying the sunshine. This is one of the most important aspects of the Minister's portfolio, and I know that he enjoys it.

The Minister holds an extensive portfolio and has a large staff. He is very interested in all aspects of his portfolio and is a very practical person. Whether it be a boat-ramp for fishing or improvements to one of the major ports in Queensland, he always has Queensland at heart. I thank him for the opportunity of being on his committee. I enjoy working with him.

Mr BRADDY (Rockhampton) (3.32 p.m.): The ministerial statement made today by the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services in response to the speech that I made yesterday provides two alternatives: either the Parliament has been misled by the Minister, or the Land Court in the case of Zandonadi and the Commissioner of Water Resources has been misled by the Government valuer, Gary Rosser.

I refer to the Minister's speech, in which he informed the Chamber as follows—

"The valuer at the time for the commission, Mr Gary Rosser, made not just one but several valuations of Mr Cox's land using different methods of calculation."

Further the Minister stated—

"I point out that that was the lowest of a number of valuations by Mr Rosser, and represented only a starting point for future negotiations with Mr Cox. Several valuations were much higher."

I refer the Chamber to several pages of transcript in the case of Zandonadi v. Cox regarding the evidence of the valuer, Mr Gary Rosser, who was employed by the Water Resources Commission. Before tabling the document, I read from page 378 of the transcript of the evidence-in-chief led by the Government advocate. It makes very instructive reading, as follows—

"Did you inspect this property—or have you inspected this property in the past?—Yes, I have on a number of occasions, yes.

And did you, in fact, prepare a valuation of it for the purpose of the surrender of the lease?—Yes, I prepared a valuation when the Commission purchased the land.

Can you tell me just in brief details what your valuation figure was for the land?—I've got some brief details here which indicate that my valuation was \$1,228,413."

Rosser was asked to give his valuation of the property. He gave the court his best valuation. His reasons also appear in the transcript, and I will refer to them.

Mr Tenni: We've got you worried, haven't we?

Mr BRADDY: I am not worried at all. I suggest that the Minister should be worried. Either he has misled this Assembly or his department is embarking on a deliberate

campaign to mislead the court. If the latter is correct, the Minister should embark on an inquiry into what his commissioner and his staff are doing in deceiving the court.

On page 406 of the transcript of the court case relating to Zandonadi, Gary Rosser was being cross-examined. Rosser was asked the question, "I mean legal subdivision of the land into separate parcels." Rosser replied, "I assessed the highest and best use of that land at the time to be subdivisional into smaller blocks."

Mr Hamill: Did you say the highest?

Mr BRADDY: The highest, indeed.

The only inference that can be drawn from the whole of Rosser's evidence, and particularly from the passages that I have read to the Committee—evidence that he was giving to the court as any honest valuer of integrity would give—is that he gave the highest valuation he had arrived at. So he told the court what the Water Resources Commission believed was the valuation.

Honourable members have been told by the Minister that that is not so and that Rosser had several higher valuations that he secreted in his pocket, apparently, and deliberately hid from the court so that the court and the litigants would be misled. Rosser's best valuation was not put before the court. Are honourable members to believe that a valuer of integrity and who is well respected would do that because he was told to do so by the commissioner, or would he do that because of some desire of his own to mislead the court? I suggest that there is only one possible course that can be followed by the Minister: he must table in this Chamber the other higher valuations that he says are available and were provided by Rosser. The Minister's excuse today for not tabling them cannot be accepted. The Minister says that because of Zandonadi's case it would not be proper to discuss these matters in this Chamber.

If the Minister is capable of thinking about the matter at all, he well knows that the Cox file and what transpired in the court will now be viewed in a totally different light. If the Minister is properly advised, he should know that the whole of that Cox file, including the so-called higher valuations, can be subpoenaed in the Land Appeal Court for scrutiny by the court. If they can be subpoenaed, I assure the Minister that they will be, because counsel and solicitors for the parties involved have also been deceived if what the Minister has said is correct. Those valuations will shortly be seeing the light of day in the court. If they are to be scrutinised by the court to determine whether they are real and proper, they should be scrutinised by this Committee today. They will see the light of day. It is nonsense for the Minister to suggest that they should be hidden from honourable members. We will eventually see whether those valuations do exist and how much they were.

To clear his name, it is the Minister's bounden duty today to table those valuations and to demonstrate that there were higher valuations. The result of the Minister's tabling those valuations would immediately place the Minister's department in an invidious position. It would mean that a valuer employed by the Water Resources Commission deceived the court when he gave evidence. When a valuer gives evidence in a court, he is regarded as an expert. If an expert gives evidence, that evidence must be his ultimate opinion as to what is the final situation. In other words, if a person decides to change his mind about the bases of several valuations that he has made, his counsel and the court are interested only in his final opinion. That was the only possible inference that could be drawn from the evidence that Rosser gave.

At page 406 of the transcript of the evidence that Rosser gave, he stated—

"I assessed the highest and best use of that land at the time to be subdivisional into smaller blocks."

Rosser gave evidence to the court about that valuation, which was based upon the subdivision that took place after rezoning.

The Minister is now trying to suggest that Mr Rosser deliberately misled the court. What an impossible situation! What other expert witness will be accepted?

I believe that Mr Rosser, the valuer, has a high reputation. He is generally regarded as a valuer of integrity, and it would destroy his good reputation if he were to behave in that way. His future standing before the Land Court would be invidious, because if what the Minister has said is true, Mr Rosser would be exposed as a person who, having made higher valuations, deliberately suppressed them. Mr Rosser was asked by his counsel what his valuation was. He gave a valuation that was in fact considerably lower than the real valuation at which he had arrived. That is an impossible situation!

For the Minister to suggest to the Chamber that Mr Rosser misled the court beggars the imagination. As the Minister is now aware that those valuations will be subpoenaed in the Land Appeal Court, he should produce those valuations. There will be no opportunity for him to hide them—if they exist. I ask the Minister to produce those valuations in Parliament so that all honourable members can ascertain whether they exist, or whether the Minister or his predecessor has in some way misled the Parliament.

If the courts have been misled, a scandalous situation would exist within the office of the Commissioner of Water Resources. There would need to be an immediate inquiry into any persons associated with the suppression of the higher valuations and the failure of the commission to reveal those valuations to the court. Disciplinary measures would then need to be taken against any persons at the so-called higher levels who were involved in the suppression of those valuations.

I repeat that there can be no doubt, after reading the evidence that Rosser gave, that he was leading the court to believe that the valuation that he was giving was the highest valuation applicable to that particular block. He said that in clear terms, and he gave that evidence under oath. It would be ridiculous for someone to suggest in a snide fashion that it is permissible for a valuer to arrive at three valuations and then give only the lowest valuation.

Mr Lickiss: He can only arrive at one valuation for one purpose. You cannot have several valuations for one purpose.

Mr BRADY: Mr Rosser ultimately had to give evidence to the court, no matter what valuations he had arrived at.

I believe that Mr Rosser's position is even more invidious in view of another piece of evidence that he gave. When he was giving his evidence, it was then in the interests of the Water Resources Commission for him to value the Cox land as low as possible so that the Zandonadis would not get a comparable value on which they could base their claim for compensation.

What the Minister is now suggesting is that the valuer suppressed his higher valuations made on so-called different bases and gave a low one. Then he goes beyond that; he actually criticises his department's own settlement of the Cox case.

Again at page 378 of the transcript of the evidence of Rosser this question appears—

“Would you regard that as a straight sale on which reliance could be placed for comparative sale purposes or are there special features in the sale?”

Rosser's answer was—

“Well I think the purchase of that particular property was outside the realms of a prudent purchaser involvement with a sale.”

What the Minister is now telling this Chamber is that the valuer, having given the lowest possible valuation that he had arrived at, then set about saying that the sale was not in the context of a prudent purchaser involvement. What an incredible thing for a valuer of integrity to put before the court and to be supported by his commissioner and by his department! If what the Minister is saying is true, it is entirely a disgraceful situation, because, as honourable members now all know, the counsel and solicitors appearing for the Zandonadis were deceived—and I can assure honourable members that they would have been deceived—the Land Court member hearing the case would have been deceived, and members of the Parliament have also now been supposedly deceived. This morning the Minister had the hide to call on me to apologise to the Cox

family and to the Water Resources Commission in the context in which he says that the Water Resources Commission deliberately misled the court.

I took the trouble to go to the Land Court the other day and read the whole of the transcript of Rosser's evidence. I did that so that I could fairly describe what occurred in that case. Having read that evidence I could only arrive at one conclusion, that is, that Rosser had given his fair valuation. I am now called on to apologise. Far from me having to apologise, the Minister should here and now table the documents that I have called for and he should then apologise to me and to the Chamber for the behaviour of his department in either misleading the Assembly or in misleading the court, whichever turns out to have been the case after the documents have been perused.

The Minister is the one who should be apologising. I can assure the Chamber that, if I was misled, I was not the only person who was misled. I can assure the Chamber that the reputation, standing and integrity of the valuer, Rosser, will be finished in the Land Court if what the Minister says is true. For the sake of the name of Rosser, if he can be defended, the Minister has an obligation to table the documents and demonstrate to the Chamber the real situation.

I table pages 378, 406 and 414 of the transcript of Rosser's evidence in the case of Zandonadi v. The Water Resources Commission.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

I say again that the clear implication that can be drawn from that evidence is that Rosser was giving honest evidence as to his opinion of the value of the Cox land. In the circumstances, I believe the case has clearly been proven and the Minister is in a position in which he must explain further. In his speech today, the Minister also referred to the seller accepting the lowest of several valuations tendered by the commission. He then said sneeringly—

“The member for Rockhampton must be exceptionally ignorant or naive about land negotiations if he thinks that any seller would accept the lowest of several valuations tendered by the commission's own valuer as a suitable sale price.”

How in the name of goodness would the seller know, any more than I would, unless he had been told that there were higher valuations?

I had the misfortune to read what I regarded as honest evidence that had been given in the Land Court, and I repeat my call to the Minister to prove to me that the evidence given was not honest evidence. If the evidence given was not honest evidence, there is no doubt in my mind that the Queensland Water Resources Commission is at full fault and that Rosser is at fault, and that the commissioner and his staff should be called to account. On the other hand, if it was honest evidence, the Minister is at fault and he must be called to account also; the Minister must resign.

Mr SIMPSON (Cooroora) (3.51 p.m.): I rise to support the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Tenni) in his presentation of his Estimates. The Estimates are very important ones indeed.

Two hundred years ago or so, Captain Cook sailed along the coastline of Queensland and was puzzled because, in spite of obvious indications of a high rainfall area and land that sloped towards the sea, he was unable to find the mouths of Queensland's rivers. The mouth of the Brisbane River was hidden from view by the islands that lie to the east of Brisbane in Moreton Bay. As Captain Cook proceeded farther north, he was confronted with the same problem in respect of the Mary River, which was hidden by Fraser Island.

I mention this because the portfolio administered by Mr Tenni and his very capable officers involves the important responsibility for management of water resources provided by half of Australia's total precipitation, which occurs in Queensland. Queensland's other major resources are also natural phenomena that have resulted from sedimentary deposits of vegetation, namely, coal and oil. Queensland has more than half of Australia's coal deposits.

Two very important natural resources, coal and water, are found in Queensland and amount to more than half of the nation's total resources in each category. Australia is a very arid continent, yet Queensland is fortunate enough to be provided with more than half of the nation's water resources. Those two resources combine to make Queensland the State that has the potential to provide the greatest number of jobs and the highest rate of productivity in Australasia. Water and fossilised fuel provide Queensland with the potential for development, and that factor focuses attention on the importance of good management, as evidenced by the Minister's handling of his portfolio.

The Minister outlined to the Committee the various factors that are involved in his responsibility for managing water resources. Unlike countries such as Brazil, which has inland ports on the Amazon River, Queensland's ports are located on the eastern seaboard. Along with countries such as Canada, Australia relies very much on its seaports. The early history of Queensland reveals that Queensland established as many naval ports along its coast as all the other States put together established.

The Minister is responsible for the storage water resources and for irrigation projects. It should be remembered also that water resources are used in the generation of electricity, which is an essential commodity for the development of industry.

The Minister is also responsible for oceanic and freshwater areas that have become centres for the development of recreational resorts. Some of that potential is administered by the Minister and some of it is shared with other portfolios.

I now turn to the greatest recreation that there is—fishing. The stocking of Queensland's fisheries is the responsibility of the Minister for Primary Industries, in conjunction with the Minister for Water Resources. Much of the original ecology of this State has been changed, in that waters have been impounded for use and thereby various native fish populations in those waters have decreased. Other species of fish must be introduced. The Premier announced such a move in the Budget. Hatcheries will be developed to produce fry, which can be released in dams throughout the State. That will be a positive move to further develop the potential of the tourist industry, which is a labour-intensive industry.

Mr Davis: Why haven't we got the Nile perch in already? We were promised them 15 years ago, and we still haven't got any Nile perch.

Mr SIMPSON: The reason for that is that the Labor Parties in other States are opposing the introduction of Nile perch. That is one of the major reasons why they have not been introduced in Queensland, along with all the gobbledegook about the Nile perch getting into the Darling River system and affecting that system. There are several species of Nile perch. If a species of Nile perch that will not live south of Queensland is selected, the fish will not live in the Darling system.

Mr Booth: It would only improve that system too, wouldn't it?

Mr SIMPSON: The introduction of Nile perch would improve any system. People often use the analogy of the introduction to Australia of the fox and the rabbit. Those people should also think of the introduction of trout to Australia, or cattle and sheep and other species that are readily accepted into this country.

The Nile perch is a wonderful sporting fish and a wonderful eating fish. The Government's present decision is to introduce other native freshwater species rather than introduce Nile perch. I do not happen to agree with that decision. I believe that a great potential for jobs is lost. For instance, the breeding pattern of the barramundi is such that it will take something like 20 years before the Tinaroo Dam is stocked. What chance is there of stocking the other areas of impounded water that could take advantage of the introduction of barramundi? The barramundi will not breed. It is like putting steers in the paddock and saying, "I will come back in 10 years' time and see how many I have got." There will be no more, because they do not breed. That is an analogy that I suppose goes straight over the heads of members opposite.

The recreational use of waterways is also not always fully developed because a conservative attitude exists in relation to some of the impounded waterways that are used for domestic water supply. Full recreational use of those waters is not allowed, because a fear exists that it will be difficult to treat the water and that it may in some way become polluted. In the United States the evidence does not show that. It shows that it is not possible to measure the effects of full recreational use of an impounded body of water versus none whatsoever. I believe that in time that will come to be understood and that the potential is there to fully develop those recreational uses so that the tourist potential of this State can be further developed.

I am concerned that some local authorities in Queensland, such as the Noosa Shire Council, have the preconceived idea that they own the river systems in their shires. Perhaps I should be more finite and say that the chairman of the Noosa Shire Council has that attitude; it is not shared by all councillors. He believes that the State Government should get permission from the local authority to do anything with the river, such as in the control of the foreshores, jetties, and so forth, which he believes are under the control of the local authority. I do not believe that is so. Of course, it has previously been proven that it is not in the interests of the local people to have a local authority with attitudes that are not in the interests of the safety of the users of the waterways or of those entrepreneurs who, in the recreational use of the river, provide a service to the public.

That brings me to the dredging of the Noosa River. The chairman continually criticises the State Government for dumping sand in what he considers to be unsuitable places and blames the State Government for the poor navigation facilities in the river. He does that even though the local authority has a dredge that could readily be used in the best possible way for dredging the river to keep open the various navigable channels.

I thank the Minister for coming to Noosa, for seeing that problem at first-hand and for getting something done while the shire chairman was waffling on about it. He has further criticised the Minister and the Government for not continually—daily—shifting navigation beacons as dredging work takes place. Of course, it is not practicable to do that. Most people using the river understand that. I believe that criticism is only for political purposes. Incidentally, that gentleman is a representative on the Beach Protection Authority. He has some strange ideas on beach protection.

Mr Tenni: He is actually on the Beach Protection Authority?

Mr SIMPSON: Yes. He criticises the Minister for not doing something about the tow on the groyne at the mouth of the river, which he says is causing it to fall into a hole and making the area unstable, yet he talks about the development of a Club Med on the spit.

Mr Tenni: He is not genuine, is he?

Mr SIMPSON: He is certainly trying to have a bob each way, or a bob his way.

Mr Tenni: He might as well do it now; he won't be there in a short time.

Mr SIMPSON: No, he certainly will not.

Mr Tenni: In fact, I have heard that he will be chucked out at the next council meeting.

Mr SIMPSON: His criticism will be diminished when he gets beaten at the next election, that is for sure.

The safety of people using the Noosa River is important. I thank the Minister and his officers for their assistance to the tourist industry by allowing the continuance of tours in the shallow lakes, such as Lake Cooroibah. That is very important to the tourist industry in Noosa, which relies greatly on the area's natural beauty and the extent of its waterways. A number of lakes form part of the Noosa River system. Lake Weyba,

which is on a creek that feeds into the river, and Lakes Doonella, Cooroibah, Cootharaba and Como, all form part of that river system.

Many people would not consider the Noosa River system to be of great significance. It does not have a large catchment area, yet I believe it has the second-highest minimum rate of flow of any stream in Australia. Perhaps that only goes to show that its drainage is through a large sand mass, which gives it some continuity of supply. That fact is a further reflection on the dryness of this continent, on how arid it is and on how great are the variations in the flow rates of its streams. This is cause for further concern that the nation's water resources be properly managed, not only for primary industry but also for domestic and industrial use.

Beach protection is most important in tourist areas. That lesson was learnt on the Gold Coast where building took place on primary dunes. Their restoration has proved very expensive for the tax-payer and the rate-payer. Such building must not happen again. Hence, certain safeguards are needed before any type of development occurs on pumped-up areas.

Before I turn to river improvement trusts, I acknowledge the work done by the Minister and the former Commissioner of Water Resources (Mr Beattie), and I look forward to having a good relationship with the new commissioner.

River improvement trusts are important, especially in the cane-growing areas on the Maroochy River, which is in my electorate. Use of the river must be managed properly so that erosion of banks does not occur. Erosion is a natural phenomenon. However, because much of the natural protection along the river has been removed, some artificial protection is needed if the present freehold land contours are to be maintained. Similar protection is needed on the foreshores. Erosion causes problems by accelerating the movement of water in the area adjacent to revetments.

The operation of river improvement trusts and drainage schemes to protect the river-banks is very important, especially if the agricultural potential of the surrounding area is to be fully realised.

The honourable member for Mourilyan (Mr Eaton) mentioned that the Baroon Pocket Dam would serve three local authorities on the Sunshine Coast. However, the Landsborough shire and Maroochy shire are the only two shires that the Baroon Pocket Dam will service. The importance of that dam is obvious. It is needed to supply the additional water required as a result of the growing population of the Sunshine Coast.

The present Minister is fully aware—as was the former Minister—of the importance of the protection of the riparian rights of farmers downstream of Obi Obi Creek, which flows into the Mary River. I welcome the protection of the rights of farmers on that stream below the dam.

It is true that the Noosa shire is now considering taking water from the Mary River. That caused some hiccups because originally it was intended to take a pipeline along the Bruce Highway, which required the Main Roads Department to determine the four-lane width of that road. Following that determination resumption notices were issued, which the Minister now has to recall—and the land has to be paid for—because the shire has now rerouted its pipeline. It goes in another direction. That is causing land-owners in some areas concern. They thought that they had been unfavourably treated because the pipeline went through their properties and around others and that perhaps the surge tank was put in the wrong place. However, that problem involves another Minister as well.

The Minister has a very important portfolio, which has a great bearing on this State not only now but also in the future.

Queensland has, through its ports, the greatest amount of exports of coal, grains and so forth per capita of any State. That is very important to Australia. The ability to maintain base resources in terms of our water supply is terribly important for the future of Australia.

The administration of fisheries and the control of offences is very important in regard to future resources. The same can be said of the control of boating offences. The Minister and his officers are often abused on that subject, but without control there would be a real shambles on the water.

I believe that the Estimates presented today by the Minister are of major importance to the running of this State. I congratulate him on the way he has handled the Estimates, and his officers for the way in which they have administered them. I totally support the Estimates.

Mr VEIVERS (Ashgrove) (4.10 p.m.): I, together with other honourable members this afternoon, have had the opportunity of listening to a very important speech. Some very serious allegations have been made by my colleague the honourable member for Rockhampton (Mr Braddy).

This Committee should be ashamed of the attitude displayed by the Minister, because whilst those very serious allegations were being made—allegations that demand an answer from the Minister—the Minister sat, virtually in contempt of this Committee, and ignored the allegations. He did not listen to them, but read the *Telegraph* and carried on a conversation with another member of this Committee. So much for the attitude of this Government to the accountability of this Committee. It is absolutely shameful that a Minister of the Crown, who is responsible for a major portfolio, did not even have the courtesy to listen intently to the speech made by the honourable member for Rockhampton.

Mr Davis: If he did not have a typewriter, he would not be able to speak.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes.

This Committee and the people of Queensland should demand from the Minister that he table the information and valuations in order to clarify the very serious allegations raised by the honourable member for Rockhampton. The Minister has now left the Chamber, but I challenge him to table those valuations and make this Government accountable to the people of this State.

For too long Ministers have ignored their public responsibilities and treated Parliament with contempt. Their days are numbered because, within the next few weeks, the people of this State will say that they have had enough.

Time after time in this Chamber Ministers refuse to answer questions and avoid providing the people of this State with the information they want.

I see that the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Mr Ahern) has a smile on his face. The people of this State have had enough of this Government's continual and deliberate efforts to avoid its responsibilities and prevent this Parliament from fulfilling its proper responsibility, which is to be accountable to the people of this State.

Mr Lee: It is a very serious allegation.

Mr VEIVERS: The Opposition is waiting for the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services to table the valuations in order to clear up the very serious allegations raised by the honourable member for Rockhampton.

I refer to the matters I raised in my speech in the Budget debate. I raised some serious matters regarding the Southport bar, and I wish to refer to them again this afternoon. The honourable member for Bundaberg will refer to some aspects of the new Southport bar. There are three areas of concern. The first relates to the financial arrangements. I note in the Estimates that a sum of just over \$5.8m will represent amortisation on borrowings and that in itself indicates the financial octopus that has developed during the development of the Nerang River entrance.

The plan to provide the residents of the Gold Coast with a safer entrance to The Broadwater at Southport has caused massive financial problems. Initially, the tender price was \$22m. That figure has escalated to a sum in excess of \$40m, reference to which appears in the Estimates of the Department of Harbours and Marine. Very serious financial problems have arisen with the development of that supposedly safe entrance.

I deal now with the aspect of safety. The new bar has already claimed the life of a very experienced fisherman, a man who on many occasions crossed the old bar, which, it is generally accepted, was dangerous.

A Government Member: This wasn't on the bar.

Mr VEIVERS: It occurred on the new bar. He was an experienced seaman. Unfortunately, he lost his life.

Many fishermen and boatmen on the Gold Coast have expressed and are continuing to express their grave concerns about the hazards of the bar. I understand that the problem is not as great on an incoming tide. The new bar is considered extremely dangerous on an outgoing tide, as all bars are. The information I have received indicates that the problem with the new entrance on an outgoing tide is that very large waves appear suddenly from unexpected directions. As a consequence, a person unfortunately lost his life. Apart from the financial problems, the development of the new bar has caused serious doubts to be expressed about its safety.

The third matter of concern arose when the resumption legislation—the Nerang River Entrance Development Bill—was rushed through the Chamber late one evening in December 1983. I referred to that during my Budget speech. Some of the matters that I raised during that speech have still not been explained satisfactorily or answered by the relevant Ministers. I wish to refer again to those matters.

The old Southport Spit was broken through by the sea in the 1940s. As a consequence of that, the Government claims—as did the former Minister, the late Mr Goleby—the payment of compensation to the holders of that freehold land would not be an issue. Rates were paid by those land-owners until the 1940s, when the sea broke through. The Government claims that, since the lands were not rateable—as no rates were paid—no compensation was payable.

I dispute that, because at least two persons have come forward with titles for land on The Spit that is above high-water mark. One person is Mr Tuesley, who has conducted a private survey and who has produced that information. The other person to whom I referred in my Budget speech has also made a fair claim to title for some land. That title was tabled by me in this Chamber.

The Government by its action seems to have broken one of society's basic tenets, which is the payment of compensation to holders of freehold land that has been resumed by the Government or a statutory authority. The land is above water now and is visible today. The Government did not take adequate care to find out if there were current holders of title to the land. What I have said previously in Parliament virtually proves that very little or no effort was made by the Government or the Land Administration Commission to ascertain if in fact there were titled land-holders.

On 28 March 1982 the late Mr Stanley Wood wrote to the Land Administration Commission. He provided the commission with the necessary information and laid claim to his land on The Spit. His letter was ignored, and the Bill was rushed through Parliament in December 1983.

In March 1984 Mr Wood again wrote to the Land Administration Commission, pointing out that he had not received a reply to his letter of March 1982. He wrote that second letter in an attempt to establish beyond doubt the title to his land. A response was then forthcoming from the Land Administration Commission. However, by then it was too late because an Act divesting land-holders of their land had been pushed through Parliament. Mr Wood's request for title to his land was then irrelevant.

I have challenged the responsible Ministers to provide an adequate explanation for what occurred in that case. I believe that is the crucial point.

Mr Ahern: How much rates have they been paying on this land?

Mr VEIVERS: They paid rates until the 1940s.

Mr Ahern: That is 40 years ago.

Mr VEIVERS: My point is that rates were paid.

The important issue is that the efforts that were made to establish title and ownership of the land were ignored by the Government. Very little effort appears to have been made by the Government in an attempt to ascertain who those land-holders were, what land they held and the areas of land involved. It is as simple as that.

I challenge the Premier and Treasurer to provide an adequate explanation of those issues. Why was Mr Wood's original correspondence of March 1982 ignored and not acknowledged? Why was it that Mr Wood received a response to his second letter, in which he raised the issue again and established his claim, after the Bill had been rushed through Parliament? I believe that the Parliament owes Mr Wood's family an explanation for that.

The second question that I asked of the Premier and Treasurer, which I now direct to the Minister, was why little or no effort was made to locate or contact those registered land-owners. I also ask the Minister why a well-established policy of the Government was not adhered to. I refer to the policy, which is embodied in our statutory laws and democratic system of resumptions, that compensation payments should be made to freehold land-owners if the Crown or a statutory authority makes a resumption.

I have now put those questions to the Minister. I believe that the family of the late Mr Wood is entitled to an adequate explanation as to why the letter that Mr Wood sent to the Land Administration Commission was not acknowledged until almost two years later, when he and his family were advised that the matter was a *fait accompli*—that it was too late; that the land had been resumed. That seems to be the damning evidence.

This is a relevant issue. A very important principle is at stake. No reasonable or adequate explanation has been given for the issues that I have raised.

Mr JENNINGS (Southport) (4.25 p.m.): The honourable member for Ashgrove (Mr Veivers) raised the matter of land on The Spit at Southport. When Mr Pat Tuesley went public on the matter, I contacted him and said, "If you like, I will go out on The Spit with you. Bring your plan. I will get an independent surveyor, a friend of mine, and it will not cost a thing. We will go out and find your land." He was going to do that, but he did not. He had two or three solicitors, so he went to one of them.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: I do not know anything about Mr Wood. Mr Wood did not contact me. I was in contact with Pat Tuesley two or three times. I offered to go onto The Spit with Mr Tuesley and a surveyor. That was before the opening of the new entrance. Many people down there have old titles. I think that Moondarewa was the name of the property. A lot of the land was under the sea.

The Opposition has insinuated that the Government has done something wrong because no rates were paid on the old properties. As the local member, I make it quite clear that I did everything possible—

Mr VEIVERS: I rise to a point of order. I realise that the honourable member for Southport is trying to make an adequate explanation—and I do not wish to interrupt him—but I point out that rates were paid prior to that and much of the land in those two instances is now above water.

Mr JENNINGS: That is the point. Most of the properties were under the water before the stabilisation project went ahead. That is the problem with which the Government was faced. It was faced with a major community project and a legal problem with old titles. However, it did everything possible in that regard.

An excellent job was done by the previous Minister and the department. The present Minister also is doing an excellent job. Spending seven years in the Gulf country taught me the importance of water resources. The supply of water is the life-blood of the country. Efforts should be made to conserve water. Australia is not like the United States, which has big mountain ranges and receives run-off water from them.

The Queensland Water Resources Commission and the Harbours and Marine Department oversee a major resource in the State. The coastline of the mainland is more than 5 200 km in length. When the islands are included, it is 7 400 km.

Mr Menzel: How do you think the member for Brisbane Central would handle the conditions in the north?

Mr JENNINGS: He would die of thirst.

I also wish to compliment the Beach Protection Authority, which is doing a fantastic job. The conservation of the beaches on the Gold Coast and other major areas is very important. The shark-meshing program is probably unique in the world. Not as many swimmers are attacked by sharks as there were years ago, and that is commendable.

The \$43m stabilisation of the Southport bar, which is now the Gold Coast Seaway, is a tremendous project and will have an enormous impact on safety for boats.

The honourable member for Ashgrove referred to the death of Mal Taylor. That was a most unfortunate circumstance. I make it clear that that incident was not as a result of the construction of the sea-way. It resulted from the sandbanks that have always been there. Any sea-way or airport always has safety factors to be considered.

The new sea-way on the Gold Coast is the passage used by hundreds and hundreds of boats that would never have ventured across the old bar. People now say to me that they would never have considered the risk of crossing the old bar, but the new sea-way is a big improvement because, if they carefully choose the time to go out and come in, it is a much safer crossing. It must also be remembered that there is a settling-down period associated with the efficient operation of the sea-way.

The honourable member for Ashgrove (Mr Veivers) neglected to mention that the Minister inspected the Southport bar and took note of the problems that have been mentioned earlier. As soon as he realised the problems of administration and control, he agreed immediately to the erection of a control tower. The control tower will be furnished with the best possible radio facilities. The Gold Coast area is very fortunate in that it has an air/sea rescue service. An honorary board of directors, comprising representatives from the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, the water police unit, and the volunteer coastguard, will administer the operations of the control tower.

Mr Tenni: A memorial to Taylor.

Mr JENNINGS: The Minister correctly points out that it will be a memorial to Mal Taylor, who lost his life in the vicinity of the Southport bar.

In the annual report of the Department of Harbours and Marine, mention is made of the first Sydney to Gold Coast yacht race. That will be a most important event because it will highlight the benefits of the new Southport bar. It is also important to observe that what the Minister has stated in the report accords with what the engineers predicted.

The canal system on the Gold Coast now experiences a greater rise and fall in tides, and the effect is that a greater volume of water is flushed through the canal system.

Mr Davis: As you mentioned the canals, tell us what happened during the 1974 floods.

Mr JENNINGS: It is fascinating that the honourable member for Brisbane Central should mention canals, because the level at low tide drops a further 16 to 19 inches. As I run around The Broadwater in the mornings, I notice schools of porpoises. I have not

seen such a thing for years. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of fish in the area, which is evidence of the flushing effect on The Broadwater of the construction of the new bar.

Mr Milliner: Some people reckon that you are a two-legged shark.

Mr JENNINGS: And you are not very original, are you!

Great credit is due to the Southport Yacht Club for organising the Bayview Harbour sponsorship for the Sydney to Gold Coast yacht race. It should be remembered that the first Sydney to Hobart yacht race was organised 41 years ago and had only nine starters. The first Sydney to Gold Coast yacht race, which took place approximately two weeks ago, had no fewer than 83 starters. That is heartening. All of the race participants came to the area through the Gold Coast Seaway. Yachting can provide a major boost to the tourism industry. All honourable members would know the significance of 41 seconds in 1983.

Mr Davis: Some of those yachts polluted The Broadwater, too.

Mr JENNINGS: I will refer to that matter later.

The America's Cup challenge will attract 1.2 million people to Perth between October this year and February next year; it will bring about the building of 4 000 public housing units and increase vehicular traffic across the Nullarbor Plain from nine vehicles per hour to 90 per hour. It will bring 150 000 visitors from overseas and add an extra 8 000 motor vehicles on Perth roads every day for five months. It will require the preparation of an extra 60 million restaurant meals and the construction of 121 tourist projects, including 6 461 accommodation units—all of which will result in the generation of investment capital to the tune of \$2 billion. It has been necessary to provide telecommunications facilities for more than 1 000 accredited journalists from all over the world. It is expected to generate an additional \$5 billion into the Perth and Australian economy. The 41 seconds I referred to earlier was the difference between winning and losing the America's Cup.

Now that the Gold Coast has been provided with an excellent sea-way, the holding of international yachting events can be planned for the future. Interestingly enough, the Cruising Yacht Club in Sydney has organised some wonderful races. The Sydney to Hobart race is a world-class event, and the Sydney to Gold Coast race can be added to the list.

Australia has achieved a remarkable record in international yacht-racing. Yacht-racing attracts a lot of tourists and provides a boost for tourism. Iain Murray was the world champion six times, and Gary Metcalfe is a world champion who is a resident of the Gold Coast area.

Australia first entered the Admiral's Cup in 1965. The second time Australia entered the race, it had a victory. That is one of the great international yachting events each year. The Admiral's Cup event in 1979 was sad because of the loss of life in the Fastnet race. It was a tragedy that 23 boats were lost. The tragic irony is that the Australian crew suffered no casualties and won the event. Australia's yachting prowess reflects the kind of conditions that are experienced in Australia.

The Southport sea-way has brought a big plus to the fishing industry. The Gold Coast restaurants serve the best seafood in Australia. There is no ciguatera risk in the reef fish that are served on the Gold Coast. As a matter of fact, the Gold Coast does not have any problems.

Mr Randell: Barramundi is the best.

Mr JENNINGS: It is not bad.

The department deserves credit for the publication Grant's *Guide to Fishes*. That is a fantastic present to give any guy. It is a fantastic book. The department also is

publishing a new book on seafood. That will be a real plus. It is good to see that. It is a great credit to the department. It is also a great thing for Australia and Australians.

Where else in the world do people have a Great Barrier Reef? Nowhere else in the world! Australia also has such magnificent fishing resources.

The Gold Coast Waterways Authority is operating very satisfactorily. Another great credit to the Government is the facility that has now been built on The Broadwater to house the Harbours and Marine Department, the water police and the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. All of those offices are together in the one building. If people have a problem with Harbours and Marine or waterways matters, they can go to that building. It is a really top establishment and it is a great credit to everyone concerned. As a matter of fact, I would not mind an office in the building also; it is a terrific spot.

The waterways authority controls the end of The Spit where the new sea-way comes in. A planning policy has been organised for that. People can now drive right up to the end of The Spit. What a terrific tourist attraction that is. People can walk out onto the new wall and look back along the surfing beach down to Coolangatta. Where else in the world could something like that be seen? The development of the sea-way has opened up that whole area for the tourist industry. About another 3 km of magnificent surfing beach has been opened up. It is an area that people can drive up to, and, when it is finished, there will be barbecue areas and a kiosk. Alongside it is The Broadwater beach. One day, a lady friend of mine said, "We will go out for lunch." I said, "That would be lovely. Where will we go?" She said, "We won't go to a restaurant, we will go and have lunch on The Broadwater beach." We did that. It was beautiful. There are some lovely little spots up there—quiet ones, too.

A very satisfactory planning policy has been developed for that whole area. That will be one of the major tourist attractions not only on the Gold Coast but in Queensland. It is an area that has beautiful beaches which can be driven to. It is an area where the kids can be in The Broadwater on one side or in the rough surf on the other. Of course, people can also enjoy fishing on the walls. Some magnificent fish are being caught there. The tower that is going up there——

An Honourable Member: Where is that?

Mr JENNINGS: The Gold Coast Seaway. If the honourable member does not know where that is, he is gone.

In The Broadwater is a wave-break island, and it is a magnificent feature in itself.

A vandal problem exists in that area at the moment. Vandalism is one of the problems that exist in Australia. It has to be attended to. I am quite sure that when the sea-way tower is erected, with its spotlight and that sort of thing, the vandal problem will be able to be controlled. The Gold Coast Waterways Authority has now banned the fellows from going out on the pumping jetty. Actually, a big sign has been erected, saying that no-one should swim around the pumping jetty. One day a journal showed a photograph of some character on his surf ski going down the middle of that pumping jetty. But that is another thing.

The annual report of the Department of Harbours and Marine mentions that some juveniles in boats cause a few problems. That all gets back to speed controls in the canals and that sort of thing. That is one of the things that have to be looked at. I give credit to the Harbours and Marine inspectors who pull those kids up. The inspectors try to let the kids know in a reasonable sort of way that the kids are doing the wrong things. A lot of warnings have been given. I think those warnings are paying off and generally things are starting to improve a bit.

Dawn Fraser said that, if she started off her swimming career again, she would come to Queensland and train because it is the only State in Australia that really helps the sporting fraternity. She knows where to come. There is no doubt that the Gold Coast is a fantastic area for swimming, running and cycling.

The department should be complimented on its public education of the boating safety program, which is a great thing. With the help of the Department of Harbours and Marine, Mr Moffatt, of the Benowa State High School, who is a really keen character who comes up with all sorts of brain-waves, has introduced a small-boat course for his students. That teaches them how to handle boats. That is a great idea and all in the department should be complimented on the help they have given.

I have some correspondence with the department on future pollution control and on the regulations for the prevention of pollution by sewage from ships. Part of the reply from the late Minister stated—

“Regulations for the prevention of pollution by sewage from ships is the subject of Annex IV to the Marpol Convention. This is an International Convention covering marine pollution to which Australia is a party. The Annex has not been adopted by Australia pending suitable legislation being formulated by the States to enable such action. It is inevitable however that we will eventually legislate the control sewage discharge from larger vessels.

The Marpol Annex IV provides that new ships of 200 tons gross and above, and new ships of lesser tonnage certificated to carry more than 10 persons, must be fitted with holding tanks or have a sewerage treatment plant on the vessel.”

That problem is still being investigated. Part of another letter from the late Minister stated—

“The Australian Association of Port and Marine Authorities is currently considering legislative approaches to the problem of garbage and sewage in harbours . . .

On receipt of the legislative proposals the matter will be discussed with all local authorities concerned, including the Gold Coast Waterways Authority.”

I thank the present Minister for his support on this problem. I am sure that all honourable members are aware of it.

Recently the Gold Coast Waterways Authority received a report from the Water Quality Council that the purity of the water in The Broadwater is of a high standard. That is a good result and ought to be maintained. I have swum across The Broadwater many times in races, however, with all the porpoises in the area now, I do not think I will be doing that any more—sharks might be in there, too. Following the dramatic improvement, I want the high water quality maintained.

I noticed with interest the following passage from the annual report of the Department of Harbours and Marine—

“An area of concern that continues to be a problem, is the number of Juvenile offenders being reported from the Gold Coast Station for committing alleged breaches of Regulations pertaining to boating in that area. The Department issued 108 letters of caution to juvenile offenders and their parents in an effort to promote commonsense and courtesy and educate the future users of our marine environment in safe boating.”

I commend the department for its handling of that problem. It adopted a very good approach. It warns the kids and sends a letter to their parents, which is the right way to go about it.

I wish to compliment the Minister and his departmental heads and officials, who have always co-operated 100 per cent. Engineers were sent down to study the area and came up with one design for the new sea-way tower. The fellows down there and I went through it. It was not quite what we wanted. Subsequently the engineer came up with a brilliant design. The working drawings stage has now been reached.

Mr McElligott: Will that fit into the Queensland space program?

Mr JENNINGS: It could help. One never knows.

Because of its design, it will be very good for search and rescue. Maybe it will help the space program.

Mr Borbidge: The Labor Party opposed the sea-way project, anyway.

Mr JENNINGS: I know that that is the case. Anyone who has seen it now would have to support it.

On behalf of everyone in that area, I pay a great compliment to the department, its officials and all the fellows who work on the Gold Coast; they are great guys to work with.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (4.44 p.m.): I have some sympathy for the Minister in this debate, because what could be called the scandals and the wasteful extravagances of the departments occurred before he took over responsibility for them. He has been put in a very vulnerable and difficult position that is not of his own making.

Before I get on to those scandals, I shall say a few words about the State's recreational fishermen and the Gold Coast Seaway, and reiterate some comments I have already made about what I call the leaky dam—that is the Bjelke-Petersen Dam—at Murgon. I believe it is important to keep that subject before the people of Queensland.

Recreational fishermen have a fairly difficult time of it in Queensland. Their position has not been appreciated. Whenever Budgets are presented in this Parliament honourable members are told that no new taxes have been introduced. However, every year very significant increases in charges are imposed on recreational fishermen.

I will demonstrate to honourable members the increase in charges for small pleasure-boats. I will take the example of a 4.5 metre boat. That is not a big boat; it is not a luxurious boat. In 1983 it cost \$29 to register such a boat and put it into the water. A year later, that rose to \$43. In 1985, it jumped to \$47. In 1986—three years later—it costs \$52. That increase in charges works out at 26.4 per cent per year. The Government is getting revenue not from so-called new taxes but from massively increased charges affecting recreational fishermen.

I turn to the effect that weirs and dams have had on causeways. Almost every major river system in south-east Queensland has either a weir or a dam on it. Very few or no environmental impact studies have been carried out in regard to the effect that that has on the fisheries resources. That should be done in the future. Whenever a weir is to be built, the effect on the fisheries resource should be considered because it is a major aspect of the tourist industry. The recreational fisheries resource must be protected for tourists.

I turn to the Middle Creek causeway, which I believe the honourable member for Lytton (Mr Burns)—the Opposition's fisheries expert—will deal with later. A bit of a fiasco took place in relation to that causeway. I believe that the Minister was let down by his department. Undertakings were given in the media, and those undertakings were not kept. I believe that the Minister was put in a fairly difficult position.

I turn to the Gold Coast Seaway, which is the end result of the Nerang River entrance development. Promises in regard to that development have not been fulfilled. Honourable members have been misled about certain aspects of that development. I refer firstly to the compulsory resumption of land; secondly to the safety of the entrance; and thirdly to the financing of the development.

I will begin with the Nerang River Entrance Development Bill. Whenever controversial legislation is introduced in this Parliament, it has to be pushed through by the suspension of Standing Orders, so that honourable members are not allowed to fully debate it. That is when problems are struck.

The second-reading speech of the former Minister, the late Honourable J. P. Goleby, should be examined closely. In that speech he said—

“The purpose of this Bill is to authorise the Gold Coast Waterways Authority to provide a safe navigable and, for all practical purposes, all-weather entrance to the Nerang River and Broadwater at the Gold Coast.”

That is wrong. Many people say that it is not an all-weather entrance and does not provide the safe, navigable and, for all practical purposes, all-weather entrance. That is my first point. I will come back to that later on.

My second point relates to the costing. When tenders were called, the lowest tender price was approximately \$22m. However, the very interesting aspect about the introduction of the Bill was that the Gold Coast Waterways Authority could have been acting illegally when it called for those tenders.

The Minister stated further—

“. . .the Gold Coast Waterways Authority has called tenders for the stabilisation works, and the Bill ensures that such calling of tenders by the authority will not be invalidated by reason of any of these limitations existing at the time such action was taken. It does this by specifically and retrospectively authorising the calling of tenders.”

Again the situation arises in which the Government, through its statutory authorities, has not fulfilled its proper role. Full accountability has not occurred. It all comes back to rushing through a Bill to authorise illegal actions. I will follow that through to some extent.

My third point relates to the talk about the compulsory resumption of the land at no cost to the Government. That is very interesting because at the time the Minister said—

“. . . it is quite clear that public opinion would not countenance any private development on that land, so that the allotments in the hands of private owners have no market value.”

The Government must be kept honest. At that time the Minister said there was to be no development on that land because it had no market value, it must be ensured that no development occurs and that land is kept for the people of Queensland. Further he stated—

“Taking all these matters into consideration, including the fact that the lands were lost by a natural process, it is considered that this is a situation where there is no case for the payment of any compensation to the remaining registered proprietors and where, in any case, the difficulty of tracing registered proprietors or their successors would make normal procedures for taking of the land of the Crown impossible to follow.”

I reiterate that statement—

“. . . in any case, the difficulty of tracing registered proprietors or their successors would make normal procedures for the taking of land of the Crown impossible to follow.”

There is a letter from Mr Wood dated March 1982 addressed to the Land Administration Commission in which he tries to establish claim to the land. That letter shows that for over 18 months previously at least one other owner was trying to establish his ownership of that land. Effectively he was ignored and, because of that, full credence cannot be given to the statements made at that time by the Government.

The third aspect is the financing of the Gold Coast Seaway project. The cost of the project was expected to exceed \$30m, and it certainly has exceeded that figure. The Minister stated—

“. . . and annual costs will be incurred for the operation and maintenance of the sand bypassing system.”

The Minister stated further—

“On the matter of financing the development, the Government has taken the view that its value to the area will be such that the project should not be expected to be self-financing in the long term.”

That is one important point. The second important point was stated by the Minister on 21 December 1983 as follows—

“The project will therefore, to a large degree, be treated in the same manner as other public works provided out of non-repayable funds. The precise accounting means by which this will be achieved is currently under examination.”

That development was expected to cost over \$30m. The figure is incorrect. At that time the Government did not know how the development was to be financed and had to bring in legislation to validate the calling of tenders, which at that time were probably illegal. The Bill had to be rushed through Parliament by the suspension of Standing Orders. The major problem is that there is no accountability.

Looking at the funding of the development in the Budget, page 76 of the Estimates of the Department of Harbours and Marines for 1986-87 states—

“Assistance to Gold Coast Waterways Authority—Amortization of Borrowings \$5,802,551.”

The public is therefore outlaying \$5.8m per year over a period of 20 years to pay for the Gold Coast Seaway. The Minister is shaking his head. In 1983 the Minister had to establish how the development was to be funded. Even up to 30 June 1985 he did not know how it was to be funded. I refer to the *Auditor-General's Report on the Miscellaneous Departmental Accounts and the Accounts of Statutory Bodies and Local Authorities*. Page 206 of that report, under the heading “Gold Coast Waterways Authority,” states that income for the year was less than \$1m and expenditure was over \$500,000, leaving a surplus of \$402,000. There is no way the Gold Coast Waterways Authority could ever pay back such an amount. The Government was not certain how the development was to be funded and Parliament was not told. Yet there is an explanatory note in the Auditor-General's report—

“Note 1 Capitalised Interest.”

I stress that that is from the Auditor-General's report dated 30 June 1985. It will be interesting to see what he has written in this year's report and compare it with last year's.

The 1985 report contains the following notation—

“Capitalised Interest

Temporary loans amounting to \$18,188,533 have been received from the Queensland Treasury and the Queensland Government Development Authority to finance the construction of the Nerang River Entrance Relocation and Training Works. Interest accruing on these loans of \$1,712,779 has been capitalised. The Authority cannot pay those monies at this time. The Treasury has agreed to hold the matter of payment in abeyance until such time as the funding arrangements of the Authority can be determined.”

That report was presented to Parliament in November 1985. The Government could not even work out the financing of that project when the Nerang River Entrance Development Bill was passed in 1983. That is a very unsatisfactory aspect of the project. The amortisation of borrowings of \$5.8m must come out of the pockets of every person in Queensland. In other words, it is a way of fostering tourism on the Gold Coast. The cost of the project was to be just over \$20m. On 25 May 1983, Dr Edwards said that tenders would be called. Those tenders were illegal. Later, on 13 December 1983 the cost had risen to \$32m.

What has happened? The loan to pay for the Nerang River entrance redevelopment is \$50.5m. Two years ago, the project was not going to cost any more than \$32m. A loan of \$50.5m must now be obtained. The loan will be for a period of 20 years with a fixed interest repayment of \$4.9m. The sinking fund of the repayments is \$1.06m. In effect, the total interest and repayment on that loan will be \$5.96m per year. It is a shame that honourable members have not been told all the accounting aspects of the development. At the time, other proposals were put forward, such as dredging on a

permanent basis. When one considers the maintenance costs of the present project, I guarantee that dredging would not have cost \$5.96m per year for 20 years. The entrance to the Nerang River has not proved to be safe in all conditions.

I turn now to what can only be termed wasteful expenditure by the Water Resources Commission. I refer to the Bjelke-Petersen Dam. The expenditure on that project justifies the call for a parliamentary public accounts committee. It also shows that the Premier was pork-barrelling his own electorate. The dam to which I refer is what I call the leaky dam. It is the Bjelke-Petersen Dam on the Barker-Barambah Irrigation Project.

An examination of the State Capital Works Program for 1986-87 referred to in the Budget papers shows that the cost of the Barker-Barambah Irrigation Project is estimated to be \$46m.

Mr Tenni: Hawke again—inflation!

Mr CAMPBELL: The initial estimate was \$17.6m. This year, almost \$10m will be spent on the scheme. The Minister did not ask the Federal Government for funding because he knew that the dam was not economic and so he would not receive any funding. The Government is paying for it out of the funds from the Special Major Capitals Works Program.

The Minister interrupted and said that the increase was due to inflation. Let me examine the reason for that massive increase in cost. I refer to the DPI and Water Resources Commission report into the Barker-Barambah Irrigation Project, which was published in December 1979. It concluded—

“Construction of a major storage on Barker Creek and associated works would cost some \$17.6 million at December 1978 costs.

The economic analysis of the proposed schemes indicate that from the view of primary benefits alone the project can only be considered marginal.”

When I was employed by the Department of Primary Industries, I worked on the economic analysis of many irrigation projects in Queensland. The word “marginal” means not economic, lousy; and in actual fact the dam should not have been built.

That same report stated—

“The site description of the proposed dam at Barker Creek 1.3 Kilometres. ‘The rock is extensively faulted, leakage prone limestone lenses are present and over the upper right bank area the rock is overlain by clay bound sands and gravels up to 30 metres deep’.”

In that initial report it was stated that there could be problems. Those problems have now arisen.

I turn now to the annual reports of the Water Resources Commission. In the 1980-81 report it was stated that—

“Some additional geological studies including drilling and geophysical assessments have been carried out, and these will continue.”

The 1981-82 report stated that—

“Seismic studies were undertaken in the diversion conduct and spillway areas to locate suspected faults in these areas.”

The 1982-83 report stated that—

“Advice is being sought from consultants on the type of investigations needed to fully delineate the limestone problem and on the measures required to ensure effective watertightness of the limestone.”

The 1983-84 report stated that—

“The investigations have confirmed that a dam can be built at the site and that the need for extra foundation materials will increase the cost.”

That was not because of the inflation rate that was increasing under the Fraser and Anthony Government; it was due to the very poor selection of the dam site. As I said before, it was stated in the original analysis of that project that those problems could arise.

The 1984-85 report stated that—

“Further discussions were held with American consultant Mr. J. B. Cooke regarding foundation treatment, particularly grouting procedures for the karstic limestone.”

The report for the current year stated that—

“Because of the unusual nature of the limestone foundation, close liaison has been maintained between the designers and the project staff for the foundation treatment including the deep high pressure grouting.”

It further states that—

“It was decided after consultation with American Consultant, Mr. J. B. Cooke, that further investigation be undertaken of the upper right abutment to ascertain the extent of a major limestone seam.”

At the present time a \$46m dam will provide irrigation for 4 700 ha of land. It is still uncertain as to what will be produced on that land. The original report stated that grain might be grown. However, that did not seem viable. Then it was decided that a few potatoes might be grown. That was also not very viable. Then it was decided to go into horticulture, because that is viable and almost every other market within the area would be eliminated.

For every one of the 4 700 ha of land that is to be irrigated, the capital cost involved will be \$9,787. That has been a windfall for those farmers, because they have already benefited by approximately \$10,000 from the money allocated for the building of the dam.

On top of that, an extra specialist's report was obtained in 1983 from Peter James, an engineering geologist. Mr James stated in that report that—

“The potential leakage problems can be separated into two parts:

Leakage under the dam

Leakage from the reservoir.”

I do not believe that the leakage from the reservoir has ever been considered. The leakage at the dam site has caused massive increases in the costs incurred on a wasteful, pork-barrelling project, which the department was not interested in and did not want to continue with.

Most of the engineers that I know within the department are dedicated people who are proud of their irrigation schemes. However, they do not like to be associated with pork-barrelling projects that will not pay their way, because it reflects on the integrity and professional competence of the whole department. I believe that that aspect must be considered.

Time expired.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (5.4 p.m.): I intend to speak generally on the Estimates. However, the previous speaker has reminded me of something that I intended to mention. I refer to the belief that dams should not be built, or that water should not be impounded, if it is not economically viable. It has also been said that funds are not available for the construction of such dams. The honourable member for Bundaberg singled out one dam in particular. He also said that uncertainty existed as to the types of crops to be grown and when they would be grown. Those problems apply to the majority of water-storage areas throughout Australia. Short-term thinking should not be allowed to cloud the issues on water conservation and the impounding of water. The honourable member, in selecting one dam, said, “We mightn't be able to grow this. We mightn't be able to grow that.” That would apply to every dam that has been built.

Mr Campbell: It does not apply with the Bundaberg Irrigation Scheme. It was based on a very good economic analysis.

Mr BOOTH: The honourable member for Bundaberg is singling out one dam for his argument, which he says does not apply to Bundaberg. At the moment, I will not ask whether the honourable member wants to expand sugar production. If he believes that sugar is the only crop to grow from impounded water, he might be completely on the wrong track.

I point out that in my lifetime the population of this nation has increased threefold. When I attended school, the population was a little over 5 million. Now it is over 15 million. That increase has been brought about by a number of factors. The first was the displacement of persons after the war. People from several other nations, having been displaced, came to Australia. I am of the opinion that that type of occurrence will continue for the next 50 years. I forecast that in 50 years' time the population of Australia will be 45 million or 50 million. I might be wrong, but I might be right. As long as the nation has made provision for a population of that size, that would do no harm.

I do not know if the conflict in South Africa will blow up and cause people to leave that country, but it might. I cannot see huge numbers of people being absorbed into any other nation than Australia—unless, of course, they go to nations that have an overpopulation problem.

Australia should be impounding every bit of water that it can. I do not believe that it is not in the best interests of this country to impound water, particularly for cropping. At the moment Australia's future lies in the bulk commodities such as wheat, sugar, wool and beef. It might well be that some of the smaller crops should be looked at. I refer to crops that suit a smaller area and would encourage diversification. With bulk cropping, a farmer has huge amounts of capital invested, on which he must receive a yield over a number of years. On a farm that is equipped to grow wheat, barley or any other of today's bulk crops, the lifetime of the machinery is about 10 years. It might not quite last 10 years. The farmer has to plan well ahead.

I perused the annual report of the Commissioner of Water Resources. It is a comprehensive report that sets out much information, including surface water and ground-water supplies. More care should be taken with ground-water supplies. If honourable members study the history in the USA and some other countries in which ground-water supplies have been severely depleted by over-pumping, they will realise that it is only right that fairly rigid controls should be imposed on pumping. If the ground water is lost, then people will realise how important it is. I have always been of the opinion that many of the controls on underground water should be exercised with great care.

In controlling such systems, a fair amount of emotionalism creeps in. Sometimes people say, "My neighbour is pumping so much water that the water under my farm must be depleted." That is usually based, to some extent, on emotionalism. Nevertheless, if pumping is not controlled, the people of Australia will rue the day.

When people complain about over-pumping and claim that they are suffering because of it, those complaints should be analysed carefully and an attempt made to alleviate the problem. Some of the problems might be imaginary, but at least a proper answer should be provided. Although some people make spurious complaints, not everyone does. Perhaps a few complaints are based on emotionalism, but that is not generally so.

I turn my attention now to surface water—impounding water resources in big dams. Although it is not my intention to criticise the impounding of huge volumes of water, I am of the opinion that the stage has been reached in the field of water conservation at which people have come to regard big as synonymous with beautiful. People think that, if a huge dam has been constructed, benefits must result. I am not so sure about that. Rather, I am inclined to think that the provision of a larger number of smaller water storage facilities would achieve a better result.

I have in mind the area of my electorate, where the streams that have their sources in the Great Dividing Range carry a large volume of water and provide fairly continuous yields. Although the dams in the area are much smaller, I consider them to be more efficient because they service the valleys that are noted for fertile alluvial soil, which is capable of growing vegetables and would perhaps be suitable for growing crops that have not yet been thought of.

I regard that proposition as being particularly suitable to the Condamine Valley. If a number of small dams were constructed, the increased storage could be used to provide water in dry spells in areas located to the south of Condamine Valley. The primary users of the smaller-capacity dams would be the farms that lie adjacent to them. I mention Swan Creek and Emu Creek, which carry a considerable volume of water and would be suitable for impounding. Although their capacity would not be as great as some of the larger dams, they would fill more quickly and more often. It could also be that their yield is better than one might think. The Minister should give serious consideration to that suggestion.

I acknowledge that the gates have been fitted to the Leslie Dam and that all that is required for the water resources of my electorate is rainfall. The construction of the Leslie Dam was not a decision taken lightly, and much of the water is not used in my electorate. It is true to say, however, that the dam services some parts of my electorate and areas in the surrounding district.

I have had contact with people in the area of my electorate who have been trying to obtain more water. I inform the Committee that, although the Minister has been responsive to the requests that have been made, naturally the provision of more water would have been appreciated. The people involved in the quest for more water were hopeful of at least obtaining what they asked for.

I led a deputation to the previous Minister for Water Resources at a time when the area appeared to have enough water to satisfy local demand. It is ironic that, when the applications were called for, a good deal more were received than were anticipated. It appears that some restriction will now have to be applied to the amount of water made available to each person.

At times, I have reservations about the policies of the Queensland Water Resources Commission, although some of my reservations could be regarded as minor. I disagree completely, however, with the idea that, if a man obtains an allotment of water, he either uses that quantity every year or his allotment is reduced. In a climate that is as dry as Australia's, that is a foolish policy. If the man has been fortunate enough to receive adequate rainfall and only needs to use half of his allotment, surely it is ludicrous to suggest that the remainder of the allotment should be pumped into the river. Surely it is sensible for him to use only what he needs.

The annual report of the Commissioner of Water Resources lists a number of water control boards throughout Queensland. Because of accessibility and the local knowledge possessed by the members, a greater number of boards may be the best way of providing sensible answers to the queries that are received. Very often, problems are able to be resolved by local water boards because of the factors I mentioned earlier, namely, local knowledge and an ability to go directly to the heart of the matter and talk to the people involved.

The other matter that I refer to—and I think the honourable member for Cunningham (Mr Elliott) mentioned it also—is water wastage. Various systems of irrigation are used—flood irrigation, spray irrigation and trickle. More money should be spent on research into those methods. If the system of irrigating can save water—if its usage can be halved—that is just as good as doubling its impounding. The supply is doubled. To some extent, I am worried when I see flood irrigation and tail drains running away surplus water. First of all, that method of irrigation wastes water. It is not effectual. It might give maximum yield, but it might not do much better. I have seen crops going yellow from too much water. Surely those crops are not giving maximum yield.

A salinity problem exists along the Murray River, where flood irrigation has been used recklessly, if the local people can be believed. Perhaps it does not exist everywhere, but that area does have some salinity problems. Some of the people along the Murray think that salinity problems are, to some extent, tied to the use of flood irrigation.

In Queensland I would like to see some more research done as to how the water is put onto the crop. If water has to be applied under high pressure, that is not effective as it costs money to build up the pressure. Recent irrigation systems have overcome some of the problems associated with pressure that is too high. I am not prepared to say that the old high-pressure systems were all bad, but certainly they cost money for power and, perhaps to some extent, they were not the best application of the water. If under pressure the water is being tossed a long way, or blown a long way—whatever one likes to call it—that causes big drops of water, which must cause soil erosion—perhaps not bad erosion, but some.

Another aspect of water storages to which I refer—and this is to the credit of the commissioner and his staff—is the recreational activity connected with the dams. The dam that is close to Warwick—the Leslie Dam—is used extensively in that way because it is only a short distance from Warwick—about a 10-minute drive. People can quite easily visit that dam. Australians are always inclined to favour the water for recreational activity. The recreational activity that is associated with dams—and the attractive layout of lawns and the tree-planting programs around them—have been of great benefit to Queensland. For those people in inland areas who are a long drive from the coast, it is difficult to visit the coast on as many occasions as they would like. If an area in the vicinity is attractive, whether it is close or not, it is a great benefit to the people who live in nearby country towns. My experience has been that the Water Resources Commission has been able to set up very attractive surroundings in the recreational areas adjacent to water storages. That is of great benefit to the towns and to the district.

Finally, I repeat that I do not agree with those people who say that the Government cannot afford to construct water storages or impound a further amount of water. In a nation such as Australia, which should grow and probably will, the question is: Can the Government afford not to spend money on their construction? A few ways of setting funds aside from general taxation each year for water conservation should be considered. Most people are worried that the Federal Government appears to be withdrawing funds from water storage or water conservation. Because the Federal Government has the taxation authority, it should be one Government that is not pulling out; it should be trying to put more in. The Federal Government, in a very sincere way, should have regard for the future of this nation.

It is all very well for the Federal Government to say that in the future Australia will not be able to export its produce. One never knows; it might have to. If the population of the nation is to increase, surely it will be of great advantage to have as much water impounded as possible.

The State Government should be heading in that direction. Naturally it should be co-operating with the Federal Government. It should be doing its best. It has not done too badly. I suppose that, when the history of Queensland is written, the development of water storages in the last 20 years will show that the Government has acted responsibly. Nevertheless, I am a little worried when I hear economic advisers and others of their ilk saying, “We can’t afford this. We can’t afford that. This dam doesn’t pay. That dam doesn’t pay.” Many other things that the Government provides for society—for instance, general recreational activities—do not pay. Just the same, without them this nation would be very much poorer.

I support the Estimates before the Committee. Despite the fact that I am worried about a few matters, the Water Resources Commission has carried out its responsibility, and the State appears to have pulled its weight.

Mr McELLIGOTT (Townsville) (5.21 p.m.): As my contribution to the debate, I will refer at length to a project that is proceeding and will, I believe, have a very severe

effect on the Bohle River system, its estuary and Halifax Bay. It is almost certain to destroy very valuable fish and prawn-breeding grounds, particularly in the estuary area. The project of which I speak is one that has been undertaken by the Thuringowa City Council to establish a sewerage-treatment plant 20.5 km from the mouth of the Bohle River and to discharge treated effluent into that area.

The residential development of Thuringowa city is occurring in a corridor between the Ross and Bohle Rivers. That development is expanding westward toward the banks of the Bohle River. To service that expansion, obviously the Thuringowa City Council needs to provide treatment works for its populace or, alternatively, to continue with the existing arrangement by which it shares the Mount St John treatment plant operated by the Townsville City Council. I should make the important point that that plant can continue to provide for the planned expansion of Thuringowa city.

Two treatment plants are proposed. Initially the Thuringowa City Council would like to discharge the Stage 1 effluent into the Bohle River adjacent to a site 20.5 km from the mouth of the river, which places it in the non-tidal reaches. The Stage 2 development would include the construction of a sewerage-treatment plant at a site 13.5 km from the mouth, which is just upstream from the tidal limit, with effluent discharge to the tidal reaches at approximately 8.5 km.

At this stage effluent from site 1A, which is the one that is already under construction, would be diverted to the site at 8.5 km to a combined outfall site, with the cost of the outfall deferred until the population base serviced by the scheme is sufficient to meet the substantial further cost. That is a very important point and one to which I wish to return at the conclusion of my speech.

The Bohle River rises in the Hervey Range and flows about 36 km in a northerly direction to enter Halifax Bay approximately 15 km north-west of Townsville. The tidal limit is not well-defined but is approximately 13 km from the mouth. Potential locations for the proposed discharge to the Bohle River are, as I have mentioned, 20.5 km and 13.5 km from the mouth. Under the prevailing flow regime, a continuous discharge will be sufficiently diluted for only a very limited period—the estimate is less than 20 per cent of the year—and will receive no dilution for the greater part of the year.

The tidal reaches of the Bohle estuary and its tributaries have been declared a wetland reserve under the Fisheries Act. The river is an important area for recreational and minor commercial fishing and for crabbing.

The Thuringowa City Council proposes, incidentally, in its strategic plan to develop the mouth of the Bohle River for tourist facilities. The discharge of such effluent from the substantial population into the often dry upper reaches of the Bohle River or to its poorly flushed tidal reaches is seen as being likely to have an extremely deleterious effect on the existing aquatic environment.

The first proposal being considered is the one to discharge effluent at a site 20.5 km from the mouth of the river. That treatment plant is presently under construction. It is subsidised by the usual 30 per cent subsidy from the State Government.

The report on the proposal states—

“A discharge to site 20.5 km will result in permanent water, comprising up to 100% effluent, establishing for some distance downstream.

. . .

The non-tidal reach of the Bohle River is underlain by an intermittent narrow band of shallow alluvial sand, under which heavy clay and tight alluvial material exists. No large alluvial deposits are present and consequently there are no shallow aquifers.

. . .

Consequently surface water may persist for an extended distance downstream.

. . .
 It is not possible to predict with accuracy whether effluent flow will reach the tidal limit.

. . .
 The pronounced deterioration in water quality likely to result from such a discharge is considered to result largely from the in situ growth and subsequent decay of algae.

. . .
 In the absence of nutrient removal, conditions similar to those observed in other locations will develop. In deeper ponded areas the water will be visibly green with algae. In shallower areas the substrate will be covered by attached filamentous forms. As water chemistry changes with progression downstream the species of algae present will also change. Algal die-off will result in the accumulation of highly organic deposits which impose a considerable benthic oxygen demand. The invertebrate fauna will be characterised by chironomids and tubificid oligochaetes.

With progression downstream permanent waterholes will be affected. When observed during the dry season these contained a diversity of submerged, floating and emergent macrophytes, a diversity of invertebrate forms and supported a considerable juvenile fish population. If affected by effluent, submerged macrophytes would be eliminated, as would selected floating and emergent species. Floating forms such as *Salvinia* and *Azolla* may proliferate. Similarly, the diversity and abundance of invertebrate species would also be greatly reduced.

Although such conditions may be restricted to 4-5 km downstream, of concern is the occurrences of minor storm events which are not sufficient to completely flush the river, but are sufficient to elevate flow so as to transport organic deposits and nutrient with waters further downstream.

The less undesirable aspects of discharging to site 20.5 km are:

- (a) The spatial extent of influence may be limited to a 5 km reach, with the possibility of reduced effects extending further downstream. This 5 km stretch will be quite unsightly.
- (b) For approximately 50-70% of the year the discharge will create an aquatic habitat in an otherwise dry watercourse. This will be choked with macrophytes, however.
- (c) The adverse conditions created are restricted largely to the habitat created by the discharge.
- (d) Adverse effects on the estuarine reach and its fisheries resource are minimized in comparison to the other alternatives."

That is another important point, which I will return to later. The report continues—

"The disadvantages are:

- (a) Within the zone of influence conditions will appear highly undesirable.
- (b) Transitory and permanent waterholes will be adversely effected and become unsightly.
- (c) The downstream translocation of organic deposits and nutrient rich waters may impose transient conditions of poor water quality which may result in fish kills in the downstream reaches.
- (d) Complete flushing of the upper reaches will occur only during the December-April period, with a prolonged interval in between."

That is the site that is currently under consideration. The report indicates some very worrying aspects of that proposal.

The report goes on—

"Proposal to Discharge at . . . 13.5 km

The temporal distribution of flow will be similar to that at site . . . 20.5 km, with the exception that runoff events may persist marginally longer. Flow volumes however will be greater than those upstream. Permanent water exists at this location, although actual flow available for dilution will be negligible for the greater part of the year. Flow to permanent water at the tidal limit will be achieved, and therefore the upper tidal estuary will be influenced.

In combination with the effects associated with elevated nutrients and phytoplankton blooms, conditions in the upper estuary may be unsuitable for supporting the aquatic ecosystem currently maintained. Changes in the invertebrate fauna resulting from organic enrichment and changes in community productivity will effect the supply of detritus, and consequently influence trophic relationships. The suitability of the upper estuary as a habitat for juvenile fish and crustaceans may be adversely affected.

The less undesirable aspects of discharging to site . . . 13.5 km are:

- (a) Water quality will superficially appear to be less adversely affected.
- (b) No immediate effect on the non-tidal reaches of the Upper Bohle River will be apparent."

That is obvious. The report continues—

"The disadvantages are:

- (a) The marginally increased dilution available will not be sufficient to eliminate adverse affects and severe oxygen depletion will result.
- (b) The presence of permanent water at this tidal limit facilitates the transport of pollutants, and therefore increases the downstream extent of influence.
- (c) The watercourse influenced by the effluent is existing, and will not be created by the discharge.
- (d) The accumulation of high nitrogen and phosphorus concentrations in the upper estuary may facilitate a significant increase in phytoplankton density and the development of areas of dense macrophytes.
- (e) Phytoplankton blooms may effect a substantial part of the tidal estuary.
- (f) The invertebrate fauna may be adversely effected in the region near the outfall.
- (g) A combination of factors influencing the physico-chemical environment may adversely affect the suitability of the upper estuary as a nursery for fish and crustaceans.

8.4 Discharge to the Estuary

The Bohle River estuary and adjacent shallows are gazetted as a Wetland Reserve under the Fisheries Act 1974-1982. The estuary provides a diverse habitat suitable for many species of fish and crustaceans. Gazettal is a recognition of the importance of the area as a fisheries habitat and by affording some protection provides for its continued existence. The area is known to be of importance as a Barramundi breeding ground, with spawning probably occurring in waters immediately adjacent to the estuary, and the estuary serving as a habitat for juveniles and larvae.

It is recognized by the Department of Primary Industries that the East Coast Barramundi fishery is on the decline.

In addition to Barramundi, which is of commercial importance, the estuary will support a diverse ecosystem of importance to coastal and freshwater fisheries.

Potential Detrimental Effects of Sewage Effluent

Dissolved oxygen is consumed by sewage effluents and remaining dissolved oxygen resources may be insufficient to ensure adequate protection to the aerobic fauna, particularly fish.

. . .

the oxygen requirements of juvenile fish in a tropical estuary are relatively high.

. . .

In addition to dissolved oxygen stress, the very presence of sewage effluent may be detrimental to some species. The combined effects of exposure to many different compounds, including those known to be toxic such as ammonia and chlorine, may be such that prolonged exposure is intolerable. Consequently the habitat is effectively destroyed for some species of fish.

. . .

There can be little doubt that significant changes to the estuarine ecosystem and biota will occur as a result of a major sewage discharge.

. . .

The cumulative effects of dissolved oxygen and toxicant stress, in conjunction with significant changes to the productivity and trophic structure of the system, on the juvenile fish fauna remain completely unknown but it is considered that major changes to the estuarine fish fauna will occur. Consequently, recruitment to coastal and off-shore fish stocks will be effected."

In summary, I quote extensively again from the report—

"There is little doubt that discharges at . . . 20.5, 13.5 and 8.5 all have disadvantages in terms of probable uses of the river. Even discharge to . . . 2.5 km does not represent the answer. It is also quite clear that a small rating base cannot afford the long term option of an ocean outfall from the outset.

The discharge from the Mt. St. John sewage treatment plant is poorly located, but this was a deliberate decision to enable sewerage of the area to be commenced. Its present discharge location has not been a major source of complaints but as population in the area grows its unacceptability will be more noticeable and its re-location inevitable.

There seem to be two strategies open to the Local Authorities which have any chance of success and which may in the long run meet the aims of the Clean Waters Act.

- (i) Pragmatic discharge location selection with short term deleterious and possibly quite undesirable water quality impacts, leading to a long term ocean outfall construction.
- (ii) Immediate decision to explore the (for the tropics) 'uncharted waters' of biological nitrogen and phosphorus removal to allow permanent local discharge from the outset.

The former strategy"—

this is the one that has been adopted by the council—

"will result in extended periods of degraded water quality in the Bohle River and damage to the wetland reserve. The utility of the creek will be lost because of the growth of dense fringing macrophytes which will prevent access to the river."

The following conclusions are contained in the report—

- "(i) The Bohle River and its tributary are unsuited as permanent locations for major conventional sewage effluent discharges in most reaches if their uses are to be protected;
- (ii) The expenditure on the immediate diversion of the effluent discharge downstream would merely shift undesirable impacts from one reach of the river to another unless the diversion went all the way to the permanent ocean outfall."

That second point is critical to the one on which I want to conclude.

- “(iii) The expenditure on the diversion even without the ocean outfall is a major cause of concern to the Thuringowa Shire Council.
- (iv) The only effluent quality which is suitable for local discharge is that from the South African process biological nutrient removal. This process is not known to have been successfully applied in the tropics.
- (v) There is already existing ‘unacceptable’ water quality degradation in the tributary of the Bohle River from the Mt. St. John sewage treatment plant and this can only be considered tolerable in the short term.
- (vi) Any equitable division of the available assimilative capacity of the Bohle River in its most downstream reaches is unlikely to satisfy either local authority and certainly not both.
- (vii) The Wetland Reserve may be difficult to retain in the long term if residential and recreational development encroaches on the river as is planned.
- (viii) Within the Townsville area Sandfly Creek, Ross River, Black River, and one of the Bohle River tributaries all either receive sewage effluent, industrial effluent or are barraged. This proposal will add the only other major estuary to the list.”

That fairly lengthy report was conveyed to the Thuringowa City Council by the Water Quality Council of Queensland and signed by its director under cover of a letter dated 4 April 1986.

In his letter, the director stated—

“What the report highlights are the problems which have been foreseen for many years in finding a suitable discharge location for your proposed Upper Ross Sewerage Scheme. As you read the report, you will be aware that the discharge location advised in my letter will be a continuing cause of concern to your citizens as the deleterious effects develop. Were there any affordable option, the Water Quality Council would not have accepted the one chosen. Your Council should aim to have the ocean outfall constructed as soon as it is affordable and clearly a joint outfall with Townsville City for its Mt. St. John plant should be considered in due course.”

The city council’s consulting engineers, McIntyre & Associates, commented on the report in a letter dated 5 June 1986, which states—

“The report highlights the problems of finding a suitable discharge location for the Upper Ross Sewerage Scheme and the covering letter notes that Council should aim to have an ocean outfall constructed as soon as affordable to overcome the deleterious effects of the discharge of normal effluent to the Bohle River, whether adjacent to the plant or to the tidal reaches downstream.

We are in agreement with the reports assessment of the effects of discharge to the Bohle River of effluent meeting conventional standards.”

McIntyre & Associates recommend that the council undertake a pilot project based on the South African concept.

On Tuesday, my colleague the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked the Minister for Local Government a question about the decision of the Thuringowa City Council to proceed despite the unfavourable report of the Water Quality Council.

In his answer, the Minister stated—

“. . . the Water Quality Council took into consideration the heavy financial burden that would be imposed on ratepayers of Thuringowa City if works had to be undertaken immediately to carry effluent to the ultimate disposal point.

The Water Quality Council decided therefore that whilst a temporary discharge to the upper reaches of the Bohle River would be approved, diversion of the effluent

would be required within six years to a downstream location to be determined following further investigations.”

The important point is that the conclusions in the Water Quality Council's report indicated that, even by diverting the effluent to a downstream site, it would merely shift undesirable impacts from one reach of the river to another, unless the diversion went all the way to the permanent ocean outfall.

I suggest to the Committee that it is beyond the financial capacity of the Thuringowa City Council to fund, first of all, that diversion within the next six years. It is certainly beyond the financial capacity of the Thuringowa City Council to fund a deep-ocean outfall, which, the report indicates, is the only possible long-term solution to the problem.

The council, with the approval of the Water Quality Council, has proceeded. Work has commenced on the construction of a sewage-treatment plant in the vicinity of Rasmussen. It has received State Government approval and subsidy under its subsidy arrangements. The initial proposal is to pump treated effluent into the dry Bohle River at that point, which will have many effects.

The Minister has suggested that the six-year plan to divert effluent downstream will do nothing but continue the deleterious effects upon the Bohle River, its estuaries and, ultimately, Halifax Bay. As honourable members would be aware, Halifax Bay is already polluted by the Yabulu nickel-treatment plant.

The decision to pump further effluent into the Bohle River will lead to the destruction of a very popular sports-fishing area. That area has been designated as a wetland reserve and is an acknowledged habitat and breeding-ground for barramundi.

Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (5.41 p.m.): Firstly, I would like to pay tribute to the late Mr John Goleby, the previous Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services. Mr Goleby was a good man. He thought about people, he had great respect for them, and did everything he possibly could for them. He did a great job within his department, and I am sure that with many people, including those within his department, I share a great sense of loss.

I was a member of one of Mr Goleby's committees, and I know how highly he was regarded. When he first took over the department Mr Goleby made it a priority to complete all the schemes that were on the drawing-board at the time. The results of his efforts can be seen by the ongoing programs.

Before Mr Goleby there was that great gentleman, Mr Ken Tomkins. He was also a very good man. The Water Resources portfolio has been blessed with good people, and the current Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Martin Tenni) is carrying on the tradition. He is also doing an excellent job. He is a good man who has the common touch. He is a very practical man who understands the needs of the people. The Minister has an excellent liaison with his staff.

The previous Commissioner of Water Resources, Don Beattie, also did a great job. However, he did receive a great deal of criticism. I believe that his main problem was insufficient funds. I also believe that if one has sufficient money to put into schemes, one is considered to be a good administrator.

No doubt Queenslanders in the future will recognise the contributions that Mr Beattie made towards future planning. I wish Mr Beattie the very best in his retirement. I also congratulate the new Commissioner of Water Resources, Mr Tom Fenwick, because his knowledge will play a very important part in future planning.

In my own electorate of Mirani the district engineer for the Water Resources Commission is Mr Mike McKenna. He is a tremendous man. I just hope that the Minister does not recognise Mr McKenna's talents and take him away from my electorate.

In the Department of Harbours and Marine there are John Leech and Alan Britton, both of whom do a great job. They understand the problems of the community. Another person with whom I often consult is Mr Mal McConnell. In the past Mr McConnell

and I did not see eye to eye on many issues. However, Mr McConnell has an understanding of the workings of his department and has been a great help to me.

The Water Resources Commission has the important responsibility of supplying water not only for urban purposes but also for irrigation, cane-growing, power generation and mining. Water supply is probably the most important ingredient in the development of this nation. It is a shame that the Federal Government has seen fit to pull out of that very important area.

In the latter years of the Fraser Government the bicentennial water program was commenced. However, the present Federal Government did not see fit to continue that program, which was abolished in approximately 1982 or 1983. It is a shame that that happened.

The honourable member for Warwick (Mr Booth) made a worthwhile contribution to the debate. He demonstrates his practical knowledge of the man on the land, and proves that he knows what he is talking about.

The honourable member for Warwick said that it is most important that the development of water resources continues within Australia. He also suggested that a percentage of tax should be set aside. I support that view.

Australia's future depends upon an adequate supply of water, because it is the driest continent in the world. Australia currently has a surplus of commodities for export. However, in the future more and more exports will be needed, and an adequate water supply must be maintained.

The majority of the ALP members have not made a very worthwhile contribution to the debate. However, Mr McElligott was an exception, in that he did not denigrate people. He did not attempt to pull them down or throw all the muck in the world over them. In the past, Opposition members have denigrated people, instead of making valid contributions to debates and showing that they are worthy to occupy the Government benches in the future.

The other exception is the honourable member for Mourilyan (Mr Eaton). I have great respect for him. He knows what he is on about. I missed what he said in his contribution to this debate about the Finch Hatton Gorge Dam and the Dumbleton Weir. I do not know whether he said that he wanted the Dumbleton Weir or the Finch Hatton Gorge Dam to be built. Does the honourable member know where the Dumbleton Weir is?

Mr Eaton: There is a Stage 2.

Mr RANDELL: So the honourable member supports the Finch Hatton Gorge Dam. That is good. I am pleased that he does support it because I believe that the reports on the Finch Hatton Gorge Dam will be released early next year. A decision may be made on the Dumbleton Weir in the middle of next year. I do not believe that the honourable member for Mackay (Mr Casey) supports the Finch Hatton Gorge Dam.

I was pleased to see financial assistance for the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Scheme. In 1985, I note that 1 622 applications for aid were received and 1 643 were finalised under the scheme. Advances during the year totalled \$1.6m, an increase of \$802,000 on the previous year because of drought conditions. It is anticipated that \$1.6m in loans will be required for assistance with farm water supply works in 1986-87.

That is a very important area of water conservation. If properly utilised, small schemes for farmers throughout the State are just as important as large schemes. A large scheme is confined to a certain area, whereas small schemes are spread throughout the country. More farmers should take advantage of the scheme.

It is essential that water storages are constructed under close supervision of staff from the Queensland Water Resources Commission. Properties are affected when small dams are built without proper regard for and attention by adjoining land-holders. At times, leaking dams can have an astronomical effect on neighbouring land and crops. A

farmer in my electorate has water flowing on to his land from a leaking dam. He cannot get his cane crop off. Last week, he used a ditch-digger to dig a drain about 40 chains long and is laying underground earthen piping to drain the water away so that he can harvest his cane. He told me that that will cost him \$10,000 to \$15,000.

As I said, for a fairly reasonable outlay, tremendous benefits can be achieved under the scheme. More farmers should be made aware of it.

I cannot let the chance slip by without talking about the Eton Irrigation Scheme. Good progress has continued on the construction of the project. When it is completed, it will provide water for 250 cane-farmers in the Eton Mill area near Mackay. Stage 1 of the Kinchant Dam and the Mirani diversion channel have been completed at a cost of \$53.6m. During 1986-87, \$12.6m will be provided to complete the raising of the Kinchant Dam and Mirani Weir and to construct further reticulation works.

Mr Milliner: What about a dam for Carmila?

Mr RANDELL: I will come to that shortly. The honourable member for Everton belittles the areas in the north, but a great city such as Brisbane would not exist if the little people were not working up there. Without them, the honourable member would not be here.

In May 1975, the implementation of the Eton Irrigation Scheme was approved by the Government. That approval followed a decision by Cabinet in September 1973 to accept a non-reimbursable grant of \$5m from the Commonwealth Government towards the cost of the Kinchant Dam. That offer was made by the Minister for Northern Development. The application for the grant was originally knocked back by the Federal Government.

Mr Milliner: Billy McMahon knocked it back.

Mr RANDELL: It was in Rex Patterson's electorate. There was no chance of getting it off any Government if Rex Patterson was not there. I pay tribute to him, and the honourable member for Everton would pay tribute to him, too.

Mr Milliner: Why is that?

Mr RANDELL: He was respected throughout the region for his common sense and the work that he did for rural people, not only in the Mackay region but throughout Australia. Even today, Dr Rex Patterson is regarded as a decent man, but he paid the price of being associated with the Whitlam Government. He was thrown out of Government. If he had received his just reward, he could have been a Prime Minister of Australia. He would have made a good job of it, too. However, he paid the price of being a member of a socialist Government that could not plan for the future.

Construction of the scheme commenced in 1974-75. By that time, the cost of the project had increased to \$21.8m, and included \$8.32m for the Kinchant Dam. The rapid escalation of costs and the refusal by the Federal Government to increase the grant of \$5m that had been finalised in 1977 led to the curtailment of the proposed works. The Federal Government withheld the necessary funds and then turned responsibility for the project over to the State Government. In November of 1977, the Kinchant Dam was constructed only to an initial stage.

The Federal Government recommenced its contributions to the project under a former national water resources program that operated in 1980-81. Each year, grants were received. Those grants were discontinued in 1985-86 when the Federal Government simply walked away from the scheme.

I notice that the honourable member for Mackay has left the Chamber. It is obvious that he cannot stand the truth. The State Government had to assume the responsibility abandoned by the Federal Government.

Work that brought the Kinchant Dam to full capacity was completed in August this year. The Minister may remember that I accompanied him on the opening ceremony.

A large crowd attended, and it was obvious that the farmers and others who had assembled appreciated the work that had been carried out and completed by the Queensland Government. They know which Government contributed a large proportion of the funds and which Government was responsible for the major portion of the works.

A contract has been let for construction of the Mirani Weir. Work on the irrigation scheme in the area will continue, and is expected to be completed by December 1988. I turn now to mention some important figures for the information of the Committee. Up till 30 June 1986, a total of \$53.6m had been expended on the project. The estimated cost of the scheme as at that date was \$82.8m. The original cost of construction was estimated to be \$21.8m. Because the Federal Government did not provide sufficient funds to enable the scheme to get under way, the total cost escalated. It is expected that the project will be completed by the end of the decade.

The scheme will provide great benefits for cane-farmers in the Eton and Oakenden areas. Even to this stage, although the scheme is not yet complete, it has already played a major part in stabilising production in the area. I state seriously that many farmers in the region would have become insolvent without the benefit of the scheme. I suspect that even the North Eton Mill could have closed because of the droughts that have affected the area.

It has always been my contention that a reliable water supply is essential in the Mackay region. There can be no doubt about that. If the potential of the region is to be realised in terms of rural production and the provision of reticulated water to the residents of Mackay and the surrounding districts, a reliable water supply is of paramount importance.

I am pleased to note that the Opposition spokesman, the honourable member for Mourilyan (Mr Eaton) supports the proposal for construction of the Finch Hatton Gorge Dam. Some controversy over that proposal has arisen, but I think that the merits of a major irrigation scheme at the top end of the Pioneer Valley are obvious. As I said previously, the area abounds with potential.

Water has been pumped and conveyed from the Pioneer River to Mackay and services also the northern beaches and areas near Sarina. To those who consider the proposal to be stupid or impracticable, I respond by saying that water was piped over a distance of 100 km over a mountain range from the Mackenzie River to Dysart. I am pleased to note that investigation into the proposal is continuing.

It is essential that farmers are supplied with an adequate water supply by the provision of irrigation schemes. An adequate water supply is required also for industrial development that has taken place in Mackay and for household use. As I said earlier, if the full potential of the best area in Australia is to be realised, the provision of adequate water is the key ingredient.

A previous speaker mentioned Carmila Creek. I understand that a dam will be constructed on Carmila Creek at some time in the future and that at present an investigation is proceeding. I hope that the proposal will be acted upon when the investigation is complete, and I look forward to being informed about progress that has been made at a later date. Carmila is an area that has great potential for the proliferation of the cattle and sugar industries. Bearing in mind the policy of decentralisation adopted by the Queensland Government, I believe there is no reason why the dam should not be constructed.

Mr Burns: There will be no people there if you keep up your record. There will be a dam, but no people.

Mr RANDALL: I listened with great interest to a speech made by the honourable member for Lytton last week in Parliament. I noted how the honourable member denigrated people who live in the rural areas. What the honourable member said about the farmers assembling in Canberra will be remembered when the honourable member

next visits my electorate. His comments will be remembered, and I can assure him of that. The honourable member said that farmers are the greatest whingers in the nation.

The honourable member will probably be going up there very shortly, and I can tell him that when he does the people will be waiting for him because they will remember what he said. He cannot go back on his word; it is recorded in black and white.

Mr Burns: I will be in your electorate on Saturday.

Mr RANDELL: It will not do the honourable member much good. From what I have heard, I think that he would be better off staying in his own electorate because that is where he has problems.

I now turn to the Department of Harbours and Marine. My area has the two great coal terminals of Hay Point and Dalrymple Bay. It is great to see that the Government has encouraged and approved such terminals. Because of the construction of those terminals, work is available for Queenslanders. During the year, 30 076 896 tonnes of coal were exported from the two facilities in the harbour, of which 16.5 million tonnes were exported through the Central Queensland Coal Associates Facility and 13.5 million tonnes through Dalrymple Bay. It can be seen that Queensland has probably the largest, or one of the largest, coal-loading terminals in the world. They are taken for granted, but they have been achieved by this Government's great work.

In June 1985 the Harbours Corporation entered into agreements with the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal Pty Ltd and Utah Development Company Limited for the development of the tugboat harbour and associated facilities at Half Tide Island at Hay Point at an estimated cost of approximately \$21m. I would ask that when the honourable member for Lytton is up there he takes note of some of the developments and the progress that have occurred in that region. When one is down here one is insulated from the real world—going out on the bay fishing, going and having a beer at the pub. When the honourable member for Lytton goes up there he will see what is happening and he will find out what people think.

Mr Burns: I wouldn't be able to fish very much in that polluted river you have made up there.

Mr RANDELL: I will talk to the honourable member about that later on. My time is running out; I have four minutes in which to complete my speech. I would not mind having an hour as there is so much that I would like to talk about and debate with the honourable member for Lytton. He will have his chance in a moment.

Construction of the first stage of the tugboat harbour proceeded satisfactorily during the year for an expenditure of \$10m. It is anticipated that the first stage will be completed early in 1987. Recently I discovered that dredging is now taking place to deepen the harbour, so that the tugs can enter.

The important thing—and even the honourable member for Lytton would be interested in this—is that part of that tugboat harbour will have a small-craft facility. Once again the Government has taken note of what is good for the people.

In Queensland 92 000 private boats are registered. That is an indication of the popularity of boating. I would go on record as saying that undoubtedly it is the most popular pastime in Australia. There is no other pastime in which more families take part. It is a great family thing. It is pleasing to see that \$2.8m will be directed towards the construction of boat harbours, boat-ramps and jetties in this State. The facility that is part of the tugboat harbour will greatly help local people, fishermen and tourists. The fishing in that area is great. If a tourist comes along and catches a few fish no doubt he will tell his mates and they will all come back again.

As I have said, that area is one of the greatest in Queensland. Where else can somebody go to see what is probably the largest coal-loading complex in the world—at least in the southern hemisphere? The area also boasts beautiful beaches, cane farms, great mountain scenery, a sugar-mill which conducts tours, the Australian National

Power Alcohol factory—the only such factory in Australia—and, most of all, friendly people. I would recommend the area to anyone.

It is pleasing to see that there will be a planning study for future launching-ramps between St Lawrence and Daintree. I am not too sure when the study will take place or be completed. Perhaps when the Minister replies he may be able to give some details of that.

Another point on which I will comment is shark-meshing, which was progressively introduced in 1962 at Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and the Gold Coast. A very large number of shark attacks have been reported in Queensland's waters. There is no doubt that meshing does reduce the incidence of attack. I would ask the Minister to consider introducing a shark-meshing program off Sarina's beaches. Tourists are coming to that area. It is becoming more and more popular. Sarina has a great life-saving movement which consists of girls and boys. At the same time, fishermen have told me of huge sharks that they have seen while they have been fishing. Their nets are torn up and fish have been taken off their lines. It would be a tragedy if anybody was taken by a shark. The Minister might consider implementing a shark-meshing program in that area. I have asked him about it before, but it has not been possible to extend the program down from Mackay. It would be good to set a few nets off Sarina to see if something can be done about the sharks.

Mr Henderson: They should have a shark-proof swimming area like the one on Magnetic Island.

Mr RANDALL: Because it is too expensive, that cannot be done.

I wish to speak about the incidence of offences and prosecutions for offences against the Fisheries Act. The annual report states that, during the year, officers within the prosecution section processed a total of 2 210 offences, which is an increase of 11.5 per cent on the figure for the previous year. I note that field officers stationed at Brisbane and Gladstone apprehended a person at the Brisbane Airport and arrested him for being in possession of a motor vehicle containing 691 mud crabs, of which 581 were female. A person at Miriam Vale, near Gladstone, was arrested for being in possession of a motor vehicle containing 394 mud crabs, of which 27 were undersized and the remaining 367 were females. That is an example of what is going on in this State. It is a shame that more offenders cannot be apprehended. I know that the honourable member for Lytton (Mr Burns) would join me whole-heartedly in saying that the Government should take the strongest possible measures against those sorts of people. If the future population of fish and crabs is to be protected, something has to be done. Each and every person in the State has a duty to help. If people are seen doing these sorts of things, it is up to the members of the public to take action. If they do not, a great asset will be lost.

Time expired.

Sitting suspended from 6.1 to 7.15 p.m.

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (7.15 p.m.): On Tuesday night I spoke briefly about the maps that were on sale at the boat show. The Government should refund the money that people paid for the 1982 and 1984 maps sold at the boat show. Those people purchased them thinking they were up-to-date safety devices. To sell out-of-date maps is dangerous.

I will now have my last word on the maps of Moreton Bay. I ask the Minister to purchase an anchor for the wreck of the Platypus. According to the charts of the Department of Harbours and Marine, it has shifted about a quarter of a mile in the last 12 months. In fact, if the Minister cares to look at the 1985 and 1986 charts, he will find that the wreck of the Platypus at the end of Peel Island, which for years has been covered in coral, clay, mud and other muck, has now started to move out into the bay. The Minister should take some money from the Estimates and buy a big anchor for what is the first shifting wreck in Moreton Bay. It is about time that the maps were updated properly.

I wish to speak about the Government's interest in water safety. In answer to a question I asked of him recently, the Minister said that he was very much interested in water safety and that his department had done a great job with it. Given the Government's stated interest, how is it that the people of Brisbane, where the greatest number of water-users live, have the poorest of facilities? With a population of approximately 42 000, Bundaberg has a brand-new TAFE college and marine unit, which cost over \$2m, with its own wharf and slipping facilities. For Brisbane, with a population of more than one million people, the State Government cannot rake up the token \$100,000 that the Commonwealth Government has asked for the wharf, land and buildings previously occupied by the army below the cliffs at Kangaroo Point.

The facilities are excellent, they are within sight of two TAFE colleges and are accessible to the people of Brisbane. The boat of the South Brisbane College of Technical and Further Education, which is used by schools and colleges from Caloundra to Southport, has been evicted from the Maritime Museum by Expo 88 and has nowhere to go. Would honourable members really like to know how much the Government has spent this year on consumerables and equipment for the TAFE marine section that serves the greatest number of marine students in this State? \$8,000! The teachers who run the marine studies in Brisbane deserve a medal. No charter-operator could run it at that price—\$8,000 to run a 45-ft boat as well as present safety, navigation, marine engineering and pre-employment courses for approximately 1 000 students. That is \$8 a head!

The least this Government could do is give them a place to tie up the boat. Professional sailors have to go to Sydney to get their lifeboat tickets. The South Brisbane TAFE college has been donated \$10,000 worth of lifeboat davits and gear for this purpose. Only the State Government's action in providing a place to moor the boat is required to fully utilise that facility. I suggest that the Government should buy that land from the Commonwealth Government and use the facility at Kangaroo Point to provide training facilities.

Years ago I used to sail out of Kangaroo Point down near the Annie Street ferry where the merchant marine training centre was. That was a good reach of the river upon which to learn to sail and it is a good reach of the river for those young people who attend the TAFE colleges that are so close to it.

I do not kid myself. I know that the Minister will rise at the end of this debate and say that it is the Commonwealth's responsibility, but in 1986-87 Queensland will receive \$43.3m in specific Commonwealth funding for technical and further education. In addition, the Commonwealth Grants Commission includes an assessment for technical and further education in determining Queensland's financial assistance grant, which is the major grant to the State. This year the total grant is \$2,189m. Not a great deal of money is required to buy this facility. \$100,000 will buy it.

The point is that, although the Commonwealth Government funds technical and further education to a level equivalent to that of other States, it is entirely up to the Queensland Government to decide whether the TAFE component in the financial assistance is actually spent on TAFE or diverted for other purposes. In Queensland, it is diverted for other purposes. As is clear from Grants Commission reports, Queensland spends less than any other State on technical and further education and provides only two-thirds of the national average for TAFE.

I now wish to speak about the dumping of dredging spoil. That has always caused trouble in Moreton Bay because much of the dredging spoil that is dumped on the dredging banks is washed onto the beaches at seaside resorts. In the old days places such as Wynnum used to have sand-castle competitions. Today the foreshores are mud and slush, which is caused purely by the way dredging spoil is dumped. The dumping of dredging spoil is destroying good trolling grounds and at the same time is destroying the foreshores of Wynnum itself.

Adjacent to the Cairns bulk-sugar wharf at Trinity Bay is a 20-metre deep hole located a distance of approximately one-third of the width of the inlet out from the

wharf. Traditionally that hole has been one of the best fishing areas in the Cairns inlet, not only for the fishing clubs but also for other amateur fishermen. All types of inlet species have been taken from that hole, in addition to the occasional reef species such as coral trout and even a painted cray.

In May this year, for the second time in two and a half to three years, the Cairns Port Authority, through the Department of Housing and Construction, approved a contract for a dredging company to dredge the area within the bounds of the navy base wharf, the spoil being pumped through a floating pipeline and dumped into the abovementioned hole. That is the hole that the Minister agrees is a good fishing hole. When dredging is carried out round the navy wharf, the spoil is pumped into the hole.

The Cairns Port Authority advised that a quantity of 66 000 cubic metres of spoil was removed and dumped into the hole. At a meeting arranged by the Cairns Port Authority in late May to explain its actions to concerned persons, the spokesman for the authority advised that the suction dredge Sir Thomas Hiley had been contracted to remove the spoil from the hole. It was pumped into the hole, and now it has to be dug back out.

In late July or early August 1986 all was supposed to be back to normal. The port authority also advised that alternative methods of dumping the spoil had been costed and that the most acceptable alternative for removal of the spoil would have cost five times that of the method that was chosen. That does not seem to me to be the way to take care of the environment. Environmental impact studies should have been carried out to ensure that that good fishing hole is not destroyed. However, the Cairns Port Authority has advised that the dredging is to be an ongoing practice that is to be carried out every two and a half to three years.

As a result of that dredging, fishing in the inlet has dropped away. Every two and a half to three years that process of dredging the spoil, dumping it in the fishing hole, and dredging it out again and taking it somewhere else, will be gone through. What a crazy system that is!

The Minister talks about the role of the Department of Harbours and Marine in protecting canals and waterways. I will refer briefly to the Sanctuary Cove development in the south arm of the Coomera River, and I will deal with the effects of a dredging operation being carried out there.

So that Mr Gore could dredge an area known as Caseys Rocks and a few other areas that were very shallow, he pushed dirt across both ends of the waterway, the south arm of the creek. He then pumped all the water out, took the fish and crabs away and sent a bulldozer in. He bulldozed the rocks and the whole of the canal.

I wrote to the Minister and asked what sort of environmental impact study was carried out to ascertain what effect that would have on the waterways. The Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Turner) wrote back to me, saying—

“I advise that an Environmental Impact Study was undertaken in relation to the dredging proposed for the South Arm of the Coomera River.”

So, an environmental impact study was carried out. The letter goes on—

“However the EIS did not examine recreational or commercial fishing activities, or the effects of the proposed dredging on these activities.”

How can an environmental impact study be carried out on a river that is going to be banked in, have all the water removed, have the fish and crabs shifted away—to be eaten, I suppose—and have a bulldozer sent in to dig the hole in the bottom, without the fish being taken into consideration.

The letter goes on—

“My Department has since sought an assurance from the developers that the impact of the dredging on fishery matters will be recognised and minimised where possible.”

How can that be done now that the fish are gone?

The letter continues—

“I would add that my Department, through its Fisheries Management Branch, now comments on all applications for dredging, made to the Gold Coast Waterways Authority which has the authority to issue such dredging permits.”

That brings me to the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. Everybody is talking about the sea-way at the Gold Coast. I think that the September 1986 edition of *The Queensland Fisherman* said it all. An article in that publication headed “Bar bashed” states—

“Gold Coast fishermen continue to criticise the new entrance to the Southport Broadwater, arguing access in moderate seas is now more difficult than on the previous natural bar.

Even fishermen in fast cats have waited in vain for a break in the surf pounding across the front of the new entrance in recent days

. . . .

A few fishermen were certainly surprised to see a full-page advert in last month's *Queensland Fisherman* from the State Government singing the praises of the new entrance. It's understood the Editor, who has nothing to do with the advertising for the magazine, was as surprised as anyone!”

Those fishermen are complaining that in their own magazine a full page ad appears with a photograph of a smiling Premier, over the caption “Open for Business and Pleasure”.

That advertisement states—

“Now, the Gold Coast's boating horizon is as wide as the South Pacific. The new stabilized Nerang River entrance is the safer access between Broadwater and ocean that local fishermen and sailors have long waited for.

It means the area's fishing industry will enjoy improved reliability for the first time ever.”

One month after that ad was placed, it is given a chiack in that same magazine.

The Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services has been attacked for lacking consistency. I spoke very briefly about Sanctuary Cove. That bar was planned back in 1979 by the Beach Protection Authority. The workers of that authority did the work. A model was put on display in Hendra, Sandgate, Bracken Ridge or somewhere on the north side. Tests were carried out. Obviously, somewhere along the line something has not gone according to plan. That bar can be very dangerous on an outgoing tide.

One of the things that worried me was the action of the Minister and others in the way they bungled the building of a gravel wall across Middle Creek, north of Bundaberg. The local electricity authority wanted to supply electricity to Bustard Head lighthouse and decided the easiest way to do that was to construct a wall across the creek. It did so and built the wall to a height of 14 feet. Originally it was supposed to be 4 ft high. At low tide a light aircraft would be needed to fly over it. People ran into it in their boats because they were not even advised of its position. In the dark they ran into the wall when they were going up the creek to go fishing and crabbing. There is evidence of incidents in which women have been tossed out of boats after running into this rock wall.

In February this year, the Minister advised that the building of the wall was in contravention of the Harbours Act and that it would come down. Everybody thought he meant immediately; but four months later the Minister made the same promise that the wall would come down.

Mr Tenni: What wall?

Mr BURNS: This is the wall over Middle Creek, north of Bundaberg. I am referring to the problem that arises when conflict occurs with an authority that puts up a wall across a creek, leaves all the fishermen in trouble and destroys the habitat.

Mr Tenni: There was supposed to be a roadway across and there was sufficient depth in the centre at high tide.

Mr BURNS: The Minister knows that statement is not true. It did not work that way. The authority built the wall very high. It became a threat to people and blocked off the water completely, as far as fishermen were concerned.

The fish habitats that the Minister stated were under threat in February were still under threat four months later in June, because the authority ignored the Minister's advice regarding the wall. Surely the Department of Harbours and Marine has more authority than that and has to be armed with more power in regard to the handling of an electricity authority, which, for some reason or another, believes it can get stuck into the waterways and do what it likes.

I am not arguing against electricity for the lighthouse, or wherever the supply has to go; but when electricity supplies are being provided, the impact on the environment ought to be minimised. The authority took far too long to remove the wall, and it should have been done more quickly. I believe the wall has now been taken away. This incident left a very sour taste in the mouths of fishermen and boating people in the area, because it took so long for the wall to be removed and because they were treated in that fashion.

In August this year I wrote to the Minister regarding the number of boating accidents. I have written to him on a number of occasions in this regard, especially after that ratbag on the jet ski tried to go across the bay and got lost overnight. A lot of problems in the bay are caused by fishermen: there is no doubt about that. A lot of problems anywhere are caused by people who disagree with the rules. A number of catamarans and other types of boats have been breaking up regularly, not in what I would call tremendously heavy seas but heavy seas—not the sort of seas experienced by round-the-world yachtsmen.

I wrote to the Minister asking whether there were any controls or regulations governing these kinds of boats. In regard to private vessels, the Minister replied—

“ . . . this Department has no mandatory requirements for survey and construction but provision of suitable life-saving equipment is covered by Regulations. The S.A.A. Small Boats Code and other related standards are available for manufacturer's guidance.

Commercial vessels are covered by the Marine Act in all areas of construction, . . . ”

That is right, commercial vessels have to get a survey.

What worries me is that anybody can go into the boat-building market, and the standards laid down by the SAA are only for that person's guidance. Quite a number of people could be lost at sea, and coastguard or air/sea rescue people could have to be sent out to rescue persons in difficulty in the bay, because the craft that they took out into the bay are not well constructed. That seems to me to be something that should be looked at.

The same applies to the registration of those people selling boats. Boats are beginning to get like cars—in fact, they are more dangerous than cars. At least if a car breaks down, the driver can get out and walk home. If a person is out in the bay in a boat and its motor will not operate, or the boat starts to sink or fill up with water, or something goes wrong, or he cannot handle the waves or the conditions, there is nothing much he can do unless he has a radio to call someone to his aid. The only thing he can do is to hang in there and hope to God he can last out.

There is the problem of overcrowding our waterways as more and more people are out on the bay and creating more and more problems. It seems to me that this Government has to begin to look at some requirements to govern the construction of vessels.

Mr Tenni: You have to look at drinking.

Mr BURNS: All that is part and parcel of the same program. If a person cannot drink and drive a car, the same thing applies in a boat out in the bay. No-one with brains would drink and then go out to sea in a boat. What's the name given to the sea? The "old widow-maker", and that is what it is. The dangers exist and are inherent in the sea. Anybody who has experienced bad conditions at sea—and I have had my bad experiences in boats on the water—would realise that grog and boats do not mix, especially in those conditions. There are days for drinking and days when people should be far more careful.

We always skite about what we do about safety. Earlier this year, like the Minister, I bought a new boat.

Mr Tenni: Mine hasn't come yet.

Mr BURNS: Although the Minister's boat has not arrived, when he does receive it and when he registers it, the only thing that he will receive from the department is a receipt. Every local authority council uses the address of a person for the purpose of sending him information. The Minister should send out in the envelope that contains the receipt all the safety advice and other material that is necessary. If I do not go to a boating shop or other places to obtain that material, after I buy my boat I can go to sea for the next 20 years, and the only contact that I will have with the Minister's department is a bill for registration or licence fees. I will send back my payment, and I will have two chances of having the Minister keep me informed about what is happening.

During the Adjournment debate last Tuesday night I referred to maps and notices to mariners. Little blokes in little boats do not go and read notices to mariners. That sort of advice is for fellows in bigger ships. A mate of mine who drew my attention to these maps has a yacht that draws 5 feet 9 inches. He has to be worried about what is happening in the bay. On the plane, my boat draws about 8 or 10 inches. I can skip across most of the problems that my mate must go around. When buoys or beacons are shifted, or lights and things are changed, my mate needs that information more than I do. Generally, if I am smart enough, I can get myself out of trouble.

Mr Tenni: How many of those maps do you want us to refund the money on?

Mr BURNS: How many were sold at the boat show? There would not have been a lot.

Mr Tenni: No.

Mr BURNS: The amount involved is not very large. It would be a good investment in safety to refund the money. When it is all said and done, the Minister would be better off with that fellow not going to sea in his boat.

If two blokes go down the bay, one fellow might say to his mate, "Look for a green flashing light. That is what appears on the map." The mate says, "I can see a yellow flashing light over there." The fellow says, "No, look, you mug, you're half drunk. There is something wrong there. There has got to be a green flashing light." If that light cannot be found, people can get into all sorts of trouble, particularly if they are in an area in which they have never been before.

I want to turn to the matter of the water supply on the Gold Coast and other places.

Mr Tenni: I would just like to point out one thing: a lot of those green flashing lights have been shot out by idiots in boats.

Mr BURNS: I know. That is another problem. It is like roadside signs that are shot at by people. That is a problem.

I always remember the old story about a tourist who went out west. In the morning, he was given bacon and eggs. At lunch-time, he was given pork, or he could have a ham salad. At night-time, he was given roast pork. When he had a drink of water at

night, he said, "Gee, that water tastes funny." He was told, "Yes, that's bore water." The tourist said, "You don't waste much of the pig!"

In the water supply on the Gold Coast and in the areas along the coast real problems exist. At the moment, massive water restrictions are being imposed on the Gold Coast. I have seen advertisements in the paper advising of water restrictions in the Redland shire. I think that the Gold Coast is being saved by its purchase of water from Tweed Heads across the border in New South Wales. Queensland is planning to go ahead with massive tourist developments, the construction of high-rise buildings and international hotels. It is a scandal that water supplies have not been planned for them. Some of the basic things that a person wants are a good cool drink of water, a shower, the use of a toilet and things like that, all of which use water.

For 40 years my dad, who belongs to a fishing family, has lived along the coast. We have lived in places in which the council has forced the local rate-payer to pay for the water supplies for tourist developments and proposed developments. While we talk about the big high-rise buildings along the beachfront of Surfers Paradise, I would point out that the little bloke who bought his house and who retired there, and who is on a pension or receiving superannuation benefits and is living down the back, is paying high rates to provide those water supplies. At present on the Gold Coast a furore is taking place over a survey on water supplies. If honourable members could see what was happening, they would realise how angry people can become.

If honourable members visit Noosa, where I go fishing—I go there on holidays fairly regularly—they would see that the water is sometimes brown. A person would not put a white shirt in a washing-machine when the water supply from Lake McDonald gets down. At one time I was in Caloundra and I was with some Yanks. They always asked for a glass or jug of water to be placed on the table. I said to a waiter, "Why don't you put water on the table?" He replied, "We do not want to chase people out of the restaurant." With a water supply shortage in a long, dry summer, that must be expected. We have been through worse droughts than the present one, and they will recur.

The Government must make better plans for the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast than it has done in the past. I know that there are moves afoot, but the water shortage exists here and now. The argument seems to be that the local authorities and the people have to pay. Unfortunately, that means the ordinary pensioners and rate-payers.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (7.35 p.m.): I support the Estimates of the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services.

When the honourable member for Lytton (Mr Burns) was speaking about purchasing maps, I was surprised that he bothers to purchase maps, because I believe that with his knowledge of the waterways he would know that area like the back of his hand. However, he could not be sure whether those maps were right or wrong, because the lines that he would draw on his hand would vary from time to time and both sets of lines would be a little bit out at different times.

I am also impressed with the efforts that have been made by the Minister and his ability to maintain contact with his department and the areas over which he has responsibility. The Minister also has a great deal of knowledge of boating, particularly in the north Queensland region. The Minister speaks about the new boat that he is about to purchase, its ability to travel over the waterways, and his ability to handle it. Honourable members should realise that we have two members in this Chamber who share a knowledge of the waterways and the activities on the water.

I now pay tribute to the previous Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services, Mr John Goleby, who was a very practical fellow. He was also keen, able to plant his feet firmly on the ground and was prepared to get dirt under his finger-nails, as it were. He was also able to locate problem areas covered by his portfolio.

Mr Goleby visited my electorate very early in the morning on a number of occasions in order to inspect possible weir sites. He also examined the problems that the local

people were experiencing, particularly those who live close to the waterfront in the region of Snapper Rocks, Tin Can Bay and Rainbow Beach. I appreciate the efforts that he made.

I feel sure that this Minister will follow in Mr Goleby's footsteps and will be able to provide equal representation for both water resources and maritime services.

One problem exists within the Rainbow Beach area, about which I feel that more research should be done. It will not go away. However, I will mention it later.

The Water Resources Commission's traditional role has tended largely towards the rural areas. That is as it should be, particularly with the requirements for water for irrigation and the growing of crops. Whereas the activities of the commission in relation to water supply continue to be important, the commission's involvement in industry, power generation, mining development and bulk-water supply for urban use has grown dramatically over the last decade.

It is interesting to note that at the present time the organisation of the commission is basically functional. The commission is divided into eight major divisions: administration and finance; construction; design; irrigation; operations; organisational services division; planning and water resources.

In relation to operations, the commission owns, operates and maintains 21 dams, 85 weirs and seven irrigation area systems. Some of those weirs are relatively small. I will mention one of those weirs later.

Those weirs serve an important role and are an important aspect of irrigation, particularly to dairy farms and small-crop producers. Those weirs also ensure that water is available for the production of crops as and when required.

The major State-sponsored schemes account for significant areas of total crop production including: rice, 70 per cent; sugar—the lowest percentage—15 per cent; cotton, 80 per cent; citrus, 70 per cent; tobacco, 85 per cent; and small crops, 20 per cent. Last year, 123 000 ha of agricultural land was provided with water. This year, it has increased to 128 000 ha, an increase of 5 000 ha.

With small crops, 20 per cent of the overall production comes from areas in which water is provided by the commission. In the other areas, the water is supplied from dams and weirs.

I impress the importance of dam construction on small farms and the ability of the dams to supply water. It is one of the most efficient methods of water conservation. Some of the dams hold up to 14 ML of water. For some time, it has been an efficient method of supplying water to farmers.

I am disappointed that not enough encouragement is given by the Federal Government to farmers to construct more dams on farm properties. Every time a reasonable storm or a reasonable fall of rain occurs, the dams are refilled. Provided the dam is well-constructed, it will give service for many years. I have not seen too many instances in which farm dams have not been properly constructed. Provided that sufficient advice and initiative is provided to farmers to construct dams, they will be of great benefit to the men on the land.

I compliment the Water Resources Commission on its water resources assessment, which has a basic objective of the compilation of an adequate data system on the quantity and quality of the State's water resources. Recently, in the Mary River, a device was used to measure the amount of water that flows through Gympie. That is important and necessary data. Assessment of ground-water resources requires investigation of the location and extent of aquifers with continuing periodic measurement of water levels and the collection of water quality samples from observation bores. Assessment of the supplies available from specific ground-water areas can then be made.

Expenditure by the commission from all sources (including the Mines Department) on this essential water resources assessment work is expected to be \$3.527m in 1986-87.

The Commonwealth Government has provided financial assistance for this work since 1963-64. For some years such assistance was shared equally with the State but over recent years the level of assistance has declined, and 1985-86 represented little more than 20 per cent. In recent years the Commonwealth contribution has remained fixed at \$800,000.

The Commonwealth has withdrawn from this program in 1986-87.

That is an indication of what happens so often. The program has been continuing for almost 20 years, yet the Federal Government has pulled out of the financing arrangements and left it solely to the State. Too often Queensland's taxes are collected by the Commonwealth Government but do not come back to provide necessary projects.

Mr McElligott: From the way you call them names, I am surprised that they give you anything.

Mr STEPHAN: I am not calling the Federal Government names. I am just pointing out what it is doing. It has withdrawn the funding in 1986-87. Cut-backs have occurred over the last few years. That did not happen in the past. Would anybody blame me for pointing out what is going on and how Queensland is being disadvantaged under the system?

Under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Scheme, the services provided include on-site inspections and advice and, where required, further investigation, design and provision of plans and specifications for farm dams, weirs, irrigation plants, stock reticulation schemes and drainage projects, plus some setting out and advice on construction supervision, which is very well received.

During 1985-86 just over 1 600 applications for technical assistance were received and it is expected that up to 2 000 land-holders throughout the State could seek such assistance in 1986-87. In addition, up to 100 applications for financial assistance, 90 of which were finalised during 1985-86, are expected to be processed during the year.

The Farm Water Supplies Assistance Service provides financial assistance in the form of loans, if required. At present, up to \$60,000 from the Farm Water Supplies Assistance fund is available on loan for each approved project. As a matter of interest, the current interest rate is 13.5 per cent. There is a need for such assistance at a reasonable rate of interest. Sometimes I feel that an interest rate of 13.5 per cent is a little too high for the repayment of principal and interest.

The Borumba Dam is possibly the smallest to have been constructed in the State. Its storage capacity is 42 500 ML. The dam was at full capacity early in the year, but that level dropped to 34 800 ML later. Release from the dam throughout the year totalled almost 10 000 ML. A large proportion of that amount was applied for irrigation, and approximately 3 500 ML was supplied to the Gympie City Council. Farmers and the council are the two major users of that water resource. When the Lower Mary River Diversion Scheme commences operations, a great deal more water will be required, some of which will be diverted into the Noosa area. Those two locations can be expected to utilise more of the available water resources.

The Pie Creek diversion scheme continues to operate, but it has encountered problems. Initially, 20 dairy farmers utilised the scheme, but the number of users has declined. Those who remain have had to incur extra expense compared to the amount they would have to pay if they were to pump the water from the river themselves. When the Pie Creek scheme was implemented, it was considered to be a necessary and important aspect of irrigation in the Pie Creek area. Its implementation was greatly appreciated. Much pressure was applied to the Government, and particularly to the Minister, to have the diversion scheme established and operating effectively.

The Burdekin River irrigation project is the largest in the State. It has an enormous capacity and will be able to supply water for a long time. However, I sound a note of warning. An additional 45 000 ha of irrigation development in the lower Burdekin River region will create 550 new farms. It is all very well to provide an additional area of

production, but the crucial factor is whether or not markets are available for the products. A problem could be created for existing producers, who are already faced with strong competition in selling their products throughout the nation. Unless overseas markets are readily accessible——

Mr Tenni: The problem there is: What comes first—the chicken or the egg?

Mr STEPHAN: I realise that. I also realise that the scheme will probably prove to be the cheapest method of providing irrigation, because it will be constructed now rather than in 15 or 20 years' time. My concern is that an additional 550 farms will be created by the expanded irrigation scheme which could result in problems for farmers who are already supplying the market and are endeavouring to make a living. As I said earlier, market opportunities in Australia are very limited. Much of the produce is sold on the domestic market rather than exported. I reiterate my concern that development for the sake of having water resources available is not necessarily the best approach. Having said that, I express my sincere hope that the water supplied to irrigation will be effectively utilised at some time in the future.

I commend the Queensland Water Resources Commission on construction of the Burdekin Dam. It will not only provide a water storage facility but also accommodate recreational activities. I am sure that its construction will be of benefit to northern Queensland.

Mr McElligott: Don't you reckon that the Government should pay to have the water pumped to Townsville?

Mr STEPHAN: If the Government were to pay to have the water piped to that city, it could be said that it should pay to have water piped to every other town in the State. I see no real need to differentiate between northern areas and southern Queensland.

I turn my attention now to the provision of maritime services. Much of the Queensland coastline is calm water and is being utilised for recreational pursuits. I instance sailing activities and the bay to bay yacht race that begins at Tin Can Bay each year. It is a very important social event, and each year a couple of hundred people participate in the race. The people get involved with this——

Mr Palaszczuk: Which race is this?

Mr STEPHAN: I am sorry if the honourable member for Archerfield has not informed himself of what goes on further away from Brisbane. It is what is known as the bay to bay yacht race. It goes from Tin Can Bay a little further up the coast to a point which is west of Fraser Island. It is possibly one of the largest still-water areas in the State. It is a beautiful stretch of water that is protected by Fraser Island and the reef. It is possible that that waterway is not utilised enough. It could be used a little more than it is at the moment. I invite anybody who is interested in yachting to utilise those facilities and even take part in that race. Late last year a problem did arise before the race. Some of the competitors who arrived a little later in the evening, about 11 or 12 o'clock, found it difficult to launch their boats. They had to launch their boats later the next morning. One or two legal problems were raised when they had to sleep on their yachts before they were launched.

I also heard, with interest, the comment made about shark-meshing and the fact that since shark-meshing operations have been initiated, no attacks have occurred in those protected areas. That is important. It is important in my area, particularly the Rainbow Beach area. For quite some time shark-meshing was a problem. The nets have been kept in fairly good order, although from time to time there was a little bit of controversy. I suppose that a personality problem existed, but shark-meshing is still carried on in that area. In one instance some dolphins were caught in the net for quite some time. The person who had the contract for clearing and maintaining the nets was not immediately on hand and that caused a few problems. The locals were concerned to see the dolphins splashing and thrashing around in the water without being able to

release themselves. Subsequently, the dolphins were washed up onto the beach and had to be buried. That was a problem.

That area also—and I may be becoming a little bit parochial, I guess—has a problem with the lead-lights through the Wide Bay bar. In the last few weeks I had a look at those lights, and there certainly is a problem. The Wide Bay bar goes out for 3 miles or a little bit further. After midday, particularly with the position of the sun, it is very difficult indeed to pick up those lead-lights from 3 miles out. From time to time, the position of the bar varies. Because of the fairly strong currents, both the current of the sea and the flow from the waterways, the bar, being sand, has a tendency to shift. Even the locals find it very confusing and cannot determine their exact location. After midday it is almost impossible to be able to find the lead-lights. Having inspected the lights and the signs, I must say that it is very noticeable that anybody who tries to come in through the bar at that time of day does so at very great risk.

I know that under those circumstances the coast guard does a tremendous job in rescuing people who finish up on the sand and gets them out of trouble. I am not too sure exactly what the problem is. I do raise the point that perhaps a buoy placed on the sandbar could be a fair sort of a marker to indicate just where it is and where the entrance of the bar would be so that people know where to come in. When the mist comes off the water and the sun is behind the markers, the lights are quite inadequate. That needs to be looked at and improved before a disaster happens to somebody who does not know the area. I compliment the Minister on his handling—

Mr Palaszczuk: Don't start that up again.

Mr STEPHAN: No, I am not doing that. I am simply complimenting the Minister and his departmental officers.

I knew Mr Don Beattie, who was for quite some time Commissioner of Water Resources. He knew the department very well and was of tremendous assistance to me. This portfolio is very important to the people of Queensland. The improvement of water resources helps the livelihood of many people and maritime services help the community in its recreational needs. The people of Queensland would do well to utilise those facilities a little more than they do at present.

Mr McLEAN (Bulimba) (7.55 p.m.): Before commencing my speech, Mr Fouras, I must congratulate you on your occupancy of the chair. It is a pleasure for me to be able to speak with you in the chair. You have always been fair and just and I congratulate you on your performances on the few opportunities that you have had to fill that position.

I will try to liven the debate up a little. I certainly will not be congratulating the Minister.

Mr Stephan: You just did.

Mr McLEAN: No, I did not.

My first point deals with an issue that I have previously raised in the Chamber, that is the scandalous history of the Port of Brisbane Authority and its efforts in the development of the port of Brisbane. I have been spurred on to do this following the recent debate on the Port of Brisbane Authority Act Amendment Bill, which dealt with the Cairncross Graving Dockyard. I will put the lie to many of the things that were said during that debate.

Much has been said about the blatant political interference in the operations of that authority, particularly with the major decisions that affected the container-handling facilities, the contract for which went to Brisbane Associated Terminals Ltd (BATL), which is a subsidiary of P & O. Just about every decision made by the Port of Brisbane Authority has been overturned by the Premier and Cabinet. Those incidents have been discussed on many occasions in this Chamber.

In maritime circles it is common knowledge that P & O has been given favours far in excess of what can be explained away as being normal. There is much scepticism and feeling in the industry as to the treatment that company has received from the Government. It is also very common knowledge in shipping circles that the managing director of that company is a large contributor to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation. It will not take me much time to remind members of this Chamber that the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation is a mafia-like fund that guarantees donors anything from knighthoods to large Government contracts and just about everything in between.

I do not aim my attack at the Port of Brisbane Authority as such, because quite obviously many of the decisions it has made have been the subject of political interference at a high level. One cannot blame the authority for such Government corruption. The authority cannot be blamed for the overruling of its decisions by Cabinet. However, I still believe that the port authority could have done more and should in the future try to do more.

Recently I was told that the authority is to undertake promotional work to try to attract new shipping lines, new shipping routes and, hopefully, new customers to the port. I commend it for that move, but I find it a little difficult to understand why it has taken so long for that to happen. I sincerely hope that this move is not the end of such an idea and that in the future much more is done.

Very, very many people in this region of the State that is serviced by the port of Brisbane rely heavily on the import and export of goods. An efficient, competitive and reliable port is an essential ingredient to promote the way of life of those people who live in this part of the State.

Although I have been critical, I can understand some of the problems and shall touch on them as I continue with my speech. Last week, during the debate on the legislation for the Cairncross Dockyard, many of the members of the Government and the Liberal Party made some very simplistic and misguided attacks—some of them were quite bitter attacks—on workers.

Mr Yewdale: Innes was terrible.

Mr McLEAN: The honourable member for Sherwood was terrible.

A couple of National Party members made it sound as though it was simply the fault of the workers; that no other problem existed.

Not once did I hear a constructive suggestion. The only suggestion that came from the Government side and from the little group at the back of the Chamber during the debate was to sack workers and to smash the unions. According to them, the unions have caused all the problems; the dockyard workers are receiving wages that are far too high, their conditions are far too luxurious, strikes are the main cause of all the problems; and, of course, the workers do not work very hard.

Mr McElligott: Do you reckon the member for Sherwood is aligned with the New Right?

Mr McLEAN: I just cannot understand why the Premier does not like the member for Sherwood. Their thoughts seem to be similar.

I did not hear any suggestion about how to make the port more efficient. I did not hear any criticism of the rorts that have occurred over the years in regard to the issue that I touched upon earlier—that is, P & O, the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation and, of course, Brian Baillie, that infamous rorter of the highest degree. I heard nothing about the incompetence and political interference at that level. I did not hear any comment about the container-handling monopoly that has been created at Fisherman Islands and that imposed possibly the highest port charges in Australia. I did not hear any practical suggestion about the improvements that could be made. All I heard was a vicious attack on the workers at the port.

That sort of mentality must not continue. People have to sit down and talk. I refer to all sections of industry that are affected by the viability of the port of Brisbane. It is very important that consultation take place. The time is long overdue when all affected parties should be called together to discuss the problems that exist. Anyone who is honest realises that problems do exist. There is certainly room for improvement. The only way to get that improvement is for consultation to take place. I believe that that is a task of Government.

One of the major problems, as I see it, is that at present no machinery exists for allowing a co-ordination of effort and ideas between, for instance, the growers and the producers; industry leaders and the workers and their unions; stevedores and the ship-owners and their agents and other users of the port. Those people all seem to be going in different directions, with no co-ordination of effort or thought. All parties have a role to play. They all rely on the efficiency of the port of Brisbane in order to survive. The Government should play a role as leader and bring the parties together to consider the problems that obviously exist.

I have spoken about efficiency problems at the port. Is the port being run in the most efficient manner? Is reliability being considered? OK, reliability was considered, but any lack of reliability of shipping movements in and out of the port of Brisbane was blamed on the workers. The workers do play a big role in that, and I admit it. So would they. However, they are not the only reason. Other reasons exist why reliability of freight movements in and out of the port of Brisbane can be improved.

Mr Tenni: Are you aware that the chairman sat down and talked with the workers?

Mr McLEAN: I am aware that some talks took place. However, I am also aware that that was only recently.

Mr Tenni: It happened in January this year.

Mr McLEAN: Well, that is a step in the right direction. I hope that it continues.

Not enough is done by the Queensland Government about access to markets. There should be a co-ordinated effort to get the right markets. Promotion is something that I am told the Port of Brisbane Authority is now undertaking. That has been sadly neglected over a period. I hope that it is carried out in the same way as the Government promotes its Ministers. If it is done half as well, it will be a good promotion for the port of Brisbane. It is an opportunity for the Minister to have his photograph in the paper. Promotion of the port is an important part of its overall development.

I believe that the port's development should cater for the differing demands and interests of the stevedoring industry, rather than bow to the political pressure or influence that has been exerted in the past.

Mr Tenni: You do not see my photo in the paper very often.

Mr McLEAN: No, but this is a golden opportunity for the Minister.

Mr Palaszczuk: The only photo you will see of him is with the H. R. Nicholls Society.

Mr McLEAN: Is the Minister a member of the H. R. Nicholls Society?

I find it hard to understand why promotional initiative has not been taken. I have listened to many suggestions from people in the industry and I mention a couple of them. I begin with the development of the port itself. Because of political interference that overrode the port authority's decisions in the early planning stages, a container-handling monopoly has been created at the mouth of the river. There are bulk-handling facilities for coal, sugar and wheat, but there is no conventional wharf. Conventional cargo ships have to come up the river. No short-term plan has been developed for building a wharf for conventional cargo ships at Fisherman Islands. That would benefit the company that has the monopoly on the port wharf facility. Brisbane has no passenger berth.

Mr Tenni: We are negotiating at the moment to try to organise that.

Mr McLEAN: It is long overdue. Mention is made continually of tourism in this State. It is claimed that Queensland is a tourist's paradise.

Mr Tenni: We are doing one in Cairns and hope to do one here. I will know in about a month.

Mr McLEAN: That is good. I am glad to hear that, because at the present time passenger ships that arrive in Brisbane have to go to Maritime Wharf, Newstead Wharf or Bretts Wharf.

Mr Tenni: We are trying to make it private enterprise so that the tax-payers don't have to pay any money.

Mr McLEAN: Yes. No back-handers, I hope?

Mr Tenni: I never do that sort of thing.

Mr McLEAN: No. That would be right.

It is a disgrace that passengers from overseas or interstate have to be plonked way down the river at Maritime Wharf. I remember that, when the Queen Elizabeth II docked at Fisherman Islands, work had to stop at the terminal while it was there. It is a disgrace that a city of over one million people does not have a passenger terminal of some description. Not a large amount of expenditure would be involved. Only a comfortable wharf area would be required for the tourists.

Mr Tenni: There has to be a customs section and so on.

Mr McLEAN: I realise that.

Mr Tenni: You are looking at \$10m or \$15m.

Mr McLEAN: Fair enough. I do not know whether it would cost that much, but the Minister should know.

That sum of money would be well spent to encourage further tourism to this State. Tourist ships that do not come here because of the lack of facilities, would be attracted to Brisbane.

Mr Tenni: You have to bring in bus terminals, railways and so on into it.

Mr McLEAN: Right.

Earlier I mentioned that the Government has an obligation to investigate new markets—for example, in Hong Kong, Singapore or other eastern countries.

Mr Tenni: I am looking at that one.

Mr McLEAN: Fine. The Minister is answering all my questions as I go. Later in the year, or next year, I will not have a worry, because all these things will be done.

Mr Tenni: Changi markets in Singapore.

Mr McLEAN: That is one of the areas I am talking about.

At the present time Australia—and particularly Queensland, which is the State I am interested in—has the products to attract an overseas market in those countries. Where does a person start? I heard the Minister say earlier, "What comes first—the chicken or the egg?" Attracting markets is exactly the same situation. Which comes first? Where does a grower go? Does he go to a shipping company first and then find the markets, or does he find his markets first and then find a shipping company?

No shipping service out of Brisbane would suit. It is a Government responsibility to organise and co-ordinate the background survey to cater for people who have the produce to sell. New shipping services would create employment and build up the port.

If the Minister is working in that direction that is good. If the Government could organise weekly or fortnightly runs that operated efficiently and on time to cater for that market, I feel sure that in no time it would lead to a big market with big sales. I am happy to hear the Minister say that that is the way he is heading.

Mr Tenni: In other words, what you are saying is that you have to go anticlockwise. The Western Australians are picking up a lot.

Mr McLEAN: Of course they are. The Western Australians are leaving Queenslanders for dead.

Mr Tenni: Only on that.

Mr McLEAN: There is no argument that they are leaving us for dead. I am glad that the Minister said that, because I possibly should have said it.

The Government should hang its head in shame over the standard-gauge railway line link-up between Acacia Ridge and the port of Brisbane. If a port is to be competitive and efficient, I cannot understand how any Government could sit back and accept that the major rail line stops 12 miles from it. Double handling results. Cargo must be put on and taken off trucks that are driven through heavy traffic to the port. That is ridiculous. The port of Brisbane is the only major port in Australia that does not have a direct standard-gauge railway line to the waterfront. Time is wasted and expenses are incurred. When one thinks about improvements, that surely must be the first improvement that comes to mind. The sooner that that problem is attacked and the Government accepts its responsibility, the better.

The amount of cargo that is being lost from the Northern Rivers district, which is a large area producing all types of produce, is astounding. Produce that could be taken back to the Northern Rivers district is being neglected and markets are being lost to Sydney. The port has enormous potential. Presently, it is cheaper to send cargo from the Northern Rivers district to Sydney by rail than it is to transport it to Brisbane. That is not acceptable. Because of the large amount of work that is being lost, one cannot say that the port is efficient and competitive. The Government must play a role in developing new methods of cargo-handling and transport if it is fair dinkum about building up and promoting the port of Brisbane.

I have been told about a new concept of beef-handling that is being offered by a Swedish shipping company called Cool Carriers. The line has ships that can lay pallets of meat more quickly than containers.

Mr Tenni: They came into Townsville.

Mr McLEAN: The ship can also be utilised to take general cargo and a mixture of cargo. From what I have been told, that is a fine concept. If possible, I will look at it next week. These are matters that the Minister should also examine.

Honourable members are aware of the problems in the beef industry. They have heard how the workers are breaking the industry. From what one hears in this Chamber, one would swear that the problems are being caused by the wages and conditions of workers. It is claimed that meat-workers, in particular, will not work. I do not know how many members of this Assembly have been on a slaughter floor. I certainly have. If the option was working harder in my electorate in order to be returned as a member of Parliament or going to work on the slaughter floor, I would be working in my electorate until midnight. Meat-workers work very hard.

Many attacks have been made on meat-workers. Because of the present state of the beef industry, one would think it imperative to adopt every possible cost-saving method in every section of the industry. Apparently that is not so. The company, Cool Carriers, can ship and deliver beef on the wharf in the USA at \$70 a tonne cheaper than the present shippers.

Mr Tenni: I think they get a full load at the moment.

Mr McLEAN: That is what I am leading to. The ship cannot operate to its capacity because it cannot obtain cargo. It cannot get cargo because a monopoly of container

companies will not allow the cargo to go that way. The company cannot get cargo in Rockhampton. I have been told that the company cannot get cargo in Brisbane because of the monopoly of the container companies.

Mr Tenni: You can get cargo here and they will drop it off at Townsville.

Mr McLEAN: Is that right? I hope that the project gets off the ground. If the industry is in such dire straits, surely a saving of \$70 per tonne on a trip from Australia to the USA would be a great advantage. It would counter some of the arguments and screaming about the 17½ per cent loading and penalty rates that employers are blaming for the ills in industry.

The Government must address positively the future development of the port of Brisbane, the rail link and several of the other issues that I have mentioned. I am pleased to hear that the Minister has set moves in train on some aspects. However, he has made no comment about the rail link. The Government is kidding itself if it believes that the Brisbane port can become a fully competitive and efficient port without the improvements I have suggested. Brisbane deserves better than it has at the present time. I hope that people within the industry will have an opportunity to express their views on the future development of the port.

The monopoly that has been created at Fisherman Islands is unfair to the industry. Because of the attitude of the Queensland Government and the obvious preference that it has given to P & O, ships are not coming to Brisbane.

Time expired.

Mr HARTWIG (Callide) (8.16 p.m.): I rise to make my contribution to the debate on the Estimates that will grant to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1986-87 a sum not exceeding \$43,366,000 for the Queensland Water Resources Commission. Of course, that money will come from consolidated revenue.

The works program that is planned by the commission for 1986-87 involves an expenditure of \$178.6m.

Since I was first elected to Parliament 14 years ago I have always said that this Government has ignored the water reticulation and water conservation requirements of this great State.

If honourable members were to examine the expenditure that has been allocated to the various departments, they would understand what I am speaking about. In the anticipated expenditure for the forthcoming year, the Treasury will receive \$509m. The police will receive \$245m. The Prisons Department spends \$45.5m to keep those gaolbirds in Boggo Road and the other prisons. The sum of \$1,295,000 has been allocated to Education. Health and Environment has been allocated \$1,093m. The sum of \$1,055m has been allocated to Transport. The Justice Department has been allocated \$83m. The sum of \$161m has been allocated to Works and Housing. Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying have been allocated the sum of \$62m. The Department of Primary Industries has been allocated \$118m. The sum of \$79m has been allocated to Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts. Water Resources and Maritime Services has been allocated \$80m. Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs, has been allocated \$64m.

On the subject of water resources, I am pleased to see that the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Tenni) is also interested in those four-legged animals up north.

Mr Tenni: Are you referring to crocodiles?

Mr HARTWIG: I believe that the Minister is on the right track with those crocodiles.

Mr Tenni: That is what I have been trying to tell you for 12 years.

Mr HARTWIG: As long as the Minister keeps those crocodiles in the north and does not let them come down here to Queen Street, I will be happy.

Queensland is subject to drought every three to five years and needs water. However, Queensland has the worst record of water conservation in the history of Australia.

In Western Australia water is piped to Kalgoorlie from Perth. Los Angeles draws its water from the Boulder Dam in Colorado. That dam provides water for 13.5 million people. Water is piped between places throughout the world.

The Fairbairn Dam at Emerald is an inland sea that is just sitting there. No efforts have been made to pipe that water to various parts of the State. Drought has cost Queensland more money than anything else that I can think of. Droughts will continue to recur. I believe that, if the effects of drought are not mitigated, that \$43m plus the works program of \$176m will be just a drop in the bucket.

Who are the people who supply the food—the beef and mutton? The country people do, and they are dependent upon water. Today, the success of any land venture depends upon water.

The commission owns and operates 21 dams and 84 weirs with a total capacity of 4.2 million ML. That is nothing but a drop in the bucket. The commission provides water to irrigate 128 000 ha; again a drop in the bucket.

Queensland's water capacity is down 12 per cent compared to last year. Water capacity has decreased on the Gold Coast and in the Albert shire. What is the Government doing about it? It is looking down the barrel of a city of approximately 150 000 to 200 000 people, plus the holiday intake, being seriously inconvenienced through a lack of water.

The eastern part of the State has one of the highest rainfalls of any part of the nation. Creeks and rivers break their banks in flood, yet following six or 12 months of drought water restrictions are imposed because of lack of water. It is 1986, not 1886. The Fairbairn Dam holds more water than the rest of the dams and weirs in the State.

I stress upon the Minister the fact that the only thing that creates drought is a lack of water, but that need not occur. The Fairbairn Dam is sitting there, and six inches of water out of that dam would run the Mackenzie River through to the Dawson and Fitzroy Rivers and fill all the water holes and weirs on its course. But, no, the Government decided to build a \$4.2m weir on the Mackenzie River. Was that weir requested by the land-holders? The land-holders were advised by letter that a meeting would be held to inform them that they were getting a weir. The land-holders were quite surprised, as one would imagine. Approximately 30 people attended the meeting and they were told that if they did not avail themselves of the offer they would have to wait 30 years for another offer.

I turn to the Callide Valley, which has over 200 irrigators all equipped for and dependent upon underground water. Not one irrigation dam exists in the Callide Valley, yet look at the wealth that the Callide Valley produces for this great State. It is the richest valley in the land. The Government stands condemned for providing no water conservation measures in the Callide Valley. A dam was built in the Callide Valley, but only for power station purposes and power generation. After 12 years, I am pleased to see that the Deputy Premier has agreed to put the gates on the Callide Dam, which will no doubt increase its capacity.

Mr White: Only after representations had been made by the honourable member for Callide.

Mr HARTWIG: It took 12 years to eventuate, but I still got it.

Despite the noise that emanates from the Government side of the Chamber, the point is that water levels in the Biloela/Callide/Argoon areas are currently the lowest on record. I am glad that officers of the Queensland Water Resources Commission are in attendance in the Chamber this evening to hear what I have to say.

Mr Palaszczuk: It is worse than the Gold Coast.

Mr HARTWIG: But at least on the Gold Coast a person can go to Jupiters and drink something else besides water, or he can jump in the ocean and drown himself.

Water levels in other areas of the Callide Valley are also reaching a critical stage. When the Government considers the construction of a weir or dam, it should base its decisions upon an assessment of the way the dam will contribute to productivity. The Government should not be concerned about what it cost the Queensland Water Resources Commission to accomplish an engineering feat. The Government should wake up to the fact that in order to obtain optimum benefit from water resources in this State, the factor of productivity is paramount. Productivity is the main reason that water resources should be conserved.

Biloela is the centre of the largest area of lucerne production in Queensland and probably Australia. During periods of severe drought, large quantities of lucerne and hay have been supplied from the Biloela area to New South Wales and northern Victoria. I stress that in times of crisis, the Callide Valley has been able to provide assistance, yet the Government has neglected its obligations to build a dam in the area. The Government stands condemned for its neglect.

The Callide Valley was the earliest cotton-producing area to be established in Australia, and it produces the highest quality cotton. Its other crops are wheat, sorghum, corn, mung beans, culinary beans, French beans and many other small crops. The area is rapidly becoming a major seed production area for culinary beans, French beans and sunflowers. The total value of crops produced in the Callide Valley is \$13.5m, which is largely due to the availability of irrigation. I challenge the Government to compare that level of productivity with any other agricultural area in Queensland. I contend that no other area in Queensland can hold a candle to the productivity levels of the Callide Valley, despite the lack of water resources that are available and the lack of water conservation that is practised.

One of the noticeable features of contributing to the Estimates debate is that when a member makes a speech, no-one listens. In my opinion, one of the major faults of this Government is that it has allocated \$1 billion or more to transport, education and health, but when it comes to the provision of water resources, what has the Government done? Absolutely nothing!

The efforts that the Government has made are but a drop in the bucket compared with its expenditure on the activities of other facets of Government. For the information of the Government and the Minister, I inform the Committee that the annual production of the Callide Valley amounts to \$13.5m from irrigated crops that consist of the following: lucerne, 2 000 ha, valued at \$5.5m; grain crops, 2 000 ha, valued at \$1.5m; cotton, 2 500 ha, valued at \$5m; and beans and small crops valued at \$1.5m. All of those crops combine to make a total of \$13.5m annually that is produced by farmers who have invested more than \$10m in sinking bores and purchasing pumping equipment. Three hundred and forty irrigation bores have been established in the area, although the Government has provided not one dam to assist farmers in the area.

I reiterate that the Callide Valley is one of the richest valleys in the world, not just in Australia; yet it has been neglected and ignored by the Queensland Government. Irrespective of what the future holds, while I retain a seat in this Parliament, there will be no greater advocate for water conservation practices to be established in the Callide Valley. The conservation of water resources will mitigate drought in areas all over Queensland.

The Mackenzie River has its head waters in the Fairbairn Dam, and it would only take five to 10 hours of releasing water through the flood gates to run the Mackenzie River through to the Fitzroy River. The paradox is that this Government can find \$4.02m to construct weirs on the Mackenzie River, in spite of the fact that water is available. Upstream there was adequate water for the irrigation that those people require.

Just over the range from the Callide River are the head-waters of the Burnett River. In that area are the Cania Dam, the Wuruma Dam and the Mundubbera Weir. The

Government is now talking about putting another weir at a cost of \$3.5m above the junction of the Nogoia River on the Burnett River. The Burnett watershed could not hold a candle to the Callide Valley for productivity. Is the Government concerned, or is it because I am an Independent member that the Government saw fit not to allocate the necessary funds? I will lay it on the line. If that is the way in which the Government operates, then I say it has a very narrow outlook. The people in the Callide Valley wrote an urgent note to me seeking immediate assistance to initiate schemes to alleviate a problem which threatens to seriously curtail continued irrigation in that great Callide Valley.

As I said before, more than 200 people in that area are irrigating and they are now registering the lowest level ever in their underground supply. Those people, the majority of whom support this Government, have been given the raw prawn by that same Government. There is nothing else that can be said.

I now want to refer to the water supply for the Capricorn Coast. Here again——

Mr Tenni: That is the responsibility of the Livingstone shire.

Mr HARTWIG: Yes, it is the responsibility of the Livingstone shire, I will admit that. I have no qualms about that. What I am saying is that water is being drawn—and this Government has agreed for it to be continued—from a mere gully. I refer to Water Park Creek. It is no more than a gully. Anybody looking to the future would have to be blind Freddy if he could not see that one day the Capricorn Coast will be short of water. All that is needed for that to happen is consecutive dry years. The alternative is to draw the water from Rockhampton by pipeline. To open up the area between Rockhampton and the coast would require a decent sort of a pipeline that would give adequate water supplies. If it did not rain for 10 years, Rockhampton would still have water available.

Mr Tenni: Did you move for that when you were chairman of the shire to get the council to——

Mr HARTWIG: I did. I also state that the great Iwasaki development, which I promoted and which I support, will not take water from Water Park Creek—it will not accept the water from Water Park Creek—because it wants water from Rockhampton. Operating under its own steam, the Iwasaki resort is drawing water out of the sand now. That cannot continue. I would like to see the State Government getting behind that enterprise and reticulating water from the Rockhampton barrage.

Recently a unique operation was about to take place with logs being floated on barges from the Byfield Forest down Water Park Creek to be loaded onto boats. The company that undertook that project claimed it as a first—unique in Australia's history. Tons and tons of logs—pine log thinnings—were going to be floated down the creek and then loaded onto ships for export.

I spoke to the contractor today. He received a telegram from the Federal Government. It has now cancelled his licence. The contractor has 16 000 tons of logs ready to be exported. He had 40 men working for him. All of those men had been on the dole. He has had to stand those men down. Because of red tape from the Federal Government, that project has just fallen apart and crashed round his ears.

I ask you, Mr Booth: What the hell is wrong with this country, when somebody who undertakes a novel idea like that, because part of Water Park Creek has been proclaimed by the Commonwealth Government as falling under the control of the Heritage Commission, goes broke? That is another minus for Queensland and for Australia. I say it is poor, bureaucratic interference and over-government that is responsible for this sort of thing. If the Government would let free enterprise run its own business, the damned country would work its way out of trouble. In all sections of industry today, there is too much Government interference.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (8.35 p.m.): I rise this evening to tell this Chamber a story, one that follows on from some of the shocking statements that have been made

over the last two days by members opposite. It is a story about a young man and could well become a chapter in the development of the State—certainly a chapter in the development of the Burdekin Dam project, which I am proud to say is located in my electorate.

This is a story that should be told. It is one that will silence thinking people. I hope there are some of them on the opposite side of the Chamber. It is a story of initiative, courage, pain and, most of all, a story that is continuing proof of the blood, sweat and tears that are known by so many who seek their livelihood from the soil.

I deplore the constant ALP tactic of questioning the propriety of individuals. In this case the member for Rockhampton (Mr Braddy) questioned the propriety of the Premier, the Cabinet and the Cox family. He sought to lump them all into one pool and he tried to muddy that pool. Above all, he tried to muddy the waters of the Water Resources Commission of this State. The member for Rockhampton has been supported in his efforts by the member for Ashgrove (Mr Veivers). Only the Lord would know how the member for Ashgrove would have any knowledge of this matter.

Mr Henderson: He is getting desperate.

Mr STONEMAN: That is correct.

They ask: "Why would the Premier be involved?" Following on from that question, why would a young man from a well-known and secure family be listened to? They raised the question of valuations. They asked, "Why were there not more valuations? Why was not the valuation listened to?" I tell those honourable members that there were other valuations but, as the Minister said today, they are the subject of further appeals in a case not related to this one.

One valuation was carried out by probably one of the most respected valuers in this State, the late C. K. Carmody, CBE, who for a number of years was the chairman of the Haughton Sugar Company, the chairman of Telecasters North Queensland and the chairman of NQRA. The list goes on and on. He was held in tremendous respect by the community. Sadly, he passed on some years ago.

This story is told in a letter to the Premier dated 7 November 1981. I intend to read this letter to the Chamber so that the people of this State know the truth of how David Cox came to seek out the advice of the Premier and how that led to the Government's purchasing some land from him. The letter reads—

"Dear Mr. Premier,

I write to you personally to ask for your assistance to correct a situation that has developed as a direct result of the restraints placed on me by the Queensland parliaments approval of the Burdekin River Project report as presented to parliament by the Commissioner for Water Resources in April, 1980. The effects of the subsequent freeze on my operation have been nothing short of catastrophic.

Since 1977, I have geared my business and finances to undertake a major land development programme as outlined by my correspondence with the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission in July 1977. In April 1980, midstream through my development, the governments actions have effectively cut off my major source of revenue, leaving me with a half completed development into which I have injected massive amounts of "Borrowed" capital with no apparent prospects for recovery in the foreseeable future. This is a quite unacceptable situation from both myself and my financiers viewpoint. I have continued without requesting any individual personal consideration for as long as possible, hoping the land freeze and resumption issue would have been decided; but Sir, after hanging on for over eighteen months, I am rapidly approaching the point where I can no longer continue to operate my businesses which employ twenty-six permanent staff.

In my submission, I wish to outline my business activities in the preceding four years to April 1980, and the effect the implementation of the Commissioners' Burdekin River Project report has had on my business subsequent to that date. As

the timing of my activities is so relevant in the interpretation of my submission, and your time is so limited, I write the following in note form, in sequence, with reference to the relevant dates."

I interpose to say that at no point was David Cox suggesting that the Government should not have proceeded with the Irrigation and Water Supply report, as it was known then. He did not make that point at all, and never did.

The letter continues—

“1970—completed my education at the Queensland Agricultural College at Lawes at the age of 17.

1971-1973—drove a dozer for three years doing general land improvement on the family property.

1974—drove the family dozer doing contract work for local cane farmers to offset losses being incurred in the cattle operation due to the severe slump in the beef market.

1975—did stockwork and grain farming on the family property.

March 1976—left family property to work away for twelve months.

November 1976—purchased 6,500 acres of the family grazing property and immediately started designing an irrigation scheme to service this land using (a) stored water from the Clare Weir which was under construction and (b) free flow in the Burdekin River during the wet season.

March 1977—started in my own business growing about 160 acres of grain; continued land improvement on my property with extremely limited financial resources.

April 1977—made an application to the I.W.S. Brisbane for a water allocation from the Clare Weir when completed, of 2,200 megalitres. This is sufficient on my soil type to irrigate 2,200 acres of maize, soya beans, sorghum etc.

May 1977—flew from Townsville to Brisbane to discuss the possibility of my irrigation scheme with Mr. Stan James, Senior Engineer I.W.S.

July 1977—submitted a sketched plan of my proposed irrigation development of initially 3,000 acres to the I.W.S. in Brisbane. I detailed my development schedule in stages and informed of my intentions once developed.

September 1977—approached the National Bank (the familys' bank) for finance to develop and excise a portion of my original holding to provide me with sufficient finance to (a) continue further development of my land, (b) implement my irrigation scheme and (c) allow me to establish a viable farming operation. The National Bank refused finance. I then proceeded to borrow money privately at 18%, this being at a time when overdraft rates were 10.5%.

November 1977—I was successful in securing enough finance to proceed with the total development of Stage 1 (460 acres). I designed, organized and supervised the complete development including the construction of 3.6 kilometres of road to Main Roads Department specifications. I then offered the blocks for sale but received little response from the market because of criticism of the soil, and the low, flat nature of the land posing possible drainage problems.

March 1978—Five months later, with the land still not selling, I borrowed more money to grow an irrigated crop of maize on one of the blocks in an endeavour to establish the lands' crop producing potential.

October 1978—After growing a very successful crop of maize, I sold all three blocks and repaid all loans to my financiers.

February 1979—With no prior knowledge or experience in the managing of a machinery dealership, I bought the Chamberlain John Deere dealership in the Burdekin district, which was a run down business employing five staff and having 8% share of the local market. I negotiated a loan from the National Bank of \$70,000,

to use as extra working capital for the machinery business which I named Davco Tractors.

I immediately began promoting my product to the limit of my ability. Within three months, we had rejuvenated the old business into a reasonable profit making concern.

May 1978—with my now established asset backing and the newly acquired machinery dealership which was already producing good profit, I contracted to buy a property (Portion 15 & 16, Parish of Northcote) of 5,200 acres which adjoined my existing holding, this giving me further scope for the implementation of my irrigation scheme. The total price was \$700,000.

At this point, WITHOUT my banks knowledge, I used the \$70,000 loan intended as work capital for the machinery business, as a NON-REFUNDABLE deposit on this property, with the balance to settle on 1st July, 1979.

June 1979—negotiated with various financiers to borrow the balance of \$680,000 required for settlement and also stamp duty, legal fees etc. I was in effect borrowing 100% of the total outlay required for purchase. I took in a partner (Mr Alec Christensen) with a 21% share to reduce my level of borrowings to a level I felt confident I could service. I was successful in negotiating loans from the National Bank and Custom Credit Corporation.

Notes on Portion 15 & 16, Parish of Northcote—

- (1) was on the market for nearly two years prior to my purchase,
- (2) the Commissioner of Water Resources (Mr Don Beattie) approves of freehoding in September 1978.
- (3) the property was inspected by the districts larger cane farmers with assets and earning capacity at that stage, many times greater than mine, but all passed it off as being—
 - (a) too swampy and poor clay soil,
 - (b) potential development to far into the future,
 - (c) little possibility of having irrigation water available in the short to medium term.”

Mr Cox's letter to the Premier then contains one or two personal notations about some people and he has excluded them from this letter. This has no relevance whatsoever to the debate, and I will not embarrass those people by naming them.

The letter goes on to say—

“August 1979—I proceeded with the development of Stage 2 of my original holding to meet commitments on the purchase of Portion 15 & 16, as well as immediate capital expenditure requirements of the machinery business.

October 1979—continued promoting my machinery dealership to the limit of my ability and financial capacity. By this time, my staff has doubled to ten, and my products market share was approaching 20%. I dealt extremely aggressively and took in many traded units to establish my product in the market. As a backstop, if these trades did not sell readily, I planned to use many of these machines in my land developing and ultimately farming operation.

November 1979—I purchased 6.5 acres of industrial land on the outskirts of Ayr on which to locate my expanding machinery dealership. I obtained vendor finance for this purchase of \$160,000.

December 1979—completed development of Stage 2 and offered blocks to the market. As with Stage 1, prospective buyers were slow to move, but after the first farmer bought, the following five blocks sold over a five month period.

January 1980—proceeded with the development of Stage 3, which when completed should have provided me with sufficient finance to

- (a) continue the development of my whole property including the construction of Stage 1 of my irrigation project to service 2,000 acres.
- (b) allow me to proceed with my planned large scale farming operation.
- (c) construct adequate facilities on my dealership site in Ayr.
- (d) leave me with a manageable debt.

March 1980—all the time, while doing developmental work on land for sale, I was doing even more work on land I wished to retain to farm myself. To date, I have developed approximately 1,500 acres for sale and a further 3,500 acres to farm myself.

April 1980—Now, at the age of 26—

- (a) my total employment has risen to 24 permanent staff,
- (b) my products market share reaches 36%,
- (c) my total liabilities exceed \$1 million.

All business operations running profitably and to plan. Repayments to all my financiers have been on schedule. By this stage, after being in business for nearly three years, I have established a good credit rating with my financiers and my bank manager is more than pleased with my accuracy of planning and ability to meet my projected repayment schedules.

May 1980—the Commissioner for Water Resources announces restrictions on the trading of land within the extended boundaries of the Burdekin River Irrigation Area. The Commission advises that all land in the proposed serviced area will be resumed, regardless of tenure, and the present landowners will be eligible to purchase a retention area of approximately 70 hectares. I presently own 4,099 hectares.

This announcement comes a short 18 months after Mr Beattie gave his full approval for the freeholding of Portion 15 & 16.

I enclose Appendix B which is a letter from the Q.W.R.C. (at that time still known as the I.W.S.) to the Parker family, who were the previous owners of this property, showing clearly the Commissioners' approval of freeholding as late as 1st February, 1979.

The effects of this freeze on my operation have been, to say the least, catastrophic. I have been the sole major developer of land for agriculture in the Burdekin district over the last four years. Some other landowners have been developing small areas for their own use and financing the improvements out of 'profit' from their cane farm or cattle station. In contrast, I have been developing on a large scale using Borrowed Capital from financiers who demand repayments. Considerable expense in road building and land clearing has been incurred on my Stage 3 development which I am unable to recover. Twenty months ago, at the time I proceeded with my Stage 3 development, sugar prices were high (refer Appendix D) and prospects of an expansion of the sugar industry were promising, thus creating a keen demand for my blocks. Now, with a severe downturn in the sugar industry, the financial success of this development in the short term, even if I was allowed to proceed, would be extremely clouded.

My development has been carried out in an orderly, well designed manner with easement provisions being made for the implementation of my irrigation reticulation scheme to service all my freehold land and lands adjacent which I envisage being serviced from my channel system. Some of this land are blocks I have already sold.

I challenge the Q.W.R.C. to fault my developmental design and layout. In fact, I have no hesitation in declaring that my development is not only 'acceptable' compared with Q.W.R.C. standards, but in fact is quite superior to the Commissions' traditional water reticulation techniques as it offers the farmer benefits not possible with the Commissions' design and also offers the construction authority considerable cost savings. Refer Appendix E for overall design layout of my development.

My machinery dealership, because of its explosive growth requires substantial injections of capital to provide the service and back-up facilities my volume of turnover demands. Since April 1980, I have had to halt any expansion of facilities

with the result that after nearly eighteen months of grossly inadequate facilities, and no indication that they are possible in the foreseeable future, staff morale is dropping rapidly. One by one, my valued, skilled staff is being lured away to competitors dealerships that can offer the facilities they require to perform efficiently. My market share has been slipping about 1% per month from 36% down to 24% and will continue to slide, because my promises to the farmers of adequate staff and facilities to service the machinery they have bought, are not coming to fruition. Slowly but surely, the business I started and promoted so aggressively, is crumbling around my feet.

I include for your perusal the following appendices,

- (A) a schedule of my total liabilities since 1977
- (B) a letter from the IWS to Parkers solicitors confirming the Commissioners' approval for the freeholding of Portion 15 & 16, and attached are my comments re this action
- (C) schedule of my irrigation project negotiations with the Q.W.R.C., Main Roads Department, NORQEB, A.J.P. Engineering and others
- (D) sugar price graph to indicate my proceeding with Stage 3
- (E) my initial letter to the IWS in July 1977, outlining my development intentions
- (F) correspondence from QWRC 24/11/81 and my reply re accusations of trading of my water allocation

Sir, I feel quite confident that I have contributed my fair share to the growth of Queensland, in the opening up of virgin swamp land for intensive farming and in the creation of employment for the people in my district. If this is the Queensland Governments' way of showing its appreciation of my efforts to date, then you have just created a completely disillusioned young man, and lost the respect and admiration of a 'once proud, free enterprise, Queenslander.'

Yours faithfully,

DAVID R. COX

P.S. Mr Premier, if my past record of performances does not meet with your approval, could you possibly spare the time to jot down a few notes on how you feel I could improve my performance to best benefit the State, should I have the courage to start again after my machinery business has crumbled and my current freehold possessions have been resumed."

Members of the Opposition should hang their heads in shame at the wrong they seek to do. They should recognise the role that young men such as David Cox can play if they are supported as they should be.

That letter was written on 7 November 1981. Mr Cox saw the Premier, who assessed the situation and made a recommendation to Cabinet in early 1982. The valuation was completed in October 1982 and negotiations continued until the final payment in November/December 1982.

At no stage did Mr Cox consult his sister, Mrs Kippin, the former member for Mourilyan. He never said that there should have been a land freeze. With progress there must be pain. However, there must also be consideration. The State Government has shown that it has the courage to be considerate.

Time expired.

Mr PALASZCZUK (Archerfield) (8.55 p.m.): I do not wish to comment on what has been said by the honourable member for Burdekin. As a matter of fact, all he did was read from a prepared text.

Mr Davis: The only thing he forgot to put in was the number of the National Party ticket.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Exactly right! The National Party ticket was the only thing that was missing from the prepared text in the honourable member's interpretation of what occurred in the Burdekin electorate in 1980.

I wish to discuss the Maritime Services section of the Minister's portfolio. In particular, I wish to refer to the Brisbane River. Honourable members have only to look out of the windows of this building—or Parliament, as some people may refer to it—to realise that the Brisbane River is a magnificent stream by any standards.

I have spent my entire life in Brisbane and I have seen the changes that have taken place on the river and its banks. I wish to comment on some of those changes, because they come within the Minister's portfolio.

Honourable members would be aware that it was John Oxley who discovered the Brisbane River in 1824. An obelisk stands on the banks of the Brisbane River near BP House and North Quay marking the spot where the great John Oxley and his party landed to look for water. He then continued up the river, past the creek that bears his name. Of course, that creek flows through my electorate.

The Brisbane River came into its own when the Moreton Bay colony was established back in 1842. That day marked the start of the great maritime artery that it is today. The Brisbane River was very important in helping the young colony ensure its food supplies.

It is interesting to note that one of the first areas that were set aside for crop-growing was the site of the present New Farm Park on the banks of the river. Fishing and prawning in the river were quite prevalent until the early 1950s. Unfortunately, with the growth of the colony, the citizens of Brisbane came to regard the river as a sewer and a rubbish dump.

Mr Randell: Do you know what happened? There was a Labor council in office.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Fair enough. That was about the time when the National Party also came to office. The Brisbane River came to be regarded as a sewer refuge and rubbish dump in the 1950s.

Thank goodness we saw the error of our ways through the Brisbane City Council under the Labor administration. Brisbane then became conservation conscious. Apart from the cleaning-up of the river itself, much overdue work commenced on the river banks.

As the colony grew in those far-off days before railways, the river was the main commercial artery. Shipping came right up the river to wharves opposite Parliament House. Eventually, with sustained growth, wharves snaked down the river towards the present Hamilton wharves.

The relocation of the coal-loading wharves, the bulk-grain terminal and the cement-works to the mouth of the river at Fisherman Islands was long overdue.

I must admit that the Port of Brisbane Authority has done a very good job. Some honourable members will recall that the fish markets were located on the south side beside the Victoria Bridge.

Mr Davis: Boy, do we know that!

Mr PALASZCZUK: Exactly. The Fish Markets hardly enhanced the city.

The first major effort at a clean-up occurred on the south bank from the Grey Street bridge to Orleigh Park at West End. That proved what could be achieved with a bit of effort, but there is still a very long way to go. The work is very timely, because, as the tourist industry has developed, it has at last been realised that the best view of Brisbane city is from the river. People and companies such as Hayles Brisbane Cruises realised

that 50 years ago. Its daily trips to Lone Pine have always been very popular with tourists and the locals alike.

What better way to view the new cultural centre, Newstead House and the beautiful homes and parks than from the river itself?

Mr Davis: I could not agree with you more. It is a very exciting time.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Of course it is. I pay full tribute to Mr Michael Nye and his associates at Hayles for the considerable amount of money that is being spent on the restoration of the grand old lady of the river, the MV Mirimar. It is a pity that the same fate was not reserved for the old river great the Koopa, which ran to Redcliffe and also to Bribie Island. The people at the Golden Mile Ferry Service have also recognised the value of the river and are in the process of further expansion. Mr Gary Balkin has also recognised the tourist potential of the river with the introduction of the Kookaburra Queen and his other improvements. The Government, in its belated attempt to convince the citizens of Brisbane that it was really interested in the Brisbane River, set up a committee under the chairmanship of the honourable member for Greenslopes (Mrs Harvey). It is a paper tiger.

It is not often that I concur with the Lord Mayor, but in this instance I do. I have heard her complain on numerous occasions that nothing constructive can be achieved, because the river is under the control of seven—I repeat “seven”—separate authorities. That reinforces my view that the National Party committee is a paper tiger. I seriously believe that the Minister should have a good look at that. Recently, I took a trip up the Brisbane River and Bremer River to Ipswich.

Mr Davis: That is a nice trip.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Nice trip! An understatement. It is a marvellous trip. History books prove that sailing ships were once the only connection between Brisbane and Ipswich. I know that my colleague the honourable member for Ipswich (Mr Hamill) has also completed that trip. I commend the trip to members on both sides of the Chamber.

Mr Davis: I am going up on October the 18th.

Mr PALASZCZUK: 18 October is a very important date.

I would conclude on that subject by suggesting that people, including the Government, should be doing much more to publicise the Brisbane River and not leave it to private enterprise alone.

Mr Davis: They should clean up those creeks.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Not only clean up the creeks; but also forget its obsession with the Great Barrier Reef and north Queensland for a short time and concentrate on promoting the Brisbane River.

In speaking to the Estimates of the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services, I draw the attention of the Chamber to a flood plain in my electorate. I refer to the area adjoining the Rocklea markets. In the 1974 floods, the river completely inundated the area and caused tremendous devastation in suburbs such as Rocklea, Oxley and Yeronga. My colleague John Mickel, the ALP candidate and next member for Yeronga, informs me that people in the Tennyson area have had their properties resumed by the Liberal Brisbane City Council as part of a flood mitigation program.

One resident of the Oxley area informed me that, in the 1974 flood, his house was completely inundated. He suggests that under the program of flood mitigation implemented by the Liberal Brisbane City Council administration, if any flood of the same magnitude were to occur, the level would be well over the roof of his house. I hope that the Minister will give careful consideration to this matter.

I note that the poultry section of the Department of Primary Industries presently occupies a site that has been approved for redevelopment, and the land has been upgraded. I remind the Minister for Water Resources that he has the responsibility of administering surface and underground water resources. The area in question is the reputed site of an irradiation plant, which has evidently been planned—secretly, I suggest—for the past two years. The Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Turner) is reported in the *South West News* on 20 August 1986 as stating that Rocklea will be the site for the plant.

Mr Stephan: It would be a good spot.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Yes. As I said, the land under discussion forms part of a flood plain. In the event of an accident at the plant, people who live adjacent to the banks of Oxley Creek and the Brisbane River will have to be made aware of any dangers to their life-style.

Mr Davis: Once they had a flood there, they would be really up against it.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Yes, that is exactly right.

Another question I ask the Minister to answer is: Does his Government plan to use the Willawong liquid waste dump for disposal of all nuclear waste from not only that plant but all Queensland hospitals and related industries as well?

Mr Stephan: We could put it into space.

Mr Davis: The honourable member for Gympie suggests that nuclear waste should be launched into space with the Government's new rocket.

Mr PALASZCZUK: I am eagerly awaiting the first launch of the rocket. I am curious to know when it will occur.

I remind the Minister that problems have been associated with the operations carried on at Willawong for a number of years. If any waste were to seep into the water-table, grave problems will be faced by the farmers on smaller allotments at Pallara.

As the Minister is no doubt aware, numerous creeks flow through the area and sand-dredging is also carried out extensively. Contaminated waste could seep into the creeks that would subsequently be the site of sand-dredging operations. All honourable members would be aware of the problems associated with seepage.

The Minister is responsible for watercourses and is also responsible for quarry materials obtained from watercourses. I suggest that the Minister should look closely at the matter I have raised. I urge the Minister not to take the advice given by the Department of Primary Industries.

Hon. M. J. TENNI (Barron River—Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services) (9.7 p.m.): I thank all honourable members who have made a contribution to the debate on the Estimates of my departments. I intend to comment on most of the input that has been made by the various speakers throughout the day.

The honourable member for Mourilyan (Mr Eaton) said that Queensland is a long way behind in water conservation practices. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. Queensland is the only State in Australia with an active water resources development program in operation. It was only two months ago that I met with Ministers from all the States of Australia, who were predominantly Labor Ministers. Those Ministers were envious of Queensland's water resources development program. For several years that has been the case, and I venture to suggest that it will be the case in the foreseeable future. Great plans are being made for water resources development throughout Queensland.

It is a pity that the Federal Government has withdrawn and refused to acknowledge its responsibilities in the area of water resources. In other words, revenue disbursement to the tax-payers of Queensland does not include an allocation to ensure that water resources will be secured for the future.

Many of the points raised about town water supplies form part of the responsibilities attaching to local authorities and the Department of Local Government. Having said that, I point out that the Queensland Water Resources Commission supplies water to 40 cities and towns. The construction of the Proserpine Dam signifies recognition by this Government of the needs of a town water supply, particularly in the Proserpine/Bowen area.

To say that Bowen lost an aluminium plant because of lack of water is, quite frankly, absolute nonsense. It was a purely commercial decision based on markets, no more and no less, and that is correct.

Water supply for Mackay city is very much in the commission's thinking and will be recognised in the current studies of the Finch Hatton dam proposal. On two separate occasions the previous commissioner, the present commissioner and I have in fact had discussions with the mayor and council engineer at Mackay, dealing with just that point.

The honourable member also mentioned problems that have been experienced with the lack of funds for water resources assessment. That is solely the fault of the Commonwealth Government—no-one else. I hope that the honourable member opposite, being the man that he is, will in fact take that matter up with Senator Gareth Evans to overcome that problem. In the past water resources have been looked after by previous Labor Governments but the present Federal Labor Government has pulled the rug out from under water resources. In recent years the Federal Government has not increased its assistance to meet rising costs. In 1986-87 it has withdrawn total support for the program. I hope that the honourable member comes back to this place next week, after speaking to Senator Gareth Evans, and tells us that the funding will be replaced.

The honourable member would be well aware of the Government's Special Major Capital Works Program of \$600m over three years from 1984-85 to 1986-87. Some \$100m of that program was allocated to water conservation and irrigation works. That program has benefited areas right throughout the State from Mareeba/Dimbulah, Bundaberg, Mackay, Proserpine, central Queensland, Callide, Dawson Valley, Maryborough, Warwick and the Lockyer Valley. As far as I am concerned, that is a great effort on the Government's part in overcoming the problems that existed in many areas.

Mr Eaton: Are you still short of money?

Mr TENNI: I would say that every Government in the world is always short of money. If the Commonwealth Government had not pulled out of its responsibilities the State Government would not be short of money. All I am asking the honourable member for Mourilyan to do is to talk to the Commonwealth blokes and make them understand that the Federal Government has a responsibility to the tax-payers of this State who, in case the honourable member is not aware, and in case the Federal Government is not aware, do send taxes to Canberra. All this Government is asking is to receive back a little more of that money.

When the honourable member for Mourilyan (Mr Eaton) criticised the lack of budgetary provisions for water resources and maritime services he mainly spoke about water resources. He failed to mention the large amounts that the Government has invested in the development of the State's port system in recent years—which would dwarf some of the provisions of earlier years—such as Dalrymple Bay, Abbot Point and major developments in the port of Brisbane. He said that major spending was in the south. When one sees the major projects in the Mackay and Bowen areas, that statement is absolute nonsense. Those areas are not south Queensland.

He criticised the cost of transporting grain from north Queensland to Mackay. The main factor responsible for that is the large investment that is needed at ports to handle bulk shipments efficiently. The Mackay Harbour Board, with the support of the Government, has made that investment, but it is quite uneconomical to provide similar facilities at all ports. Common sense tells us that.

He suggested that the Government acquire a dredge to deal with the requirements along the whole coastline. The Port of Brisbane Authority, on behalf of the Government,

does in fact operate a dredge to deal with the dredging requirements of major ports. The variety of dredging tasks required for smaller works is considered to be best handled by private enterprise which has the necessary equipment and bids competitively for all available work.

Mr Eaton interjected.

Mr TENNI: The Sir Thomas Hiley is taken right up into the Cairns Inlet. If any other work had to be done in rivers such as the Dickson Inlet at Port Douglas, a dredge was hired. I think the name of the people was Davis or Davies. They did an extremely good job at a very competitive price. The Government will continue to operate that way because, unlike the Labor Party, it believes in private enterprise.

Mr Eaton: You should not have private dredges do work for all the river improvement trusts.

Mr TENNI: That would put the many men who work on the private dredges up and down the coast out of work. The Government does not intend to do that.

The honourable member also criticised the passing of responsibility for jetty maintenance to tourist operators. That has been done for jetties the use of which is confined to a small number of tourist operators because it is believed that the general tax-payer should not be held responsible for the support of isolated private ventures. One honourable member said exactly that during the debate. Where that policy has been followed, the tourist operators concerned have provided their own requirements without affecting the profitability of their operations. Because of their day-to-day presence at the site, they are in a far better position to deal with the use and maintenance of that facility. At the same time, tax-payers do not have to put any money into it.

Mr Eaton: You didn't worry about the tax-payers when you spent an extra \$240m to put the power house at Tarong.

Mr TENNI: I had nothing to do with the power house at Tarong. I am talking about my responsibility as the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services. The honourable member has his responsibility as the Opposition spokesman. That is what this debate is about. I am speaking about private enterprise looking after its own affairs where possible and, at other times, the Government's trying to promote private enterprise by providing assistance that will help them to do things that will be beneficial for all tax-payers.

Mr Eaton: I agree that it is the responsibility of both private enterprise and the Government.

Mr TENNI: That is being done up and down the coast.

The member for Cunningham (Mr Elliott) spoke about progress on the diversion of the north branch of the Condamine. That is very close to becoming a reality. I am pleased that the commission has been able to formulate a scheme that has met with almost overwhelming approval by those who will be affected by the scheme. Following a public meeting a few weeks ago in that area, I am pleased to be able to say the response has been most positive. Very soon I will be going to Cabinet to obtain formal endorsement for a concrete start on the scheme. I confidently expect that the project will be completed by 1989.

The transfer of water from the northern rivers of New South Wales into the border area of Queensland and the Condamine Valley have been investigated on a number of occasions. In fact, until the Hawke Government abandoned the bicentennial water resources program, a detailed study was to be undertaken in 1983. It was the Hawke Government again! Whether honourable members opposite like it or not, it is a fact of life. Of course, any diversion from New South Wales would require the agreement of the Unsworth Government. Given that Government's problems with water resources and its lack of spending on water conservation, I do not believe that the Queensland

Government will gain any co-operation from New South Wales, but Queensland will keep the matter under review.

Comments about the diversion of flow and the need for water in the Granite Belt and border streams are accepted. There is no doubt that water supplies in the Granite Belt are a problem. Investigations of possible projects based on Quartpot Creek and the Severn River are under way at the present time. I am seeking special funds to enable some works to be commenced as an extension to the present Special Major Capital Works Program.

On the border streams, the construction of a new weir at Goondiwindi is also being examined. I trust that the New South Wales Government will agree to jointly fund a new weir in that location in the very near future.

Unfortunately the member for Cook (Mr Scott) is not now in the Chamber.

Mr Milliner: He is a good member.

Mr TENNI: The honourable member could have fooled me.

I do not believe I should say too much about the granting of a subsequent lease to Mr Minetti. Quite frankly, for many years that person endeavoured to get the Water Resources Commission to put an extra water wheel on the bottom section of his property. When the pros and cons of the cost of that water wheel were gone into, the costs were found to be so high that it was decided the tax-payers of this State would be far better off if some other land was made available to him. The land that Mr Minetti now has, including the small area of his original block of land, makes for a very viable project.

The honourable member for Cook also referred to representations on behalf of Mr Parise. A priority lease was not appropriate, and that continues to be commission policy.

The whole problem of water supply in Cook shire and Cooktown is largely one for the shire. The dam was built by the council and the Government. The Water Resources Commission had nothing to do with it. The State Government has been positive. It asked for a water supply for Cooktown under the Country Towns Water Supply Improvement Program, which is a Commonwealth program. The commission undertook the ground-water investigation under that program.

The only funding for town water supply from the Commonwealth has been for Karumba and Cooktown. It was only after long argument that the Commonwealth provided any money for town water supply. For years, it has insisted that no money would come from Canberra for town water. Over the years the level of Commonwealth funding has been small compared to State investment. Even this year, in a total commission budget of \$240m, only \$33.8m is Commonwealth funds, and only a miserable \$800,000 of that is for town water supply.

The honourable member for Cook (Mr Scott) said that he works very hard in the Cooktown area. He should not have said that because on Saturday afternoon, Saturday night and Sunday morning I was in Cooktown, and I can assure honourable members that the people of that area are very, very dissatisfied with the efforts of the member for Cook, who represents them. A couple of years ago the people of Cooktown spoke very highly of the member for Cook. At present, he is not thought of very highly. I can understand that, because tonight he made the statement in this Chamber that the harbour is in a shambles or is not looked after. He complained about the water supply.

I have been the holder of the Water Resources and Maritime Services portfolio since February this year. Never in that time have I received a letter from or been approached by the member for Cook concerning that matter.

Mr Palaszczuk: That is rubbish.

Mr TENNI: It is not rubbish, it is true.

Mr Palaszczuk: There is correspondence.

Mr TENNI: There is no correspondence.

Mr Palaszczuk: You wouldn't answer it.

Mr TENNI: How would the honourable member for Archerfield know? He does not even look after his own electorate. He would not even know where Cooktown is. The former member for Archerfield did a good job. The Archerfield electorate has not even heard of the present member. It is about time that he woke up to himself.

The member for Cook has never written to me. Tonight he said that a large vessel could not get into the harbour. When I was in Cooktown recently I was on board a 91 foot vessel which now cruises daily to Cooktown from Cairns and returns to Cairns again. That vessel managed to get into the harbour. I admit that prawn-tractors and yachts were higgledy-piggledy in the passage. However, the honourable member for Cook should have drawn that to my attention. It is in his area.

On the Monday after I returned to Brisbane from Cooktown I asked the director of the Department of Harbours and Marine (Mr Leech) to instruct the harbourmaster in Cairns to go to Cooktown next week with a view to inspecting the whole of that harbour and putting in place the necessary markers to dedicate the actual channel so that ships such as the 91-footer that I travelled in are not forced to weave in and out between vessels.

It is the responsibility of the member representing that area to make representations to me. Tonight in this Chamber the honourable member made a lot of smoke. However, he never made representations to me. Now he does not have to. I have solved the problem, just as the Premier is fixing up the problem with the water supply.

Some years ago I made representations to the Minister for Education and to the Premier to have the high school built in Cooktown. That is why it was built. I also negotiated with the Cairns Hospital Board and the Minister for Health in regard to the first hospital in Cooktown. That hospital cost more than \$4m. The Minister for Health said to me, "Go back and tell them that they can build a hospital for \$2m. They can have one." That hospital was built as a result of my representations to the Minister for Health, not the representations of the member for Cook.

It really upsets me when the honourable member goes on in this Chamber about what he has done for the people of the Cook electorate when in fact he has done nothing. I was there on Saturday afternoon and attended a barbecue that night. I do not know how many hundreds of people were at the barbecue. The Labor Party president, who has resigned from the party, closed the branch down because he said, "You cannot talk to Bob Scott or John Gayler. They are called the butterflies." I said, "What do you mean, the butterflies?" He said, "They flit in and out of town. They float in and they float out. They see no-one." That is the type of representation that the people of Cooktown are receiving.

Mr Austin: Are they friends of Barry Unsworth?

Mr TENNI: The Minister for Health can say that again.

Mark my words, in the next State election the honourable member for Cook will go down the chute. There are no two ways about it. I was talking to the people from Hope Vale and they were of exactly the same opinion. I was at Wujal Wujal. The honourable member did not support the road there. He hid in the toilet or behind a hollow log. The people of Wujal Wujal will not support him either. The Labor Party can kiss him goodbye. As well as many other Opposition members in this Chamber. As far as I am aware, criticism for the honourable member for Cook comes from his own electorate. The criticism should not come from him in this Chamber. He should get out and do his work.

He criticised the barge facilities at Karumba. That service was initiated with the assistance of the Department of Harbours and Marine, which has provided the necessary site. The operators are providing the facilities required, and are happy to do so without

Government financial assistance. Whether financed by Government or private enterprise, commercial facilities are expected to pay their own way, not to place additional burdens on the tax-payer. The service has been established in competition with the traditional sea services, which similarly have been required to pay for the facilities they use. It is about time that the honourable member for Cook realised that he can no longer attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of this Chamber or this Government. He has to get out and do some work for himself.

I refer to the comments made by the honourable member for Lockyer (Mr Fitzgerald). The water supply problem in his electorate is recognised by the Government. The ground-water problems are among the most serious of any area in the State, and are comparable with those on the Condamine. The seriousness of the problem is underlined by the fact that the Lockyer Valley is the salad bowl of south-east Queensland. Any problems in the Lockyer Valley are quickly felt in the vegetable markets of Brisbane and southern States.

Over recent years, the commission has constructed 11 weirs to promote ground-water recharge, has commenced construction of the Lake Dyer off-stream storage and is currently investigating the Lake Clarendon scheme. Those proposals will assist greatly in helping to safeguard existing agricultural development and urban water requirements. I can assure the honourable member for Lockyer, who always makes strong representations, is always on my back—unlike the honourable member for Cook—and never stops looking after the people he represents, that this Government will continue to make sure that any risk factor in that area will be minimised.

I turn briefly to the comments made by the honourable member for Rockhampton (Mr Braddy). They were absolutely shocking. It is an absolute disgrace that Rockhampton has to tolerate a person representing them who makes such comments. He said that my statement this morning shows that the commission's valuer, Mr G. Rosser, misled the court in the recent Zandonadi case. He also suggested that the fact that Rosser prepared several valuations casts further doubt over the whole matter. He said—

“I believe Rosser's evidence to the court was factual and in response to matters raised.”

Any suggestion that Rosser misled the court reveals a lack of experience by the honourable member for Rockhampton, who embarked on character assassination of a person who cannot defend himself in the Chamber. I suggest he goes out on the street tomorrow—

Mr Braddy: Table all the valuations.

Mr TENNI: The honourable member for Rockhampton should be ashamed of himself. I am challenging him to go outside and repeat what he said in the Chamber today. Mr Cox comes from a very good family in north Queensland that has done a marvellous amount of development. This State is better for people such as him.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr TENNI: The honourable member does not know what he is talking about. He should go back to Ipswich.

I am absolutely ashamed that there is in the Chamber a member who is prepared to denigrate a very good valuer in my department. He has denigrated the name of the Coxes, who are well respected in far-north Queensland. The honourable member for Rockhampton is a disgrace to his position. When I am campaigning in the Rockhampton area I will let the people know the type of personal assassinations that are made by the member who represents them. He is an absolute disgrace. He should repeat his allegations outside the Chamber. Mr Cox is in the precincts of this Chamber. The honourable member for Rockhampton should challenge him. He would not have the guts to do that. He would not be game to go outside the Chamber and do that. That is the type of person he is.

In case the honourable member for Rockhampton does not know, I point out that a sale of land is a matter for negotiation based on valuations prepared by each party; the buyer obviously valuing pessimistically and the seller valuing optimistically. That is how it always has been. It was not changed in the Cox affair; it was not changed in the Smith affair; it was not changed with the 20 or 30 Labor people with whom the Government was involved in land resumptions in the same area. Everyone was treated in the same way. It is about time that the honourable member realised that is the way resumptions are handled and how business takes place. The issue raised by the member for Rockhampton is an integral part of an appeal currently before the Land Appeal Court. Therefore, it would not be proper to engage in any further conjecture or discussion about it. If the honourable member is so sure of his grounds, he should repeat his allegations outside the Chamber or meet Mr Cox tonight. He should see whether he has any of that stuff that's half-way between his head and his feet. I do not think that he has. However, he should try to do something.

The remarks by the member for Cooroora (Mr Simpson) about the introduction of sporting and other fish into Queensland streams and storages is very welcome. As honourable members know, the Government announced in its recent Budget—

Mr BRADDY: I rise to a point of order. The Minister has challenged me to meet Mr Cox. If, as the Minister says, Mr Cox is available, I am more than prepared to meet him. All the Minister has to do is to give him my office number and I will see him at any time he likes.

Mr TENNI: Things must be tough when a solicitor is soliciting for business in the Chamber. All I can say to the honourable member for Rockhampton is that, if he is a solicitor and if he does not have the ability to find Mr Cox in the precincts of Parliament House, he is not a very good solicitor and he is a poor member.

Let me return to sound business. The member for Cooroora sensibly represented his electorate tonight, unlike the member for Rockhampton, who denigrated people and criticises a very good employee of my department. As members know, in the recent Budget the Government announced a proposal to allocate \$1m a year for three years for fish stocking of streams and fresh-water storages. That initiative will assist greatly in expanding the recreational development of those storages. The Queensland Water Resources Commission will actively be involved in and will encourage the development of such facilities.

The honourable member raised the matter of Baroon Pocket Dam on Obi Obi Creek and the protection of downstream rights. The honourable member knows what I am referring to.

Mr Simpson: I know it well.

Mr TENNI: The dam is the project of the joint local authority water board to supply water to the Sunshine Coast. I know that the honourable member is aware of that, because he has made representations to me since I have been the Minister responsible for water resources. The commission has discussed with the board the need to protect the existing riparian right and licences of downstream users.

Mr Simpson: Brian Austin will look after it after the next election.

Mr TENNI: He will look after it well, as the honourable member for Cooroora has done.

It has been indicated to the board that up to 2 000 ML per annum should be received for that purpose for release as and when inflows occur. The board has agreed, and the operation of the storage to preserve those rights will be assured by the commission. Because of the honourable member's very strong representations, those matters will be looked after.

I am sure that the honourable member for Ashgrove (Mr Veivers) would like to hear my comments. However, I believe that he is out playing cricket. I also believe that he gave one of his special balls away to the Prime Minister.

The honourable member for Ashgrove referred to the Gold Coast Seaway, and to the financial contributions that have been provided in the Estimates. He also referred to the aspect of safety, and the resumption of properties for the purposes of the sea-way project. He also spoke of the final contract price for the work. However, he overlooked the fact that two major contracts are involved. One contract involves the entrance works, and the other involves the sand bypassing system, which is essential to maintain the depth of the entrance and to avoid the erosion of the southern end of the beach on Stradbroke Island. On top of that work is the cost of minor works such as the revegetation of reclaimed land, including the wave-break island, and the provision of public amenities on the reclaimed land.

The fact that a major annual contribution is to be made from consolidated revenue is no reason whatsoever to suggest that the project faces financial difficulty.

The Government has always recognised that the project will not result in direct recovery of its capital costs from the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. I believe that that authority is doing an excellent job, as is the Port of Brisbane Authority.

The true value of a project of that nature lies in its contribution towards tourist development, in what is a world class tourist area, and the enjoyment by the people of the extensive waterways. The real value of the project is what it will do for employment and other economic activities within the area.

Of course, additional revenue will be generated through the taxes on property transactions. Employment will also be generated. The Labor Party is supposed to look after employment, but this Government is looking after it instead. With the increase in employment, more taxes will be paid. Therefore, the Labor Party in Canberra will receive from the Gold Coast waterways a great deal more money to squander.

The honourable member for Southport has effectively covered the safety and land resumption aspects. No matter what is said by the media and the odd critic of the project, for every critic there are several thousand people who will say that the project is a winner.

In accordance with the plans, the project is constantly improving as the tidal scouring of the entrance takes place and as it moves towards its long-term equilibrium.

The honourable member for Southport (Mr Jennings) covered everything, so I do not feel that I need expand any further on that subject.

The honourable member for Ashgrove (Mr Veivers) followed his colleague the honourable member for Rockhampton (Mr Braddy) in personally assassinating the Cox family. That is unbelievable! The honourable member for Rockhampton has an assassination partner in this Chamber. They should be very proud of themselves. I hope that they can sleep with their consciences tonight. I also hope that the honourable member for Rockhampton, who is now leaving the Chamber, runs into Mr Cox on his way out. We will see how good he is then.

The honourable member for Bundaberg complained about the increases in registration fees for pleasure-vessels. It is accepted that the total cost of registering a vessel has increased because of the imposition of the additional levy of a facilities fee. However, the total revenue received from the facilities fees goes back into providing additional facilities for recreational boat-owners. I believe that most people accept the additional charges in the knowledge that the revenue will be returned to them in the form of benefits.

If the honourable member for Bundaberg was to talk to those people who have boating experience in Queensland and other States—and many of those people visit me from time to time—he will find that the facilities that are provided in Queensland are way ahead of those that are provided in other States. Queensland has been able to

maintain a satisfactory program of small-craft facilities development because of the levies that are charged on top of the normal grants that have been made for this purpose out of consolidated revenue and the State Loan Fund.

The honourable member for Bundaberg also raised the same issues in relation to the Gold Coast Seaway project, which had already been mentioned by the honourable member for Ashgrove and so effectively demolished by the honourable member for Southport, who knows the area well and is aware of the effects that the project will have on his electorate.

I have already drawn the honourable member's attention to the effect of cost escalation to the project at the rate that applies under the Hawke Government's mismanagement of the economy. Everyone is asked to pull his belt in. What for? To pay for the last three years of mismanagement of the economy by Hawke and his colleagues in Canberra. Everyone has to pull his belt in to pay for their stupid mistakes and their inability to run this country in a sensible financial manner.

The other major addition is the capitalised interest also at the high rates that unfortunately apply to the detriment of the national economy.

What the honourable member for Bundaberg said about the effect that weirs and dams have on fish habitats ignores the reality of the situation. I wish that he would go home to do his homework. I am told by the people that he represents that he goes off at the mouth and does not do any homework. A detailed environmental impact study is always undertaken and assessed before any decision is made to proceed with such a project.

Mr Campbell interjected.

Mr TENNI: The honourable member needs to listen to this. That is his problem; he does not listen. Acting on the advice of fisheries experts in the Department of Primary Industries, the commission has even installed fish-ladders on a number of weirs; for example, the Clare Weir, the Burnett Barrage and others. The commission has always funded research at the University of Queensland into the movement of fish and the performance of fish-ladders. That research is almost unique in Australia. The honourable member should tell some of his socialist mates in the other States about it.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr TENNI: I notice that the honourable member is back in the Chamber. I wonder where he has been.

In addition, the Government's Budget allocation of \$1m per year for three years to establish fish-stocking in streams and storages demonstrates the Government's interest in habitat and recreational fishing. That is not done by other Governments.

Mr Campbell interjected.

Mr TENNI: It hurts because the honourable member went off half-cocked. He did not check his facts.

If those actions do not demonstrate an interest and concern for the environment, fish habitat and recreational fishing, I do not know what does. There is no way in the world that I could convince the honourable member for Bundaberg.

The member's reference to the Barker-Barambah Irrigation Project again demonstrates his ignorance of irrigation works and the benefits which they provide.

With the exception of the Burdekin irrigation project, no scheme anywhere in Australia pays for itself on the basis of direct benefits. If the honourable member did not know that, he should have come and asked me and I would have told him before he went off half-cocked.

The real benefits come from secondary benefits such as increased production, increased employment, social stabilisation in rural areas and so on. The Commonwealth

Government receives a lot of tax out of that as well. That is why it should put some money into irrigation schemes and other schemes. In that regard, the Barker-Barambah Irrigation Project is not dissimilar to other projects such as the Bundaberg Irrigation Scheme, where the cost of the project has increased from about \$78m originally to over \$211m at present. Honourable members should cop that one!

The foundation problems confronted in that project are no different in degree to those suffered by most water storages. The commission has competent and capable engineers—and the honourable member should not tell me that they are not, because they have done some good work in this State—readily able to design safe and watertight storages. I object to the honourable member's implication that the dam will leak. The Water Resources Commission employs very capable staff. I do not need people such as the honourable member for Bundaberg to tell me that they are incapable. Over many years they have done good work.

In criticising the Barker-Barambah project, the honourable member demonstrates his lack of knowledge of water conservation works, his narrow experience of economic benefits that flow from such projects, and his parochial attitude to his own area.

In closing, I observe that not once did the honourable member for Bundaberg mention the \$130m spent in Bundaberg to date, the \$27m to be spent this year and the \$60m to be spent over the next four or five years. That shows how narrow his views are. The honourable member was deliberately trying to get at the Premier and Treasurer. He forgot about his own constituents.

Mr Wharton: He never made any effort to get the money.

Mr TENNI: The only men who made an effort to get the money were Mr Wharton and Mr Powell, because they were the ones who made the representations. The honourable member for Bundaberg was still in napkins when the idea was thought of.

I appreciate the comments made by the honourable member for Warwick (Mr Booth), particularly those that supported the Queensland Government's policies on water conservation and the supply of water resources.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr TENNI: I will deal with the honourable member in a moment.

The honourable member for Warwick recognised that the availability of water resources quickly leads to demand and responsible use. I assure the honourable member that the Queensland Water Resources Commission is actively pursuing investigation and control of ground-water resources. Schemes designed to replenish water resources in many areas of the State have been highly successful. I am sure that the honourable member for Warwick would be fully aware of that.

I take note of the honourable member's comments about construction of small-capacity weirs and water-storage facilities rather than large dams. Generally, from a water supply point of view, it is more efficient to build large storages, because the yield is better and the degree of regulation is much greater. In contrast to that, the construction of small water-storage facilities, particularly in areas in which it is not possible to construct large dams, can be an attractive proposition when used to provide risk-mitigation supplies. In other words, when the water is available, it is used as quickly as possible. It is quite often the case that use of opportunity supplies can be economical. That is the reason why water-harvesting is becoming more and more popular, particularly in the honourable member's electorate.

I note the comments made by the member regarding the need for irrigators either to use their entire allocation each and every year or risk losing the allocation. I can inform the honourable member that that is not the case by any means. The honourable member would realise that the commission has a responsibility to ensure the beneficial use of a water supply. In cases of gross and persistent underuse, action is taken to reduce or cancel licences. That action is, however, exercised only after lengthy and sympathetic

consideration has been given to the individual situations that arise, and after cognisance is taken of particular climatic conditions. I assure the honourable member that, provided that an irrigator makes reasonable use overall of his allocation, there need be no fear of a reduction being imposed.

The honourable member for Townsville (Mr McElligott) raised the matter of the possible effects of discharging sewage effluent into the Bohle River. His comments were interesting, but clearly relate to the responsibilities of the Water Quality Council. That is not a matter that comes within the administration of my portfolio.

Mr McElligott: It is in *Hansard*.

Mr TENNI: That is a charming comment! I thought that the honourable member wanted to demonstrate to the people he represents how bright he is and how capable he is in Parliament. Apparently, he is not aware that the Water Quality Council is administered by the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing (Mr Hinze). I am glad I have been instrumental in assisting the honourable member to learn something this evening.

I am quite sure that the Water Quality Council will take all necessary action to ensure that the discharge of effluent results in minimal deleterious effect, commensurate with the ability of the community to provide funds for its activities.

Mr Burns: You must have bought about 50 typewriters.

Mr TENNI: I will deal with the honourable member shortly.

The kind words spoken by the honourable member for Gympie (Mr Stephan) about the activities of my department are much appreciated.

I inform the honourable member for Lytton that I have very capable staff in my department.

Mr Burns: How many typewriters have you got?

Mr TENNI: We have one typewriter only, but we have very efficient typists. The whole department is made up of efficient staff. I compliment the honourable member on his observation, because it shows that he recognises that the department has very good staff. I thank him for his comments.

The honourable member for Gympie supports the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Scheme and the role adopted by the commission in providing technical advice. There is no doubt that these are important functions. Over the years, the commission has usually been able to meet the demands that have been made for financial assistance.

The progress of the Lower Mary River project has been significant over the last year or so, and it is expected that the project will be completed next year. I note the member's comments regarding the rate of development of the Burdekin River irrigation project. I assure the honourable member that the development of an additional 45 000 ha of irrigation to create approximately 500 new farms will be tailored to meet demands that exist for farms and markets that are available for the sale of produce. The release of farms will take place over a period of 15 years and will be closely monitored in relation to land demand.

The range of crops that will be produced in the Burdekin area will ensure success of the project. Some of the crops will include rice, soybean, maize, sorghum, horticultural species and even coffee. In addition, sugar-cane will be grown, which will ensure the success of the project.

The honourable member for Gympie also mentioned the increasing recreational activity in terms of boating in his electorate. I agree that the area of his electorate is one of the most attractive areas for boating in the State. He mentioned problems associated with the Wide Bay bar and the positioning of beacons insofar as visibility is concerned. A problem has arisen because of the constant shifting of the channel and the

need to be able to move markers from time to time. That has created some difficulty. My department has been examining possible solutions, and it will advise the honourable member as the matter progresses.

I thank the honourable member for Mirani (Mr Randell) for his kind words and recognition of the role that both organisations within my portfolio play. His comments regarding Finch Hatton Dam and Dumbleton Weir have been noted and their priorities will be addressed in due course when reports on each are available.

Views regarding the Farm Water Supply Assistance Scheme are worth recording. It should be noted that since 1958 the commission has finalised over 31 000 applications for technical assistance. Storage holdings over 152 000ML and irrigation layouts covering 40 600 ha have been designed.

Almost 4 900 applications for finance have been approved, requiring advances of \$25.6m. That is not a bad effort. In other words, it is a most effective scheme which recognises the desire and need for land-holders to undertake private water conservation. In relation to the Eton project, I can assure the honourable member that every effort will be made to achieve the planned completion date for the scheme by 1990.

I will now deal with some of the comments made by the honourable member for Lytton (Mr Burns). He is a good fisherman; I can say that. I hear good reports about his fishing, even though he occasionally loses his rods overboard.

The honourable member raised the water supply problems that are being experienced in the Gold Coast and Redlands areas. He would realise that urban water supply for such areas is the clear responsibility of the respective local authorities. I am well aware of the particular problem at the moment, but the honourable member would also be well aware that positive action to augment supply is well under way.

The Government has been monitoring the situation and has taken the initiative. It is about to undertake a review of the available water resource potential of south-east Queensland. That study is presently at the stage of intensive data-gathering. I would expect the study, which aims to plan the water needs of the south east well into the next century, to commence in the near future.

The honourable member raised the question of the adequacy of TAFE college courses for marine education. As he would well know, this does not come within the Water Resources and Maritime Services Estimates, and he should address his comments to the Minister for Education (Mr Powell). However, I will take the matter up with the Minister on the honourable member's behalf.

The honourable member also spoke about the dumping of dredge spoil in Moreton Bay and Cairns. Dredging is often blamed for effects that occur naturally and have been occurring over many years, irrespective of dredging activities. However, I am taking a personal interest in the method used in Cairns, which, while it is the most economical means of dealing with the dredge spoil, is giving rise to public objection, and an examination is being made of alternative methods for future dredging operations.

The honourable member spoke about the dredging in the Coomera River. It is all very well to criticise the possible disturbance to the fish habitat that the dredging might cause for a relatively short time, but this has had to be weighed against the immense benefit that will accrue in making it possible for recreational boats to navigate this reach of the river, which gives access to the major Sanctuary Cove development and others that are in the planning stages further upstream. I am quite satisfied that the benefits that will be provided by the dredging will greatly offset any long-term effect that the project might have on the local fishery.

The honourable member for Lytton also raised the question of compliance with conditions imposed on approvals of works below high-water mark, with particular reference to the causeway across Middle Creek. There are numerous approvals for works under section 86 of the Harbours Act, and in the great majority of cases conditions are

respected for the carrying out of the work. In this case, a contractor did take a short-cut, and the honourable member can be assured that my department took very prompt action to remedy the situation when the breach of conditions came to its notice. Full co-operation was received from the electricity authority, which was not directly responsible for the breach.

The honourable member also suggested the use of the department's registration system as a means of circulating safety campaign literature. This is a popular advertising method used by many commercial concerns and statutory and local authorities, and it is something that I will have a close look at from my department's view point. Personally, I think it is a good idea.

Mr Burns: What about those maps? Will the people get their money back?

Mr TENNI: If the honourable member can bring those maps in with a receipt showing where they were bought from, yes, the money will be refunded. How would it be if they were given good maps in place of the ones they bought?

The honourable member for Bulimba referred to an alleged monopoly in the handling of containers through the port of Brisbane. He is obviously quite out of date in his knowledge of what is going on in the port. Had he been in tune with what is happening, he would have known that the Government and the port authority are giving very active assistance and encouragement to the re-establishment of the operations of Patrick Stevedoring Co. at Fisherman Islands, where it will provide more effective competition to the BATL operation. I have been very involved in this matter.

The port authority is constructing a new berth for container-handling that will be leased to the competing operators. The authority has offered to finance half the costs of the new container crane if the company is unable to make other arrangements for the use of a crane. These moves will result in healthy competition in the handling of containers in the port. That conforms to the aims of both the Government and the port authority.

The honourable member also raised the matter of the connection of the standard-gauge rail to the port. That has been studied over a long period but, in view of the additional volume that would be likely to result, it would be a very expensive project. It has not reached the stage at which it can be considered as a priority project without special Commonwealth financial assistance, which has been requested and refused. If the honourable member can convince his colleague in the Federal Government to provide assistance similar to that which has been granted for similar links in other capital cities, he will have achieved something.

The member for Callide (Mr Hartwig) seems to think that the Fairbairn Dam in central Queensland is a bottomless pit. The truth is that the available water from that dam is virtually totally committed to the Emerald Irrigation Area and the Gregory, Blackwater, Dysart and other coal mines as well as for urban use. Contrary to what the honourable member says, very little spare water is available.

The honourable member also suggested that the Mackenzie River Weir was not needed. I wish he would tell that to the people who will be served by it. The weir was proceeded with only after detailed studies of the economics of the scheme had been carried out by consulting engineers and economists from the Department of Primary Industries. There is no doubt about the economics of the scheme, which is necessary for any expanded production in the area. The scheme was accepted by users in the area.

I noted the honourable member's tirade about the Callide Valley. Perhaps he has never seen the Callide Dam, the several recharge weirs in Callide Creek and its tributaries and the new weir that is about to be started. I am surprised at his outburst. I wonder what representations he made and why nothing was achieved whilst he was part of this Government for so many years.

At 9.57 p.m.,

The **TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr Menzel): Order! Under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 4 September, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for Water Resources and Maritime Services.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—
Water Resources and Maritime Services—

| | |
|---|-------------|
| | \$ |
| Queensland Water Resources Commission | 43,366,400 |
| Balance of Vote, Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund Account | 448,563,730 |

Progress reported.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Wavell—Minister for Health and Environment), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Mental Health Services Act 1974-1984 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Wavell—Minister for Health and Environment) (10 p.m.): I move—

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

In my foreword to the explanatory booklet for the Mental Health Services Act 1974-1984 I stated that mental health legislation should be continuously monitored and subjected to frequent comprehensive review. The achievements of the State Government in widely amending and developing these important statutes on two previous occasions within 10 years shows commitment to that principle.

The Mental Health Services Act 1974-1984 commenced on 1 July 1985 and has now been in operation for some 13 months. Its operation has validated the assurance of the Government that its provisions would ensure that mentally ill people receive the care and treatment they need while safeguarding their basic rights and protecting the legitimate interests of the community.

In order to maintain the smooth and effective operation of this legislation, which in certain respects is quite innovative and progressive, a small number of house-keeping amendments are now required. This is entirely as expected, given the comprehensive nature of the previous review and amendments of 1984, the new concepts underlying a number of the principles embodied in those amendments, and the general spirit of the Act.

The amendments contained in the Bill are concerned with Part IV of the Act, which deals with patients concerned in criminal and like proceedings. They do not involve any significant changes in principle or policy and are consistent with the other provisions of the Act.

With the exception of the amendments to section 46A and section 29A, the amendments relate to the operations of the Mental Health Tribunal and the Patient Review Tribunal. The amended section 29A simply expands the definition of a simple offence to include a regulatory offence.

The Mental Health Tribunal, as expected, has proved greatly successful in determining matters of criminal responsibility, fitness for trial, and as an appeal body from the

Patient Review Tribunal. The operations of the Mental Health Tribunal have not in any way impeded or prejudiced a person's right to trial.

As at 31 August 1986 the Mental Health Tribunal had received 72 references and heard 67 cases.

The references were made by the Director of Psychiatric Services; the Director of Prosecutions; a judge of the District Court; the Public Defender; legal representatives; patients; and appeals from the Patient Review Tribunal.

The findings of the Mental Health Tribunal have been as follows—

| | |
|---|----|
| Unsoundness of mind | 39 |
| Diminished responsibility and fit for trial | 2 |
| Not of unsound mind and fit for trial | 7 |
| Facts in dispute and fit for trial | 7 |
| Struck out for want of jurisdiction | 2 |
| Appeals from Patient Review Tribunal | 5 |
| Leave granted to withdraw reference | 1 |
| Other | 4 |

The good range of sources of referral and findings of the Mental Health Tribunal indicate clearly its acceptance by the legal and medical professions, and the wider community.

The proposed amendments to section 33 and section 69A deal with procedures of the Mental Health Tribunal and the nature of proceedings before the Mental Health Tribunal respectively.

The amendment to section 33 is necessary to define "the facts" more clearly. It was always intended, as indicated by the general tenor of the legislation and other provisions of the Act, that "the facts", as referred to in this section, should mean the facts of, or connected with, an alleged offence or of the involvement therein of the person in question.

The Mental Health Tribunal will not proceed if there is reasonable doubt as to whether the person charged actually committed the offence.

In 1985-86 the Mental Health Tribunal found that the facts were in dispute in seven cases. Of course, they were the facts of the alleged offence.

The whole purpose of the Mental Health Tribunal is to proceed, if the facts of the alleged offence are not in dispute, to determine the mental state of a person at the time of the alleged offence and at the time of hearing. That is the major, central task.

It can do that without denying a person's right to trial. As a judicial tribunal with the powers of a commission of inquiry, it can conduct wide and deep inquiry, thereby ensuring that all of the required available evidence can be considered in determining a person's mental state. If the person, who is always entitled to proper legal representation, is dissatisfied with this process or the outcome, he or she can elect to go to trial. The matter of his or her mental state can then be considered during the trial.

In the recent decision by the Court of Criminal Appeal in the case of House, which was appealed from the Mental Health Tribunal, the need for a clearer definition of the facts was indicated. This amendment to section 33 will achieve the necessary clarification.

The amendment to section 69A also involves a clarification of definition. This ensures that, unless otherwise determined by the Mental Health Tribunal, the oral evidence of witnesses shall be sworn. The amendment does not limit its powers as a commission of inquiry.

Again in the House case, the decision by the Court of Criminal Appeal pointed to the need for clarification of this matter, and that is achieved by the amendment.

It must be further emphasised that the amended provisions of the Mental Health Services Act 1974-1984 will not impede or prejudice the right of a person appearing

before the Mental Health Tribunal, or the Court of Criminal Appeal, to proceed to trial. Similarly, the right of appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal from the Mental Health Tribunal is well preserved. There can be no denial of justice.

The five Patient Review Tribunals heard 366 applications and referrals throughout Queensland during the 12 months to 30 June 1986. Those tribunals, which are chaired by a judge of the District Court, have memberships drawn from the health professions and the wider community, in accordance with the provisions of the Mental Health Services Act 1974-1984. The operations of those tribunals constitute a strong safeguard of the rights of patients subject to the provisions of the Act.

The minor amendment to section 36 deals with the review of a patient detained as a restricted patient under Part IV of the Act. The amendment replaces the term "detained" with the words "liable to be detained" to avoid any possible confusion. The use of the term "liable to be detained" covers the situations of actual detention, and leave from hospital. A patient who is liable to be detained is detained unless he or she has been formally granted leave in the required manner. Therefore, this amendment to section 36 guarantees that there can be no doubt as to the authority and responsibility of the Patient Review Tribunals with regard to those patients who are liable to detention as restricted patients under Part IV of the Mental Health Services Act 1974-1984.

The amendment to the Mental Health Services Act 1974-1984, which inserts the new section 46A, is designed to change the management and treatment of those sex offenders detained in custody under section 18 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1945, and to strengthen the safeguards afforded to the community in the Act. Those persons have been found, by a Supreme Court judge, to be incapable of exercising proper control over their sexual instincts. At present, those persons can be released from their place of detention by the Governor in Council, on the advice of two medical practitioners. There is no provision for an intermediate stage. The amendment, by way of the insertion of the new section 46A, allows the Governor in Council to order a trial of closely monitored and supervised leave in the community prior to final release or discharge for those persons. That can only be done on the recommendation of two medical specialists in psychiatry, who are nominated by the director of Psychiatric Services. The amended provision will permit the Governor in Council to determine that the police can return the person to hospital or gaol immediately there is any hint of problem behaviour. That is a significant safeguard for the community. It will not result in untimely early release on leave of those sex offenders.

The proposed new section 46A is similar to the former section 39 of the Mental Health Act 1974, and differs from it in that it requires the recommendation of two psychiatrists rather than two medical practitioners. Obviously, it is better to have the opinions of the more appropriately qualified medical specialists in psychiatry. During the last 12 months, officers of the Division of Psychiatric Services have examined possible legislative alternatives to this amendment, but none have been found to be practicable at this point in time.

It is considered that the amendments outlined in this Bill will advantage the provision of mental health services on a State-wide basis and will be of benefit to the community generally.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr McElligott, adjourned.

FUTURES INDUSTRY (APPLICATION OF LAWS) BILL

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill relating to the futures industry in Queensland.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.8 p.m.): I move—

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

The Futures Industry (Application of Laws) Bill provides for the application in Queensland of the Futures Industry Act which was drafted in co-operation with all other States and the Commonwealth. The area which the legislation seeks to regulate deals with futures or commodity contracts.

A futures contract is a contract which requires, on a determined day, a settlement to be made either in the physical delivery of the commodity or a financial settlement between the parties. There are many reasons why the futures market has developed over the years, including a perceived need to hedge against inflation, and to ensure a fair market price for commodities. Commodities which are involved in futures contracts include gold, wool, beef, grain and Treasury bonds.

The size of the market has increased over time and many smaller investors are now becoming involved. The nature of investing in futures contracts runs a course parallel to investments and securities. It is therefore appropriate that the Futures Industry Act 1986 is modelled on the securities industry legislation and comes under the umbrella of the National Companies and Securities Commission.

The legislation is within the co-operative scheme and has been adopted in principle by all Australian States and the Commonwealth. To date, the legislation has been passed by New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia.

As investment in futures contracts involves a certain amount of speculation, it is important that the legislation be adopted throughout Australia with as great a degree of uniformity as possible. This legislation is complex in that it seeks to regulate all facets of futures contracts.

The broad definition of futures contract will ensure that all futures trading, wherever possible, is brought under the legislation. However, banking and ordinary commercial transactions are exempted. In addition, the Ministerial Council of the NCSC may declare certain futures markets as exempt futures markets.

The definition section of the Futures Industry Act 1986 (Commonwealth) contains an extensive list of definitions of words used in that Act to assist in maintaining control of futures markets to the degree which it is considered appropriate.

To operate as a futures broker or a futures advisor it will be necessary to be licensed under the legislation. Included also is a provision regarding the revocation and suspension of licences. However, in such proceedings licence-holders are able to make submissions before the revocation of a licence is carried out.

It should be noted by honourable members that one of the principal aims of the legislation is to provide an orderly market system in which dealings in futures contracts may be made. The uniform legislation will help achieve this result. One method by which the orderly market can be brought about is the provision of sanctions to penalise persons and corporations who fail to meet the requirements of the Act.

Maximum punishment under the legislation ranges from a fine of \$20,000 for natural persons to \$50,000 for corporate bodies. A maximum period of imprisonment for 5 years may be imposed. The nature of offences range from false or misleading statements in applications for brokers' licences through failing to give auditors information, to a major offence of unlawfully establishing a futures market.

The conduct of business is governed by requirements within the Commonwealth legislation that becomes the law of Queensland. Matters such as undesirable advertising,

the issue of contract notes, dealings on own account and dealings with clients' money are within the scope of the legislation. These and many other provisions in the legislation are designed to protect the public in their dealings with futures brokers and advisors.

It is appropriate to mention the matter of public protection. It is my intention to ensure that Queensland will not become a Mecca for unscrupulous companies engaging in "futures" currency contracts.

I point to the collapse of the New South Wales company, Shoreline Currencies (Aust) Pty Ltd, and the proliferation of advertising in Queensland by similar companies: advertising failing to warn of risks attaching to investments in leveraged currency contracts.

The administration of the Bill will be carried out by the Corporate Affairs Office, and advertisements may be restricted under the provision dealing with undesirable advertising.

It is noteworthy that the legislation within the co-operative scheme provides for the establishment of a fidelity fund to recompense persons who suffer a pecuniary loss through fraud or defalcation. To claim, the loss that occurred must have arisen in the course of dealing with a futures contract by a broker or his employees.

The Bill has emanated from the National Companies and Securities Commission and, having been scrutinised by the ministerial council of the commission, may be supported in confidence by all members of this House.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Davis, adjourned.

BILL: REMAINING STAGES

Suspension of Standing Orders

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House), by leave, without notice:
I move—

"That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would otherwise prevent the Small Business Development Corporation Act Amendment Bill from being taken through its remaining stages at this day's sitting."

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (10.15 p.m.): I wish to speak to the question before the House. One might as well say that it is on again. Standing Order No. 241 is being completely disregarded by the Government and is being tossed out the door.

The particular Bill that the Government wishes to bring on now was introduced into this House only 48 hours ago on last Tuesday evening. Standing Order No. 241 clearly states that the debate on the second reading shall be adjourned for a period of at least two whole sitting days. Therefore, the Bill was not due to come on again until next Tuesday. There are other Bills that the Government also wants to move on with.

Once again the Government is showing complete contempt for the people of Queensland and is denying the Opposition and all members of this House the opportunity to properly study the legislation before it is sent through the sausage machine in the House.

Today every honourable member received a circular from the Leader of the House (Mr Wharton), who is now moving this resolution, setting out clearly the program into next week. On the bottom of that circular it was stated that the House will continue to sit until such time as it goes into recess. The Government obviously feels that it has plenty of time if it wishes to continue with legislation.

There was a 4½-month recess from March to August of this year when Parliament was not in session. During that time the Ministers and the Government had plenty of time in which to prepare legislation. No monumental legislation has been introduced so

far. Absolutely nothing was done about legislation during the 4½-month recess. Instead, legislation has been appearing on the Business Paper in dribs and drabs. We have only been one short step away from having no legislation to debate.

In fact, last Thursday night the Government had no legislation to debate and the House had to adjourn after the Budget debate was completed.

The Forty-fourth Parliament would be the worst-organised Parliament of the six Parliaments in which I have served. The way in which legislation is brought forward in the House is to be condemned.

At one stage the Leader of the House also wanted to bring the sugar legislation forward. That is one of the most important and one of the most controversial pieces of legislation. It has created more discussion within the community than any other legislation has for a long time.

The Leader of the House says, "Let us have a look at what else is on the notice sheet." There is plenty on the sheet to debate. It has something like 14 resolutions or notices of motion on it. Matters of major importance to the people of Queensland can be debated at any time.

The question asked this morning of the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts (Mr McKechnie) by the Leader of the Opposition is surely evidence that the need exists for a parliamentary public accounts committee in Queensland. One of the notices of motion refers to that. There is a need for so many other things. One of the members of the Liberal Party suggested that a statutory authorities review committee be established. There is a need for Ministers to lodge proper returns concerning ministerial expenditure. That was mentioned in this House recently.

I could go on and on and talk about a parliamentary public works committee. As the honourable member for Brisbane Central (Mr Davis) said, the Premier has spoken today about space shuttles flying all over Queensland. Surely we should be able to debate that suggestion and ascertain how fair dinkum he is and what it is all about, or whether it is the Premier who is about to go into orbit.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr CASEY: I doubt very much whether the Premier would obtain a licence to become an astronaut. Although the Premier flies helicopters and aeroplanes, I would not care to fly with him. I do not believe that the Premier will be around long enough to see the establishment of that space station and to obtain a licence to be one of the first astronauts on that space station.

There are so many matters on the Business Paper of the House. There are four general business notices of motion that have been adjourned. They have been partly debated in the House and then adjourned. The adjournment was moved by the very Minister who is endeavouring to ram this Bill through the House.

The Opposition would be remiss if it did not vehemently oppose the move by the Minister to push forward legislation in that way. That is typical of the way in which he acts in this Parliament, and the Opposition strongly opposes the motion.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah) (10.20 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports the two pieces of legislation that the Government wishes to bring forward prematurely.

Mr Comben: There is only one.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: There is only one at a time.

Mr Comben: There is not one at a time; there is only one.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The honourable member does not listen very carefully. There is no problem about that.

When the changes were made to the Standing Orders, they were made not just for the convenience of Parliament, they were made also for the convenience of the community

so that people who were not familiar with the legislation would have an opportunity to study it and to inform their members of Parliament, the Government or whoever, or even to indulge in public debate about the matters before the House. The matter that is proposed is not urgent. The Business Paper is very light. There is all of next week and even the week after that, if necessary, to consider the legislation on the sheet. A very important principle is involved. It is entirely unnecessary to have this urgency placed upon the motion.

It is regrettable, because people outside the Parliament, who assume that Parliament would obey its own Standing Orders, feel that they have reasonable time to study Bills that appear on the Business Paper of Parliament so that they may make a proper submission either to the Government, to the Minister or to other members of Parliament. By rushing the legislation through unnecessarily, the Government is precluding them from doing that.

Question—That the motion (Mr Wharton) be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

| AYES, 41 | | NOES, 30 | |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Ahern | Lester | Braddy | Underwood |
| Alison | Lingard | Burns | Vaughan |
| Austin | Littleproud | Campbell | Veivers |
| Bailey | McKechnie | Casey | Warner, A. M. |
| Bjelke-Petersen | McPhie | Comben | White |
| Booth | Menzel | D'Arcy | Yewdale |
| Borbidge | Miller | De Lacy | |
| Cahill | Muntz | Eaton | |
| Chapman | Newton | Fouras | |
| Clauson | Powell | Gibbs, R. J. | |
| Cooper | Randell | Goss | |
| Elliott | Simpson | Innes | |
| FitzGerald | Stephan | Knox | |
| Gibbs, I. J. | Stoneman | Lee | |
| Glasson | Tenni | Lickiss | |
| Gunn | Turner | Mackenroth | |
| Harper | Wharton | McElligott | |
| Harvey | | McLean | |
| Henderson | | Milliner | |
| Jennings | <i>Tellers:</i> | Palaszczuk | <i>Tellers:</i> |
| Katter | Kaus | Shaw | Davis |
| Lane | Neal | Smith | Hamill |

Resolved in the affirmative.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 9 September (see p. 1102) on Mr Ahern's motion—

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

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (10.28 p.m.): I indicate at the outset that it is the Government's action of suspending Standing Orders to which the Opposition has objected this evening, but certainly not the Bill. The Opposition supports the provisions contained in the Bill, and I will be commenting on a considerable number of matters that are covered by the Bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! Too much audible conversation is taking place in the Chamber.

Mr CASEY: I am afraid that the Government back-benchers are a bit noisy after they have been disturbed in their nocturnal habits at this late hour.

Small business is an integral and important part of society in Queensland. The Australian Labor Party holds the view that small-business proprietors have the necessary

determination and entrepreneurial flair to fight inequality and discrimination that is levelled against them. Governments must encourage innovation and enterprise to allow small-business proprietors to compete on equal terms in the market-place.

Queensland's independent traders are disadvantaged by rebates, concessions, bulk-buying deals and special purchasing and promotion arrangements that are available to big business.

Economic recovery and growth in Queensland can only be achieved by hard work, initiative and co-operation. A Queensland Labor Government will certainly match those three qualities already exhibited by small business in this State with meaningful programs and incentives.

The valuable role that is played by small business in the economic and social development of this State has long been recognised by the Australian Labor Party. The National Party Government in this State stands convicted of promoting and abetting policies which grossly favour big business, and for its failure to adequately support the small-business sector.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is still too much audible conversation in the Chamber. This debate will not proceed until the Chamber comes to order. The Chamber will come to order.

Mr CASEY: This National Party Government has placed the small-business sector in a most vulnerable economic position and made it easy prey to discrimination, manipulation and persecution in the market-place because of its unkept election promises, its apathy and procrastination and its pandering to the demands of major corporate enterprises.

Governments must do all in their power to ensure that small business is not exploited or unfairly pressured by its bigger, more powerful counterpart. That is a task in which this National Party Government has failed.

Unfair and unscrupulous leasing practices have continued to prevail because of the proliferation of major shopping complexes and strip shopping areas, irrespective of the National Party State Government's promises and inquiry recommendations and the implementation of the Retail Shop Leases Act of 1984. Even today one can see that the powerful friends of the National Party are able to get retail shopping complexes off the ground where they like and whenever they like. The Minister for Local Government simply gives them his imprimatur so that they can go ahead with shopping complexes. The screws are simply put on the small-business people who are involved.

Is it little wonder that almost seven out of 10 new small businesses fail within three years? Although inadequate management skills and hard economic circumstances have taken their toll, most of the blame for the demise of many a small-business proprietor lies squarely at the feet of the National Party Government in Queensland, where bankruptcies are running at the highest rate of any State of Australia.

Small business must be provided with a secure environment in which it can grow without unnecessary or unfair obstacles being placed in its way. About 60 per cent of the people employed in the private sector are either self-employed or work for small business. Small business also provides an important employment and investment opportunity for the family and plays a vital role in specialist retailing and service industries. Profits from small business generally remain in the local community and ensure that the control and ownership of commercial enterprise is more localised.

Small business viability means effective and true competition in the market-place, a better choice for consumers, full-time employment opportunities in the retail industry and economic strength and stability for Queensland's cities, towns and rural areas. Only the Labor Party in this State has a plan to make small business grow in Queensland.

One of the problems with this legislation is that the Small Business Development Corporation has now become just simply a financial assistance package in the hands of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation. Small business will be competing

against farmers, the Agricultural Bank, the tourist developers, the shopping centre-developers and the entrepreneurs. That is really what will happen now in the competition for financial support and assistance. Small business will have to compete against those heavies that the National Party continually supports. That has already happened with the support of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation for a restructuring of the group—I cannot recall its name—in the electorate of South Coast, which is represented by Mr Hinze. The same thing has also occurred in many other areas.

In his second-reading speech the Minister said that the interest rate for loans from the Small Business Development Corporation would be at the prime rate for the Queensland Industrial Development Corporation at the date of acceptance. I want to look at recent happenings that give an indication of what that prime rate is likely to be and how there will be competition for loans between the many small people in the community—not only small-business people but also small farmers and others involved in agriculture.

A few moments ago I heard the term “hypocrite” used in the Chamber. There is no bigger hypocrite in this State than the National Party Government. Does it deny that the formation of the QIDC and the phasing out of the Agricultural Bank, as it was always known, will simply mean that farmers will have to compete on the open market against people with the entrepreneurial skills that the Government seems to favour? I have copies of information that was posted to farmers in recent weeks that clearly indicates an entire change in the operations of the old Agricultural Bank.

In years gone by the lending rate from that institution was at a very low figure and low interest loans were made available to the farming community. Now what is to happen? For existing borrowers on loans up to \$100,000, the rate is to be 13.5 per cent. As from 1 July this year, for loans over and above that figure, the interest rate climbed to 17.5 per cent. Those interest rates come from a Government that wants to try to lay the blame for every problem on the Federal Government in Canberra. It has the power within its own hands to continue to regulate the interest rates of the QIDC for the small-business people of this community as it sees fit. How does the Government see fit? It increases the interest rates to the corporation's prime rate! Now the corporation has an interest rate for business finance of 17.25 per cent. That has jumped from 13.25 per cent.

Mr Elliott: Will you take an interjection?

Mr CASEY: That is the attitude of this Government towards the small people of this State.

I have heard the member for Cunningham whinging, crying and groaning about the need for low interest rates for the farmers and small business in this State, yet his Government stands condemned by its actions in recent days. What are some of the guide-lines that have been put out by the corporation? The interest rate for existing borrowers is 13.5 per cent for the first \$100,000 and, some time this month, the figure will increase to 16.75 per cent.

Mr Elliott: Farmers in the USA are charged 7-odd per cent.

Mr CASEY: But I am talking about Queensland. I am speaking about the honourable member's Government, not the Government of the United States. I am speaking about something that is within the legislative power of the honourable member's Government. If the member for Cunningham thinks that 7 per cent is a good rate in the United States, why is his Government, through this legislation and through the QIDC, not making loans available at 7 per cent to the farmers of this State? I will tell the House—it is for the simple reason that the Government has no sympathy for farmers whatsoever. That is how come!

All honourable members would recall that three years ago when the Queensland Government received money from the Commonwealth Government at what was supposed to be 8 per cent, it magnanimously lent it to the four co-operative sugar-milling

companies that needed support at 14 per cent. It whacked on another 6 per cent for good luck and for fun. That is what this Government does with interest rates. That is what the Government does when it has the legislative ability to help small people in the community.

Mrs Chapman: What about your mates in Canberra?

Mr CASEY: The Minister asks about my mates in Canberra. Mr Deputy Speaker, through you I accept that interjection. The blokes in Canberra have held down interest rates for housing loans for the small people in the community. Certainly those rates are subjected to change by the fluctuations in the world economy. However, what has happened here in Qld? What has the Queensland Government done? What has the Minister for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs done to see that the building societies in this State, which are completely under the legislative control of the Queensland Government, reduced their interest rates or kept them at the same level in order to keep people in housing in this State? The Minister for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs (Mrs Chapman) has done nothing but sink her high-heeled shoe into the poor, the sick and the single-parent families in this State. That is all that she has done. She has put the boot in instead of trying to do something that is within her legislative power.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order!

Mr CASEY: I appreciate your tolerance, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was talking about interest rates generally when I was side-tracked by interjections.

Small-business relief loans will now be under the control of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation. Maximum prime interest rates will be paid under the QIDC. What sympathy do small-business people get?

I turn to the guide-lines laid down in the name of Mr Peter Boschma, who, I believe, is the chief executive of the QIDC. Finance to purchase additional properties with a view not to becoming more viable but simply to expanding will attract an interest rate of 16.75 per cent.

What is the difference between becoming more viable by getting bigger and getting bigger to become more viable? What it means is that a person has to study hard before asking for a loan so that he uses the right words. If a person does not use the right words when asking for a loan he or she will be sent back through the door. A person who says, "I want to become bigger. I want to become more viable." will be as right as rain. I wonder if that is the excuse that Mr Cox from the Burdekin has been using.

I turn to refinancing of properties. Total advances that are used to pay out existing financiers, such as banks, and to purchase motor vehicles attract an interest rate of 17.75 per cent. That is the way this Government kicks the farmers. I stress that this State Government has complete legislative control over that interest rate. It can vary interest rates as it desires. It has complete control over them.

Mr FitzGerald: That is bunkum.

Mr CASEY: The honourable member for Lockyer says "bunkum". He is another Government member whom I have heard crying and whinging in this Chamber that he wants low-interest loans for Queensland farmers. The honourable member cannot have very much influence in his own Government, because the guide-lines laid down by that Government reveal that the low rate that this Government wants to charge its own farmers is 17.75 per cent. He cannot be very interested in it.

However, I know that that does not affect the Premier, because he secured loans for The Ten Mile from a bank in Singapore at a much lower rate of interest. He does not have to worry about interest rates. If a person can obtain a loan off shore or borrow money through friends and influential people—I am not too worried about writs or anything else—that is the lurk. However, the Premier does not extend the same privilege to the people that his Government represents; that is for sure. That is why Queensland has a very, very big problem.

The Bill is small but it has enormous consequences.

Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen: He is a first-class liar.

Mr CASEY: I feel sorry for the Premier. I wonder when his next space flight will be. He has come out of orbit for a little while, and he will go back into orbit again and find more PLOs or something.

Mr Katter interjected.

Mr CASEY: Fancy the honourable member for Flinders interjecting! He cannot even catch planes in time to attend Cabinet meetings. He does not read timetables.

Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen: He pays his debts; that is the main thing.

Mr CASEY: The Premier should pay back all those people from whom he got money to drill for oil in Cape Hillsborough. He diddled those people with salted rock. He diddled them with all sorts of funny-looking geological reports and spent all the money that they had invested with him. When the Premier pays back all of that money, I will consider the position of the company of which I was a part. If the Premier wants to continue in that vein, I will find a few more things to talk about.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Everyone knows the honourable member for Mackay very well, but I would like to get the record straight.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! Is the Premier stating a point of order?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I rise to a point of order. Everyone knows the honourable member for Mackay backwards. He cannot stick to the truth at all. I am drawing attention to the fact that that statement is completely untrue.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I suggest this debate return to the Bill.

Mr CASEY: Certainly, Mr Deputy Speaker. The Bill is all about Government and the way in which it will operate in a new set-up; in a new way. One does not know what will happen tomorrow and it may be that, now Milan Brych is out of goal, he is coming back to Australia too.

This is a very small Bill, but it has enormous consequences for small businesses and other businesses in Queensland. I sincerely believe that one of the worst aspects of the Bill is that the power of the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Mr Ahern) has gone. The Minister who will be responsible for the Queensland Industry Development Corporation is the Premier and Treasurer. His approval will have to be obtained on these matters, and he may be out on a space flight or somewhere round the countryside. That is one of the problems. The ministerial responsibility will be transferred from the Minister for Industry in Queensland to the Premier, who once more will have that all-powerful control.

I will not go into the full extent of the power struggle that occurred initially when the QIDC came into existence and the Premier wanted to gather all the financial control under his wing. I understand that the present Minister for Industry has always acted responsibly in determining applications for financial consideration.

Mr Smith: That's not the policy of this Government.

Mr CASEY: I am referring to an individual Minister.

I believe that the Minister has acted responsibly. I know that on some occasions attempts have been made to overrule him. I know of some examples regarding the Industries Assistance Board, where very powerful forces were brought to bear on the Minister in an attempt to force him to approve lending against his will, his wishes, the

recommendations of his department and the financial viability of the organisation. Those strong pressures came not only from the Premier, but also from the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs (Mr Lester).

Mr Ahern: Name the party. I don't know what you are talking about.

Mr CASEY: I will not deal with the matter in detail because, as I mentioned a few moments ago, it involved the Industries Assistance Board and occurred about 12 months ago. Without naming the parties, I simply say it was a company which wanted to manufacture tractors in Queensland. It operated on the south side of Brisbane. The Minister will know the company to which I am referring.

Mr Ahern: Kirkat.

Mr CASEY: The Minister has mentioned a name, and that perhaps could be the name. I believe that the Minister acted responsibly in that instance and under those circumstances, as I stated previously.

The Minister will be untruthful if he does not come forward and admit that he was put under strong pressure from the Premier and the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs. I have in my office copies of the correspondence, which refers to the way they wanted to force the Minister and his department into lending them money under circumstances in which there was no real economic viability. I saw the full financial statements and reports. I acknowledge that the Minister acted responsibly and correctly, as did his department.

Will the same responsibility be adopted towards the QIDC and by the Premier? I believe not. Queensland already has an example of the Premier's actions in the deal for Sanctuary Cove on the Gold Coast, for which a special Bill was passed by Parliament last year giving the developer special considerations. The Chamber was told all about the viability of the development and, within six or seven months, it is all down the chute and the whole project has to be considerably restructured, requiring a great deal of finance to be drained from other areas.

The Small Business Relief Scheme has not been a great success. Under the guidelines, a large number of people have not qualified for assistance under that scheme.

Mr Ahern: Under the old scheme?

Mr CASEY: Yes. The Budget figures show that \$153,800 was all that was lent in the last financial year.

Small business is under a false impression about these matters. I suppose that other members have had a similar experience to mine of people coming into their offices or ringing them, saying, "I am involved in small business. I have this and that problem. Where can I obtain financial assistance to help me?" Members send those people to the regional office of the department, saying, "That is the only place, the only chance and the only hope, but I doubt very much whether you will get anything." Two or three weeks later, members see those people again and are confronted with the statement, "That was the answer. I did not get any help or support. There is virtually nothing that can be done."

I do not question the proposals that were put forward. Small business is under a completely false impression about the support and assistance that is available. The department issues a number of brochures from time to time, which small-business people read, stating that help can be provided. Unfortunately, when they apply they are turned away.

I raise one matter on which the Minister may like to comment in his reply. Under the new method of finance, does the Minister still have powers of approval under paragraphs (e) and (f) of section 12 of the Small Business Development Corporation Act? The new paragraph (ea) is being incorporated between those two paragraphs. The legislation is contradictory and should be closely examined. If it is out in one case, it should be out in the others, or vice versa.

Under the Queensland Industry Development Corporation Act, which was introduced into this Chamber in 1985, proclaimed by Order in Council on 30 January 1986 and gazetted on 1 February 1986, section 6(a)(ii) was exempted. The rest of the Act came into being from the date of proclamation. That exempted section relates to, "The Minister for Industrial Development of Queensland preserved, continued in existence and constituted under the Industrial Development Act of 1963". That was really the power that the Minister had under the old Industrial Development Act and the power that he has under the Small Business Development Corporation Act. The matter becomes complex. I think that the Minister would agree that the three Acts—the Small Business Development Corporation Act, the Queensland Industry Development Corporation Act and the Industrial Development Act—are virtually interwoven. Under the Industries Assistance Board, which is established under the Industrial Development Act, the Minister has certain powers.

Under another section of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation Act, the Industries Assistance Board disappears. I do not know whether that has been put fully into effect. I believe that that applied from 1 July. If that has been put into effect, the Industries Assistance Board no longer exists. Does the exemption under that part of the Act also go out the door now, or does the Minister still have that exemption under this Act? If so, what is he doing with it?

Mr Ahern: The Act—

Mr CASEY: The Minister can refer to the matter in his reply.

The matter can become complicated for those who do not follow the Act. I would hate to think that we would have to return early next year to amend the Act.

Mr Ahern: No. I indicated in my second-reading speech that this is an amendment to overcome an immediate problem and that a full-scale review is under way and will be placed before the Parliament next year.

Mr CASEY: That matter can be taken on board.

The QIDC will have enormous power over finance in this State. One has only to look at the Estimates in this year's Budget. Big money is involved that is being controlled by the Premier and, as honourable members well know, one of the friends and financial advisers of the Premier, Graham Tucker, who is the chairman of that organisation. While that is happening, small business in Queensland is still crying out for support. Although the small-business sector criticises the fringe benefits tax and other taxes, it is not taxed any more than anybody else. However, somewhere along the line the pressures upon the small-business sector are coming from big business.

The State Government loves to criticise the Federal Government. Even some of the printed matter that comes from the Minister's department contains criticism of the Federal Government.

I have a pamphlet from the Small Business Development Corporation. The pamphlet is freely available to the public, and most honourable members would probably have copies of it in their offices. It sets out a list of booklets that are designed to help people manage their businesses successfully.

The main support that the Small Business Development Corporation gives along the line is support by way of information and education—to a point. There are so many brochures. In one of them it is stated—

"These booklets, produced by the Commonwealth Department of Industry and Commerce, bring sound management, knowledge and modern techniques to small business owners and managers."

The majority of the films that are available from the Minister's department are also produced by the Commonwealth. It is good to see that at least somewhere in this Government there is co-operation between the Commonwealth and the State. However, it would be good if the Government was prepared to give credit where credit is due,

instead of constantly criticising Canberra and everything else that it can possibly lay its hands on.

The Labor Party has a definite, most positive and different plan in relation to the small-business sector. I am now referring to co-operation on certain aspects, particularly education and training. The Labor Party will co-operate with the Federal Government to implement and co-ordinate modern education and training facilities to meet the specific needs of small businesses.

Through the revamped Small Business Development Corporation the Labor Party will assist, encourage and foster private institutions, organisations and associations and assist them in the upgrading and provision of educational and training programs for the small-business sector. Business-management courses will be expanded in TAFE colleges, using qualified and experienced tutors.

In addition, the services of retailers, manufacturers, marketing experts, administrators, economic analysts, accountants, bankers, financiers, builders, architects, engineers and lawyers will be co-ordinated through the Small Business Development Corporation to help small-business operators on a short-term basis in trouble-shooter roles where necessary.

One of the problems with the funds to which I am referring is that the corporation virtually ends up acting in an overdraft capacity for those people who cannot obtain money from any other lending authority. Not only that, there is also a broad range of services in which the small-business sector needs support and assistance.

The Labor Government will implement a broad range of those additional support services as a co-ordinated package. Along with other industries, the small-business sector will be given access to technical support services insofar as technological exchange is concerned; advice will be given to firms on the appropriate technology; establishment assistance will be provided; assistance will be given to firms to comply with regulations and requirements at all levels of government; and, indeed, some of those regulations that are an enormous burden on small businesses will be eliminated. The ALP will also provide financial and marketing advice for both new and existing firms, particularly those that are innovative.

Even those firms that are export orientated must be looked at. That can be done through the co-ordination of State and Federal trade offices in an endeavour to ascertain the best areas within which to develop our export markets.

That is the range of services that the small-business sector needs. Those are the sectors which need assistance. I refer to product information, research and data banks, and improved links with education and research institutes. All of those support services can be co-ordinated through a network of offices operating within the regional areas of Queensland.

My final point in that regard relates to the real need for financial support. I come back to the point that I was making earlier, that it all boils down to interest rates.

There is no reason why a small-business interest-support fund could not be established to provide financial help to approved small-business borrowers. The fund will provide interest support of 2½ per cent of current market rates on borrowings by small-business operators to them under special approved circumstances. Such assistance should be available to small businesses whose operations are disrupted by natural disasters, exceptionally adverse seasonal conditions and cases of regional economic downturn. Interest support should also be available to firms involved in the establishment of export industries or services, or those using innovative technology. That could quite easily be done from existing Government sources and could provide much greater benefits than some of the other things that are being looked at.

It would be remiss of me in this debate if I did not make one further comment. I want to pay tribute this evening to a most outstanding and exceptional public servant, Mr Don Young, the Director of the Department of Industry Development, who is about

to retire later this year. He is a man whom I have known personally for almost 30 years in one capacity or another. I rate him as one of the most knowledgeable, most approachable and best public servants I have ever seen in this State. That is unquestionably so in all the fields that I have had dealings with him.

I first knew Don Young when he was involved with the Main Roads Department, when I was quite a young man myself. In that capacity with the Main Roads Department, he was the person in the central Queensland area who supervised much of the work of getting access roads into the brigalow development scheme. He was the architect behind many of the beef roads that were constructed in those areas.

For several years, he was also involved in private industry in the same region and also in Brisbane. One of the great things that he did was design work and supervision work in a consulting capacity for many of the major coal developments in the State.

He then returned to the public service as Deputy Co-ordinator-General in Queensland. In that role in the 1970s, which was an era of great development in his State and in which a lot of resource development opened up further areas of the State, he was doing the negotiating and the work, and looking after many of those projects.

Since he became Director of the Department of Industry Development, he has brought a new thrust to that department. He has brought new energy, new enthusiasm and new ideas. Full credit must go to him for his work over so many years.

I would like to say personally and on behalf of the Australian Labor Party, Her Majesty's Opposition in this Parliament, "Thanks very much, Don Young, for a job very well done. Your retirement is deserved. May it be a long and happy one."

Mr WHITE (Redcliffe) (11.2 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports the Bill. The strength of the Bill resides in providing \$10,000 loans to innovative new small businesses with a capital base of half a million dollars, which really means that 50 firms will be eligible for \$10,000 each.

I know that the Minister is earnest in endeavouring to help small businesses; but, quite frankly, by the time a small-businessman opens his doors, throws some lino on the floor, pays his registration fees, stamp duty and everything else that goes with it, receiving \$10,000 is a bit like flying in the face of a cyclone.

The Small Business Development Corporation will be responsible for administering the Act. Anybody who is interested in the small-business area will welcome any move to assist with the acquisition of finance. However, I have grave reservations as to whether it will be of any great benefit. If it does assist some small businesses to get off the ground, well and good. I hope that it does. It seems to me that a sum of \$10,000 is a very negligible amount.

I know that the Minister sees this as a move for more innovative small businesses. I hope that it does help. Quite frankly, I have some reservations as to whether it will be of any use. Perhaps it would have been better to help half a dozen firms with \$80,000 or \$90,000 each, which is a more realistic figure, than help a greater number of firms with \$10,000 each. These days I do not think it is even possible to open a fish and chip shop with a capital investment of \$50,000, so I do not know what one could do with \$10,000.

Mr Smith: It is a good figure for an election year.

Mr WHITE: I do not think that that is really right. I think that the honourable member tries to imply that it is an election ploy. In my view, the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Mr Ahern) is endeavouring to provide assistance for small-business operators. I do not think that that level of assistance is worth a bumper; nevertheless, I do not think that anyone should discourage the Minister from trying to help.

Listening to the Opposition spokesman on Industry, Small Business and Technology, the honourable member for Mackey (Mr Casey), I gained the impression that he believes

that the way to help small business is to provide ever-increasing assistance from the Government. In contrast to that, I would like to see small-business move away from Government in toto. Whenever I attend a small-business seminar or conference, especially a conference sponsored by the Small Business Development Corporation that is presided over by Mr Jim Kennedy, there is usually overwhelming support for a motion to the effect that the corporation will have nothing to do with the Government at all.

These days, Governments seem to want to become more involved in private enterprise matters and engage in the lending process. Over the past 20 to 30 years, Queensland has witnessed an inordinate degree of Government interference with business in general and small business in particular. As an example, I cite the instance of a person who wants to start out in business. The first thing that must be done is that the premises must be registered. If the business concerns retailing or small-scale manufacturing, the name of the person conducting the business has to be registered and various approvals from a multiplicity of local, State and Federal Government authorities have to be obtained. The second thing is that one has to deal with the iniquity of stamp duty and pay-roll tax. On top of that, a person who wishes to start out in business has to have funds of approximately \$1,000 merely to have an electricity supply connected.

Governments—particularly State Governments—should consider carefully the costs that small-business operators years ago did not examine very closely. State Government charges are becoming more relevant to the viability of business.

The Opposition spokesman seemed to believe that the State Government should wave its wand and produce a crock of gold that will finance the provision of inexpensive loans for small-business operators. I point out to the honourable member that in Australia, it is a Federal Government that bears the prime responsibility for fiscal and monetary policy. The core of most of the difficulties being experienced today is not the acquisition or obtaining of approval for finance, but the ability to repay. One only has to read articles on finance in the newspapers on an irregular basis to realise that the prime rate of borrowings now amount to something of the order of 19 per cent. When the margin for bank charges is applied to that percentage, very few people will be able to obtain funds at a rate lower than 20 per cent. The end result is that a borrower has to service a loan for, say, \$100,000 with the addition of a \$20,000 interest bill per annum to start with, without taking into account the repayment of capital. If the Government really intends to help small-business operators, it should concentrate on helping to put the nation back on its feet.

I mentioned before that that kind of policy is primarily the responsibility of the Federal Government. Since the Hawke Government took office, a wide range of increased taxes had been imposed and a wide range of interference by bureaucratic regulation has made more difficult the administration and efficient management of small-business operators in this country. The last Federal Budget revealed that the taxation revenue pool will increase by something of the order of \$1.5 billion. Where will that revenue come from?

To a large degree, it will be provided by the small-business sector of the community which provides the economic drive in Australia, and employs approximately 60 per cent of its labour force. The best way that small business can be assisted is by Governments providing sound economic management, which is not a feature of Government at the moment. When one remembers the extent to which the Australian dollar has been devalued, it is frightening.

I know that the officers of the Minister's department would be looking regularly at what is happening to the Australian dollar. It is an indictment on the present Labor Government that, since it came into office, the Australian dollar has been devalued by 40 per cent. If there is any judgment of any Government in power it is what the worth of its country's currency is.

As I said, the wide-scale introduction of new taxes has been seen. The small-business community in general is up in arms about things such as the fringe benefits tax, the entertainment tax and capital gains tax.

Mr Lee: The “farewell Bob tax”.

Mr WHITE: As the honourable member for Yeronga has said, it is the “farewell Bob tax”. There is no doubt in my mind that the Federal Government will go down the chute because of its decision to introduce FBT alone. It seems to me—I do not know what it should be called—an iniquitous thing to ask people who are in business creating sales to be running around in motor vehicles with little books writing up their mileage every day, where they have been, and so on. I find that absolutely bureaucratic. It is the sort of thing that only a socialist bureaucrat could really ever come up with.

As I said, the Bill itself is an endeavour to help people in small business. That is welcomed. The best way that people in small business can be helped is through better financial management of the national economy. There is another aspect of the financing of businesses, particularly small business, that I would like to mention tonight. It is my view that financial institutions in this country are inherently conservative in terms of collateral. I do not know whether the Minister himself has ever taken that on board and discussed it with any of the financial institutions. The attitude that has prevailed with banking institutions over many years is an unbelievably bad one. It is gratifying to see that the winds of change are gradually starting to occur with the opening up of new banks. I welcome the Federal Labor Government’s decision to allow foreign banks to come into this country and introduce a little competition. The reality is that, at this stage, a great deal of change has not been seen, but no doubt it will come.

What I am primarily referring to is that, when a small-businessman goes along to his bank to obtain a loan, what has been seen for too long in this country is that all the banks are interested in is putting their clamps on a piece of property rather than looking at that business as a viable institution or looking at the personnel, the goodwill or the track record of the small-businessman. I hope that one of the things that the Minister will do is have discussions with Australia’s major financial institutions. I believe that he would be sympathetic to that sort of proposition.

I do not want to sound overly critical of the banks but, like a lot of large institutions that have grown up in this country, they have got into the habit of doing business that way. It has become a self-perpetuating sort of situation. I realise that it is changing and that banks are becoming a little bit more adventurous. I would like to see Australia’s banks as adventurous as banks are in the United States of America where things such as skill, personnel, track record and goodwill are tangibles against which one can borrow. For many people in small business today, access to finance is a major difficulty.

As I said, there is much concern in the small-business community about the cost of doing business, in terms not only of interest rates, as I mentioned earlier, but more particularly of the costs associated with the interface with government. I have referred to stamp duty, which is a considerable impost. Pay-roll tax is another impost, particularly upon growing small businesses. I realise that the recent State Budget marginally raised the pay-roll tax threshold to \$315,000, or a similar figure; but that is not a very high figure.

Tonight I particularly wish to raise the matter of a group of small-business people, namely, real estate agents. I have raised this issue previously. I refer to recent amendments to the Auctioneers and Agents Act under which real estate agents even have the way in which they paint their signs or illuminate them virtually controlled by the Government. There is nothing more socialistic or interfering in business today than to have Governments telling people what sort of a sign they ought to be allowed to put up outside their premises.

Some time ago, I mentioned to the Minister the regulations concerning retail chemist shops, with which I have been actively involved for so many years. There seems to be a problem growing in that area, too. I just cannot understand for one moment why governments have to get into the business of mucking around with, and having a say in, the sort of a sign a person has on his premises. That that sort of thing should be perpetuated or introduced by a Government that espouses free enterprise is unbelievable.

Mr Smith: It is not a bad way for these guys to push the little fellows out. You see some of the Amcal chemists have very large signs on their premises.

Mr WHITE: I am glad the member for Townsville West has raised the question of Amcal chemists, which is a group just like the Mitre 10 stores, the Green Spot chemists or the real estate agents who operate under the group banner of Ray White, L. J. Hooker or whatever it may be. That enables the individual to compete with the large corporations. If the honourable member understood anything about Amcal chemists, he would know that they are independent chemists who have come together in a co-operative so that they can buy, advertise and promote together and compete with stores such as Woolworths and Coles. I do not think it is fair to be critical of that sort of activity; it should be encouraged.

Previously I mentioned the general area of small business. An ever-growing problem is that of flea markets. Some 18 months ago the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs (Mr Lester) indicated that he would do something about them. They are an ever-increasing problem. For example, the flea market at the Rocklea markets has become a major enterprise.

Mr Lee: On Government land.

Mr WHITE: Yes, on Government land.

One would think that an activity that operates under a State Government charter with a mass of people out there acting as de facto retailers in opposition to legitimate traders would have to abide by the Government's laws. I simply make the point that I have no objection to the operation of flea markets, but I object very strongly to the fact—the honourable member for Sherwood has raised this very point—that people operating legitimately in the retail field have to register their premises, abide by the Factories and Shops Act, abide by the various health regulations and abide by the trading hours regulations, yet every Sunday morning blind Freddy can go out there, set up a table, be in business with new merchandise and compete against legitimate retailers. That is wrong. Either the whole thing is wiped and it is open slather, or it is brought into line.

Legitimate retail traders are the people who employ hundreds of thousands of workers in this nation today, who pay the piper with rent, who pay stamp duty and pay-roll tax and the various other charges of the State Government, while the fly-by-nighters and shonkies—and there are many of them—are out there selling stolen goods on occasions but, to a very large extent, are acting as de facto retailers, selling new merchandise.

The Government cannot have it both ways. Nothing is wrong with the traditional operation of flea markets. Nothing is wrong with people selling trash and treasure and second-hand goods, plants and so on. Nobody argues about that. However, in some of these flea markets there are 8 000 to 10 000 people. I notice that the honourable member for Surfers Paradise (Mr Borbidge) is smiling. He seems to have a great interest in flea markets and their promotion. I have spent a great deal of my time telling the retailers of Queensland that the honourable member for Surfers Paradise supports flea markets against legitimate retailers. It is wrong, and putting politics aside——

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Redcliffe has told the House an untruth. I find the words that he has used quite offensive, and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I take it that at this hour tempers are becoming a bit frayed. I suggest that the honourable member for Redcliffe withdraw the remark if it offends the honourable member for Surfers Paradise.

Mr WHITE: If the honourable member is sensitive about it, I am happy to withdraw it. However, I would not have thought that he would be so sensitive about it.

It is a fact that unfairness is occurring, and something ought to be done about it.

As I have said, the Minister made a statement to the effect that he would do something about the flea market. Nothing has happened. Retailers are very upset about it. They understand that there are problems associated with it. However, fundamentally the problems can be resolved by laying down guide-lines as to who can operate flea markets and as to the range of merchandise that can be sold at flea markets. I imagine that if that is done and local authorities are given the responsibility—the proper charter—the matter can be regulated and organised without a great deal of damage to the retail traders.

Finally, the Small Business Development Corporation is doing a good job. I hope that the work that it has started in terms of providing information and research is continued. The more consideration that is given to small business, the more I feel quite certain that information and educational programs should be provided for staff-training and encouraging small-business people. That would achieve a far greater degree of success than adopting the apparent desire of the Labor Party that Governments should hold the hands of small-business people.

Small business really does not want to get involved with the Government. Basically, it wants Governments to create the economic climate in which costs can be kept down.

It is my pleasure to support the Bill.

Mr INNES (Sherwood) (11.23 p.m.): It is probably appropriate that the Small Business Development Corporation Act Amendment Bill is being debated at the end of a session of Parliament, or at the end of the term of a Government.

Small business has excited comment continually over the last few years, and quite properly, because it is the most important employment sector. It is one of the most dynamic sectors in State and national life. Small business is where the growth in medium and large business comes from. It is where one first finds risk, enterprise and invention.

Small business has dogged this Parliament for some years. There has been the vexed problem of the fortunes and fates of small retailers, the problem of shopping centres and the problems of getting enough finance to embark upon risk and high-tech together with the other sorts of modern developments in enterprise.

The Minister has striven valiantly to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. He has never been given substantial resources to enable him to achieve anything greatly significant in terms of the charter and title that he has been given. It is true to say that the greatest contribution that the department has made towards industry in Queensland has been the development of industrial estates. That has been an enormously valuable exercise. Marshalled by the State Government, the development of industrial estates at strategic points up and down the State and in the towns has made places available where businesses can commence at attractive rates and terms that have assisted people to embark on a business. Every business has to have a place where it can do business. That exercise has been enormously beneficial.

The history of small business has been chequered. The honourable member for Redcliffe (Mr White) is correct, and the Minister will have to concede, that \$500,000 is a piddling or paltry amount of money. If it is broken down into \$10,000-units it will amount to 50 loans. Fifty loans of what? As the honourable member for Redcliffe has rightly said, this amount does not even start to pay basic outgoings in order to open a shop in a modern shopping centre. Sums of money such as \$12,000, \$20,000, \$30,000 and \$32,000 are not unknown in order to buy an existing shop, with its goodwill and stock-in-trade, or for the payment of stamp duty alone. It is the taxation imposed by this same Government—and I am not picking on just the National Party Government by saying that—that is giving this largess.

Ways of assisting business have to be found. There are a variety of massive Government charges and requirements, registration fees and the like, which must be considered in order to assist businesses financially. \$10,000 is absolute peanuts. It represents two-thirds of the cost of a utility, one-tenth the cost of a modest truck or a

prime mover and is less than stamp duty for many types of small businesses. It is a token. It is so small, one wonders if it is worth while.

The attitude of the department in relation to giving out this money, and the rate which is charged—and the Minister will confirm this figure——

Mr Ahern: 17.25 per cent.

Mr INNES: 17.25 per cent, which is only slightly different to the rate that is commercially available.

The department requires substantial documentation and verification of records and assets, which is no different to what is required in other commercial areas. It is end-of-the-line stuff. The Minister's department has a responsibility to administer public moneys with care and not to waste them. Therefore the department makes business applicants run the gauntlet and go through the kinds of procedures that an organisation with far less restricted amounts of money and ceilings would require.

If a national attack is to be made on the whole problem of the size of Government and a commitment made to free enterprise, for a start why is the Government in the business? When one reaches the barrier, the amount of money that is made available is so small as to be of no significant consequence in the business life of this State. Why does this Government defy its basic principles of commitment to free enterprise? A whole spectrum of free enterprise sources of finance is available at comparable rates of interest so why is the Government in the business? Is the Government just pandering to the flat earth and discredited Social Credit philosophies of the Rockhampton anti-inflation group and the other funny little groups in the community that besiege the Minister and other members of Parliament demanding low-interest loans?

Let us make no bones about it: anybody who is receiving a low-interest loan or a loan at less than the market rate is being subsidised by other people. It certainly comes from the Government. It means that tax-payers are subsidising anybody who gets a rate of interest that is lower than the market rate. I think that the interest rate on a loan to purchase land is 13.5 per cent. If a man who purchases a property wants to purchase seed or equipment, or make improvements, the interest rates goes straight up to 17.25 per cent.

The Young Farmer Establishment Scheme that was set up to assist young persons on the land was administered by the same corporation that will administer the proposed fund. Last year, it lent only half of its money because people could not satisfy the risk requirement or obtain enough money from the fund to embark upon a venture. The Minister's department did not lend a significant amount of money. It lent only a few small amounts of money, following a promise of assistance after the SEQEB strikes. It has not lent out the moneys that were available under the previous scheme. What is made available under this scheme is also absolutely paltry. Fundamentally, if we are going to commit ourselves to a new commercial and financial rationality in Australia, what are we in this business for? Frankly, it amounts to tokenism. On the one hand, public servants require, reasonably and justifiably, prudence, and they require accountability because they are looking after public moneys. On the other hand, we look at the decisions that are made by the Government or the political arm. The record is one of disaster.

I turn to those matters on which politicians have decided. With Suttons Foundry, the limit was about 50 people who could get \$10,000. If the Government had not bought shares in Suttons Foundry, from which it will receive nothing in return, another 135 people could have received a \$10,000 loan at an interest rate of 10 per cent, not a loan at an interest rate of 17.25 per cent. The Suttons Foundry exercise is one of the biggest scandals in which the Queensland Government has been involved.

The Liberal Party joins with the spokesman for the Labor Party in wishing Don Young much success. He has served the Queensland Government extremely well and

faithfully. I am not trying to embarrass Don Young when I say that, as I recall, he was put on the board of Suttons Foundry. Is that right?

Mr Ahern: That is right.

Mr INNES: Mr Young and his officers recommended against that investment earlier in the same year in which the Government made a commitment to buy the shares. If the politicians had listened to Mr Young and the officers, he would not have had that unfortunate experience when he looks back on his career in the public service. He and the officers knew what was in the best interests of the people of Queensland. Politicians came in for cheap, short-term political advantage and bought \$1.25m of worthless shares in a company that was in liquidation within a few months after that ill-fated, ill-conceived, shoddy, cheap little trick of trying to shore up one wayward business that had run an inefficient foundry and foolishly and rashly committed itself to buying another one to get itself out of trouble. I think that the investment in White Industries was another politician-inspired bail-out exercise. That was another disaster.

Compared to politicians, the public service of this State has a reasonable record for making commercial judgments. Let us leave commercial judgments to commerce. Let us get Governments out of commercial decisions in as many places as possible, certainly if it is only replicating in a very paltry and minimal way what is available from the commercial and free market area. We should be calling on the Federal Government and rightly giving it the responsibility of looking after the national finances, realising that we are recipients of tax money and that we participate in a national economy. Should we not be assessing every piece of legislation in which we are involved and every action in which Governments are involved and asking: Can we start to administer the medicine that we demand that the Labor Government administers in Canberra? In all honesty, that is what this Government should be about. It should be demonstrating a commitment to the reduction of Government size and the support of free enterprise, which it demands that people of other political persuasions and other Governments should make.

I turn now to the question of shopping centres, which also has vexed both the Parliament and the Government. At the beginning of the present Government's term of office, it made a commitment to change the local government legislation as a sop to, or in response to demands by, small business in their plight in the over-shopping that was developing in many parts of Queensland. A provision that allowed people to object to the development of new shopping centres on economic impact grounds was introduced into the local government legislation.

Following that, Queensland went through a phase—which has only calmed down in the last couple of months—in which the Government was involved in ministerial rezonings contrary to the spirit, intent and undertakings that were implicit in the local government legislation. The Government has ignored that legislation at the behest of certain individuals who wish to develop shopping centres.

On the eve of an election, apparently because of the persistence of demands by the small-business sector, the situation is now being reassessed by Cabinet. Perhaps a commitment can be made to resolve or control the problem. Some consistency should be established.

There are town plans covering all parts of Queensland. Zonings are allocated under those plans. That is the system under which people live.

People who have bought into existing retail premises have paid the necessary premiums because so much retail space is available under the town plan in their area. Those people pay a market price for the premises, and yet people come in and throw that zoning and that balance out of kilter. They also jeopardise the premium that has been paid, because so much retail or local-business space has been allocated to a particular area. In the past that has been done in a fashion that overrides the legitimate objections that those people were lawfully entitled to make under the Local Government Act as a result of the amendments that were introduced for that purpose. Of course, the ministerial zonings remove the possibility of those persons exercising their legal rights.

There is no doubt that many parts of Queensland are becoming over-shopped. At a time when outgoings are increasing and rents are increasing, because of the nature of ownership of shopping centres, the investors are still required to pay the inevitable progressive increase in rentals each year. Outgoings are increasing above the rate of inflation, but the reality is that the retail volume and sales have been dropping.

There are many people in shopping centres in the populous parts of the State—not just country centres—who are in desperate strife. Those people have paid \$30,000, \$40,000 or \$50,000 for goodwill. They still have three, four, five or six years to go on their leases, and they simply cannot walk away with the complete loss of their investments, even though some of them are not even earning wages. Some of those people are not earning a sou, but they are staying in business. Their problems have often been caused by the opening of other regional shopping centres within their localities, in defiance of the words “regional shopping centre”. Regional shopping centres are being located within 300 or 400 metres of one another—or half a kilometre. Those regional shopping centres are supposed to be designed to service areas of many square kilometres. Those are the realities of the market-place.

In my own electorate, there was a proposal—again, inevitably, from persons interstate who could not do in their own State what they want to do here. They come to Queensland, look at maps, find an open space that nobody has built on and build a shopping centre. Somebody found a space in my electorate on Oxley Road, Oxley. The reason for the space was that it was part of the Oxley Creek flood system. Last night I spoke about another part a little lower down the river. The space is full of reeds. Water lies there year round. Of course, there is an inevitable proposal for a major shopping centre. It is 400 metres from an existing shopping centre at Oxley, 500 or 600 metres from an existing shopping centre at Corinda and about 250 to 300 metres from another group of shops in another part of Oxley. There is no growth in that area. It is a land-locked area.

The proposal is from somebody from another part of Australia. There is a legion of them. Honourable members see them sitting in corridors round this House. Almost invariably, they have gold bangles and Gucci bags. They are traipsing round the State looking for push-alongs and favours. In my electorate, the favour was the desire to secure the rezoning.

The rezoning was opposed by small-businessmen—Liberal, Labor, National—in the three shopping centres, and with my total and whole-hearted support. It is the wrong place. It happened to be 30 feet under water in the 1974 floods. Offers were made to buy three premises at very inflated prices. It would have been very nice for a couple of the premises. One of them was not so keen on selling. The person who proposed the magnificent project absolutely did not know, was astonished and did not believe that 30 feet of water had been over the premises. After all, it was 2 km from the river. He just did not know enough about the local area, the topography or Queensland to recognise the basic hazards.

Coles, one of the more dynamic marketers in Queensland, had bought into the old shopping centre at Corinda and put in a free-standing Coles supermarket adjacent to the existing shopping centre. That is fine. That is terrific. That is what should be happening—the consolidation or renewal of the old centres, which has a spin-off of attracting more trade to that locality and helps to some extent the existing shops in the area.

If somebody can build a totally new centre so close to three existing shopping centres in a land-locked area, that will absolutely and inevitably torpedo the trade of the other centres. Of course, the argument is that in two or three years' time there will be new tenants; but how many individuals are wiped out in the two to three years before that predicted inevitable renewal takes place?

Brisbane has a system of town-planning—it is not Houston, Texas—and people pay a premium to enter an existing business area. If the area is land-locked, there should be—I am not saying “total sanctity”—but rigidity that favours the people who buy in on

the understanding of the present system. If there is no growth in the locality, the Government should encourage people to renew the existing shopping centres and not set up in complete opposition in the local area.

The position has been getting out of hand. Businessmen are in trouble all over the State because, frankly, the real thrust of that amendment to the Local Government Act has not been carried through. It was brought forward as a political action to provide a safety-valve for political pressure. The Government moved right away from it for the next 2½ years. It was total open slather. Any company that builds, provided it was big enough, got the push-along.

Now that it is close to the election, the Government falls back because a few votes are involved. The developers throw their money into the State, but they do not vote. The small-business people do, so the Government believes it should do something to silence the small-business people again.

Some consistency and some certainty should be brought into the exercise. Rules should be established. I am not calling for unnecessary Government regulation. A town-planning system exists. Let us have it observed with some fairness and some rigidity. The people who have made investments that presently operate should have their initiative left intact, and the Government should endeavour not to torpedo their investments by the device of ministerial rezoning. Ministerial rezoning is an insidious and increasing practice. It is not an open system, and it is not accountable. Frequently, its effect is to jeopardise significantly the financial interests of other people.

Mr Lee: It is not appealable either.

Mr INNES: That is the point I make; it is not appealable.

Small business is important, and it will remain so. The Minister has made an effort to publicise a variety of aspects of small business in this State assisted by only a very limited budget, for which the Minister should be commended.

An effort should be made, however, to look beyond the facade of publicity and encouragement offered by the Minister. I recognise that the Minister has a perfect right to offer encouragement in areas of high-tech and business generally, but he should examine the financial structures that have been introduced in legislation. Are the financial structures really effective? Is the legislation really necessary?

An examination ought to be made of some of the other areas of Government, such as the administration of the Local Government Act and responsibilities that pertain to shopping centres, to ensure that people who start out in business are not torpedoed. The Government should ensure that life-time investments of \$50,000 or \$100,000 are not torpedoed because of the activities of interstate vultures.

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology) (11.46 p.m.), in reply: I thank all honourable members who have participated in the debate. At the outset, some criticism was made of the decision made by the Leader of the House to bring on the debate today because the Bill was introduced only two days ago. It ought to be brought to the attention of readers of *Hansard* and those who are strong enough to be in the gallery at this hour that when I was made aware that the Bill was to be brought forward, I asked the director of the Department of Industry Development to brief the Opposition spokesman the honourable member for Mackay (Mr Casey) on Monday, so that he would be provided with an opportunity to consider the Bill. It should also be noted that the Bill consists of only one page, which is not a very substantial amendment.

Mr Casey: I spoke to the principle, not to the Bill.

Mr AHERN: I know that Opposition members will say that it is a matter of principle, but when one takes into account the competent organisation and the adequate notice that has generally been applied to the conduct of the session, and when one compares what happens in the other State Parliaments throughout Australia—particularly

in the Labor States where substantive changes are made at very short notice—some of the Labor leaders of other State Houses make Claudie Wharton look like Mother Theresa.

The Bill before the House has to some extent been misunderstood. The purpose of the Bill is to enable the Small Business Development Corporation to provide finance directly as agent for the Queensland Industry Development Corporation. Previously, the Small Business Development Corporation has not been able to do that.

Members have examined the contents of the Bill in the context of the Budget papers provided to them, and have been trying to determine how much the Small Business Development Corporation has been able to provide in the past. They may have become confused, because the fact is that it has been able to provide nothing. Although provision has been made in legislation pertaining to the corporation to enable it to do so, in the interests of safeguarding accountability and public interest, and out of prudence and a desire to provide security, the Small Business Development Corporation is required to make a recommendation to the industries assistance board. The next stage of the process is that the recommendation is presented to the Governor in Council for assent. The plain fact is that the process did not work, and no funds have been provided.

The funds that have been allocated in the Budget papers relate to the natural disaster scheme, which is administered separately by Treasury. A scheme was devised in respect of the South East Queensland Electricity Board dispute and in respect of cyclone Winifred but not through the aegis of the Small Business Development Corporation. Those schemes were carried out directly by a committee of Treasury.

It has been argued that the funds have never been allocated, but I point out that, at that time, the allocation was made for a specific purpose and subject to certain criteria laid down by Treasury.

One criterion was that the money was being made available for purposes which were caused by a particular incident, whether it be the industrial dispute in Brisbane or cyclone Winifred in north Queensland. It could be said that \$500,000, or whatever, was made available for the purpose, but unless it could be proven by the small business applicant that the disadvantage had been caused by the incident, the money could not be made available.

Mr Innes: What is the total amount of money available directly from your department or the QIDC for loans to small business?

Mr AHERN: I will get around to that in a moment. I can see that the honourable member for Sherwood has misunderstood the situation. Under the new legislation the QIDC is now a separate entity with separate *raison d'être* and *modus operandi*. A decision has been made to establish a large corporation to take over the financial role of the Agricultural Bank, the Rural Reconstruction Board and a number of other small schemes that have been applied elsewhere in the Government and the duties of the Industries Assistance Board, which operated in the past and which was given a lot of extra money by Treasury. Now, one Government finance corporation is making loans available generally for the purposes set out in its legislation.

In the past, everything in my department had to go to the Industries Assistance Board and then to the Governor in Council. It was very difficult to get anything for large business through that process at all. It really did not work at all for small business and no money was made available. That is why the Government moved to create QIDC. It means that people have greater access to finance under the new format rather than under the old scheme. The Government has been able to go to QIDC and say that, in the case of a very small business loan, it makes sense for the Government to administer it, on QIDC's behalf, through the Small Business Development Corporation.

Those loans are made available to parties who cannot obtain loans from normal commercial sources. Up to \$10,000 is made available. It can be done administratively by SBDC. People do not have to approach the large organisation, which has a long queue, because of the huge expectation that has been raised about it, in order to get a

small amount of money. People can go to the Small Business Development Corporation and, hopefully, easily effect a loan. That loan is available only to those people who have not been successful in obtaining a loan in the commercial sector.

It is not the fact that only \$10,000 is available to all businesses. If a loan of more than the \$10,000 that was originally approved is required, the opportunity will still be there to go directly to QIDC and apply to have the loan approved. So \$10,000 is not the only amount of money that is available. It is a small amount of money that, hopefully, can be administratively simply made available through SBDC to those who need it and who cannot get it from the commercial sector. That makes sense. This scheme will be a lot more successful than the scheme that operated previously. I assure honourable members that it would have to be.

Mr Casey: That's for sure.

Mr AHERN: That is accepted.

The previous scheme was instituted for accountability reasons because public funds—tax-payers' funds—were being used. It was a great idea for small business, but the scheme did not work. Now the Government has taken another course, which will be much more flexible and, hopefully, will assist small business.

The provision of \$500,000 is the first-off allocation. When that is used, more money will be made available by QIDC. However, a huge expectation about QIDC is being built up, and that expectation will never be able to be fulfilled. If QIDC's budget was multiplied by 20 or 30, it would not be enough, considering the expectation that has been raised about it. Queensland is a private enterprise State. QIDC was set up not really to solve everybody's financial problems but to fill a gap.

Hopefully, the private-enterprise sector will be able to work with the QIDC. That is the idea. I am not the Minister responsible for the QIDC and I do not intend to spend a great deal of time talking about it, although I could. That, I can assure the House, was the reason why the QIDC was established and that is why the Small Business Development Corporation wanted a system that works. The SBDC wanted to be allowed to act as an agent for the Queensland Industry Development Corporation for those small operations to quickly carry them through. That was agreed to. I am not suggesting that in the longer run that is all that will be needed for small business. Some other options are under consideration in an endeavour to assist small-business people to get finance.

I want to make some reply to the remarks of the honourable member for Mackay, who was highly critical of what the Small Business Development Corporation has done. Now that I have listened to the three other members who participated in the debate, I really do not think that they have recently been to the SBDC to see what is happening. A lot of great work has been done there. When I took over the portfolio it had a budget of \$350,000; today it has a budget of \$1.1m. That is an increase that features nowhere else in the State Budget. It is a quite substantial operation. It is not yet really up to full speed, but I suggest that by the end of this financial year it will really be up to a reasonable speed not only in Brisbane but also in the regional areas of Queensland. It has available an excellent range of programs. It is not, again, all things to all people. The corporation is working with private enterprise, adding leverage to the efforts of private enterprise and co-operating with the bankers, accountants, consultants and so on, in an endeavour to provide a service for small business. A wide range of programs is available.

Tonight I listened with some interest to the honourable member for Mackay's list, which I think he read out from his party's platform and policy on small business. That list contained a whole range of things that he said a Labor Government would do with the Small Business Development Corporation. If he went and had a look at the corporation, with one exception he would find that the SBDC is already doing the things on his list. It provides advice, runs seminars, works with TAFE colleges and in the total education area, and has a very substantial number of programs. Some are run with Commonwealth Government assistance. I encourage all honourable members to go and

have a look at the technology expo on the ground floor. It is great. That was recently opened by Senator Button and me, with the help of private enterprise, which, at no cost at all to the corporation, is putting in a lot of equipment there. The corporation is endeavouring to work with private enterprise to assist small business. It has a number of highly innovative programs that are very impressive.

I do not think a problem such as this can be solved with the expenditure of huge amounts of money. The competence of an organisation has to grow with the allocations. It has grown just about as quickly as it could without making a lot of mistakes. It is building up a corporate competency. I am pretty proud of what has been achieved there and I take my hat off to Jim Kennedy, Peter Weightman and the young people, principally, who are there and who are doing an excellent job in the circumstances.

The honourable member for Mackay also mentioned the Retail Shop Leases Act. I had the responsibility of the passage of that legislation. I want to say to the honourable member that he should have a look at the statute-books of every other State of Australia, and he will find that our legislation was used as a model for that which was introduced in all the other States of Australia. Some of the Ministers concerned, particularly the Deputy Premier of Western Australia, Mal Bryce, recorded in *Hansard*, "I acknowledge the contribution of the Queensland Minister, who was the pioneer in this field." He acknowledged that the Queensland legislation is the model. The changes that Queensland considers reverberate round the Commonwealth. When Queensland is reported to be considering change to its legislation, phone calls come in from the other States of Australia saying, "You guys wrote this legislation. If you are considering changing it, let us know, because we might change ours, too." The legislation has worked.

Mr Casey: New models do not necessarily overcome all problems.

Mr AHERN: It is not a complete solution to the problem, but it has gone a long way down the track towards resolving the issue. It is not just a set of laws, either. It has worked because one guy has determined to make it work—that is Bill Lamond, the mediator, who has set about implementing it in a rational, fair manner and who has earned the respect of all people in the industry in carrying it through.

Friday, 12 September 1986

The honourable member for Mackay (Mr Casey) did sheet home some criticism that should rightly have been directed towards the Federal Government. I must say that it is surely not the fault of the Queensland Government that interest rates are so high in this nation. Interest rates are clearly the responsibility of the Federal Government.

Inflation is also having an impact on small business. The Government regularly holds conferences with wide-ranging groups of people. The issues that are sheeted home to the Government by those people are interest rates, inflation, fringe benefits taxes, capital gains taxes, and the superannuation push. All of those things are themes of the Commonwealth Government.

The Opposition in this place cannot run away from those issues. The community will not be convinced that the Queensland Government can just set interest rates at whatever level it chooses. It simply is not on unless the tax-payer subsidises it.

To a substantial degree, the Government has been able to provide the QIDC with a concessional interest rate below the market, because the State Government can use its powers to borrow below the commercial market rate as a result of its credit-rating. Therefore, interest rates offered by the QIDC are generally below the market rate. That is really all that the Government can do without asking the general tax-payer to subsidise it. Interest rates can be subsidised down to 1 per cent, but that creates very substantial equity problems. I do not think that the Government can get involved in that, and the community does not expect it to. That is how Australia got into the pickle that it is in at the moment—big government and too much taxation.

The honourable member for Mackay also asked me to make reference to Kirkat, or asked a question about it. Any honourable member can make representations to me any time in relation to any person seeking assistance, and honourable members from both sides of the House do so. The Premier certainly made representations to me in relation to Kirkat, as did a number of other Ministers.

Under the law at that time, the matter had to go before the Industries Assistance Board. The board recommended against it. It went before Cabinet and the Governor in Council refused the application.

I like Kirkat's proposed project. It is simply too lightly geared. There is not enough equity in the proposal at present. Therefore, tax-payers' funds could not be risked, and the application was refused.

I thank the honourable member for Mackay for his remarks about Don Young. Don is one of the great public servants of Queensland. He is retiring shortly. I am sure that he will retire with the good wishes of all honourable members. He has done a great job.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr AHERN: As the hour is late, I will make only a few brief references to the comments of the honourable member for Redcliffe (Mr White). He spoke about the matter of conservative financiers and the difficulty that they create for small-business people. That is fair enough; I accept that. However, the fact is that the Government regularly speaks to the people involved in private industry and, in particular, the banks and people involved in venture capital. I regularly attend luncheons with people involved in private industry, and the Government holds seminars on making available venture finance to the small-business sector.

The Government has been able to involve two major banks with the Small Business Development Corporation by way of finance. The National Bank and Westpac have responded to the Government's invitation to become financial sponsors of the Small Business Development Corporation. The idea behind that is that it will add leverage to the efforts of the Small Business Development Corporation, as well as provide an opportunity for its small-business borrowers to have ready access to the Small Business Development Corporation.

It is important to tie up a small-business loan with some element of training. When someone says, "I need \$10,000 for my business. I am going in with Westpac," Westpac can say. "We are sponsors of the Small Business Development Corporation. We really think that before you borrow that money you should go to the Small Business Development Corporation and talk about some of its programs, which might assist you in the running of your business."

When it is all boiled down, the most important achievement of small-business corporations around the world in their assistance of small-business people, is the upgrading of management skills. It is the most urgent requirement in the small-business community and in this co-operative venture, the Queensland Government is working with private enterprise in regard to finance and is doing a pretty good job.

The honourable member for Mackay (Mr Casey) raised a couple of technical questions. I have obtained advice from my advisers and I will provide the House with the information. It is true that section 6 (a) (ii) of the Industrial Development Act provides for the dissolution of the power of the Minister for Industrial Development, but it has not been proclaimed because the Minister has other responsibilities in the development of industrial estates. The Act did, however, dissolve the Industries Assistance Board, and it is for that reason that I will be bringing forward amendments to the Industrial Development Act next year.

The Minister will not be providing assistance by way of section 12 (e) or 12 (f). I understand that those sections have now been taken over by QIDC. They have been left in the Act because they will permit the Small Business Development Corporation

to recommend to the Minister ways and means of structuring measures of assistance generally.

The final issue to which I refer is the statement by the honourable member for Sherwood (Mr Innes) regarding shopping centre proliferation. That is a very complex issue that is surrounded by a great deal of politics. The plain fact is that there is a concern in the community. What is not so clear is what can be done about it. All kinds of solutions are put forward, but they have to be very carefully worked through in the interests of all parties, such as local authorities, developers and small-business people.

The Queensland Government has stated to the industry that it is not satisfied with the current framework within which these matters are considered and a further solution is required that will provide a community that requires a shopping centre and deserves a shopping centre, with a shopping centre, and not cut it off completely with red tape. At the same time the Government has to provide a sensible, rational and legal mechanism for stopping unnecessary developments that result in gross over-shopping in an area. It is not as easy as it looks from the outside to reach that point.

Mr Innes: No-one pretends it is.

Mr AHERN: Right.

The Government is doing that and is committed to it. I thank all honourable members for their contributions to the debate. I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion (Mr Ahern) agreed to.

Committee

Mr Randell (Mirani) in the chair; Hon. M. J. Ahern (Landsborough—Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of s. 12; Functions of Corporation—

Mr CASEY (12.8 a.m.): There are a couple of points I wish to raise. This clause is really the whole guts of the Bill. In his reply, the Minister referred to the suspension of Standing Orders and defended the Leader of the House. He endeavoured to compare the Leader of the House to Mother Theresa. I am quite sure that he does not have the disposition, the religious fervour or—looking at the corpulence he has developed since he first entered this Chamber—the same eating habits as Mother Theresa!

When the process with the introduction of legislation was changed, it was made quite clear that a wide-ranging debate on matters connected with a Bill would be allowed in the second-reading debate, as had previously been the case with introductory or first-reading debates. The Minister would remember those days, as would the Leader of the House. Consequently, that is why so many other small-business matters were discussed during this legislation. Now, Bills come before the scrutiny of this Assembly only once. Shortly, the Minister will move for the third reading of the Bill. The Bill will be out and gone. There is only one occasion on which there is an opportunity to debate it. I can recall that during my earlier days in this Chamber, second-reading debates and those on clauses very rarely took place on the same day. The Bills were always taken back so that members had a further chance to look at the particular matters that were before the Assembly.

Some of the Minister's explanation deserves further comment. The Minister made the shocking admission that the legislation that was introduced to amend the Act 3½ years ago has not worked at all. During that 3½ years honourable members have seen all the pamphlets, the promises, the press releases and everything else about what one could obtain through the Small Business Development Corporation. However, they were not true.

Representatives from the Small Business Development Corporation have conducted local interviews in my electorate. They spoke about what the Small Business Development

Corporation could do publicly. In the following weeks, half of the small-businessmen who had financial problems rang me to see whether they could obtain a loan. At various times I sent dozens upon dozens of people to see Mr Russ Kennedy, who was the regional officer in Mackay. He was very efficient and a very good officer. For one reason or another, all those people were turned away. Nobody was ever given an excuse. The real reason was that the legislation was not working.

In some respects, that was deceitful. The Minister said that the queue of people looking for this type of finance was very long. He said that the money has not been made available. I thank him for his honesty on that matter. Perhaps it is desirable to get this legislation through as quickly as possible so that the present scheme will be converted into a reasonable one. I hope that the \$500,000 is taken up very quickly by small business in the community.

Mr AHERN: I shall go very quickly over that matter again. I do not think that the small-business community has ever been under the misapprehension that the purpose of the Small Business Development Corporation was to lend money. Indeed, when one looks at the sorts of things that can be done for small business, one will see that many other things should be done before money is lent. That has been the principal focus of the Small Business Development Corporation. The principal function of small-business corporations that I have examined around Australia and throughout the world is to upgrade the management skills of the small-business person. It is not a bank. It has always been agreed that, to be fully equipped, it needs the capability to help people in certain situations. In my time, I have certainly never emphasised that the Small Business Development Corporation is a bank. I have never made a claim that a person can obtain a loan at concessional rates of interest from the Small Business Development Corporation. It has had very little emphasis in any pamphlets that have been printed. It has not been a big problem for the Government, but it is part of the equipment that should be provided. It will be provided after this legislation has overcome those problems that were in the Act previously.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 4 and 5, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

The House adjourned at 12.16 a.m. (Friday).