



Speech by

Mrs D. PRATT

MEMBER FOR BARAMBAH

Hansard 11 November 1999

COMMUNITY CABINET MEETING, KINGAROY

Mrs PRATT (Barambah—IND) (10.16 a.m.): Sunday, 14 November and Monday, 15 November are two days that have been awaited for some time in the Barambah electorate. The people of the electorate have been waiting ever since the announcement was made that this Government was to hold a Community Cabinet meeting in Kingaroy.

It is, perhaps, a shame that there will be little time for all Ministers to experience the wonders of the Burnett region, but the needs of the communities must take priority. No doubt most of the time will be spent with representatives of various groups representing a variety of issues. There has been a constant barrage of concerns aimed at this Government and there should be issues for every Minister.

The regional forest agreement has been a major concern, and remains a major concern, to those involved with the industry. The South Burnett Meatworks, our prize-winning wines and our olives should be only the start of the delectable topics that will be discussed in relation to the Burnett region. The extension to the Tarong Power Station is a major issue for the Minister for Mines and Energy, Mr McGrady. We are looking for a positive outcome in relation to that matter.

The continued perceived threat of a downgrading of services at the Nanango Hospital is a topic for the Minister for Health, Mrs Edmond, as is the crisis of a shortage of doctors in many of our smaller towns.

There are concerns that new regulations are jeopardising the existence of small community events such as picnic race meetings and rodeos. These community events are often the lifeblood of small communities.

An issue for the Minister for Emergency Services, Merri Rose, concerns the reduction of ambulance services which recently resulted in a woman having to personally transport her husband to the Toowoomba Hospital because the ambulance does not make trips to Toowoomba on Mondays. Another matter of concern is the reduction of ambulance services at Proston, where a first responder now bears the load after hours.

The road over the Blackbutt Range is one of the most dangerous roads in the area. I would ask Ministers to bear in mind that the arrival of the Queensland Cabinet in Kingaroy is seen as being the forerunner of an announcement of some major infrastructure project. Such an announcement is awaited with much anticipation. I ask that this visit to Kingaroy not be treated as a political stunt. I hope that this Community Cabinet meeting delivers more substance than other Cabinet meetings of which I have been informed.
