

Report on selected decisions

1983 Cabinet Minutes

Dr Jonathan Richards for Queensland State Archives

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Old ways of administering Indigenous communities and political animosities still prevailed. In January approval was granted for a \$20,000 grant from the Commonwealth Schools Commission to be accepted for alcohol and drug education in Aboriginal communities (Decs. 39317, Sub. 35200). Education Minister Lionel Powell said, 'My department acknowledges the fact that Aborigines have a set of values that is quite different from that of white Australians, based on cultural differences.'

In February Cabinet decided that any request for renewal of leases made by the Delta Pastoral Company, which was funded by the Aboriginal Development Commission, would be refused (Decs 39508 and 39512; Subs 35371 and 35375). After attending a meeting of the Australian Aboriginal Affairs Council, Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs Val Bird told Cabinet in August that Commonwealth 'ambitions to treat Aboriginal people as a class apart in the Australian community' would 'rebound on Aboriginal people' who 'sought only equal opportunity and recognition' (Dec. 40979, Sub. 36733).

For many years Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees on government reserves were paid less than other workers doing similar jobs. Members of Cabinet were reminded in early 1983 that this practice contravened state and Commonwealth laws, so decided in March that wages of reserve workers would be increased to the level of the Guaranteed Minimum Wage, with retrenchments approved if necessary to achieve a reduction in the total cost (Dec. 39901, Sub. 35739).

In August the members of Cabinet decided that Queensland would participate in a Commonwealth inquiry into Aboriginal education, reversing a 1981 decision to not cooperate (Decs 35644 and 40971; Sub. 36725). Premier Bjelke-Petersen told ministers that 'the political climate and constitutional situation had changed dramatically' since 1981:

At times like these, I believe that every opportunity must be taken to obtain much greater exposure of the Queensland Government's policies, and of its achievements, in those areas where the Commonwealth is seeking to extend its powers, e.g. conservation/heritage matters, human rights legislation, Aboriginal affairs, etc. It is certainly true that Queensland's achievements in the field of Aboriginal affairs have received very little attention in the media.

According to one newspaper, Cabinet was 'about' to consider a 'huge new body to administer Aboriginal affairs and development in north Queensland', headed by former Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement director and unsuccessful National Party candidate Pat Killoran, late in the year, but no reference to this proposal was found in the Cabinet Minutes ('Qango planned for blacks, north', *The Courier-Mail*, 28 October 1983, 12). In December, Acting Premier William Gunn described Aboriginal people as 'set to become Australia's new elite' who would, as a result of federal land rights policy, be 'placed above all other Australians' ('Whites' rights 'sell-out', *Sunday Mail*, 11 December 1983, 1).

Doomadgee

At a number of meetings in 1983 Cabinet members discussed the financial situation of the Doomadgee Aboriginal community in North Queensland, operated by the Christian Brethren Church since 1931 (Decs 39783, 40190, 40241, 40490 and 40506; Subs 35628, 36007, 36055, 36284 and 36300). Reserve staff and assets were transferred to the public service from 1 July 1983. A joint submission in May from the Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement

and Treasury noted the only other remaining church-run communities in Queensland were Wujul Wujul (on the Bloomfield River) and Hopevale (near Cooktown), both run by the Lutheran Church. Hopevale's 'long-term viability' was said to be 'suspect' and the department was 'keeping a watchful eye on its affairs' (Dec. 40241, Sub. 36055).

Deeds of Grant in Trust ('DOGIT')

Queensland Parliament passed legislation concerning revocable deeds-of-grant-in-trust in 1982 to deflect Aboriginal demands for land rights. Cabinet ordered the Coordinator General to inform the Commonwealth Government that Queensland rejected Aboriginal affairs proposals made in late 1982 and early 1983 (Dec. 39508, Sub. 35371). Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs Val Bird informed members that the Commonwealth had recruited 'political anthropologists, motivated in the direction of academic research, philosophically committed to territorial separation of the Aboriginal land areas and a progressive return to tribal lifestyle', which would cause 'disruptions to Aboriginal community life.'

Cabinet decided in May that the legislation covering Deeds of Grant in Trust (DOGIT), which only applied to Aboriginal and Islander communities, should be amended so that only parliament could change or revoke declarations (Dec. 40103, Sub. 35924). Minister Bird said community residents informed him they were concerned that grants of land could be diminished or revoked without parliamentary approval. To avoid possible criticism of the Bill as allowing the Executive to 'usurp' the prerogative of the parliament, when the amending Bill was drafted Minister Bird gained approval for the legislation by Cabinet, his Bills' Committee and the Joint Parties before presentation to parliament (Dec. 40945, Sub. 36702).

Edward River and Lockhart River communities

In July Cabinet ordered the Police Department to commence funding of policing at six Aboriginal communities, with buildings, equipment and vehicles to be transferred from the Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement (Dec. 40868; Subs 36625, 36670, 36684). The Department of Police was also asked to consider the transfer of police services at the Edward River and Lockhart River communities, as an urgent measure to avert a threatened boycott by teachers at those two places. Cabinet had previously asked the Police Department to 'take immediate action for the stationing of police' at Lockhart River and Edward River (Decs 38992, 40676 and 40786; Subs 36460 and 36559). A 'violent confrontation' between police and Edward River residents, said to be caused by 'growing resentment of white paternalism', was reported in November ('The resentment that led to the mission riot' and 'Tribal violence fuelled by beer', *The Courier-Mail*, 21 November 1983, 1).

Bicentenary

A January meeting of Cabinet decided not to announce 1988 Bicentenary projects or to approve a Memorandum Of Understanding with the Commonwealth until further information was provided (Dec. 39363, Sub. 35241). In March Minister for Mines and Energy Ivan Gibbs reported on progress by the Queensland committees of the Bicentennial Authority (Dec. 39663, Sub. 35516). Commonwealth funding for Bicentennial projects was accepted in September (Dec. 41351, Sub. 37095). Projects to be funded included the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and Outback Heritage Centre at Longreach, the Australian Sugar Industry Museum at Mourilyan, the Australian Air Museum at the Gold Coast, and the Boondall Sports Complex in Brisbane. Other projects still

being considered were Great Barrier Reef World at Townsville and 'an Aboriginal Museum in the Carnarvon Area'.

Brisbane

In April Cabinet approved a commercial development above Toowong Railway Station (Dec. 40038, Sub. 35865; '\$12m station facelift', *The Courier-Mail*, 20 April 1983, 1).

Expo 88

Plans for holding an international trade exposition at South Bank were discussed 12 times during 1983 ('Decision day for Brisbane Expo '88', *The Courier-Mail*, 30 May 1983, 3; 'Brisbane gets Expo 88', *The Courier-Mail*, 8 December 1983, 1). Issues included land resumptions and rezoning, liaison with the Brisbane City Council, funding from the Commonwealth Government and the preparation of a parliamentary 'Expo 88' Bill (Decs 39904, 40394, 40731, 40962, 41030, 41121, 41223, 41570, 41823, 41993; Subs 35742, 36197, 36509, 36719, 36784, 36871, 36965, 37294, 37525, 37694; 'Joh back with union, Expo plans', *The Courier-Mail*, 12 December 1983, 1).

The public response was not all always positive ('Reaction mixed on Expo site', *The Courier-Mail*, 1 June 1983, 3; 'Authority will buy Expo land', *The Courier-Mail*, 17 June 1983, 3; 'Protests grow over Expo confusion', *The Courier-Mail*, 27 September 1983, 4; 'Expo gets power to take land', *The Courier-Mail*, 22 December 1983, 3). In December, members of Cabinet noted a submission from Aboriginal Affairs Minister Robert Katter concerning the 'relocation of occupants' from Musgrave Park in preparation for Expo 88 (Dec. 42071, Sub. 37766; 'Move to shift park blacks', *The Courier-Mail*, 19 November 1983, 13; 'Musgrave Park will not alter', *The Courier-Mail*, 23 December 1983, 2).

Kangaroo Point redevelopment

Plans for the redevelopment of the former Evans Deakin shipyard site at Kangaroo Point, now the location of 'Dockside', were discussed at four Cabinet meetings in 1983. Consolidation of a number of small blocks into portions adequate for new construction proposals occupied much time and effort. Approval for resumptions, compensation and land sales was granted in May, August and October (Decs 40348, 40961 and 41478; Subs 36151, 36718 and 37208).

Government Precinct

In May Cabinet approved the commencement of work on a new Government Precinct building to house the Works Department in George Street Brisbane (Dec. 40102, Sub. 35923; '\$45m project for city', *The Courier-Mail*, 4 May 1983, 12). In August the erection of a statue of the Queen, in 'Queen's Place' at the corner of George and Alice Streets, was authorised (Dec. 41145, Sub. 36891).

Budget

Cabinet considered unforeseen expenditure resulting from award and basic wage increases during May (Dec. 40123, Sub. 35944). Treasurer Llew Edwards advised that some departments had

almost exhausted their budgetary allocations, and rather than deal with each case individually, proposed that 'as in previous years' a 'bulk approval' be given. Members concurred.

In July members of Cabinet discussed the state's budgetary position. Treasurer Llew Edwards advised of a \$30 million shortfall 'with all funding sources exhausted' against the need to find \$203 million from 'diversions' and 'economies', with the greatest proportion (\$64 million) to come from the Consolidated Revenue Fund (Dec. 40929, Sub. 36689). In June the Treasurer advised the media that the budget was in good shape, and said he believed 'Queensland will end up being the only state with what is virtually a balanced Budget' ('Budget is on target', *The Courier-Mail*, 27 June 1983, 1). 'Queensland', said Edwards after attending a Loan Council meeting in July, 'stands alone in not being in desperate financial straits' (Dec. 40777, Sub. 36550).

Extra control measures were endorsed in August when ministers were informed that supply could not be guaranteed beyond the end of November (Dec. 41126, Sub. 36876). General increases of 'at least' 10 per cent for all state government fees and charges were approved by Cabinet from November (Dec. 41598; Sub. 37320). A second decision in November approved further recommendations for the budget's revision (Dec. 41686, Sub. 37403). Election promises had increased from \$3 million to \$9.4 million, although stamp duties increases of \$30 million would boost revenue. However, failure in Queensland's negotiations with the Commonwealth over Medicare funding could create a \$21 million shortfall. 'This could involve freezes on further staffing, reductions in the capital works program, deferment of Budget Enhancements/Election promises plus increases in taxation and/or establishment of an entirely new revenue source', said Bjelke-Petersen, then Premier and Treasurer.

Capital works

A meeting in January approved a special capital works programme utilising \$75 million of Commonwealth funds (Dec. 39346, Sub. Oral, Edwards; 'Qld to spend \$70m-\$100m on new jobs', *The Courier-Mail*, 11 January 1983, 1). Commonwealth funding of almost \$10 million for water resources projects was also endorsed during January (Dec. 39442, Sub. 35317). The purchase of two dams near Mount Isa, previously owned by mining company Mary Kathleen Uranium Ltd, was authorised in March (Dec. 39678, Sub. 35531). Preparatory work for the Gold Coast rail link was approved in June and August (Decs 40463 and 41025; Subs 36262 and 36779; 'Surfers line ... perhaps', *The Courier-Mail*, 8 June 1983, 1).

In July Cabinet endorsed dam and flood mitigation investigations on the Proserpine River as well as a list of water resource projects for submission to the Commonwealth Government (Decs 40718 and 40817, Subs 36496 and 36582). A weir on the Maranoa River was approved in August (Dec. 40990, Sub. 36744). Cabinet noted, in December, cost increases for the building of the Bjelke-Petersen Dam near Barambah (Dec. 41947, Sub. 37646). Originally expected to cost \$17.6 million, the total project expense was now expected to be about \$40 million due to difficulties with the underlying rock and clay.

Bradfield Scheme

The Bradfield Scheme, first suggested in 1938 by John Bradfield, the engineer who drew the original plans for the Sydney Harbour Bridge, involved the diversion of water from coastal rivers in North Queensland to the Gulf of Carpentaria and Lake Eyre drainage basins. Cabinet voted to accept, in principle, the Bradfield Concept Preliminary Study in January (Dec. 39352, Sub. 35230; '\$1 billion water project', *The Courier-Mail*, 17 January 1983, 1). Premier Bjelke-Petersen would

send a copy of the report to the Prime Minister and request federal assistance. The proposal, said the report's authors, was technically possible but would be very expensive to build ('\$1.4 billion could make desert bloom', *Sunday Mail*, 23 January 1983, 6).

Premier Bjelke-Petersen advised ministers in February that the Commonwealth had agreed to fund a detailed feasibility study (Decs 39487 and 39576, Subs 35354 and 35436; 'Canberra to spend \$5m on Bradfield', *The Courier-Mail*, 26 January 1983, 3). A planning committee was approved in April and in September, Cabinet approved a consultancy study of the Bradfield Concept (Decs 39967 and 41225, Subs 35801 and 36967; 'State to pay for further river studies', *The Courier-Mail*, 6 April 1983, 3).

Burdekin River dam

Proposals to dam North Queensland's Burdekin River, one of Australia's biggest rivers, had, like the Bradfield Scheme, been made since the 1940s, and a joint agreement between state and federal governments was announced in 1982. Cabinet decided, in March 1983, to restrict the list of prospective tenderers to seven companies with adequate financial backing that were 'experienced in planning for and handling large river flows' (Dec. 39781, Sub. 35626). Within two weeks the list had been expanded to include four additional companies and one substitution had also been made (Decs 39888 and 39936, Subs Oral, Bjelke-Petersen and Oral, Edwards). In October Leighton Contractors (with a price of almost \$36 million) was selected as the successful tenderer (Dec. 41490, Sub. 37220).

Nerang River

Coastal training walls for the mouth of the Nerang River and the Broadwater at the Gold Coast were discussed at a number of Cabinet meetings during 1983. At first the acquisition or resumption of the old township of Moondarewa, subdivided on South Stradbroke Island at the end of the nineteenth century, was proposed (Dec. 40072, Sub. 35899; Dec. 40700, Sub. 36478). A map showing Moondarewa's location, at the site of the planned entrance, was presented to Cabinet during October (Dec. 41554, Sub. 37278). It was subsequently decided that the land was to be rezoned 'so that it will have 'nil' value' (Dec. 41627, Subs 37278, 37339, 37401). Compensation for the owners of land in Moondarewa was rejected when compulsory resumptions were approved in December (Dec. 41984; Subs 37684 & 37665; 'Southport bar plan to cost \$32m', *The Courier-Mail*, 13 December 1983, 3).

Casinos

Gold Coast

Cabinet members gave approval in February and March for the proposed Jupiter's Casino on the Gold Coast (Dec. 39496, Sub. Oral, Edwards; Dec. 39767, Sub. 35615). The requirement to pay '\$10 million minimum per annum for five years from commencement of operation' was not to be 'insisted upon'. The 'Jupiter's Agreement Bill' was approved at meetings held in February and March (Dec. 39602, Sub. 35462; Dec. 39767, Sub. 35615). Difficulties in raising finance were also discussed during March (Dec. 39767, Sub. 35615; 'Big backer pulls out of casinos', *The Courier-Mail*, 23 March 1983, 1).

In June members considered the replacement of a partner in the Jupiter's consortium by Conrad Investment Corporation, a subsidiary of Hilton Hotels Corporation (Dec. 40535, Sub. 36329). Two police officers travelled to the United States to investigate the Hilton Hotels Corporation's suitability as a casino operator (Dec. 40827, Sub. 36592; 'Vegas bid for Coast casino deal', *The Courier-Mail* 8 June 1983, 1). Approval for the change in ownership was granted in July (Decs 40778 & 40779, Subs 36551 & 36552; 'Cabinet gives nod to casino partner', *The Courier-Mail*, 15 June 1983, 3). Work on the site began in July and the public were later invited to purchase shares in Jupiter's Casino ('Jupiter's casino is gambling on pokies', *The Courier-Mail*, 1 July 1983, 3; Advertisement, 'Be a part owner of the Gold Coast's first casino', *The Courier-Mail*, 8 November 1983, 6; 'Casino share sales create huge response', *Sunday Mail*, 13 November 1983, 2).

Townsville

In January Treasurer Llew Edwards presented Cabinet members with details of a proposed Breakwater casino, marina and commercial development at Townsville (Dec. 39454, Sub. Oral, Edwards). The draft agreement was approved in February and an 'early start' to construction was announced in March (Dec. 39607, Sub. 35463; 'Casino start being studied', *The Courier-Mail*, 31 March 1983, 11).

Commonwealth Government

Members decided in February that Queensland would not present a submission to the inquiry into Commonwealth assistance to the arts (Dec. 39458, Sub. 35325). In March Cabinet noted a motion on 'Democratic Elections' to be discussed at the forthcoming Australian Constitutional Convention (Dec. 39922, Sub. 35760; 'Joh sharpens legal knives on state rights', *The Courier-Mail*, 14 April 1983, 2). The principle of 'one vote - one value', said Attorney-General Doumany, meant that factors 'other than population' – such as 'population distribution, centres of interest, means of communication, etc' – would be 'removed from the electorate distribution process'. Cabinet decided in July that any Commonwealth requests for information about Queensland, made under Freedom of Information laws, would be referred to the Premier's Department (Dec. 40796, Sub. 36561).

Franklin River dam case

Minister for National Parks Elliott told Cabinet members in March that 'the campaign over the Franklin Dam shows that conservation groups are now well organised and ready to use emotive campaigns to obtain their ends, regardless of fact' (Dec. 39911, Sub. 35749; 'Joh blasts greenies', *The Courier-Mail*, 14 March 1983, 5). This was particularly the case, Elliott said, with rainforest, which 'had not been cleared in North Queensland since 1972'. In July the High Court decided that the Commonwealth Government had power, under external treaty obligations, to stop the Franklin River dam being built in Tasmania. Premier Bjelke-Petersen declared the court's decision to be 'a black day for Australia that could herald the beginning of the end of federation' ('PM pledge: No rush on new powers', *The Courier-Mail*, 2 July 1983, 1; 'Danger in treaties', *Sunday Mail*, 3 July 1983, 5).

Soon after, Cabinet members authorised 'urgent discussions' on legislation to protect Queensland Railways from 'Federal Government intervention and control', especially in the 'negotiations and approvals for freight rates for Queensland coal and mineral deposits' (Dec. 40924, Sub. 36686). The Attorney-General was asked to examine the removal of Queensland Railways' corporate

status and report back to Cabinet (Dec. 41024, Sub. 36778). In October Cabinet members discussed High Court decisions (Dec. 41418; Dec. 37151). Premier Bjelke-Petersen warned members that adverse High Court decisions would have allowed the Commonwealth to 'nationalise the banks', 'nationalise the airlines' and to 'stop the Tasmanian Dam without compensation'.

Labor governments

Cabinet noted in March the election of Labor governments in Western Australia and Canberra (Dec. 39815, Sub. 35660). Attorney-General Sam Doumany declared this 'fundamental realignment' meant 'all Queensland ministers and officials' would have to 'exercise considerable subtlety and sophistication in order to protect the interests of this state'. 'The High Court', he added, would 'no longer provide any great protection' because 'the majority of justices' were 'opposed to the long-term interests of the states'. The election of a federal Labor government, warned Doumany, meant the Commonwealth could begin to make laws relating to sexual and racial discrimination (Decs 39815 and 39975, Subs 35660 and 35809), as evidenced by the High Court decision on race discrimination in *Koowarta v Bjelke-Petersen*.

Four-year parliamentary terms were also mentioned in March, members noting the idea was 'intrinsically linked with proposals by the Labor Party to introduce fixed parliamentary terms and to impose restrictions on the powers of the Senate' (Dec. 39830, Sub. 35671). In July Cabinet members noted 'the ALP's policy document on local government' (Dec. 40814, Sub. 36579). National Party advertising for the October state election featured 'Socialist' labels on each ALP-controlled state (Advertisement, 'Now, more than ever we must keep Queensland free from socialism ... socialism means more taxes, less jobs', *The Courier-Mail*, 20 October 1983, 7).

Medicare

Health Minister Brian Austin informed ministers that, under present Medicare arrangements with the Commonwealth, Queensland was being 'disadvantaged to the extent of \$130 per patient day' compared with the other states (Dec. 40595, Sub. 36382). The Cabinet agreed in September and December to fund an advertising campaign 'to counteract Commonwealth Government advertising in connection with the introduction of Medicare' (Decs 41321 and 41900, Subs 37063 and 37602).

Education

Computers

The Education Department's policy on 'use of micro-computers' in schools and colleges was approved in July (Dec. 40809, Sub. 36574). Almost 600 computers, mainly purchased by school Parents and Citizens' Associations, were already in use throughout the state's schools. An extra \$1 million might be allocated in the next budget for 'the development of computer education'.

Foreign students

Cabinet discussed the issue of overseas students enrolling in Queensland schools at several meetings (Decs 40501 and 40602: Subs 36295 and 36389; 'New limits on Asian pupils goes to Cabinet', *The Courier-Mail*, 14 June 1983, 3; 'Clampdown on Asian students', *The Courier-Mail*, 22 June 1983, 16). After an early submission was withdrawn and new information provided, the members of Cabinet agreed to limit numbers in high schools and Centres for Continuing Education

to 50 per year, with no more than five to be admitted to any single high school. 'The number of 'Government-sponsored' overseas students admitted in any one year', they decided, 'would not exceed 40'.

Holidays

In August Cabinet approved a proposal from Education Minister Lionel Powell to grant one extra week of holidays for schools in north-western and south-western areas of Queensland, on account of communication and transport difficulties, as well as the fact that 'conditions in December in this region are not conducive to effective learning' (Dec. 40953, Sub. 36715). A second decision that month dealt with the issue of Cabinet ministers granting special holidays to schools they had visited. In future, holidays would only be granted on 'very special occasions' and 'not extended to neighbouring schools or shires' (Dec. 41187, Sub. 36933).

The timing of the 1986 mid-winter school vacation was discussed at a meeting in November, with members deciding to shift the holiday date in order to ensure that Queensland families were at home on Census Day, 30 June 1986. On the last census date (30 June 1981), 'significant numbers' of families were absent on holidays which meant 'some funding decisions by the Commonwealth Government did not take into account all Queensland residents' (Dec. 41642, Sub. 37357).

Review of School Based Assessment

The Review of School Based Assessment (ROSBA) was discussed at a number of Cabinet meetings during 1983 ('New student system may be shelved', *The Courier-Mail*, 24 January 1983, 1; '11th hour change tipped for ROSBA', *The Courier-Mail*, 26 January 1983, 3; 'ROSBA delay hits job hopes', *The Courier-Mail*, 23 May 1983, 10; 'Teachers find gradings flaw in new system', *The Courier-Mail*, 10 December 1983, 3). In May Cabinet gave approval for the implementation of ROSBA in Phase III schools, corresponding with Education Minister Lionel Powell's plan for all secondary schools to convert from the 'Radford' scheme to ROSBA by the end of 1986 (Dec. 40228, Sub. 36041). Other submissions from the Education Minister, including his recommendation in February that the Education Department be permitted to develop 'a logo or stylised symbol' on publications and letterheads, were not so favourably received (Dec. 39563, Sub. 35423).

Social Education Materials Project

Issues such as teaching about human relationships, sex and religion in schools were very topical issues during the 1980s ('Fed up on sex report delays', *The Courier-Mail*, 13 April 1983, 14; 'Joyner to fight new school kit', *The Courier-Mail*, 8 December 1983, 2). Private Christian schools, which 'resisted any suggestion of state control of educational standards', began to emerge throughout Queensland (Dec. 39570, Sub. 35430; 'State drops school plan', *The Courier-Mail*, 22 February 1983, 11).

Premier Bjelke-Petersen clashed with the Education Minister over his sex education recommendations. The Social Education Materials Project (SEMP), providing a package of suitable 'human relationships' material, had been rejected by Cabinet in 1978 and a second attempt to have the program delivered in Queensland schools was withdrawn (Dec. 39864, Sub. 35707; 'Joh orders holidaying minister back to work', *The Courier-Mail*, 6 April 1983, 1). Instead, Cabinet members decided in May that a voluntary course on human relationships, devised by John

Robson of the Family Life Movement and still to be finally approved by Cabinet, could be offered 'out of regular school hours' to interested parents and their children 'of the appropriate age' (Dec. 40142, Sub. 35963; 'Cabinet 'yes' to lessons on sex', *The Courier-Mail*, 4 May 1983, 11).

Tertiary education

In January Cabinet approved amending legislation related to traffic control, financial borrowing and representation at Queensland's three universities (Dec. 39418, Sub. 35293). Approval was granted in April for a letter to be written to the Prime Minister 'drawing attention' to 'underfunding of tertiary education' in Queensland (Dec. 40007, Sub. 35837). Education Minister Lionel Powell's argument was based on the increase in Queensland's population and the state's lower participation rate in tertiary studies: 'Queensland has at least 16 per cent of Australia's population but receives much less than 16 per cent of Commonwealth funding for tertiary education'.

A decision made in May required all statutory authority employees, including those working in universities and colleges of advanced education, to apply for Cabinet's approval of any overseas travel (Dec. 40201, Sub. Oral, Edwards). Cabinet subsequently rejected an application made in June for an overseas visit by a Queensland Institute of Technology lecturer, noting the trip's 'insubstantial justification' (Dec. 40474, Sub. 36273; 'Curb on trip sparks row', *The Courier-Mail*, 31 August 1983, 12). A proposal to drastically reorganise the delivery of tertiary education in Queensland was deferred in August (Dec. 41159, Sub. 36905). Expected economic difficulties would lead to reduced funding and the most cost-effective way to deliver tertiary education under these circumstances was seen as combining all three existing universities into one institution, to be known as 'the Queensland State University'.

Elections

In June the Premier recommended parliamentarians be granted three-quarters of their allowances for 1983–84 before the upcoming election, but Cabinet decided instead to allow them to only use half their travel allowances before the election (Dec. 40564, Sub. 36352). Cabinet passed a number of decisions relating to the *Elections Act 1983*, which replaced the existing *Elections Act 1915-1976*, during meetings held in July, August and September (Decs 40837, 40857, 41307 and 41065; Subs 36603, 37126, and 36818). Most decisions related to the fees and allowances for Returning Officers and other administrative details, including special provisions for districts declared as 'remote areas', such as Cape York, Mount Isa and Roma. In August the government announced that a state election would be held on 22 October ('Election under way', *The Courier-Mail*, 23 August 1983, 1).

Arrangements for the state tally room were approved in late August (Dec. 41158, Sub. 36904). Cabinet members endorsed a joint submission from Justice Minister Neville Harper and Minister for Works Claude Wharton 'minimising the possibility of any disruption' which meant 'political party supporters' could gain entry to 'major political party rooms' (National, Liberal, ALP) but 'the general public will not be admitted'. Police would 'make secure' the tally room, located at the QEII Jubilee Sports Centre. In September Cabinet decided to authorise the use of charter aircraft by the Leader of the Opposition (Dec. 41350, Sub. 37094).

Electricity

Mines and Energy Minister Ivan Gibbs presented a submission in January concerning the exclusion of 'certain coastal sites', currently under investigation for coal-fired power stations, from a proposed Barrier Reef Marine Park (Dec. 39425, Sub. 35300). In February Premier Bjelke-Petersen's recommendation that 'electricity be available to every resident of Queensland by 1988' was adopted (Dec. 39548, Sub. Oral, Bjelke-Petersen; 'Power to outback by 1988 - Joh', *The Courier-Mail*, 7 February 1983, 3). Minister Gibbs recommended that charities and pensioners not be granted cheaper electricity tariffs, and ministers concurred (Dec. 39869, Sub. 35712).

Electricity Tariff increases of 10 per cent, later reduced to nine per cent, were approved in May, with a further eight per cent increase to be added in 1984 (Decs 40143, 40198 and 40246; Subs 35964, 36015 and Oral, Gibbs). New electricity tariff arrangements for 'major projects', such as the Comalco Aluminium Smelter at Gladstone, were considered at meetings held in June, September and October (Decs 40467, 41354, 41373 and 41409, Subs 36266, Oral, Bjelke-Petersen, 37112 and 37188).

Cabinet noted in May and August that the State Electricity Commission and the Queensland Government Development Authority (on behalf of the Harbours Corporation) had borrowed \$25 million from Japanese lenders and \$117 million from lenders in the US (Decs 40313, 40954, 41128 and 41149, Subs 36122, 36711, 36878 and 36895). In November approval for the construction of the Stanwell Power Station was granted, with electricity production to commence in 1990 (Dec. 41682, Sub. 37397).

Employment

Unemployment rates in Queensland reached 11.5 per cent during February 1983. Almost 40 submissions made by Premier Bjelke-Petersen throughout the year informed the members of Cabinet about 'employment from government works'.

Community Employment Program

Cabinet first considered community-based employment projects, aimed at long-term unemployed, in February (Dec. 39471, Sub. 35338). 'In principle' approval of departmental involvement in special youth employment training was granted soon after, which meant 400 jobs were subsidised in government departments and authorities for four months (Dec. 39582, Sub. 35442). In June members decided that Queensland would participate in the Commonwealth's Community Employment Program, a scheme aimed at 'disadvantaged people' such as 'Aborigines, disabled, women, migrants, etc' (Dec. 40601, Sub. 36388; Advertisement 'Our new employment program could help put your group's community project on the map', *The Courier-Mail*, 2 September 1983, 14).

Premier Bjelke-Petersen criticised the scheme for having 'many of the trappings of the infamous R.E.D. [Regional Employment Development] scheme of the previous Federal Labor Government, notably an over involvement by the Commonwealth and grass roots community in the ponderous administrating, approving and reporting mechanisms which is counter productive to the basic objective of putting the money quickly and effectively to work to the benefit of the unemployed'. The problems with the scheme that he foresaw led him to have 'very serious doubts as to whether

worthwhile community projects can be undertaken under the restrictive and heavy-handed guidelines' but if Queensland did not participate 'it could be seen as obstructionist and displaying a lack of concern for the unemployed in this state'.

Members of Cabinet decided in August to 'commit to maximum involvement in the program to optimise the state benefit', while simultaneously maintaining a 'continued objection officially and publicly to the fabric of the program and its administration' (Dec. 40964, Sub. 36721). With \$125 million in Commonwealth funding at stake, Treasurer Llew Edwards convinced ministers to overlook issues such as the exclusion of the Main Roads Department from the scheme, 'the emphasis given to female job creation' and the discouragement of the use of contractors, 'which will exclude worthwhile works such as sewerage'.

Public Service

In January Cabinet approved a scheme to recruit 300 extra school leavers to the public service (Dec. 39444, Sub. 35319). The allocation of these new positions, mainly to the Education, Police and Health departments, was noted in May (Dec. 40339, Sub. 36142). The total cost, \$200,000, was approved in June (Dec. 40429, Sub. 36228).

Wages Pause

In January Cabinet approved a special \$75 million capital works program (Dec. 39346, Sub. Oral, Edwards). Members also discussed Commonwealth funds for unemployment relief connected with the 1982–83 Wages Pause (Dec. 39396, Sub. 35274). The Treasurer told members that funds would be available to December 1983, to be used in a number of areas, including local government works (\$40 million), teacher and public servant housing (\$10 million), and railway staff housing and accommodation (\$10 million).

Health

Cabinet members voted in April to accept a donation of \$1.5 million from the Leukemia Foundation of Queensland for the construction of a bone marrow transplant unit (Dec. 40060, Sub. 35887). A further donation from the Association of \$600,000 for an extra floor on the new Queensland Radium Institute building was accepted in July (Dec. 40826, Sub. 36591). In June the Cabinet agreed that Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) would be declared a 'Notifiable Disease' (Dec. 40596, Sub. 36383). Minister Austin said there were 'currently no known cases of AIDS in Queensland' ('First Aust. AIDS death', *Sunday Mail*, 10 July 1983, 3). In November Cabinet approved the establishment of a short-term Mosquito Elimination Campaign in North Queensland, enlisting long-term unemployed people to remove and reduce possible mosquito breeding places and sites (Dec. 41738, Sub. 37446).

Hospitals

The calling of public tenders for hospital construction work was approved and then rescinded by Cabinet in May and June (Decs 40402 and 40481; Subs Oral, Bjelke-Petersen and Oral, Austin). Commonwealth–state hospital funding arrangements were discussed in June and July (Decs 40595 and 40776, Subs 36382 and 36549). Cabinet minutes from August and September detailed the approval of 'gratuitous payments' of \$25,000 for companies making presentations on new hospital contracts (Decs 41190 and 41260; Subs 36935, 37004 and 37010; 'Firms asked for fees',

The Courier-Mail, 10 September 1983, 4). In October Cabinet decided to pay \$25,000 each to five companies tendering for hospital construction contracts (Dec. 41495, Sub. 37225).

Radioactive sand

Sand mining on beaches created thorium 232, a radioactive substance with a half life of 10,000 million years. The disposal of this radioactive sand, first raised during 1982, was discussed by Cabinet members at seven meetings during 1983. In March Health Minister Brian Austin recommended that radioactive sand stockpiled in Brisbane be transported, at government expense, back to Stradbroke Island and disposed of in 'dune reconstruction' but his submission was withdrawn (Dec. 39738, Sub. 35586). Further meetings between March and June considered detailed information on the risks of radioactive sand, the distribution of contaminated material (particularly at four state schools and one private school) in Brisbane and the cost of transporting the sand (Decs 39757, 39786, 39878, 39899, 39900, 39955, 40385 and 40453; Subs 36252, 35605, 35631, 35657, 35721, 35737, 35738, 35789, 36188 and 36252). The subject was revisited in October, when Cabinet decided to continue transporting stockpiled material from Brisbane to Stradbroke Island although the funding of this arrangement was not determined (Dec. 41420, Sub. 37153).

Smoking

In April Cabinet endorsed a submission from the Health Minister on tobacco smoking and the advertising of tobacco products (Dec. 40061, Sub. 35888). The Standing Committee of Australian Health Ministers aimed for 'the establishment of a non-smoking generation by 2000', but Queensland would not support legislative action restricting tobacco advertising or sports sponsorship by tobacco companies. 'Public education' was seen as a more preferable way to dissuade people from smoking, and legislation to create 'smoke free areas' was described as 'harassment and infringement of rights'. The phasing out of financial assistance to tobacco growers was not supported.

Industrial relations

Members of Cabinet were briefed on industrial issues in the electricity supply industry at every Cabinet meeting held in 1983. Few submissions resulted in action: in February and March ministers agreed to refuse claims made by unions involved in the industry (Decs 39624, 39805 and 39806; Subs 35477, 35650 and 35651). A meeting in August decided to support a 'coordinated approach' to oppose union claims (Dec. 41104, Sub. 36853). Cabinet decided in November to advise all departments and statutory authorities that union membership was 'not a requirement for appointment or continued employment of employees' (Decs 4160 and 41812, Subs 37342 and Oral, Bjelke-Petersen). The State Industrial Commission declared a six-month 'wages freeze' in January, rejecting the Queensland Government's application for a 12 month pause ('State wages frozen for six months', *The Courier-Mail*, 5 January 1983, 1).

In February Cabinet members voted to accept a commissioned report *The Effects of Industrial Agreements and Arrangements with Unions on the Operation and Efficiency of Queensland Railways*, noting the consultants had identified 'a number of industrial benefits to railway employees which are in excess of acceptable community standards'; government-owned railway activities were under review throughout the year (Decs 39494, 39645 and 39972; Subs 35498 and 35806; 'Railways get major shake-up', *The Courier-Mail*, 2 February 1983, 1; 'Blueprint to save

\$130m on railways', *The Courier-Mail*, 5 April 1983, 1; 'Railways subsidy near \$3m a week', *The Courier-Mail*, 26 November 1983, 1).

At the National Economic Summit held in April 1983, unions were persuaded by Prime Minister Hawke to restrict strikes and demands for wage rises in exchange for 'improved social wages' from employers and government. Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen and Treasurer Llew Edwards, who both attended the summit, reported to Cabinet on negotiations and proceedings (Dec. 40076, Sub. 35903). In May Cabinet members considered a redundancy test case mounted by the Australian Council of Trade Unions before the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, agreeing to 'intervene' and engage counsel to oppose the union application (Dec. 40321, Sub. 36130). A second decision continued 'an attitude of opposition' (Dec. 40392, Sub. 36195).

The engagement of counsel to oppose the National Wage Case was authorised in June (Dec. 40541, Sub., Oral, Knox). A secret minute listed the Queensland Government's submissions, which included the rejection of wage indexation and opposition to the ACTU claim for a wage increase based on the Consumer Prices Index (Dec. 40686, Sub. 36470). The Queensland Government supported a continuation of the wages pause, 'for as long as it is economically and industrially viable'.

In August ministers approved the briefing of counsel to oppose a National Building Trades Agreement (Dec. 40982, Sub. 36736). An application by the Teacher's Association of Australia for federal registration was discussed in November (Dec. 41861, Sub. Oral, Lester). Cabinet considered changes to superannuation cover for public servants at meetings in June and July (Decs 40530, 40681 and 40781, Subs 36324, 36465 and 36554; 'Public backlash on super, *The Courier-Mail*, 6 July 1983, 1).

Industry assistance

Manufacturing assistance

Cabinet approved financial assistance, in various forms, to a number of manufacturing businesses, including Bradford Kendall Foundries, Morris Woollen Mills, Sutton's Foundry, and Tube Estates throughout the year ('A quick re-start hope at foundry', *The Courier-Mail*, 23 September 1983, 12). In each case, strategic importance, financial viability and numbers of employees were critical factors in the success of applications (Decs 39979, 40626, 41462, 41493, 41537, 41550, 41601 and 42017; Subs 35813, 36410, 37229, 37266, 37323 and 37712). Assistance for an oilseed processing plant in Central Queensland proposed by a Paraguayan businessman, Dr Shrian Oskar, was initially promised but later withdrawn (Decs 4000 and 40200, Subs 35830 and Oral, Gunn; '\$6 mil loan to oilseed plant', *The Courier-Mail*, 12 April 1983, 9; 'Oskar: I'll quit over Edwards', *The Courier-Mail*, 20 April 1983, 1).

Retail businesses

In May Cabinet decided not to support the establishment of hypermarkets in Queensland (Dec. 40309, Sub. 36118). A meeting in June approved a recommendation from Local Government Minister Hinze for the amendment of town planning schemes 'throughout the state where hypermarkets might be anticipated' so rezoning could not be passed without the state government's consent (Dec. 40458, Sub. 36257). Legislation over hypermarket establishment was endorsed in August (Dec. 41005, Sub. 36759). In November Cabinet discussed a Bill relating to retail shopping leases but further consideration of the Retail Shop Leases Act was postponed in

December until 'a later meeting of Cabinet' (Decs 41784 and 41814, Sub. 37492; 'Shop lease law change is deferred', *The Courier-Mail*, 6 December 1983, 1; 'Shop lease about-face', *The Courier-Mail*, 16 December 1983, 1).

State Preference Policy

The Cabinet approved a new State Preference Policy in May, despite opposition to this idea at an Industry Minister's Conference (Decs 40234, 40133, 40252 and 40379; Subs 35954, 36047 and 36182). A meeting in August voted to maintain a State Preference Policy for goods supplied to the Queensland Government 'for so long as the New South Wales and Victorian Governments maintain their present policies' (Dec. 41090; Subs 36827 and 36869). Further consideration of a 'preference' clause in construction contracts was also discussed in November (Decs 41628 and 41692; Subs 37301 and 37448).

Mining

Coal exports

Coal mining and export from Queensland was a rapidly expanding economic activity during the 1980s. The major customer was Japan. New ports and railway lines were constructed to allow export of coking and steaming coal to Asia and the rest of the world. Major coal carrying railway lines were electrified (Decs 40965 and 41573, Subs 36722 and 37297; '\$270m start for rail grand plan', *The Courier-Mail*, 3 December 1983, 13). Cabinet decided in August to implement a 1982 decision that state royalties 'should take priority over Commonwealth excises, taxes and other imposts on resources' (Decs 37269 and 40987, Sub. 36741). A ten per cent reduction in coal freight rates was announced in December ('Coal freight rates drop by 10 percent', *The Courier-Mail*, 23 December 1983, 9).

A plan to export coal through a new Bribie Island port, first proposed during 1982, was eventually rejected (Dec. 41313, Sub. 37057; 'Second port study is ordered', *The Courier-Mail*, 12 January 1983, 1; 'Miners will get port at Bribie', *The Courier-Mail*, 18 January 1983, 7; 'Coal port at Bribie dropped', *The Courier-Mail*, 13 September 1983, 3). A site at Red Rocks near Bundaberg was also briefly considered (Dec. 39293, Sub. 35088; 'Govt hits a snag in coal port plans', *Sunday Mail*, 16 January 1983, 6). Port Clinton, near Yeppoon, was removed from the list of potential sites after Australian Defence Force claims to the Shoalwater Bay training area were supported by the federal government ('Canberra stand hits port hopes', *The Courier-Mail*, 2 March 1983, 3).

Trial coal exports to Korea, Spain, Malaysia and Hong Kong were approved (Decs 40087, 40424, 41472 and 41510; Subs 35910, 36223, 37202 and 37239; 'Samples may lead to \$100m deal', *Sunday Mail*, 21 August 1983, 36). In January Premier Bjelke-Petersen and Treasurer Edwards reported to Cabinet on their recent trip to Japan, where reductions in coking coal imports were discussed (Dec. 39339, Sub. 35222; 'Coal loss could hit employment', *The Courier-Mail*, 4 January 1983, 2; 'Assurance by Edwards on coal jobs', *The Courier-Mail*, 11 January 1983, 10; 'Australia awaits 'coal war' talks', *The Courier-Mail*, 1 February 1983, 22). Mines Minister Ivan Gibbs kept members informed of concerns and trends within the mining sector (Decs 39423 and 39534; Subs 35298 and 35397).

Financing and delays in the construction and operational requirements of the Dalrymple Bay (Hay Point) coal terminal – expected to become 'one of the largest coal terminals in the world' – were discussed at a number of Cabinet meetings (Decs 39350, 39917, 40204 and 41020; Subs 35229,

35755, 36017 and 36774). The provision of navigational aids to mark Hydrographer's Passage, allowing coal ships to traverse the Great Barrier Reef from Hay Point, was discussed as well (Decs 40607 and 41618; Subs 36391 and 37340). Ministers noted that the passage was originally charted to allow navy ships to rapidly deploy from the coast to the Coral Sea.

Issues connected with BHP's purchase of the Utah Development Company, which operated seven mines in Central Queensland, were discussed by Cabinet (Decs 41392, 41411; Subs 37131, 37193; 'Record BHP Buy', *The Courier-Mail*, 29 January 1983, 1). New coal mining areas were offered and released at the Ensham (Emerald) and Winchester South (Moranbah) areas in Central Queensland (Decs 40324, 41214, 41343, 41419, 41496, 41500, 41703 and 41910; Subs 36133, 36956, 37085, 37152, 37226, 37411, and 37612; 'Winchester goes full steam astern', *The Courier-Mail*, 12 September 1983, 15; 'Coalfield will make fortune - Minister', *The Courier-Mail*, 7 December 1983, 13). Part of the Isaac River (near Moranbah) was diverted to benefit mining operations (Dec. 41768, Sub. 37476).

Greenvale nickel mine

In February the Treasurer informed ministers about the current situation of the Greenvale nickel mine and processing plant near Townsville (Dec. 39483, Sub. 35350; 'Secret Japan talks on nickel', *The Courier-Mail*, 18 February 1983, 11). Falling prices and increasing costs threatened the project's continued operations, and a looming 'cash crisis' could only be averted by reducing production. The Treasurer reported again after he attended a joint venture meeting in San Francisco and a customer meeting in Tokyo (Decs 39601 and 39882; Subs 35461 and 35725). Rezoning of land adjacent to the nickel refinery for residential development, north of Townsville, was approved by Cabinet in September, reversing an earlier decision to block the rezoning on the grounds of air-pollution risks (Decs 40947 and 41244; Subs 36704 and 36987).

Jackson-Moonie pipeline

Issues connected with the construction and operation of oil pipelines from Western Queensland to the coast were discussed at a number of meetings throughout the year (Decs 39492, 39654, 39711, 39717, 39986, 39989, 39990, 40196, 40323, 41033 and 42063; Subs 35359, 35507, 35564, 35565, 35820, 35823, 35824, 36013, 36132, 36787 and 37758; 'Ultimatum is given for oil pipe contract', *The Courier-Mail*, 29 January 1983, 3; 'Time limit on oil pipeline', *The Courier-Mail*, 11 February 1983, 8). Plans for a Korean company to be involved were rejected by the Foreign Investment Review Board ('Govt rebuff for Jackson pair', *The Courier-Mail*, 7 May 1983, 12). An Australian company was also unsuccessful in bidding to build the pipeline (Decs 41603 and 41624, Subs 37325 and Oral, Bjelke-Petersen; 'State will not back Red Ru', *The Courier-Mail*, 2 November 1983, 13; 'Pipeline cash hitch as Govt rules firm out', *The Courier-Mail*, 11 November 1983, 3).

Miscellaneous

Bread industry

In June Cabinet asked the Minister for Primary Industries to 'investigate the formal referral of the situation which has developed in the bread industry', where bakeries were engaging in 'intensive competition' (Decs 40397 and 40405, Sub. 36201). A Bill 'to provide for the zoning of areas and franchising of bakers', complete with penalties for breaches, was approved.

Cloud seeding

The payment of \$50,000 was approved in February for a pilot rain-making scheme, to be undertaken by Dr Irving Krick from California, using silver iodine particles in a ground-located generator (Dec. 39653, Sub. 35506).

Government Air Wing

Meetings in November approved the establishment and operations of the Government Air Wing, which brought the ministerial aircraft and three police aircraft into one unit (Decs 41619 and 41809; Subs 37341 and 37517).

Heritage protection

Cabinet agreed in June to establish a Heritage Advisory Committee to advise state and local governments about the protection and preservation of historic buildings, objects and sites 'except those owned by the government' (Dec. 40504, Sub. 36298). The Committee would compile a register, which would be used to determine valuations, concessions, rates and other incentives so building owners might 'preserve, restore or recycle historic buildings, objects and sites'.

Koalas for Japan

Approval for 18 koalas to be exported to Japan, as a publicity exercise, was passed during November and December (Decs 41710 and 42085, Subs 37418 and 37782).

Promotion

In April and December Cabinet approved funds for the production of a television program 'Queensland Unlimited' promoting the state (Decs 40020 and 42090; Subs 35844 and 37729; 'State to pay for Joh's TV soft-sell', *The Courier-Mail*, 20 April 1983, 3; '\$11,500 a week to plug state', *The Courier-Mail*, 23 December 1983, 11).

Queensland Year of the Family

A planning committee, to organise events and activities, was approved in August and November for the Queensland Year of the Family in 1984 (Decs 41157 and 41772, Subs 36903 and 37480).

Stradbroke Island bridge

In February the period for bridge proposals was extended to May (Dec. 39651, Sub 35504). Further consideration of the matter was deferred in May 'to enable further investigations to be made' (Decs 40189 and 40326, Subs 36006). Cabinet decided, in December, to extend the closing date for submissions related to bridge construction until June 1984 (Dec. 42036, Sub. 37731). The bridge plan was finally dropped in 1986 ('Stradbroke bridge axed - too costly', *The Courier-Mail*, 25 February 1986, 3).

State Protective Security Service

Cabinet decided in March to approve legislation establishing a new 'essential service', the State Government Protective Security Service, to protect government buildings (Decs 39821 and 39880; Subs 35666 and 35723).

Supreme Court judge

Cabinet approved in August the appointment of an additional judge to the Supreme Court despite Attorney-General Sam Doumany's original recommendation for two extra judges (Decs 39428 and 41180; Subs 35303 and 36926).

Technology

In March Cabinet decided that the Premier should be responsible for 'high technology development' in Queensland (Decs 39784 and 39825; Subs 35629 and 35676).

Parliament

Members of Cabinet voted in February to increase parliamentary salaries (Dec. 39538, Sub. 35401).

Liberal Party leader

The election of Terry White as the Liberal Party's parliamentary leader on 9 August triggered a political and constitutional crisis which resulted in the dissolution of the Liberal-National Party coalition ('Joh to opt for minority rule', *The Courier-Mail*, 10 August 1983, 1; 'Joh plans to take Treasury', *The Courier-Mail*, 11 August 1983, 1; 'Coalition all set to collapse', *The Courier-Mail*, 12 August 1983, 1). At a meeting in August Cabinet gave approval 'as an interim measure only' for the Parliamentary Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr White, to be provided with an office in Parliament House, a typewriter, a photocopier, two office staff, a car and unlimited air travel within Queensland 'until the General Election is held' (Dec. 41141, Sub. 36887). After the election Cabinet decided that the leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party was entitled to a car and driver, with 'the matter of other concessions to be determined by the Premier' (Dec. 41691, Sub. Oral, Bjelke-Petersen).

Ministers' expenses

Cabinet decided in February that ministers' expenses would be reported as 'Notes' in their departmental accounts, which would 'avoid the details being highlighted', 'make comparisons less obvious' and 'avert the inevitable criticism that would result from a decision to discontinue the reports' (Dec. 39547, Sub. 35410). In March members ratified the Treasurer's submission and also decided to 'subsume' the following items 'in departmental figures': expenses relating to ministers' private secretaries and other officers; airfares and vehicle costs, and travel costs 'other than accommodation, meals, entertainment and like costs' (Dec. 39881, Sub. 35724). 'Travelling expenses in hotels, meals, etc. and entertainment, functions, liquor and beverages' would be itemised under 'Notes' in departmental accounts. Officers were 'not to offer comment on the level or nature of expenses'.

Legal action involving members and ministers

In March the members of Cabinet agreed to cover all expenses incurred by the Minister for Justice in regard to legal action he had brought against several media companies (Dec. 39889, Sub. Oral, Edwards). Similarly, a defamation writ issued by John Gayler in Cairns against MJ Ahern, the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology, was passed for defence by the Crown Solicitor (Dec. 41728, Sub. 37436). Cabinet approved the defence expenses, costs and any damages of JA Elliott, MLA, the former Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and the Arts, in relation to alleged defamatory material he released about a film *Goodbye Joey*, during November (Dec. 41746, Sub. 37455).

Police and crime

Police budget

In May the Treasurer told Cabinet \$2.5 million was urgently needed by the Police Department (Dec. 40124, Sub. 35945). Part of the expense overrun was related to the purchase of a police aircraft (\$575,000) which had not been provided for in the Budget (Decs 39946 and 40623, Subs 35780 and 36407). The Treasurer noted 'the apparent absence of any meaningful and effective mechanism for budget control', and said while he was 'sympathetic to budgetary problems that arise unavoidably in departments from time to time'; he was 'not convinced that the situation in the Police Department is beyond the control of the department':

Budget over-runs in the Police Department have become an annual occurrence despite relatively generous budget allocations and exhortations from Cabinet and Treasury for the institution of efficient commitment and expenditure control procedures.

Consideration of extra police was discussed in May (Dec. 40334, Sub. 36137). Police Minister Glasson informed members that 'development, growth and increasing urbanisation tend to attract people with a greater propensity for crime'. Violence, drug importation and other offences, he said, continued to increase throughout Queensland.

Cabinet approved an additional allocation of \$2.73 million for the Police Department in June after Police Minister William Glasson argued that increased wage costs resulted from 'an abnormally high number of murders, extortion attempts, armed hold-ups and other crimes' (Dec. 40552, Sub. 36340; 'Police budget spill blamed on control, *The Courier-Mail*, 26 June 1983, 14). The preparation, in principle, of a Drug Trafficking Bill was approved in August, with ministers deciding not to adopt a proposal 'for payments to a Police Drug Control Fund of the proceeds of forfeited goods, etc' despite this clause being recommended by Minister Glasson (Dec. 41041, Sub. 36793).

Stewart Royal Commission

Members of Cabinet considered the Commonwealth's Royal Commission into Drug Trafficking (the Stewart Inquiry) throughout the year. In February they re-affirmed Queensland's decision made in 1982 not to participate in the Inquiry into the activities of the Nugan Hand Bank (Decs 38169 and 39595; Sub. 35455). The Stewart Inquiry's report was discussed in May and July (Decs 40314, 40812 and 40813, Subs 36123 and 36578). Specific recommendations were rejected, including the creation of an 'Inspectorate' to 'root out police corruption' ('see no need for it'), and the use of uniformed police 'in areas of high corruption risk' ('best left to plain clothes officers'). Police

Commissioner Lewis' proposal, presented in July, that an Inspectorate, staffed by one officer, be formed to 'ensure procedures, policies and systems are adhered to', was approved (Dec. 40806, Sub. 36571).

Issues connected with the creation of a National Crimes Authority were considered in September, with Cabinet agreeing to 'maintain a low profile in relation to the proposal' (Dec. 41390, Sub. 37129). Justice Minister Neville Harper told members the proposals 'are of concern from Queensland's point of view' because:

[I]t will be possible for the Labor states to use their majority on the inter-governmental committee to commence investigations into matters not involving breaches of the laws of the State of Queensland, but which could cause political concern to Queensland.

The Police Union wanted Premier Bjelke-Petersen to take control of the force, refusing to 'liaise or deal with (Police Minister) Glasson in any way' ('We'll talk to Joh, police union says', *The Courier-Mail*, 27 April 1983, 3). One newspaper said in June that Glasson and Bjelke-Petersen disagreed about Queensland's participation in the National Crimes Authority, with Glasson apparently admitting 'corruption existed within the Queensland Police Force' ('Glasson, Joh clash on crime', *The Courier-Mail*, 2 June 1983, 1). In July the members of Cabinet re-affirmed that the National Institute of Forensic Science should be, as agreed in 1982, sited in Brisbane despite Minister Glasson recommending that the facility would be better located in Melbourne (Dec. 40744, Sub. 36517).

Conclusion

With hindsight, 1983, a pivotal year in Queensland's political history, represents the pinnacle of the Bjelke-Petersen era. Although many commentators anticipated a Labor victory at the state election, Bjelke-Petersen instead managed to form a minority government by convincing key Liberal Party members to defect to the National Party. Some may connect what took place during 1983 with the events of 1987, when Bjelke-Petersen resigned as Queensland's Premier and Treasurer, and 1991, when the Fitzgerald Inquiry heard charges of corruption and perjury made against him, but his 1983 electoral victory was a landmark event in Queensland's history.