

From the Press Office

SUMMARY OF ABC'S 7:45 am NEWS

The Federal Government is keen to lend money to the States for new coal-based electricity projects and it has called on them to submit any proposals they have. In a statement released in Canberra, the Minister for Trade and Resources, Mr. Anthony, has said the proposals would be considered for financing through the Loan Council. However, Mr. Anthony said the proposals would have to involve new projects and not programmes already approved. The Deputy Prime Minister said increases in world energy prices and recent disruptions to the supply of crude oil had drawn attention to the importance of Australia's massive coal reserves and their use in generating electricity. Mr. Anthony said coal offered a relatively low-cost alternative to expensive and increasingly expensive petroleum products. As well, it provided an attractive energy source for industry. Mr. Anthony said Loan Council financing of coal-based electricity projects would help ensure that Australia had adequate electricity during the next decade and beyond.

A bid is being made for the biggest takeover in Australian corporate history with the sugar group CSR seeking to get full control of the Queensland coal producer Theiss Holdings. CSR is offering \$373 million for the shares in Theiss which it does not already own. This follows last month's share raid in which CSR paid \$84 million for a 19 per cent holding in Theiss.

Iran: diplomatic efforts to release the 60 American hostages in Tehran have intensified, but Peter Barnett reports from Washington that the Carter administration remains helpless in its efforts.

Mrs. Roslyn Carter has arrived in Bangkok on her mission to see what more can be done for Kampuchean refugees. She will spend two days visiting refugee camps.

Some air fares between Australia and Japan are likely to go down by as much as 46 per cent at the beginning of next year. Qantas and Japan Airlines have reached a compromise agreement on the new fares, subject to approval by the Australian and Japanese Governments.

A new Japanese Cabinet has finally been announced, a month after the general election. The Prime Minister, Mr. Ohira, has chosen a Cabinet which observers say represents all major factions in the ruling liberal democratic party.

A vaccine to prevent German measles is being withdrawn from the Australian market because of fears that some batches may not be effective. The drug is made in Belgium by an American company.

The largest dam to be constructed in Australia, the Dartmouth Dam in North Eastern Victoria, will be officially opened today. The dam has taken four years to build at a cost of \$138 million. It has been built under a joint project involving the Commonwealth Government and the Governments of Victoria, N.S.W. and South Australia.

The Queen has approved 19 bravery awards under the Australian system of honours and awards. The Governor-General has announced that 16 of the awards have gone to people involved in two sea rescues in N.S.W. on January 10 this year.

The BBC is in trouble over its use of armed IRA men in an incident staged for a documentary on Northern Ireland. The British Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher, has ordered an investigation.

The Federal and Northern Territory Governments held talks in Canberra yesterday to try to avoid a confrontation over land sovereignty in the Territory. After the talks between the Chief Minister, Mr. Everingham, and the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Anthony, a spokesman said both men agreed they did not want a confrontation and talks would be held to find an amicable conclusion.