

Australia's Next Great National Project

THE *Bradfield* SCHEME

The greatest scheme of all

As the driest continent on Earth, it has been a continual dream of many Australians to be able to bring water to the arid inland, opening up the millions of hectares therein to agriculture, population and economic growth.

To date, the only large-scale water diversion scheme implemented in Australia is the Snowy Mountains Scheme. But there have been many other schemes that were imaginatively conceived to increase water availability in Australia, but for various reasons have not been implemented.

Perhaps the most famous - and most controversial - of these has been *The Bradfield Scheme*.

Dr. J.J.C. Bradfield CMG D.Sc. M.E. (1867-1943), born at Sandgate Qld and educated at Ipswich and the University of Sydney, designed the Sydney Harbour Bridge; was the consulting engineer on the Story bridge across the Brisbane River; helped design and plan the University of Queensland; engineered the building of Sydney's electric railway system; and was deputy Chancellor of the University of Sydney from 1942 until his death.

He was associated with a great range of engineering work including the Cataract Dam near Sydney and the Burrinjuck Dam which formed part of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area.

But Dr. Bradfield is possibly better known for something that he did *not* build - his magnificent plan for the watering of inland Australia which he presented to the Queensland government in 1938, following a lifelong interest in irrigation and water conservation.

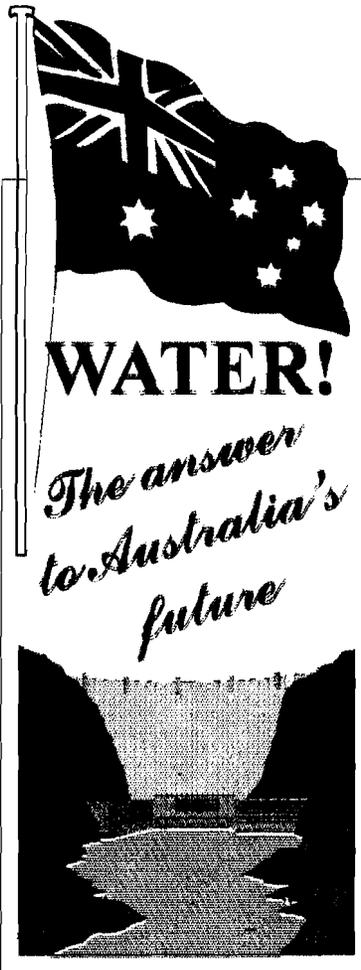
The arid interior of the Australian continent and the intermittent flow of the vast river system that drains towards Lake Eyre have acted as a challenge to many men with dreams who sought to make the dry lands blossom.

These dreams have two recurring features ... the filling of the dry bed of Lake Eyre in the centre Australia in the hope that evaporation from the water surface would increase rainfall in the vicinity, and the diversion of Queensland coastal rivers to feed the watercourses of the inland system.

Dr. Bradfield's plan involved diverting the waters of the upper reaches of the Johnson, Tully, Herbert, Burdekin and Flinders Rivers one into the other, then into the Thompson, thence into Lake Eyre, refilling it and, with evaporation, creating a climate change and rainfall throughout inland Australia.

The Lake Eyre Basin has a total catchment of approximately one fifth of Australia's land mass, with an average annual rainfall of no more than 230 millimetres.....less than 10 inches.

(Continued overleaf)



The greatest scheme of all

(Continued from Page 1)

On the other hand, the tropical north-eastern section of Queensland is a land of many rivers draining an area of 970,000 square kilometres with an average rainfall of 790 millimetres. It contains the highest rainfall areas in Australia.

It was such an obvious waste of Australia's most valuable asset - water - that drove Dr. Bradfield to spend some of his later years riding through Queensland's "super wet" belt, surveying his dream.

On horseback, and armed with only the most basic of surveying equipment, Dr. Bradfield fought his way through the dense rainforests of the mountains behind Innisfail and Ingham, to come up with the design for his grand plan. Such was his skill, that later engineers and surveyors could find very little fault with the overall concept of his plan, and the sites he picked for his dams.

But, as is mostly the case with men well ahead of their time, Dr. Bradfield's dream of turning Central Australia into what he called his "*Ghirraween*" (A Place of Flowers), also had its detractors.

Following his first concrete proposal of the scheme in 1938 in a report to the Queensland government, and having great excitement and a large and loyal basis of support, it wasn't long before the criticisms started to come.

In evidence on the Bradfield Scheme to the Commonwealth Rural Reconstruction Commission, an engineer - H.P. Moss, A.M.I.E. (Aust.) - told the commission that some parts of the scheme were feasible, that many of Bradfield's claims could not be justified, and that no firm opinion could be expressed on other points without further technical investigation.

A more detailed assessment was made in 1947 by W.H.R. Nimmo, chief engineer of the Stanley River Works Board - later head of the Queensland Water Resources Commission - in a report to the Queensland government on Bradfield's 1938 proposals.

His general conclusions were that some portions of the Scheme were physically impossible - for instance, the building of a suitable dam with sufficient storage capacity at Hells Gates; that, at best, less than a third of the diverted flow of 170,000 litres of water per second envisaged by Bradfield would be attainable by any feasible modification of his original plans; and that one of his levels was slightly out and water would not gravitate between the Burdekin and Flinders Rivers.

Following a resurgence of interest in the Bradfield Scheme, sparked by criticism of the Burdekin Falls Dam project, in 1981 Dr Eric Heicecker, Senior Lecturer in Geology at Queensland University; Roy Stainkey, a fourth generation Mid-West sheepman; and Hon. Bob Katter MLA, then Queensland Minister for Northern Development, produced the *Queensland N.P.A. Water Resources Sub-Committee Report*.

This report proposed using the waters from the upper reaches of the four coastal streams and diverting them onto the Mid-West and Central Western Plains for irrigation of crops, cattle fattening, timber farms and drought mitigation for sheep.

Consequently, the Queensland Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen announced that the Queensland government was going to move forward with this revised scheme, and secured a commitment of \$5 million from the then Federal government.

Following Fraser's 1983 defeat, when the Bicentennial programme was axed by the incoming Hawke Labor gov-

ernment, the Bjelke-Petersen government commissioned its own study by a consortium of Australia's leading water engineers.

Bringing together four of Australia's best-known hydraulic engineering firms - Gutteridge Haskins & Davey, Monro & Johnson, McIntyre & Associates, and Cameron McNamara - the State government formed the Bradfield Study Consortium in 1984.

This report was never released.

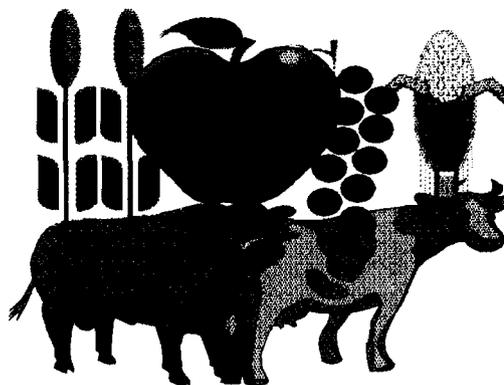
Cabinet directed the Office of Northern Development to produce a Cost Benefit Assessment of the Consortium Report, indicating also Ways and Means. The Northern Development assessment was completed late in 1989.

With the fall of the National Party government, neither report was ever made public. The Consortium Report & Assessment and the Feasibility Study were both public documents but neither was published by the new Goss government.

In July, 1993, a major breakthrough occurred when all of the relevant Shire Councils of North & Central Queensland banded together to form the Northern Australia Water Development Council.

This body is intent on seeing that the Bradfield Scheme is now given a fair hearing, and intends to liaise with both the Federal and State governments to bring about this second great national project — a project that will take Australia to its next level of development.

(Continued overleaf)



The greatest scheme of all

(Continued from Page 2)

The Snowy Mountains Scheme gave Australia the post-war boost it needed to become a nation of strength in the 1950's ... the N.A.W.D.C. believes that the Bradfield Scheme will take the nation into the 21st Century as a regional leader.

In times such as we are experiencing now of high unemployment and low economic growth, Australia should be looking to massive public works programmes (such as Bradfield) to boost employment.

Compare our current situation with what happened in the United States under Franklin Deleanor Roosevelt with his *New Deal* during the 1930's Depression.

Instead of paying people unemployment benefits - paying them not to work, Roosevelt instituted a programme that saw the building of the massive Tennessee Valley Authority project, and other such monuments to clear economic thinking in hard times such as the Hoover Dam - then the largest dam in the world - and the strategic planting of 2,000 square miles of trees to revitalise the degraded and droughted mid-west - the US heartland.

"While Roosevelt was paying people to work and building the USA into the great nation it is today, Australia was doing just the opposite," Bob Katter says.

"Australia experienced the highest level of unemployment of any nation in the world during the Great Depression - more than 30 percent - we have apparently learnt nothing. With real unemployment levels hovering towards 20%, we are repeating the mistakes of the thirties," he claims.

By creating a large public works project such as Bradfield, the N.A.W.D.C. hopes to give Australia the economic boost it needs to not only once again make it The Lucky Country, but The Lucky Watered Country.

Another major breakthrough in convincing the politicians in Canberra of the need for a long-term, national look at Australia's rural infrastructure occurred in early 1995, when a bipartisan group of Federal politicians from across the full Party political spectrum came together to support the concept of a National Water Distribution Scheme (N.W.D.S.).

Comprising WA Labor Shadow Minister for the North, Hon. Ernie Bridge-OAM, Hon. Bob Katter MP, former Leader of the National Party Rt. Hon. Ian Sinclair, former Labor Minister for Transport Hon. Bob Brown, WA Liberal Senator Winston Crane, SA Liberal member for Grey Barry Wakelin, and NPA member for Parkes (NSW) Michael Cobb.



The Bradfield Study

Consortium Report, 1984

This report was commissioned by the Premier's Department of the Queensland government, and undertaken by four of Australia's leading water engineering firms - Gutteridge Haskins & Davey, McIntyre & Associates, Munro & Johnson, and Cameron McNamara.

This report was never released. The Scheme proposed by the Bradfield Study Consortium Report (BSCR) was allocated only a limited percentage of the water resources of the area under study. The B.S.C.R. study included ONLY the waters of the Upper Herbert & Upper Burdekin Rivers - the Upper Tully and Upper Johnstone were not included.

The study's terms of reference and resources were limited...e.g. the preferred scheme, Route 8 was not costed

in the Report. Route 8 was chosen to avoid pumping costs and would appear to have rendered them negligible, but pumping costs still appear as a major item in the Study Summary.

The BSC report was prepared from engineering parameters only with restricted and narrow terms of reference.

Resale of land now irrigated, drought and flood mitigation, facilitation of the mode of the Mid-West and Central West existing water resource; inter alia, needed to be factored.

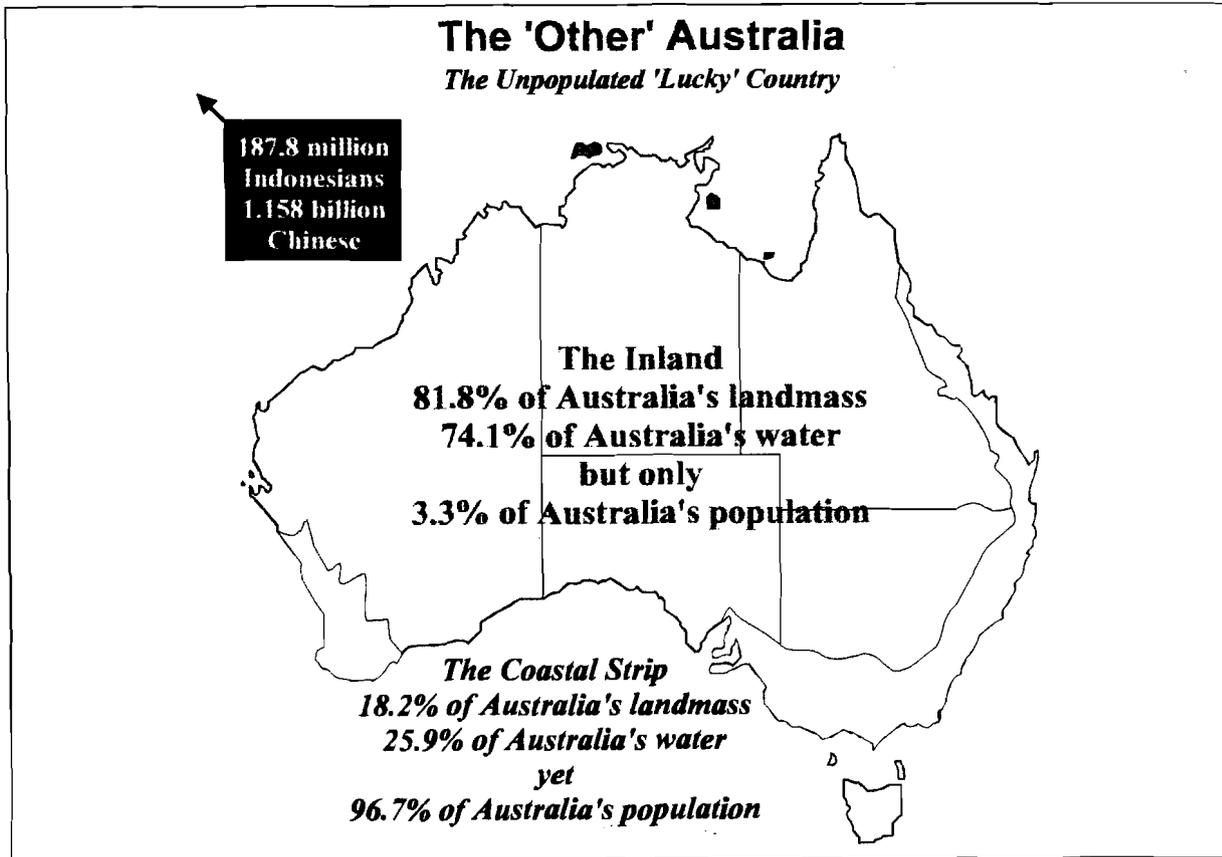
Integral considerations of a non-engineering nature were not factored into the BSC Report. The raw engineering figures needed to be inserted into an assessment model with a more adequate framework and terms of reference.

Cabinet did not finance a proper costing of Route 8 but did direct the Office of Northern Development to carry out a cost benefit assessment for consideration.

A Summary Assessment and Feasibility (cost benefit analysis) was prepared by the Office of Northern Development. It was completed just prior to the fall of the Government in 1989. So neither it nor the BSC Report was released.

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The Battle for the Inland

Unemployment: Over 1,000,000 Australians cannot find a full-time job.....until the 1980s, official unemployment averaged 3%.....since the 1980s, it has averaged 9%. Real unemployment hovers close to Depression levels of 20%.

Hopelessness: Australia has the highest youth suicide rate in the world.....Australia has one of the lowest birth rates in the world.

Debt: Australia's bankruptcy rate is one of the highest in the world.....until the 1980s it averaged around 3,000

Declining Inland Population

SHIRE	Pop. 1961	Pop. 1980	Pop. 1991	+ or - %
Longreach	5,013	4,100	4,369	-13%
Blackall	3,291	2,090	2,045	-38%
Barcaldine	2,384	1,770	1,813	-24%
Aramac/Muttaborra	1,790	1,020	832	-53%
Winton	3,043	1,900	1,877	-39%
Central West Average Population Loss				-33%
Cloncurry	4,869	4,250	3,382	-31%
McKinlay (Julia Ck)	2,134	1,450	1,306	-39%
Richmond	2,214	1,450	1,108	-39%
Flinders (Hughenden)	3,953	2,850	2,491	-37%
Mid West Average Population Loss				-39%
Brisbane	593,668	702,500	1,358,000	+112%
Brisbane Population Gain				+112%

p.a.....for the last five years it has averaged around 15,000.

Balance of Payments increases debt**Debt increases our annual interest payments:** Every month, over \$1,500 million goes out of the country more than comes into the country. If we had this money, every three months we could build a Bradfield Scheme, air

condition every home in inland Australia, and dig a canal and fill Lake Eyre with sea water.

The interest paid on the Federal government debt two years ago was \$3,886 million.....in the 1996 year, it will be \$9,388 million.....20% of our entire tax revenue will go to the banks for interest and repayments:

Collapse of the Australian Economy

The Facts

- 93% of Australia's exports come from mining and agriculture.
- Between 1988-1991 there was a 14% increase in agricultural income and a 25% increase in mining income. Between 1991-1994 there was only a 1.9% increase in agricultural income - and only a 3.6% increase in mining income.
- In 1986 there were 135,700 self-employed farmers in Australia. By 1993 there were only 101,700 self-employed farmers in Australia.....34,000 farmers have been broken and forced off the land in the past seven years.
- Cattle numbers in the late 70s hit 33.4 million head....by 1993, cattle numbers had fallen to only 24.9 million head.
- Sheep numbers in the late 80s reached 174 million head....by 1993, sheep numbers had fallen to only 139 million head.
- Wheat production of around 25 million tonnes per annum fell to 13 million tonnes in 1994.

Whilst Interest Rates & De-regulation of Statutory Marketing are all contributing factors, drought has always been the Grim Reaper.

BUT.....

In sharp contrast, Sugar & Cotton in Queensland - both predominantly grown on irrigation - have increased sugar production from 3.2 million tonnes in 1986 to 4 million tonnes in 1993; and cotton production from 40 million kgs in 1986 to 104 million kgs in 1993.

DROUGHT

- Drought has arguably halved wheat production in 1981-82, 1991 and 1994;
- Drought takes millions of tonnes of topsoil away from the land;
- Drought causes (with the drought-breaking rains) large scale erosion;
- Drought causes massive destruction of Australian wildlife.
- Drought's damage is long term....the last drought in

North Queensland (1986-88) resulted in 97,000 cows being slaughtered in excess of normal processing levels. These cows would have produced 64,600 calves a year.....this annual production loss is, of course, a recurring loss. The loss to North Queensland is \$72 million every year.

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Drought Proofing & Flood Mitigation

Cattle Drought Losses

Increased slaughtering of females during the drought years (i.e. 1986-1988) were 97,000 head. The 97,000 head @ 60% calving rates represents an annual production loss of 60,000 head @ \$1,220 per head (processed cost)

Cattle Drought Losses an Estimated \$72,000,000 p.a.

Sheep Drought Losses

Sheep losses are far harder to quantify. Lambings are nearly 20% lower than in the rest of the State, but income from sheep is far less than from cattle. Losses of 5% from annual woolclip of \$60m would seem to be a not unreasonable figure -

Sheep Drought Losses an Estimated \$3,000,000 p.a.

Drought Assistance

Drought grants and subsidies saved cannot be quantified because there are a plethora of assistances. It is considered that a figure of \$1m would not be excessive

Drought Assistance an Estimated \$1,000,000 p.a.

Total Value of Drought Proofing \$76,000,000 p.a.

Flood Mitigation & Cane Losses

Loss of sugar production through flooding (and to a small degree, water-logging) and the cost of property loss in general in the Lower Herbert basin is difficult to quantify. The Cameron McNamara Flood Management Study 1980 states the losses in a 1-in-25 year flood at \$8,877,000 - an average loss of \$360,000/year. However, if two 1-in-50 year floods and one 1-in-100 year flood damage is added, this figure would then be doubled. CPI increase allowed for over 9 years would double this figure, again giving an annual loss of around \$1m p.a. A similar figure for the Tully would produce annual losses of over \$2m.

More importantly, a simultaneous flooding in the upper and lower Herbert, which has not occurred since European Settlement (but is part of Aboriginal legend of the area), would result in substantial loss of life and massive property loss -

Flood Mitigation & Cane Losses an Estimated \$2,000,000 p.a.

Total Drought Proofing & Flood Mitigation Savings: \$78,000,000 p.a.

**Office of Northern
Development's
Summary
Assessment and
Feasibility of the
Revised Bradfield
Scheme**

This Report was never released. Whilst it was of an exploratory nature, it was undertaken to provide some hard figures.

The Fraser Government had, prior to this, allocated \$5 million for a full feasibility study. The Government fell before it was undertaken. The Queensland Government then allocated \$0.5 million for an abbreviated study.

This study, it must be emphasised as stated above, was never to be a comprehensive report. It did not even cost out its preferred route, Route 8. The money allocation was simply for an overview costing.

It did not include any contribution from the Upper Tully or the Upper Johnstone. It did, along with the T.M.H.E. Report, provide ancillary information which enabled this report to produce accurate cost and yield figures for both these basins.

It must be emphasised that the Summary Assessment and Feasibility does not include seven factors:

"One pumping station should be eliminated by Route 8 (Route 8 is the post script preferred route) This should markedly reduce pumping costs.

"Night Pumping and Hydro-Electric contribution - will further reduce operating costs from the scheme. More detailed work would need to be undertaken to confirm these assertions. Real night pumping costs are only around 25% of electricity charges.

"Wages would comprise an estimated 50% of the cost of construction. The cost of each job created by the project is off-set by the removal of one person from unemployment benefits. This "dole reduction" effect should lower the "real" cost of construction by over 25%.

"Figures for drought losses are grossly inadequate because of difficulties in

Cost Benefit Analysis

The following figures are taken from both the Bradfield Study Consortium Report 1984 and the Summary Assessment & Feasibility of the Revised Bradfield Scheme as prepared by the Office of Northern Development.

All costs and incomes are updated to 1988 (ABS Construction & Commodity Series).

STAGE	Capital Cost	Gross Value Production pa	Av Yield (mgltrs)
STAGE 1			
Diversión of Upper Burdekin and Upper Herbert	\$2.37b	\$0.93b	725,000
STAGE 2			
Diversión of Upper Tully (add)	\$0.12b	\$0.59b	506,000
STAGE 3			
Diversión of Upper Johnstone	\$0.55b	\$0.53b	460,000
Sub-Totals	\$3.04b	\$2.05b	1,691,000
<i>(This production figure assumes no downstream processing of the woodchip. Value adding to paper pulp would add another -</i>			
		\$0.50b	
TOTALS	\$3.04b	\$2.55b	1,691,000

This figure for Stage 3 of \$2.55b is in line with California's agricultural production.

California's Central Valley produces around \$12b of agricultural production from 2 million hectares of irrigated land.

The revised Bradfield Scheme would irrigate around 0.3 million hectares and should yield \$1.8 billion of agricultural produce.

producing an objectively quantifiable assessment.

"Figures for sheep production stabilisation and increases are again grossly inadequate, once again because of difficulties in producing an objectively quantifiable assessment. Anecdotal information would indicate that increased wool production could be understated by a factor of ten.

"C.C.S. - the sugar content of cane - in the super wet belt is some 15% less than in the rest of Queensland. What percentage of this is a result of waterlogging and excess water, and what percentage is due

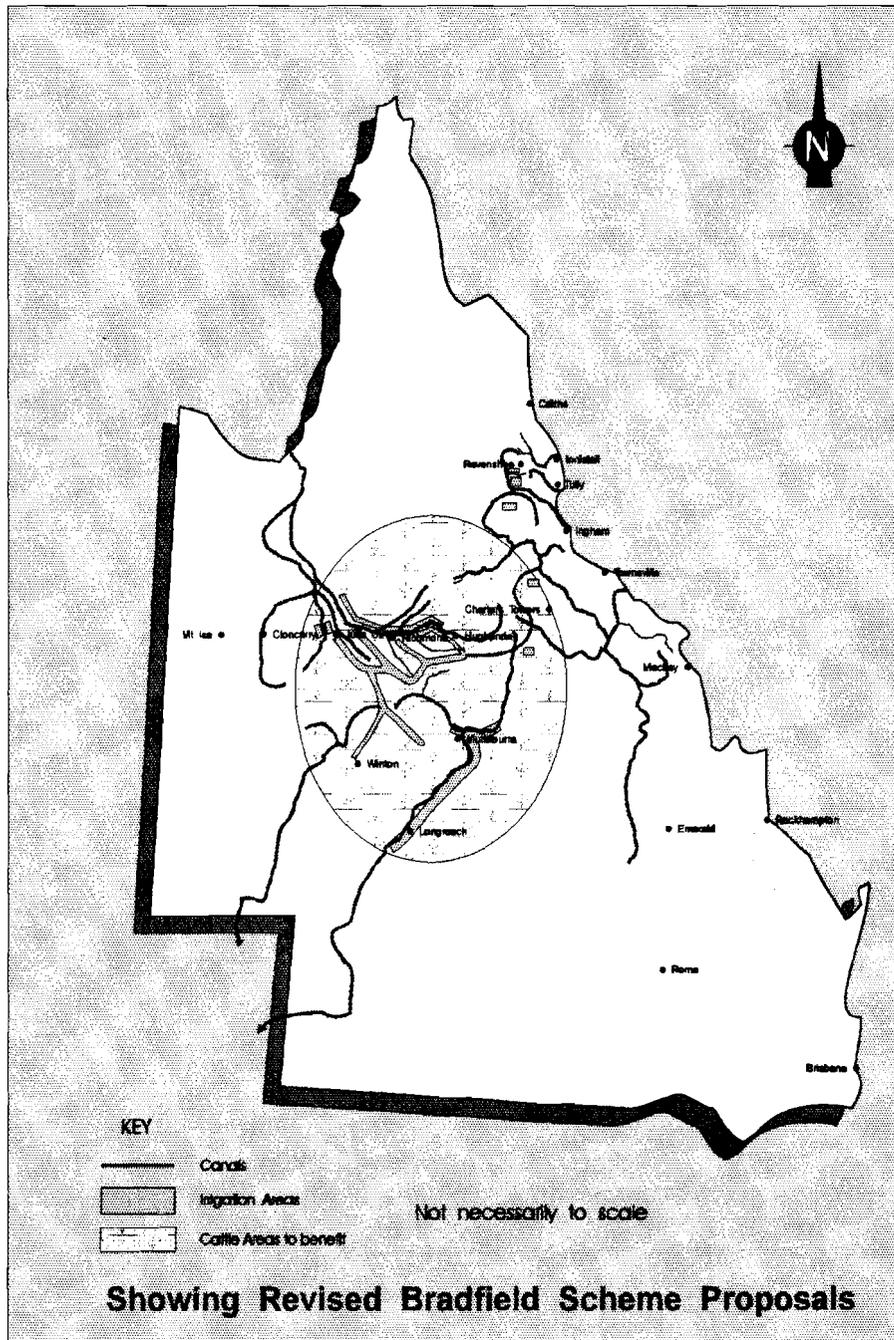
to a lack of sunshine cannot be established. If half of this 15% deficiency was excess water, savings from the Bradfield Scheme could be over \$10 million per annum.

"Replenishment of shallow weirs and dams, if built along the Flinders and Thompson Rivers, would enable us to utilise part of the huge flows.....3.8 million megalitres in the Thompson alone. This could facilitate an increase in the following farm product figures by between 5-10 percent.

Benefits of the Revised Bradfield Scheme

It is envisaged that the Revised Bradfield Scheme will.....

- Droughtproof 15% of the surface area of Queensland;
- The Office of Northern Development proposed the closure and capping of the Artesian Bores along the Bradfield canals. Stations not on Bradfield irrigation canals will be able to use water thus saved for on-station fattening and droughtproofing;
- Two meatworks will be built to cater for increased beef production;
- One paper pulp mill will be built to process timber farms;
- The Pentland power station will ultimately be necessitated by an increased power demand with a 50% increase in the North Queensland population;
- Four cotton gins will be built.....two in the Central West and two in the Mid West;
- Another sugar mill will be needed in the Ravenshoe/Innot Hot Springs area;
- Increase export earnings of \$2,550 million p.a.;
- 91,800 jobs will be created (36 jobs for every \$1 million in increased earnings);



- Protection of Ingham against the simultaneous upper and lower flooding, which would cause a projected loss of some 200 lives (SES estimate);
- The building of the phosphate plants at Duchess and Mount Isa. Fertiliser demand will dramatically increase because of increased farming.

Increased & Stabilised Cattle Production

Stations contingent to the irrigation channels can take 400 mgl each to permanently irrigate 40 ha of pasture for cattle fattening (or lamb weaning) or drought feeding of breeding stock during a prolonged dry. (Bullocks would be sent to agistment to feed lots during a prolonged dry). Artesian bores can be closed off along

irrigation routes, considerably contributing to the conservation of this still dwindling resource.

Pastoralists can secure their stock watering from Bradfield channels.

Mid west towns can secure vastly improved drinking water from Bradfield channels.

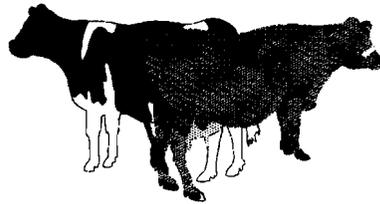
Both these measures will substantially reduce the pressure on the artesian aquifer. Some of this water conserved by these measures can be reallocated for similar cattle fattening and drought mitigation projects on stations off the Bradfield channels. Thus the average turnoff age of cattle - five years old - can be reduced to 2 years only and

turnoff ratios would consequently increase from 1:7 to 1:3¹/₂. In the rest of Australia, the average turn-off is two beasts for every seven in the herd. The cattle population of the mid-west region and contingent areas is 1.4 million head.

Annual cattle turnoff will therefore increase from 200,000 to 400,000 head @ value added (i.e. processed price) of \$1,220 per head.

The increase in the value of cattle production would be \$240m per annum.

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Capital Cost of Revised Bradfield Scheme

	\$ billion
BSCR states: total costs of the project	1.75
Cost of delivery channels to the farm gate	0.25
BSCR Total Cost therefore	1.95
However, these are 1984 costings.	
No earthworks price index exists. Cement has increased by some 33-1/3% (162.6 to 217) using 33-1/3% as the Cost Price Index movement - increase in cost of scheme (of 33-1/3) adds \$0.65b to project costs.	0.65
TOTAL COST OF SCHEME AT 1989 PRICES	\$2.60b

LESS

	\$b
Net proceeds of land resumption and resale. Unlike previous irrigation schemes (all undertaken in marginal farming areas) this scheme services a narrow band along the canals at "grazing land" prices of \$50/ha and resells the land at irrigation farm prices of \$1,625/ha.	
There is 110,000 ha of irrigation farm land (i.e. land provided with a water allocation of 7 mgl/ha) that will be resumed and resold. The gross surplus from the resale of this land would be \$1,575/ha (\$1,625 - \$50).	0.173
A further 110,000 ha can be resumed and resold for opportunity farming (whenever dams are at full supply level or near full supply level and/or for cattle and sheep grazing @ \$400 per ha).	0.044
The 40,000 ha reserved (for commercial paper pulping) @ \$300/ha will provide a further	0.012
TOTAL REDUCTIONS	0.229

Net Capital Cost of Scheme: \$2.371b

Australia - The Foodbowl of Asia

For far too long, Australia has ignored the burgeoning market of our neighbours to the North in nearby Asia. This market is one of the fastest growing markets in the world which, along with the area's population growth, presents one of the most exciting challenges ever to be faced by our nation.

It is considered unlikely that with the population growths as depicted below, Asia will eventually be unable to feed itself. There is only one nearby source of food for this massive market.....Australia.

But, to become the Foodbowl of Asia, Australia has to pull itself out of the developmental doldrums that has plagued us since the completion of the Snowy Scheme and begin to look at major developmental projects that will enable our nation to take its rightful place as the food supplier of this massive market.

Schemes such as the Bradfield Scheme will be the only way that we can develop our inland by bringing water to it and begin to grow the crops, beef, sheep and vegetables that will take Australia into the Asian sphere and into the 21st Century of economic development.

The table below indicates the population growth in the countries ringing the Pacific Basin. By the year 2009 there will be an extra 535.7 million people in this, our trading area.....more mouths to feed..... more people to clothe.....and provide fuel, energy and other needs.

The economic growth of countries like China are around 15% and the Asian Tiger economies are bettering this. Their purchasing power is growing even faster than their population growth.



Population, Major Pacific Countries

Millions, Actual and Projected

	Projected Population Growth (% p.a.)	1990 Actual (m)	2009 Projected (m)
Australia	1.14	17.06	21.16
New Zealand	0.71	3.36	3.84
Malaysia	1.98	17.76	25.78
Singapore	0.43	3.00	3.26
Canada	0.91	26.60	31.59
Chile	1.17	13.17	16.42
China	1.22	1,122.40	1,412.41
Colombia	1.41	32.99	43.04
Indonesia	1.43	179.30	234.61
Japan	0.26	123.54	129.78
Mexico	1.61	86.15	116.78
Peru	1.77	21.55	30.09
Philippines	1.64	61.48	83.82
South Korea	0.79	42.87	49.78
Taiwan	0.79	20.35	23.66
Thailand	1.29	56.08	71.55
USA	0.78	249.92	289.67
Vietnam	1.73	67.60	93.66
TOTAL Above	1.18	2,145.19	2,680.89

535.7 million extra people by Year 2009

SOURCES:

International Financial Statistics Yearbook 1992, IMF

Industry of Erea China, Key Statistics, N.Z. Department of Statistics

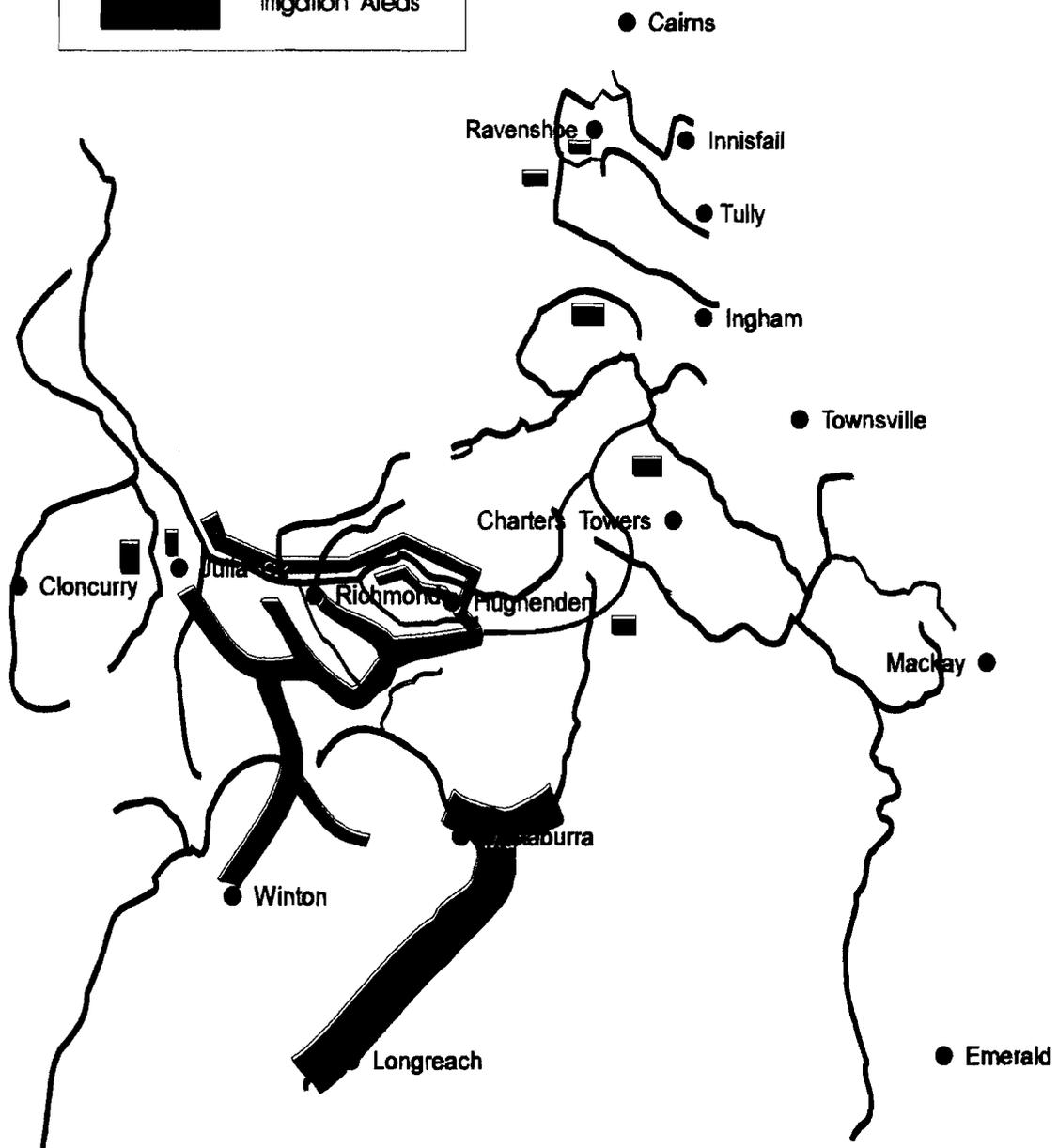
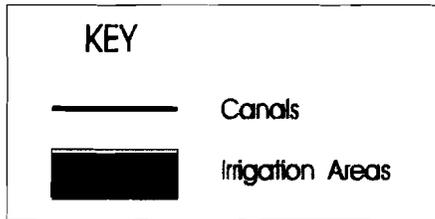
Asia Yearbook, 1992, ABS Cat. No. 3101.0

World Population Projections, 1992-93 Edition, World Bank

COMPILED AT REQUEST BY THE STATISTICS GROUP OF THE PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH SERVICE



Revised Bradfield Scheme in closer detail



(Note: Stylised Representation - Not Necessarily to Scale)

The National Water Distribution Scheme

In early 1995 a major breakthrough in the political fight to get Bradfield moving occurred when Hon. Ernie Bridge OAM, a long-serving minister in the W.A. Parliament and current Shadow Minister for the Northwest, met with the Federal Member for Kennedy, Hon. Bob Katter MP, himself also a highly experienced senior Minister in the Queensland government, in Canberra to discuss the formation of a National Water Development Committee.

The purpose of the politically bipartisan committee that resulted from this meeting is to co-ordinate a National Water Distribution Scheme that will include the Bradfield Scheme, the Kim-

berley-Perth Pipeline, the Daly Scheme in the N.T., and the Clarence River Diversion in northern N.S.W.

These four schemes will produce \$5,000 million per year in direct export earnings for Australia from an outlay of around \$7,000 million.....or \$460 million per year for the 15 years it will take to build all the schemes.

But the real cost of this programme may be only two thirds to one half of the projected total cost because the number of people who would be employed to work on the schemes would of course result in a corresponding fall in the number of people on unemployment benefits.

By taking these people off unemployment benefits and giving them work, the real cost could be as low as only \$260 million per year for 15 years.....the Federal government is now spending \$15,000 million a year on dole payments.....and achieving absolutely nothing in national income or in improving national infrastructure.

In 1994, the Federal government spent nearly \$390 million on 'one off' Foreign Affairs items:

- \$90 million on the new Foreign Affairs building in Canberra (\$168 million final cost);

- \$20 million given to Yasser Arafat and his P.L.O;
- \$100 million donated to Vietnam;
- \$7 million given to the Irish Prime Minister;
- \$42 million on the Laos Friendship Bridge;
- \$50 million approximately to the World Bank.

The Arts got a special boost in 1994 of \$252 million over four years.

Whilst the Goss government in Queensland found nearly \$2,000 million over the past four years to improve the railway system around Brisbane and for a 'playground' for city dwellers on the South Bank of the Brisbane River, not one cent has gone into water infrastructure in the State.

16.5% of Australia's workforce is being paid some form of benefit because they cannot find work.

The Federal government is now spending over \$15,000 million per year to pay these people not to work.

Better surely that we pay them to dig ditches and pour concrete to take water from where it is not needed and doing damage, to where it is so desperately needed.....to where our nation's great storehouse of risks.....to where our cattle and sheep herds are dying.....to where our Australian flora and fauna are dying at the hands of nature's cruel side.

