

# Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 31 May 1988

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett) took the Chair at 2.15 pm, and read prayers.

## PETITION

### *Conservation - Shark Bay*

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe) [2.17 pm]: I have a petition which reads as follows -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned respectfully sheweth:

That following the Hon. Minister for Planning's promises, made at the public meeting at Shark Bay on 24 March 1988, in which he said "if the local people do not want Heritage Listing of the Hamelin Pool then the State Government will not proceed to nominate it and will oppose that Listing. . . . in the most unequivocal terms that the State Government will oppose the total listing of Shark Bay for World Heritage at all. . . .", that the people of Shark Bay and other citizens are deeply concerned that the Government has agreed that further consideration be given to World Heritage listing for Shark Bay, and

- (a) believe the special features of the region can be best protected through finalisation, of the Shark Bay Plan in consultation with local people,
- (b) do not want transfer of control of the area to the Commonwealth or overseas influences,
- (c) calls on the State Government and Parliament to cease consideration of World Heritage listing,
- (d) calls on the State Government to oppose and fight against any World Heritage listing.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition bears eight signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 23.]

## PETITION

### *Football - Goalposts*

MRS BEGGS (Whitford - Minister for Housing) [2.19 pm]: I have a petition which reads as follows -

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned citizens of Western Australia, request that the Minister for Sport take whatever steps necessary to ensure that freestanding goalposts are banned, thereby eliminating the potential danger to children of such goalposts collapsing onto them causing death or serious injury.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition bears 2 436 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 24.]

**MISUSE OF DRUGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL***Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Greig, and read a first time.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY - SEVENTH DAY***Motion*

Debate resumed from 26 May.

MR READ (Mandurah) [2.25 pm]: I shall take this opportunity to speak on matters relating to my electorate of Mandurah but, before doing so, I congratulate the Premier - before he leaves the Chamber - on his elevation to that position. The Premier's decision to move from the upper House to the Assembly has been of great assistance to this side of the House and he clearly outshines the members on the other side of the House. He is proving to be a most worthy Premier.

I also offer my congratulations to the Deputy Premier, a man of great ability who has a high capacity for work. I think most members will agree that his abilities are recognised not only in Western Australia, but also Australia wide and in some overseas countries.

I offer my congratulations to the new members of Parliament recently elected to this place: I refer of course to the members for Ascot, Balga and Dale. I know that their contributions will be worthwhile and I have only one word of advice for the member for Dale - he represents the new blood and he should not use the old blood in this House as an example.

It is with some pride that I served in the Government under Brian Burke as Premier. Many of us had a close personal relationship with him and he was never too busy to listen. He was always prepared to give his assistance and advice to anybody who asked; that assistance and advice was not restricted to members on this side of the House, but was also offered to and accepted by members opposite. I am also proud to have served under Malcolm Bryce as Deputy Premier. He was a very friendly, humane person and his contribution to this place was well noted.

With regard to issues relating to Mandurah, I refer firstly to the Cabinet meeting recently held in Mandurah. The first Cabinet meeting to be held in Mandurah took place in 1985 and the events of this second Cabinet day were most interesting. The people of Mandurah thoroughly enjoyed the attention they received. The day started with a breakfast attended by representatives from the Town of Mandurah and the Shires of Murray, Waroona and Boddington. It is fair to say that the comments of the mayor and the shire presidents indicated that they were very happy with the Government's actions in the Murray-Mandurah area. The long awaited opening of the police station and courthouse complex took place and it was interesting to note that the Mayor of Mandurah was quite outspoken in his praise of the Government. He indicated that, politics aside, this Government had always delivered on its promises with regard to Mandurah. I believe that was quite significant. A youth resource centre, which had been built to provide services for the youth of the area, was opened. That holds great promise and it is hoped that in the future it will receive some support from TAFE. The Cabinet luncheon, which ended the morning's proceedings, was attended by local representatives who thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The important point about country Cabinet meetings - which were an initiative of this Labor Government - is that they enable country people to meet the decision makers in Government face to face and, conversely, it gives those decision makers the opportunity to meet country people and learn of their specific problems.

The second matter I shall address is the release of the environmental review and management program on stage two of the Peel Inlet and Harvey Estuary management strategy. That took place on the day of the Cabinet meeting and was of great interest to all in Mandurah. The poor condition of the estuary has been a contentious issue in Mandurah for a number of years. Governments from both sides of politics have had an opportunity to do something about its condition. In August 1985 the former Premier, Brian Burke, launched a six point plan to canvass the problems of the estuary. That plan was aimed at an overall view of the problem and I will quickly refer to its elements.

The first element involved a detailed feasibility and comprehensive ERMP for the Dawesville channel proposal. That has been completed. The second element involved the dredging of the Mandurah channel. It is interesting that that has been completed; the Fairbridge bank has been removed at a cost of just over \$500 000 and the Sticks channel has been dredged at a cost of \$1.7 million. This has led to a great improvement in the flow of water in and out of the estuary, which has been commented on in local newspapers.

The member for Cottesloe is not here, but when he was Leader of the Opposition he expressed concern that the dredging of the Sticks channel would not occur. He asked what guarantees Mandurah had that the work would be undertaken and expressed concern that the money given would be used and not just soaked up elsewhere for further studies. His concern should be laid well to rest at this stage. That Press release was issued about the time of the 1986 election. There were a number of what I considered to be dishonest statements made by the Opposition at that time. I believe that it embarked on an election policy of "Promise them everything; give them nothing; and take it off them before they get it".

Mr Trenorden: When did Brian Burke promise that?

Mr READ: He initiated that six point plan for treatment of the estuary in 1985.

Mr Trenorden: I would be interested to read that.

Mr READ: The member can have a copy of that plan when I am finished, just to let him know that everything has been done.

The Minister for Police and Emergency Services is not here. In a Press release at the time of the 1986 election I was intrigued to see that even at that stage the Opposition was indicating a desire to interfere in the processes relating to appointing police to specific areas. On Thursday, 16 January 1986 the Opposition spokesman for that area was quoted in the Press as saying that a Liberal Government would allocate more police to Mandurah. I brought that statement to the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, who was quite interested to hear that. It has not been a short-term aim of the Opposition to interfere in police matters.

The third element of the plan introduced by Brian Burke in relation to the Mandurah estuary related to dredging of the ocean entrance, which has been carried out. Approximately 60 000 cubic metres of material has been removed each year at a cost of about \$200 000 a year.

The fourth element of the plan was the fertiliser program, which also is in place. An amount of \$500 000 was allocated to the action plan to support that program. There has been a resulting reduction in the amount of phosphorus being washed into the estuary.

The fifth element of the plan involved measures such as weed harvesting and beach cleaning to alleviate discomfort for nearby residents, and that has been carried out. There was an allocation of \$100 000 in the 1985-86 Budget and a further amount in the 1986-87 Budget to allow that to occur.

The sixth element involved the setting in place of new administrative arrangements. A new steering committee was put in place to advise the Government on the task of clearing the estuary. It is interesting - and I am sure the member for Avon would be interested to hear this - to trace the attitude of the Opposition on this matter.

In relation to the release of the six point plan by former Premier Brian Burke, the Leader of the Opposition was reported in the *Coastal District Times* of 15 August 1985 as saying a Liberal Government would support whatever action was necessary to preserve the region's waterways. The next part of his comment was most interesting because he said that the remedial steps announced by the Government showed that the estuary and its environment were not a political issue.

It was interesting that the matter was not to be a political issue. Unfortunately, it turned into a political issue because the Leader of the Opposition at that time, the member for Cottesloe, said that the Liberals promised full support for the Dawesville Cut if feasibility studies proved favourable. Around election time, when things heated up and people wanted things to happen, the Leader of the Opposition was reported in the Press as saying the following -

He said that the stage two environmental review and management programme, announced in August by Premier Brian Burke and still being carried out, was not necessary to make a commitment to proceed with the cut.

The Liberals have made their commitment after discussions with PIMA "and other groups".

Mr Hassell said that the Cut was something that should proceed, and that was before the ERMP was completed, so the Liberals promised full support for the Dawesville Cut before having the advice of the ERMP.

Mr Trenorden: So you are saying that everyone was in favour of it.

Mr READ: I am showing the member the duplicity of the Opposition's attitude where it thought it could make political mileage.

Mr Trenorden: You must be battling to fill up your 30 minutes.

Mr READ: What is the attitude of the present Leader of the Opposition should the Cut go ahead?

Mr MacKinnon: We've always been supportive of the Cut.

Mr READ: Before the ERMP process?

Mr MacKinnon: We have always been supportive of it.

Mr READ: Answer the question; before the ERMP process was finalised?

Mr MacKinnon: We have always said that we supported it.

Mr READ: Does the Leader of the Opposition also say that it should go ahead prior to the finalisation of the ERMP process?

Mr MacKinnon: The member knows what we have said; we have always supported it.

Mr READ: The Leader of the Opposition has said a number of things. It is interesting that the ERMP was released on the day of the Cabinet meeting in Mandurah. It involves five steps, which are proposed as a management strategy.

The first step is the modification of agricultural fertiliser practices, which is aimed at encouraging farmers to modify their fertiliser uses. The second step is the conversion of land use to forestry, and that will be a fairly contentious issue. The third step is the control of point sources, such as how to control effluent leakage from places such as piggeries, sheep holding yards, market gardens, etc. The fourth step is the suggestion to place a moratorium on further clearing and drainage, and there is no doubt that will be a matter of contention and discussion between farmers. The fifth step is the proposal to construct the Dawesville channel.

The member for Murray-Wellington suggested that private enterprise should be invited to tender to do the work on the Dawesville cut. I see no difficulty about that if private enterprise is interested in looking at the proposal. A study has been conducted by Ralph Stanton Planners for the Department of Marine and Harbours, which gave three pictures of what was involved in the development of that private land. I will not go into the detail of that study but I will make the report available to the member.

I also wonder whether the member for Murray-Wellington, in his call to involve private enterprise, has taken any steps to arrange for the people to whom he referred to meet the Government or the appropriate Minister. He would have done so if he were fair dinkum about his suggestion.

Mr MacKinnon: Has the Government talked to the owners of the land in the vicinity of the proposed Cut?

Mr READ: Yes; and that process started many years ago.

Mr MacKinnon: You had better talk to the owners. They do not think that is the case.

Mr READ: At the time of the meeting -

Mr MacKinnon: When was that meeting?

Mr READ: I am not sure of the actual date, but I attended a meeting between the land owners and the Premier.

Mr MacKinnon: When was that?

Mr READ: I think it was in 1984 or 1985. The Premier indicated at that meeting that the

door was always open for those people to discuss the land sale options, and he also enumerated what their options were. So I cannot see that anything has been hidden; it has always been open and aboveboard. People have been given the opportunity to meet with Government and to talk about their land sales.

Mr Clarko: Have you had a falling out with the Cabinet? All the members of the Cabinet have walked out on your speech; the whole front bench is deserted.

Mr READ: I have been in this place long enough to know that is a taunt which is constantly thrown across the Chamber. I have noticed that on occasions when the member has been speaking his members have left the Chamber because they have had other things to do; so it is not a point that I worry about. The Member for Karrinyup should worry about his constant claim to be the guru -

Mr Clarko interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! This is most unlike the member for Karrinyup. I do not know what the member had for lunch today but it obviously was something that did not agree with him. I hope that for the balance of the day, when I call for order, he will pay some attention to that call.

Mr READ: The member for Karrinyup has claimed to be the guru of Star Swamp. I talked recently with a couple of ladies who were most upset that the member claimed the amount of credit that he did when in fact it was on their initiative that the action group was established to do something about saving Star Swamp.

Mr Clarko: I made that proposal long before that group started.

Mr READ: That is interesting, because the member attended a number of public meetings which they organised, and it was at the time when the member was in Government. They did not believe the member was as enthusiastic about saving Star Swamp as they were.

Mr Clarko: I started it.

Mr Lightfoot: Get your facts right.

Mr READ: For the member who deals in distorted facts, the member for Murchison-Eyre, to say that is astonishing.

I want to speak about what has been achieved in relation to the problem of child sexual abuse. Mandurah is in the forefront of progress being made in that area of social concern. On 28 January 1985 a conference was organised, sponsored by the South West Development Authority and the Department of Community Services, with the theme of "Women and Children: Their Rights to Security". Approximately 200 people attended, and it was a highly successful and very constructive conference. On 11 May 1988 a second South West Policy Conference was held with its theme "Sexual Abuse in Children: A Social Problem". Again it was sponsored by the South West Development Authority, and approximately 150 people attended.

The problem of child sexual abuse has no simplistic solution, such as longer gaol sentences to deter perpetrators. We must look at the fabric of our society and the dynamics within families to seek the causes and remedy them rather than just treat the symptoms.

What emerged from the conference was the intricate and involved issues which exist when child sexual abuse occurs. There were four speakers at the conference. The first was Hon John Halden MLC for Metropolitan North, representing the Minister for Community Services. He spoke of what the Government was doing in relation to this problem and the details of that are contained in this pamphlet which is being put out for public reading by the Ministry of Community Services. Members opposite will find it of great value.

The second speaker represented a group called THREDS in Mandurah. Mrs Lynley Baker spoke on a number of things which the group has done in developing a program to teach children how to avoid sexual abuse. For those who are interested, THREDS is a group involved in teaching for human rights, empowerment and defence strategy. It started with a grant of \$500 with which it developed a program to teach children how to avoid sexual abuse. That was tested in schools in Mandurah, Pinjarra and Dwellingup. The program comprises a couple of videos, a classroom program, outlines for lesson plans, work sheets and relevant background information. The program has been assessed by the group, and that assessment is contained in this book which has the THREDS emblem on it.

Associated with the program is a booklet entitled "The Right Kind of Love; Understanding Sexual Abuse of Children; a starting point for the family and community". The idea is that parents whose children are involved in the program, or even if they are not, can take this book which helps them all to develop an understanding of the problem of child sexual abuse and reinforce what has been learnt at school. It is significant that the Mandurah Town Council has purchased sufficient copies to provide every grade four child in Mandurah with a book.

The third speaker was Dr Roger Cole from Princess Margaret Hospital. He spoke on different types of people who became child abusers, and listed a number of myths regarding child sexual abuse which are quite interesting. The first of these myths associated with child abuse is that offenders are dirty old men. That myth is dispelled by the fact that men are, on average, aged 35. Another myth is that the offender is a stranger, and that he is intellectually handicapped. The talk was most interesting and enlightening on what actually comprises an offender. An interesting point to me and many at the conference was that 80 per cent of child sexual abuse comes from within the family.

The fourth speaker was our Minister for Education, Dr Carmen Lawrence, who spoke on the work of the task force involved in investigating child sexual abuse. All in all, it was a most enlightening conference and everybody who attended gained great benefit from it.

I have a few words to say on the South West Development Authority. I have been most concerned with the attitude of the Opposition to the South West Development Authority. It has come up recently with the suggestion that Mandurah should have a separate development authority. It was most insulting to the people who operate the South West Development Authority's Mandurah office.

Mr MacKinnon: One of those people was a friend of yours.

Mr READ: They are all my friends.

Mr MacKinnon: Did one of them not work on your campaign committee?

Mr READ: No, that is completely untrue. Where did the Leader of the Opposition get that information?

I have the quote here. It reads -

In an exclusive interview with the Telegraph, both State Opposition Leader Barry MacKinnon and Murray Wellington MLA John Bradshaw expressed their thoughts on the Authority, saying it was not serving Murray-Mandurah people.

Both politicians were cutting in their attack on the Authority: Mr MacKinnon said there was no doubt it was not helping the region and Mr Bradshaw said the Authority was "a mistake".

This, of course, is the Mandurah office of the authority he is talking about. I ask the Leader of the Opposition, while he is here, has he ever bothered to go to the South West Development Authority in Mandurah to find out what it is doing?

Mr Lightfoot: We do not have to go to the office to find out what it is doing.

Mr READ: If members opposite are being critical, they should know what it is doing. The Leader of the Opposition made that statement without bothering to check on what the authority had done in the area. I caught the member for Murray-Wellington out when he said on the ABC that the authority was not doing anything and that it should be involved in a Pinjarra industrial land study. That, I informed him, is already being done.

I support the motion.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [2.55 pm]: As is customary, I would like to extend my congratulations to the new members for Dale, Balga and Ascot and wish them well in their endeavours. This will be my last opportunity to speak from the Opposition side on the Address-in-Reply. I can hardly address any subject without mentioning the vastly deteriorating climate and environment in which Opposition members perform their duties in the interests of their constituents and the community at large.

The State Labor Government, which has introduced "Western Australia Inc.", favours cronyism and self gratification by indiscriminate means as opposed to the interest of all Western Australians; it supports highly improper and unethical behaviour, sailing close to the

boundaries of formal legality. The statutory agents, corporate supporters, and beneficiaries of this Government are increasingly concerned about the gathering force of the Opposition's criticism, particularly the media reports of that criticism. They foresee that the final acknowledgement of this justified criticism will be a re-elected Liberal Coalition Government of integrity, with the demise of the statutory authorities and to the considerable disadvantage of the corporate beneficiaries of "Western Australia Inc."

Hence they do everything to prevent the measures proposed against corruption, to silence the criticism and publicity given to it, to try to intimidate the critics themselves who only do their traditional duty by slamming writs against them. This is a cowardly action with no personal risk involved, for the cost is borne by the taxpayer to satisfy the self centred vanity of the people responsible in these instrumentalities. It is an action of understandable despair, quite unprecedented in what was in the past our open and democratic society.

Can you, Mr Speaker, or any member of this House recall one single instance when a Government instrumentality would have sued a member of Parliament because of the general criticism by that member which the Government instrumentality nervously related to itself? One is compelled to ask, "Why are the present instrumentalities so nervous?" I can find no other reason, apart from the fact that they must be feeling guilty and they must have plenty of skeletons in their cupboards.

I can assure the House, however, that no matter how time consuming, inconvenient and costly such unprecedented, desperate actions are, like issuing writs against the member for Kalamunda, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Cottesloe and myself, we will not be silenced or intimidated in the proper pursuit of the interests of the community.

The publicity and the perception of the corrupt Western Australian Government is far greater in the eastern seaboard than it is here. To be convinced about this, one has only to read some of the Eastern States newspapers or talk to some of those people. I represented the Opposition at the opening of the new Canberra Parliament House, and many people unrelated to one another asked me, "Who is the latter-day Khemlani extending loans for market speculation by your Western Australian State Government Insurance Commission and superannuation trust funds?"

I turn now to a more localised issue which emanated from my electorate but has drawn the attention and the interest of a large number of people outside the electorate, within the metropolitan area and indeed the whole State. This is the proposed development of the bushland near Bold Park. People who use this area for walks and relaxation, together with the majority of the general public, have made it perfectly clear that they do now want that development. They would rather see a statesmanlike decision made, like John Forrest's historical in connection with Kings Park, to preserve this and the adjacent areas for future generations.

Characteristic of the Government's lack of any capacity for listening, let alone taking advice, it has ignored my warning of nearly a year ago and my suggestion for a then feasible solution which would not have cost the taxpayer any money at all. I suggested via questions and via a grievance debate in this Parliament that the Government offer remote Crown land, the future value of which would have been equivalent to the Bold Park land, to the University of Western Australia, the then owner of the land, in exchange.

The Government ignored the suggestion, as indeed it ignores anything which does not come from its own gurus, and subsequently found itself in deep trouble. It found the new seat of Glendalough was threatened. It was subjected to vigorous, well-organised lobbying and increasing genuine public uproar against the proposed development. Under this pressure it decided, and announced its decision, not to allow the proposed development, full stop. Although I welcome this decision as an interim measure, I warn the Government that it is not the final solution, by far. It might temporarily silence the protesters and perhaps even relax some members of the well-organised lobby; it might even get some sympathy for the Minister for Education in Glendalough; but it is not a solution at all, for the stopping of the development did not create the desired recreational bushland. It left a small block of 19 hectares in private ownership, which was legally acquired, and has done nothing about the surrounding areas which are equally important.

Neither can the decision be considered to be legally final. The Environmental Protection

Authority's recommendation is not binding on the Government so it or any of its agents, with its approval, can change that decision in the future to allow development.

The final aim is for a coordinated decision - a decision concerning Bold Park and the surrounding area - to preserve the whole area as natural bushland for the benefit of public recreation.

To go about this, it is suggested that, having learnt its lesson, the Government should cut its losses, compensate Bond Corporation which legally acquired the land, and seriously examine a suitable land swap - perhaps with the mental hospital area over the road. This area has been painfully slowly developed by successive Government agencies and would undoubtedly be much better in the hands of private enterprise. As far as the surrounding area is concerned, a very thorough and if necessary lengthy discussion must be entered into with all the representatives of the local residents so that their acquired rights - most of them having bought land in the City of Perth Endowment Land Act area - are thoroughly taken into consideration and coordinated to remedy the unholy situation where the interest from the endowment funds is not used in the area. Only if all concerned are kept 100 per cent informed and only if they are satisfied, can a final solution for maintaining the bushland recreation area be reached.

Before I come to my main subject, I wish to deal with a matter which very much concerns the vast majority of people; that is, the proliferation of pornography in our society. Despite the otherwise commendable fact that the Government banned the so-called X rated videotapes altogether, not only from general but also from restricted distribution, and even made their possession illegal, the Government has done nothing of this kind regarding printed and illustrated pornographic material. On the contrary, because of the properly prohibitive manner of the Video Tapes Classification and Control Act 1987, the non-video section of pornographic material is enjoying an ever-increasing importation to and distribution in Western Australia. Indeed, one can observe a larger and larger quantity of restricted publications in more and more frequent special editions of the *Government Gazette*. Based on the provisions of the Indecent Publication of Articles Act a growing number of filthy titles are listed for restricted publication, meaning only that they cannot be displayed or sold legally to persons under the age of 18. Even these titles, let alone the magazines I described, are filthy and revolting. Because of that, decent people would not want to read them. Even their titles are filthy and revolting to such an extent that I would not bring myself to read them out here, not even for the record; but unfortunately they are the sole occupants, just to give you a few recent examples, of *Government Gazettes* Nos 20, 37 and 42 of March, April and May 1988. To illustrate my point I ask one of the attendants to hand the Minister these titles and two publications to which I have referred, which I acquired through the courtesy of the Australian Family Association. That association must be commended on its endeavours in this matter. These publications are sold as a result of the laws which the Government is tolerating.

These *Government Gazettes* refer not only to explicit sex pictures but also to all types of unnatural sexual activity, including anal sex, group sex, homosexuality, lesbianism, and even bestiality. I wonder - indeed I am appalled - that in times when excessive feminism often deals with almost ridiculously petty matters; when a large amount of taxpayers' money is spent on maintaining agencies of nondiscrimination; when valuable human resources are put to work to devise more modes of affirmative action claiming to protect the weaker sex; when we have a Minister for Women's Interests and another to assist him; at the same time, in the same philosophical atmosphere, a lady Minister, Hon Yvonne Daphne Henderson, signs a regulation containing a schedule of "restricted" publications, all of which except perhaps the homosexual ones deal with direct or indirect exploitation and degradation of women.

Such printed material is worse than videotapes because, albeit legally restricted, it can and does easily fall into the hands of schoolchildren. Videotapes can be watched only with a recorder and the TV equipment and are not available at public conveniences or schoolyards. Every available social and academic research indicates that such material of illustrated sexually violent activity is the most frequent immediate cause of violence, sexual assault and abuse.

It should not be forgotten - and this is really pragmatic proof - that the Birnies' place was full of such filthy material. However, even if all this pornography does not lead to violence



in crime, it contributes to abnormal sexual relationships, to loss of emotion and love and affection, and causes domination and exploitation. Here we are complaining against the proliferation of crime, promising all sorts of remedies for it, yet at the same time we are promoting, by Government, the restricted sale of such printed filth and aberration with all its consequences. I would like - indeed I demand - the Minister to stand up and explain to the House the reasons for such Government policy, which deliberately aims at, and will result in, the corruption of the community.

My main subject is extremely important for the future and proper balance of the Federal system within the Commonwealth of Australia. I refer to the proposed amendments to the Constitution which, after a very long propaganda exercise, the Federal Attorney General finally submitted to Parliament in the form of four Bills. This is nothing but a political exercise to try to regain the severely damaged ground which the Labor Party suffered in its humiliating electoral defeats and in the large swing against it throughout Australia. Despite the \$6 million-plus spent on the Labor-appointed Constitutional Commission, the Government has ignored its recommendations. Instead, the Government chose to suggest amendments which are aimed at driving a wedge between the Opposition coalition parties and the coalition and the Australian Democrats.

These amendments are all motherhood subjects and are difficult to argue against, particularly when the Australian public is much less versed in the Constitution than are the people of the United States in their Constitution. Another joint characteristic of these four propositions is that all are directly or indirectly increasing the power of the central Government and weakening the rights, not only of the State Governments, but of the people of Australia generally.

In addition, the four amendments give increased opportunities to the High Court to make the constitutional laws instead of leaving the law making to the people and their parliamentary representatives. Each submitted amendment invites further interpretation from the High Court, which could - and based on past experience, it will - extend the central powers even further against true federalism and the acquired individual rights of citizens.

It should also be widely communicated to the public - and this would be the duty and responsibility of the media - that all the questions, as proposed to be submitted, are deceit and indeed straight out lies. They omit the whole truth and even sugar-coat the half truth, or less than it, which is mentioned in the questions. I will use my remaining time to briefly analyse each of these four proposals and their consequences, should they be accepted.

Firstly, the Constitutional Alterations (Parliamentary Terms) Bill, and particularly the referendum question connected with it, which in the absence of any other information is the long title, is a straight out deceit and lie. I am not alone in critical judgment of this kind. Gerry Morgan, a well known public relations researcher, said that all the questions, including this one, were rigged. The Federal Leader of the National Party said that the questions were deceptive and sinister.

Mr Parker: Coming from Ian Sinclair, that is quite a statement.

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister should listen and he will understand. The question is whether the people want a four year term for the House of Representatives and the Senate. Does the Minister know of any other question?

Mr Parker: The Leader of the National Party here said the Federal Leader of the National Party lacked credibility.

Mr MENSAROS: A four year term for both Federal Houses, that is the question, but it does not mention that the Bill takes away the States' constitutional right to decide the time and place of the election of their senators. It does not mention that it takes away the six year term of the senators. It is silent about taking away the fixed term from the Senate and, most importantly, it is silent about taking away the rotation of senators, which is the ultimate safeguard for the effective power of the Senate and is the common characteristic of every second Chamber, save the proposed new Western Australian Legislative Council. Here of course we know that the legislation deliberately aimed to debar the Legislative Council from its proper role of review.

The different - that means really double - term of the Senate is essential if we genuinely want to retain the second Chamber. Even the Labor-appointed Constitutional Commission has recommended an eight year term for the Senate if the House of Representatives has a

four year maximum term. We should not forget that more than \$6 million was spent on the commission, and yet the Government has not adhered to its recommendations. Had we had a simultaneous Senate term, the Bill of Rights and the ID card legislation would have been passed against the wishes of the people. The Canberra Labor Government had hoped that simultaneous Senate terms would find favour with the National Party because if all the senators were elected at the same time, the National Party would have had a better chance of electing more senators. However that proved to be wrong. Only the Australian Democrats were irresponsible enough to prefer their selfish aims to the interests of the people represented by the Senate.

In respect of the House of Representatives, the four year term is a maximum term, with no minimum set as in Victoria. By doing this yet leaving the double dissolution provisions in place by leaving section 57 intact, the Executive has two bites of the cherry. It can dissolve both Houses of Parliament at any time or it can use the presently prevailing option for double dissolution to pass unpopular legislation like the ID card with a joint majority against the will of the people. Therefore, the farcical fact is that there will be more elections despite the Government's false, dishonest sales pitch at aiming for fewer elections every four years instead of every three years as it is at present.

Secondly, the Bill for Fair Elections, which should really be called the Bill for centralised and unfair elections, broadly provides, with very cumbersome drafting, that one year after the referendum has been agreed to, in each State and Territory there should be a Parliament with electorates of equal numbers of constituents, save a 10 per cent tolerance.

Mr Hassell: It does not deal with its own elections in Canberra.

Mr MENSAROS: No, but I will come to this. If one third of the electorates is out of kilter for two months, redistribution will be due. With these provisions, the States lose the right to specify electoral qualifications by repealing section 30, and all the electors entitled to vote according to the State law lose the right to vote for Commonwealth elections by the repeal of section 47. The amendments proposed in new sections 124A to G provide that States and Territories will have one-vote-one-value for any State House - that word "any" is important - and if they do not, the Commonwealth can legislate for them. If the Commonwealth does not legislate, the whole State becomes one electorate and proportional representation prevails, as it does with the Senate vote.

In Western Australia, even the new electoral laws would become invalid because the Legislative Assembly needs an equal number of electors in each district and the Legislative Council cannot have six regions, only one. We know that the one-vote-one-value system is much less equitable than the present situation in Western Australia. We only need to cast our minds back to the 1970s when we had 10 Federal seats - each being subject to one-vote-one-value - and the Liberals had nine out of the 10; that is, 90 per cent of the seats based on a popular vote, which at its best, was 57 per cent. Now, with 13 Federal seats the Labor Party has nine, representing 75 per cent of the seats, with a popular vote of 50.6 per cent. Those figures represent the true demerit of the one-vote-one-value system.

We should not forget that it was the Labor State Attorney General who moved in the upper House to delete the clause from the new electoral laws which would have introduced one-vote-one-value. He was responsible for that, not us. He wanted to get rid of that because he saw that it would not suit the Labor Government.

These provisions apply only to the State, as the member for Cortesloe says. The Commonwealth Government - the benevolent dictator - only wishes them to apply to its serfs not itself. No one-vote-one-value prevails in the Senate nor the House of Representatives in Tasmania, the ACT and the Northern Territory. No doubt in the future some High Court will even reduce the Senate to one Australia wide representation.

The "Rights and Freedoms" Bill is the most pathetic motherhood coating of the package. Trial by jury as codified in relation to the States restricts rather than extends freedom which we have enjoyed since the creation of the State of Western Australia. Property compensation is window-dressing - we have this provision on a wider base in common law as well as in the Public Works Act. The religious freedom provision which extends section 116 to the States is nothing but dangerous because if we follow the American example where the Supreme Court made its own interpretation, we could end up with State Government aid to

private schools being abolished. This has occurred in the United States, and we could end up with prayers in any non-religious school being abolished like it has been in the United States.

Finally, the so called local government recognition will be dealt with by the member for Karrinyup. However, I will read the clause relating to local government recognition -

119A Each State shall provide for the establishment and continuance of a system of local government with local government bodies elected in accordance with the laws of the State. ...

What is the gain there? Local government does not receive more money. Does it receive more road money? It gets nothing. Local government does not need recognition as it is recognised already in section 52 of the State Constitution. We could finish up with a High Court interpretation which will abolish local government in favour of Whitlam type regions. If the State decided that we should have one only State wide local government, according to this constitutional amendment it could do so.

Dr Gallop: Rubbish!

Mr MENSAROS: Of course, it could do so, because it is a system of local government. I remind this House that Canberra does not apply these things to itself. Members should remember that the Commonwealth suspended local government in Canberra.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

We should all be vigorously opposed to this centralised power grab. For that reason I move an amendment -

That the following words be added to the motion -

But we regret to inform Your Excellency that the Commonwealth Attorney General introduced four Bills in the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia for alteration of the Constitution, aiming to severely restrict and take over some of the powers and responsibilities of the Sovereign State of Western Australia.

To prevent this aim from succeeding, this Assembly calls on all Western Australians to safeguard the interest of the people of our State and vote against the referendums containing these amendments to the Commonwealth Constitution.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe) [3.25 pm]: I second the amendment so ably moved by the shadow Attorney General, the member for Floreat. We should clearly understand what is going on in relation to the Government of Western Australia and these referendums proposals because in supporting these proposals the Government of Western Australia seeks to diminish this State and to diminish the Constitution of this State on the grounds that response must be made to the demands of its centralist colleagues in Canberra.

Three of the four proposals directly relate to interference by the Commonwealth Government in matters of State responsibility. The Labor Party which has been elected to govern on behalf of the people of Western Australia has placed itself in a position of supporting the transfer of more powers and more controls to Canberra. The Labor Party deserves to be censured and condemned for having done so.

The member for Mitchell interjected on the member for Floreat to talk about the local government issue - and I will not deal with this topic at any length because the member for Karrinyup will do so. I remind the member for Mitchell that Western Australia has a Constitution as well, and that our Constitution is as legitimate and as proper as any other. In fact, our Constitution precedes the Commonwealth Constitution. The idea that we have a hierarchy in Australia, with the Commonwealth at the top, the States underneath, and local government underneath that, is completely wrong because in their respective spheres of responsibility the States and the Commonwealth are equal; they are both Sovereign, but in different areas.

Dr Gallop: Waffle!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HASSELL: The Liberal Party of Western Australia has consistently supported the ambitions of local government. A Liberal Government of Western Australia enacted legislation to give constitutional recognition to local government by writing it into the Constitution of Western Australia. The fundamental issue of what is immediately being attempted by the Commonwealth Government is to make four changes, but which amount to a whole lot more. Four groups of changes to the Commonwealth Constitution are proposed through a referendum to be held later this year in September, I understand. There are three ways to change the Commonwealth Constitution. The legitimate way is the way that is being attempted now. The attempt is legitimate; I trust it will fail through the mechanism of the referendum.

The Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia is not the Australian Constitution - there are seven Australian Constitutions. The Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia is supposed to be altered by the referendum procedure. It has in fact been altered by two other methods: the abuse of the finance power by the Commonwealth and, secondly, by the extraordinary decisions of the High Court of Australia. It has undermined the Constitution with decisions totally inconsistent with its structure and intention.

The High Court in the Franklin Dam case decided that the Commonwealth had power to override great chunks of the Constitution. Section 100 of the Constitution states -

The Commonwealth shall not, by any law or regulation or trade or commerce, abridge the right of a State or of the residents therein to the reasonable use of the waters of rivers for conservation or irrigation.

That apparently counted for nothing when the High Court wanted to give the Commonwealth power to ban the State of Tasmania from building a dam to use the water.

More recently we have seen the controversy about the World Heritage listing. The unfortunate people of Shark Bay were crying out for the support of the State Government to oppose World Heritage listing because it involves a transfer of power over their property and livelihoods to the discretion of the Commonwealth Minister. The Minister can say to the people of Shark Bay, "You may own your pastoral property and stores in Shark Bay, but you may not use them, and you have no right to compensation under Commonwealth legislation." That is the result of the High Court decision.

In the past two weeks we have seen the High Court reverse 80 years of decisions in relation to section 92 which prohibits, as it stands, restrictions on free trade between the States. Those decisions have been overturned, and the power of Commonwealth and State Governments to legislate, restrict and control what people do has been increased.

We should remember that Government is about the exercise of power over people, and democracy is about the control of that power to protect people. Part of our democracy is the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia. Four changes are proposed to that Constitution, and each is designed to diminish the power of the people and the States, and enhance the power of the Commonwealth and the High Court to the detriment of the people and States.

It should be remembered that the High Court of Australia was elected by no-one and is answerable to no-one. It is a serious matter when the High Court makes decisions, as it has done in recent years, which undermine the independence of the States and the rights of the people in the States. The truth of the matter is that if the people of Shark Bay want to stop the World Heritage listing of their area, they have to go to Sydney and Melbourne, because the effect of the High Court decision is to transfer the political power over the State of Western Australia into the hands of Canberra and, therefore, people in the suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne.

What is the intention of these referendums proposals? Their intention is to transfer the power of the State of Western Australia to Canberra, and the people of Sydney and Melbourne. Firstly, there is the attack on the Senate. The independence of the Senate is to be undermined. That argument is perhaps difficult for some people to understand but, put simply, it means that at present the Senate has a fixed term of six years - there is a rotation procedure whereby half the senators go out each three years for election. The Senate, with equal representation from the States, can reject legislation and the Prime Minister of the day

cannot put it to an election except in the case of the double dissolution procedure. This proposal would give the Prime Minister power to put the Senate to election at any time he likes.

In addition, there is a more basic proposition. Across Western Australia and, indeed, Australia, there is a growing movement for a people's initiative referendum procedure. That is a procedure which would allow the people, by signing a petition, to require that a referendum be held on a particular issue. The people's initiative referendum can take several forms, but the two main forms are: In a negative form, for the people to have the power to initiate a referendum to reverse a law that has been passed by Parliament; and, in a positive form, to enable people to initiate a referendum to put a law into operation.

At the very moment that this movement is taking place across the country with the intention of increasing the accountability of Parliaments and politicians to the electorate, the Federal Government proposes to reduce accountability by having a four year term. What do the protagonists of the four year term say openly and publicly about why they want it? They say, "We want a four year term so that the Government can make decisions that are not popular." Imagine what Western Australia will be like if, by any chance, this Dowding Government is re-elected next year. All the nasties that it has been keeping under the carpet for the past few years, because of the electoral impact, will be dragged out.

For instance, it will be able to bring back industrial legislation to get rid of subcontractors; ban the common law rights of employers, and bring in legislation for a single workers' compensation insurer and deny the competitive private enterprise system. It will bring back all those measures on the basis that after four years no-one will remember them.

I want to put on the record today that I have never supported a four year term and I do not support it now. I believe in the accountability of politicians and Parliaments, whether we are in Opposition or Government. I believe that Australia has been saved from some very bad decisions because elections have been imminent. There is no more important example of that than what occurred last year when the Federal Government proposed a law to deny employers the right to go to common law on industrial issues, and get rid of the provisions of sections 45D and 45E of the Trade Practices Act. The proposal was dropped because of opposition to it, and the fact that the Federal election was about to be held.

We are often saved from bad laws because Governments have to be responsive to public opinion, and so they should. They have to have the courage to make tough decisions and convince the electorate of the rightness of those decisions. It should not be made easy for Governments to get off the hook by having such a long period in office that they can get away with things that they know would not be acceptable to the electorate. Therefore, we should oppose the first referendum proposal for four year terms, not only because it diminishes the power of the Senate, and that is against the interests of this State, but also because it is bad in itself to have a four year term.

There is then the farcical and grossly dishonest referendum question about so-called fair and democratic elections. I would ask the few remaining members of the Labor Government in the House whether any of them believes -

Mr Carr: There are not many of yours here either.

Mr HASSELL: The question happens to be directed to the Minister's colleagues. I ask whether any of the Government members believe that it was a fair situation in 1975, when the election was held on 13 December, and the Liberal Party got about 55 per cent of the vote, but won nine out of the ten seats in Western Australia. With 55 per cent of the vote the Liberal Party got 90 per cent of the seats. That was a one-vote-one-value situation as imposed by the Whitlam Government and as distributed -

Mr Carr: That is always possible with single member constituencies.

Mr HASSELL: The Minister for Local Government is acknowledging that one-vote-one-value does not necessarily produce fair electoral results, yet the people are asked to vote for a fair and democratic system. Is it fair and democratic to have a system which gives a party 90 per cent of the seats for 55 per cent of the vote? The answer is no. If that system were applied to this Parliament all the seats on the Opposition side of the House, except for three or four, would be occupied by Government members. That could be the result of one-vote-one-value.

One-vote-one-value is not, of itself, fair and democratic, yet that is the question the Commonwealth is dishonestly putting on the basis that people will be induced to vote for a referendum which is itself flawed. They think it is the right thing to do because of the words the Commonwealth has used.

What is incredible about this proposal is that the Commonwealth Parliament is seeking to impose on this Parliament a system which it is not imposing on itself. What is more incredible is the State Labor Government is supporting the Commonwealth in seeking to interfere in the Western Australian Constitution. I even have a question in my mind as to whether this referendum is lawful because section 106 of the Constitution states -

The Constitution of each State of the Commonwealth shall, subject to this Constitution, continue as at the establishment of the Commonwealth, or as at the admission or establishment of the State, as the case may be, until altered in accordance with the Constitution of the State.

The Constitution acknowledges what those people thought in those days; that is, that the business of our Constitution is for the people of Western Australia.

I wonder whether Government members realise that if 90 per cent of the people of Western Australia wanted an electoral system in the upper House, such as that which is now in place, and if this amendment to the Constitution had been passed, the will of 90 per cent of the people of Western Australia would be overruled. It is absurd that people in Sydney and Melbourne are judging our Constitution and determining how it should operate. What is even more incredible is that the Labor Government which is dedicated to the interests of Western Australia is supporting three propositions, every one of which diminishes the rights of the people of Western Australia and gives those rights to majorities in the Eastern States, the Government in Canberra and to an unelected High Court against the interests of the people in this State.

The Government should think about the fact that it has an obligation to the people of this State. It is not a matter of State rights: It is a matter of the rights of people to be governed locally and not remotely.

MR CARR (Geraldton - Minister for Local Government) [3.45 pm]: The Government completely rejects this amendment. It was not surprising to hear the member for Cottesloe carry on with all the nonsense and emotional claptrap about the powers of people and that sort of thing. Those of us who have heard him perform over recent times are quite aware that he has become hysterical in his attitude to the relationship between the State and Commonwealth Governments regarding all matters concerning the powers of people in relation to governments.

The member's comments should not really surprise people. He is using one of those very old tactics which is used when a person is in doubt, under pressure, when one does not have an argument or finds himself locked into a corner. A person in that situation does not try to defend his position, but he lashes out in a counter attack in the hope that he can divert attention away from the fact that he made an awful mistake and has found himself in an embarrassing position where he is committed to the indefensible. That is the position in which the Opposition in this State and around the country has found itself regarding the referendum question. It found itself confronted with reasonable propositions and its immediate reaction was that because the referendum question has come from the Government it will not have a bar of it. Now it has realised where its attitude has placed it - in a position of attempting to defend the indefensible; and rather than defend the position it has lashed out at the Government about intruding on people's rights. It should not be surprising that it has come from the member for Cottesloe considering the way he comports himself, but it is disappointing in terms of any rational analysis of the situation.

Let us look at the situation. The truth is that the Opposition has found itself in difficulty on this issue. First, it is divided and is in disarray. As an example of the disarray in which the Opposition finds itself let us take the performance of the Opposition in the Federal Parliament when the legislation was put through the Parliament. A number of members were not prepared to vote for the position that had been agreed to by their party's leadership. I understand that four members were not prepared to vote for the position adopted by the Liberal Party in its party room. The Federal member, Mr Spender, expressed very strong

views because he found himself in an extremely embarrassing situation. Mr Spender, as the Opposition spokesman on legal matters, had included in the Commonwealth Opposition's policy on law and justice two of the proposals which are included in the fourth question relating to trial by jury and compensation for land required by the Government.

We had a situation where a prominent member of the Opposition supported the proposals and included them in the Opposition's policy and proposed they be put to a referendum, but when the Government of the day proposes to put them to a referendum he has been left high and dry because his colleagues have deserted him. No wonder he said that he was "damned" if he understood why the coalition had opposed the extension of these rights. That is the second example of how the Opposition is in disarray on this.

I refer now to the Opposition shadow Cabinet's position in the Federal Parliament which actually supported two of the referendum proposals - one relating to the recognition of local government and the other relating to the acknowledgement of certain rights - and they were rolled in the joint party Caucus room. What sort of situation is that? The so-called leadership of the Federal parliamentary Liberal and National Parties adopted a policy to support two proposals included in the referendum and opposed the other two and it could not obtain the support of its members in the party room. The Opposition cannot tell me that it is not in disarray in regard to these proposals.

Let us look at the position in Queensland; the Liberal Party in Queensland has over a period been prepared to stand up for the important issue of one-vote-one-value and has been consistent. Historically the Federal Liberal Party has supported one-vote-one-value for much of the time. When the opportunity arose to say no to an initiative from the Government, the Commonwealth Liberal Party rushed in and said no, and is now having a brawl with the Queensland Liberal Party. Let us consider comments made by the Liberal Party in Queensland. Their leader, Mr Innes, accused Mr Howard and his Federal colleagues of not understanding the local and national implications of opposing the proposal for one-vote-one-value. He actually asked for, and received, an assurance from Mr Howard that the Federal Liberals would not campaign in Queensland on that issue. Members opposite should not tell me that there is no disarray on the Liberal side of politics on these matters.

The Western Australian Government has been prepared to acknowledge that people of different political persuasions can adopt reasonable attitudes at times and on that basis it has invited Mr Innes to come to Western Australia and join the campaign on these issues in this State. Let there be no doubt that the Liberal Party is in disarray on this issue and because it is so keen to oppose everything it has fallen into the trap of opposing reasonable and popular proposals. It is embarrassed because it cannot defend the position it is now in and, therefore, is lashing out in this way. Let there be no doubt that these are popular proposals. People may say that opinion polls can be used to prove a number of points, but an opinion poll carried out by the Newspoll organisation and reported in *The Australian* on Tuesday, 17 May indicates overwhelming support for each of the four questions in each of the States throughout the nation. We certainly found strong support for each of the questions in Western Australia.

Let us consider something more significant than that - the attitude of Liberal Party supporters around Australia. I do not refer to Liberal Party and National Party members of Parliament, but to Liberal Party and National Party voters around Australia. Again, there was overwhelming support for all four questions among the people who regularly vote for the Liberal Party or the National Party. Let there be no doubt that the Opposition is in the embarrassing position of being hoist with its own petard by its negativism. That is the only explanation I can provide for the way the member for Cortesloe was lashing out in such an irrational way earlier.

I will take that position further so far as the Liberal Party is concerned and refer to an article which sums up the position well. The article written by Paul Kelly appeared in *The Australian* under the heading "The party without a memory". This article referred to the difficulties the Liberal Party is now having because it cannot remember the mistakes it made in the past. It referred in particular to the founder of the Liberal Party, Sir Robert Menzies, who of all things believed there was a role for a progressive Liberal Party in Australia. He espoused that view and he would be very disappointed if he were alive today and saw how the Opposition in this Parliament and in the Federal Parliament has an initial reaction in all

circumstances of saying no to any proposal from the Government, and then working out how to get out of the mess it is in. I quote from the article to which I referred -

In 1944, Mr Menzies said: "On far too many questions we have found our role to be simply that of a man who says 'no'. Once this atmosphere is created it is quite simple for us to be branded as reactionaries . . . there is no room in Australia for a party of reaction."

"There is no useful place for a policy of negativism."

That is not my view but the view of Mr Menzies, as he then was, in 1944. As Paul Kelly pointed out, the Liberal Party in 1988 has forgotten the mistakes it made prior to 1944 and has forgotten the message given by Mr Menzies who led them out of the wilderness. It is a party without principles or a memory of the mistakes of the past. The same article referred to the need for a party to work out what it supports and to establish its principles; clearly the Liberal Party does not know what it supports. It is a party that does not know where it is going.

I would like to spend a few moments considering the four matters that have been proposed. The first relates to the proposal for a four-year term. I find it quite extraordinary that the member for Cottesloe suddenly finds merit in a three-year term and considers it more appropriate than a four-year term. He, like any other member in this Parliament who has been a member of Government, knows full well that a three-year term does not provide a reasonable and sufficient time for longer term planning and policy implementation. I do not support Mr Hawke's holding a number of early elections but the member for Cottesloe knows that the present system encourages early elections in order to bring the two Houses into kilter. A four-year term will provide a greater opportunity for planning and decisions to be made outside the post election and pre election periods when Government activity slows down.

I was most surprised to hear the member for Floreat refer to the four-year term proposal as taking away the proper role of review of the upper House. I presume by that he is implying that the present situation provides a proper role of review. He referred to the Western Australian Parliament, and I wonder how that statement relates to the performance in the upper House last Wednesday evening when a very simple motion - a standard formal procedure - was moved to reinstate a Bill at the same place on the Notice Paper that it had been at the end of the previous session. I am sure that members in this House are familiar with the procedure which has been used year in and year out, that when a Bill is left on the Notice Paper at the end of a session and it is decided to debate the Bill in the next session, a simple procedural motion is moved that the Bill shall be reinstated. The upper House rejected that Bill without any debate whatsoever.

Mr Stephens: Which Bill?

Mr CARR: It was the Local Government Amendment Bill (No 2).

Mr Stephens: The Government wanted it to be restored and to have a second go at it.

Mr CARR: The Bill had not been fully debated; it was at the stage of a second reading adjourned debate. The member for Stirling's colleagues in the upper House, along with members of the Liberal Party, were not prepared to allow that Bill to be debated in the upper House and it was tossed out. It dealt with one controversial issue, but contained six other provisions which were wanted by local government, including the provisions dealing with the rateability of mining tenements, and enforcement of disabled parking provisions. It was tossed out without any consideration at all.

The member for Floreat should not talk about the proper function of the upper House as practised at the moment being endangered by some other initiatives; he should not claim that the Legislative Council carries out a proper process of review. It certainly does not do so.

The second of these referendum questions relates to one-vote-one-value and I know members of this Parliament, who have been in this place as long as I have, have debated this issue through and through over the last 14 years. I do not want to rehash the issue except to say the process of that debate over some 14 years has managed to overcome the enormous forces of reaction that have been mounted against this initiative over that time, and has helped to bring us to a stage where the people of Western Australia support strongly



one-vote-one-value. The poll that I referred to earlier showed that in all States - with the exception of Tasmania, where there was an 82 per cent approval for one-vote-one-value - there was 81 per cent approval. So that is what has happened as a result of the passage of that debate, and it is extraordinary that the Liberal Party seeks to hang to the past in the way that it does.

The way in which the Opposition parties have refused to support the question of the recognition of local government has to be the most extraordinary example of hypocrisy that I have seen from any party for a long time. The proposal to recognise local government is an initiative, as every member knows, that has been sought by local governments for a decade or more. It is seen by local governments as a symbol of local government taking its place as an equal partner in our "three sphere" system of Government. Successive Liberal and Labor Party people in local governments have supported the measure, and probably none more strongly than a Liberal Party member of Parliament in New South Wales, Greg Percival, who did so for many years.

Since that decision was made we have seen some very strong statements by local government leaders in this State. Mayor Ray Finlayson, the President of the Country Shire Councils Association, described the Opposition's decision to oppose the referendum proposal to recognise local government as "a big disappointment to local governments throughout Australia." He said that -

Coalition talk about the importance of local government as an equal partner in the three sphere system of Government in Australia will now be seen as mere platitudes.

He said -

"Mr Howard's criticism of the referendum proposal... as "nothing more than an attempt to win cheapjack support from the local government community", shows that the Federal Opposition's decision to advocate a "no" vote lacked substance and was at variance with the Opposition's stated policy on this question"...

Mr MacKinnon: That is absolute rubbish.

Mr CARR: That is not rubbish; it is a comment made by Mr Finlayson.

Mr Peter Kyle, the President of the Association of Local Government, and a former Liberal aspirant for preselection, said -

"The Federal Opposition's failure to support the Local Government referendum bill last Wednesday in the House of Representatives is an about-face which has shocked Local Government,"... "Local Government Associations have dozens of letters on file from Coalition Party members, including statements by both the Liberal and National Party leaders, supporting Constitutional recognition."

They were all thrown out the window. Mr Kyle referred also to the "extraordinary claims as to the implications of Constitutional recognition." He said -

... these claims are simply untrue. "They are red herrings aimed at diverting voters' attention from the real issue - the fact that the Opposition has reneged on its commitment and is now assembling a series of excuses for its action,"...

We have clearly a very strong expression from local governments that they have been let down by the Liberal and National Parties.

The last of the referendum questions relates to trial by jury, freedom of religion and fair terms for property acquisition, which are issues which are even more fundamental and basic than the previous one. It is extraordinary that the Liberal and National Parties are so quick to say "no" under any circumstances that they are even prepared to advocate against the rights to have trial by jury, freedom of religion and fair terms for property acquisition, when the Liberal Party's Federal spokesman has put those questions into the Liberal Party policy and wanted to put them to a referendum. I therefore oppose the amendment.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup) [4.05 pm]: Four amendments are proposed to the Federal Constitution, and I understand they will come before the people of Australia in September. The initiative for the four questions being in the form in which they are presented lies with the Federal Labor Party, which sees these four questions as suiting its long term aims. It is interesting that the Federal Labor Party should bring about the proposed legislation relating

to the referendum questions before the Constitutional Commission has made its final report. The Federal Labor Party chose to bypass a body which cost \$6 million to operate.

The proposition which will install one-vote-one-value is clearly a long term objective of the Australian Labor Party. One-vote-one-value will do great harm to the power and interests of the least populated States, and to the people who live in rural, pastoral and mining areas. If the referendum is successful on the question of one-vote-one-value it will be interesting to see how that sits in the Australian Constitution, which says that Tasmania shall have five members, irrespective of population. It would be a contradiction to maintain that particular situation; and if the one-vote-one-value element was to take precedence over the other, the people of Tasmania would probably have only half the Federal members they now have. It would also affect significantly the representation of the Northern Territory and Canberra. The Federal Labor Party believes in centralisation of power in Canberra and in pushing power into the hands of the people who live in the regions of Sydney and Melbourne. It does not care about the interests of the rest of Australia. It does not care about Western Australia.

The Liberal Party in Western Australia has always been highly supportive of local government in our State. That is demonstrated by the fact that in the 1970s, under the Court Liberal Government, local government was recognised in the Western Australian Constitution. We view with great suspicion the current proposal to recognise local government in the Federal Constitution in the form that is now proposed. The only specific argument provided by supporters of constitutional recognition of local government, such as the various local government associations, is that it will enhance the status of local government. It will not enhance one jot the status of local government. I challenge any member to tell me how people who are running a rotten local government - such as in the Labor controlled suburbs of Sydney - will be able to walk around with their heads held high. It will make no difference to the status of councils which behave in a rotten way, or to those which administer themselves properly. Do members think those councils would suddenly be given a big halo or gold lame suit or some other practical gift that will make them more elevated than they are presently? They are what they are, and the various States of Australia are what they are, as is also the Australian nation. The Australian nation is presently in a deplorable state because it has rotten Government. The status of local government councils and councillors will not be changed one iota, and it is absolute nonsense for anyone to suggest otherwise.

The hard headed local government councillors that I know do not care a fig about status. They would like a bit more power, and particularly the power of extra finance. In Western Australia they would be looking for more money for roads. I said a few days ago that local government councillors know that \$7 billion has been collected by the Federal Government in road taxes and fuel charges, and only \$1.2 billion is coming back. Local governments do not want an imaginary status or the nonsense of recognition. The Minister for Local Government said a moment ago that recognition of local government is seen by local governments as making them an equal partner in Australian Government. That is absolute nonsense. If members think that if local governments achieve recognition in September this year they will be able to go up to Canberra - to that billion dollar flagpole - and say, "We are an equal partner; therefore we want a couple of million dollars extra out of the \$7 billion you are taking", they are wrong.

Mr Stephens: The Federal Government cannot even give the States their just due financially.

Mr CLARKO: Exactly. The Federal Government of Australia is a great cancer. It has destroyed the legitimate basis on which it was created whereby various colonies agreed to come together. They set down a compact and a Constitution and for the 88 years that have passed since then the decisions of Federal Governments and the High Court have been progressively to strip power from State Governments and to give more powers to themselves.

If local government were placed in that situation that is what would happen. I do not need to make a generalised statement, I will say very specifically that it was a Federal Liberal-National Government that introduced the system of grants that came from Australian taxation collections, and it was a Federal Liberal-National Government that said two per cent of those tax collections should go to local government as of right. And what did the Hawke Labor Government do? It cut the grant back from two per cent to 1.75 per cent. That is what it thinks of local government.

If local government were welcomed into the Federal Government's parlours I reckon it

would be wise to keep its hands over its pockets, and if it had a couple of sets of arms I would advise it to put them in other places, too, because they would have everything of value taken from them. That is the Federal Government's record.

If members read the Bill they will see that Hon Lionel Bowen, the Federal Attorney General who introduced the Bill, states one reason only for it. He says -

The Bill will give proper recognition to the third level of public administration.

"Proper recognition". I will set out below the essential parts of Lionel Bowen's speech, and I will quote from the Bill right now. Before doing so I remind members that what Mr Bowen says here is what the Bill will not do -

The Bill does not give the Commonwealth Parliament power to establish local government bodies in the States. It expressly recognises that the form and structure of local government is a matter for the States. It requires each State to provide for the establishment and continuance of a system of local government.

Further on in his speech he said -

The provision is not intended to prevent State Governments from providing for the amalgamation of local government councils or for their dismissal on grounds of incompetence or malpractice. It is expected, however, that the States will need to make provision for the election of new councils within a reasonable time after any such dismissal.

What that says is that, as far as Western Australia is concerned, the alteration is nil. If members like, I will read out the only clause of significance in that piece of legislation relating to constitutional recognition. The Bill adds this clause to the Australian Constitution -

119A. Each State shall provide for the establishment and continuance of a system of local government, with local government bodies elected in accordance with the laws of the State and empowered to administer, and to make by-laws for, their respective areas in accordance with the laws of the State...

That is the only clause in that Bill and what it says, in effect and very simply, is that the States shall make laws in regard to local government in their States and that no-one shall interfere or do anything in any way with regard to it. How does that change the standing or power of local government in Western Australia when it is already in the Constitution, having been put there by a Liberal Government in the 1970s? If these words mean what they say - that is, we just put a clause in the Constitution that says local government in any State shall follow the laws of the State as the State decides - if we take that on face value it gives us absolutely nothing. This recognition is pointless. There is no statement in there about status or giving local government gold lame suits.

For those who support recognition, hopeful that it will enhance their powers, there is absolutely nothing unless these words in the Federal Constitution open the way, through the use of the High Court, for a new interpretation of the Federal Government's powers to interact directly with local government, thereby bypassing the States.

History will tell everybody in this Chamber and in Australia who advocates that latter position that the Australian High Court and Federal Governments have progressively shifted political and economic power to Canberra. They have taken it away from the rest of Australia and the rest of Australia - especially the less populated States - has suffered.

I move now to the question of power through money. Clearly recognition as set out in this Bill does not open the way for Federal funding for local government. Local government currently gets about \$1 billion per year and nothing in this legislation will enhance the opportunity of local government to get more. I have already pointed out that this Hawke Labor Government has given local government less - it has cut the grant back from two per cent to 1.75 per cent - so there is no doubt that it is not getting any more power, or the imaginary status, or new means of getting finance.

It is quite improper to suggest that if local government gets recognition in the Constitution in accordance with the States' way this will make it easier for local government representatives to meet Federal Ministers, because local government meets Federal Ministers right now, and the Prime Minister, and has for many years had complete access to meeting the Federal

Government. So this provision will not make any difference whatsoever to their option actually to talk and negotiate with local government. For example, local government all around Australia but especially in Western Australia has desperately sought more money for roads; yet when the mini-Budget came out last week, what did it get? There was a cut of \$50 million for roads. I understand, although I did not check it out, that last year there was a cut of \$180 million.

Mr Crane: That is what you call recognising the needs of local government.

Mr CLARKO: That is right. Unfortunately the newspaper misquoted me yesterday when I said the roads of Australia are worth \$100 billion; they wrote that I said \$100 million. The roads are already collapsing all over Australia. In many States in Australia in the late 1980s we are ripping up bitumen roads and replacing them with gravel roads. That is how far advanced we are under the Hawke Labor Government. This proposal does not give local government anything. All it will do is perhaps give an opportunity for this Federal Government to treat local government more harshly.

I urge every councillor to read the booklet that has been put out by the Office of Local Government entitled "A Case for Constitutional Recognition of Local Government". They should read that because in that booklet is the alternative to what I have said; namely, that the measure before the Parliament is only to leave things as they are, to make no changes. In Western Australia we are already well ahead of that, so it is giving local government something it already has. They are saying, "I will give you a shirt", and the reply is, "I already have a shirt." They are saying, "I will give you shoes", and the reply is, "I already have shoes."

That is what the legislation is proposing to do, but everyone knows that is not what is the aim of our socialists. They would rather go down the path set out in this booklet. That says very clearly on page 4 -

Inclusion in the Constitution would obligate local government to adhere to the same democratic principles and practices governing elections of Commonwealth, State and Territory governments. In a democracy with interlocking legislative structures, all sectors of government should have a common democratic base regarding the value of each person's vote, each person's voting eligibility, and each person's voting obligation. This would mean changing the Local Government electoral system in some States.

Of course, that is what is wanted. The Federal Government in Canberra wants to impose on the people of Western Australia, especially local authorities in the bush in Western Australia, one-vote-one-value and compulsory voting. Yet those people meet in the Country Shire Councils Association annually, and more often; and at these conferences they regularly pass motions, for which virtually every person in the room votes, in which they say, "We do not want it. We do not want one-vote-one-value, that will hurt us; and we do not want compulsory voting."

The present system of wards has been brutally imposed on local authorities in a very uneven way. Of course, the Minister for Local Government pretends he is pushing one-vote-one-value for all wards. He has not done so in some councils which are regarded as Labor Party councils. Our country councils especially wish to have a system of wards based on a mixture of population, rateable income, distance and other factors. Yet we have councils in the metropolitan area where the Minister knows there is a need for change. I have copies of correspondence to the Minister by people who say that their ward has many more voters than do other wards, and the Minister makes no change. The Minister was very quick to make a change in Mundaring because it was very easy; he does not make changes in other councils which are supportive of the Labor Party.

The Minister has put out a disgraceful Press release about another matter. I know the Minister's department has been making untrue statements about the local government Bill debated in the upper House last year. According to an executive officer of a handicapped persons' institution, the Minister has told handicapped people that it was the Liberal Party and the National Party which refused to deal with the Bill to allow inspectors to handle handicapped parking bays. That was a grossly dishonest act.

Mr Carr: The Opposition did that.

Mr CLARKO: If the Minister were honest he would have said to these people, "I had a Bill before the upper House; almost every clause in it was agreed to except the clauses relating to referendums and the boundaries for local government. I deliberately refused to allow the Bill through without those clauses so that handicapped people did not receive what they wanted." I told those people that when they telephoned me. I said, "The dishonest Minister and his department could have given you what you wanted but because they wanted to press on and gobble up a little bit of Greenough, they did not." Now the Minister and his department dishonestly tells handicapped people that the Opposition stopped that Bill going through. All the Government had to do was delete those reprehensible clauses. Our speakers had already indicated they would not support the Bill as it stood. If the Government had removed the offending clauses the Bill would have been passed, and people would not have been disadvantaged.

Mr Carr: The Opposition in the upper House had the numbers, but it was frightened that the National Party would not vote for it.

Mr CLARKO: The Constitutional Commissioners set up the Distribution of Powers Advisory Committee which opposed recognition of local government. The Australian Labor Party supports the recognition question and at the same time ignores the question of funding; in fact, it goes further - it supports the principle that local government funds should be cut. If I were a member of a local government association I would not support a Government which cuts local government funds. The formula for ward boundaries is not being applied justly and fairly.

Mr Carr: I deny that.

Mr CLARKO: Is there a local government council in the metropolitan area where the Minister is not making changes because the council is divided, and Labor only has an advantage of one?

Mr Carr: I have not used my powers in a political way. I challenge the member to tell me where I have used power politically.

Mr CLARKO: The Minister did it in Mundaring because it suited him.

Mr Thomas: Go back where you belong.

Mr CLARKO: The member for Welshpool should not comment. I remember how he behaved as a student at university. He was in every demonstration outside the university instead of studying and developing his mind. He wasted those years by involving himself in grossly undesirable demonstrations in the city. They were ineffective; they were failures.

I had intended to quote Professor George Winterton, Associate Professor of Law at the University of New South Wales, but as my time has expired I invite members to read the article.

[The member's time expired.]

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [4.25 pm]: The National Party supports the amendment. We endorse the arguments, which have been adequately advanced by the Opposition. The referendum is not about improving the Constitution at all; it is about concentrating more power in Canberra and as such it is understandable that the socialist Labor Party of Western Australia will support the move. The Opposition realises that the Government intends to transfer all power to Canberra. The terms of reference of the first report of the Constitutional Commission read in part -

- (b) Provide the most suitable framework for the economic, social and political development of Australia as a federation;
- (c) Recognise an appropriate division of responsibilities between the Commonwealth, the States, self-governing Territories and local government;

I have been through the document *A Time to Update - First Report of the Constitutional Commission and Summary* and find that the real problem has not been tackled. Notwithstanding the terms of reference of the commission, the real problem is the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and the States, and that problem has not been dealt with. The Leader of the National Party referred to this recently. Power has been given to Canberra, and the Federal Government is using financial power to weaken the Constitution at

every opportunity. If people looking into the Constitution carried out their proper role they would have concentrated on that area. A breakdown of finances available to States vis-a-vis the Commonwealth should have been investigated.

I had hoped the Minister for Local Government would remain in the Chamber as he had been loud in his interjections earlier. We are under no misapprehension regarding the Federal Government's endeavours to have local government embodied in the Federal Constitution. Such a move is absolutely unnecessary as local government is already embodied in the State Constitution. The motives of the Labor Government were clearly outlined by Prime Minister Hawke on 9 May 1984 during a speech at the national seminar of the Institute of Municipal Management in Canberra.

Mr Read: He is an excellent Prime Minister.

Mr STEPHENS: That is the member's opinion. I am talking facts. The Prime Minister then was carrying on the aims and ambitions of Prime Minister Whitlam and his glorious scheme of regional administration. The Whitlam Government made an attempt to give more power to a centralised Government in Canberra and endeavoured to bypass State responsibilities. A similar attack is being made now by the Federal Government through this referendum.

I am aware that the Minister for Small Business and the Minister for Local Government have both been interjecting that the Opposition does not understand, that we have not read what local government authorities have been saying, and that the reference in the Constitution would simply recognise local government. The Government does not understand, as I will demonstrate.

In his speech on 9 May the Prime Minister said, *inter alia* -

The Government has a strong commitment to raising the status and strengthening the capacity of local government. Our aim is a genuine partnership of the Commonwealth, States and Local Government.

That statement clearly foreshadowed that the Commonwealth Government wanted to be in a position to interfere with local government. Further on he said -

My Government established the first Ministry for Local Government last year and appointed one of its most experienced Ministers to lead it. That represented an historic step forward for Local Government.

It was also a step forward in the Federal Government's march towards taking more power away from State Governments and giving it to centralised Government. The Constitution does not give the Federal Government the right to have a Ministry of Local Government. It is an unnecessary use of funds. The money that is being used to run the Ministry of Local Government in Canberra could be used by the States to help local government in a genuine way. It should not be used in an administrative way to direct the power to Canberra and to deny the States another area of influence.

Further on in his speech the Prime Minister said -

As Tom Uren has said

"We aim to strengthen the capacity of Local Government to deal efficiently and equitably with the concerns of people where they live; and we are seeking to do that in ways which achieve a sustainable shift in the status and functioning of Local Government".

Those quotes clearly demonstrate the aim of the Federal Government in its referendum. It not only wants local government recognised, but also it wants a mechanism whereby local government appears in the Federal Constitution so that the Government can use the High Court to interpret in such a way that the Government is given responsibility for local government. That is not only my opinion; I am sure I would also have the support of the member for Victoria Park, because my opinion is backed up by a quote by an academic.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member on his feet not to encourage interjections. The interjections will be made if he invites them.

Mr STEPHENS: I would get through my few remarks quickly if interjections were to cease.

They are inane and are not worthy of a response. The interjectors are making it more difficult for me to speak.

I will quote from an article which the member for Karrinyup was unable to do because he ran out of time. The article appeared in *The Australian* of Wednesday, 25 May and was written by George Winterton, Associate Professor of Law at the University of New South Wales. It is headed, "A referendum proposal that should be rejected - Local Government - leave well alone". How true it is. He said *inter alia* -

The second ground for opposing the proposal to "recognise" Local Government in the Federal Constitution is that the proposed new S.119A, which would ultimately be interpreted and applied by the High Court could lead to numerous difficulties far outweighing any benefit to be derived from such "recognition".

Mr Carr: Does he elaborate on that?

Mr STEPHENS: Yes he does, but time will not permit me to read it all. Professor Winterton continued -

The section does not define the term "local government", yet that term, which is obviously central to it, lacks inherent meaning and its uncertainty could lead to all sorts of arguments alleging that different types of local or regional Government are constitutionally entrenched.

We all know that the High Court is made up of judges appointed by the centralised Government in Canberra. The Federal Government tends to be centralist irrespective of whether it is a socialist Government or a coalition Government. One of the great weaknesses of our Constitution is that the High Court judges should have been appointed, one from each State. Presently they are appointed by the Federal Government and the judges could have a bias to centralism. I am not reflecting on the judges. We all have biases, whether we like it or not. It does not take much to discern the bias of any one of us and it is open to the Federal Government to appoint High Court judges who have a centralist bias. It is interesting to note that virtually all the Constitution decisions made by the High Court have been in favour of a centralist Government. The situation in Canada is that virtually all the decisions from the High Court have been in favour of State Governments.

Mr Hassell: They have a legal court rather than a political court.

Mr STEPHENS: I spoke with an associate professor of constitutional law from Canada in the corridors of Parliament House and he made that observation to me. It was an interesting observation.

Once local government is mentioned in the Constitution not one member in this House could say that the High Court would not give the broadest interpretation and allow the Federal Government to pass whatever legislation it liked with respect to local government.

Further in the article George Winterton said -

A third reason for opposing the proposal is that it will undoubtedly make it more difficult for State governments to dismiss corrupt or inefficient local councils and appoint unelected officials to administer affairs on a temporary basis. If their proposal is adopted, we can be certain that whenever a council is dismissed, the dismissed councillors will immediately apply to the court for an injunction to overturn their dismissal on the ground that it contravenes S.119A.

Members opposite can shake their heads, but it is the considered opinion of a man -

Dr Gallop: Excessively cautious.

Mr STEPHENS: No, not excessively cautious. Even if he is cautious it is better to be sure than sorry. Given the history of the decisions of the High Court, this area is not one with which I would take any chances, particularly when we are interested in protecting the rights of the States.

If the Federal Government were genuinely interested in the Federation it would look at the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and the States. It would take measures to reduce its spending in Canberra and, I suggest, would get rid of quite a few departments for which it has no constitutional authority. It does not have the direct constitutional power to

set up all these departments so it is using an oblique power. We have a Federal Department of Conservation and Environment, but there is nothing in the Federal Constitution which gives the Federal Government the direct power to establish that department. It is an oblique use of its powers. It is a waste of the State's money because the Federal Government is only doubling up on work that is adequately carried out by the respective States. Let Canberra have a secretariat which can be a mechanism for the exchange of information from the States. It does not have to run another department, thereby doubling up on the work that is already being carried out. The Federal Government should prune its departments, bearing in mind that when the States supported Federation in 1901 there were nine departments and now we have 27. I am not suggesting we revert to nine departments, but we could substantially cut the number of Federal departments and in that one manoeuvre substantially reduce the cost of government.

I congratulate the member for Floreat for bringing the amendment to the House. It is a necessary amendment and all true Western Australians will oppose the referendum so that we can retain an element of power in this State.

**DR GALLOP (Victoria Park) [4.40 pm]:** I have a confession to make: Despite the fact that I barrack very enthusiastically, and will continue to do so, for the Eagles, the Wildcats, the Western Australian cricket team, the Western Australian baseball team, and any other sporting or other team which represents this great State; even though I will barrack for the Premier of this State when he goes to the Premiers' Conference in an attempt to get a fair deal for this State at the conference which distributes many of the taxes levied on the people of this country; and even though I am passionate about my Western Australian State Parliament and its powers and privileges; first and foremost I am an Australian and I am proud to be an Australian. One cannot be a good Western Australian unless one is an Australian first and foremost because the two go together.

The fact of the matter is that our great country requires a Federal system of Government because of its geography and its history. I support the Federal system of Government, it is an excellent system that has served our country very well. The issue of federalism is indeed part of this debate, but not the major part of the debate we are addressing when looking at the constitutional proposals put forward which will go to the Australian people. It is interesting to note that the opposition to these measures focuses solely on the question of federalism and State rights. In this debate the Opposition does not want to address the specific clauses proposed in the constitutional changes. The only contributor to this debate from members opposite who started to address these specific questions was the Deputy Leader of the National Party.

As a general observation two features of the Liberal Opposition are patently obvious to all who study politics at the moment. First, the members still have not abolished from their thinking and mentality the notion that somehow they have the automatic right to rule in this country. Opposition members do not believe they have to argue a case on its merits, but rather that they should oppose any proposal by a State or Federal Labor Government. The second feature relates to the belief that somehow the Government is secretly setting about to destroy the Australian democratic system and way of life. It filters through every speech made by the member for Floreat - this belief that somehow the great Australian Labor Party, which has fought through its history for democratic rights and civil liberties in this country, is somehow secretly manoeuvring to establish a one party State.

**Mr Mensaros:** What about the Australia Card?

**Dr GALLOP:** That argument is a disgrace to the people of this State and this country who voted for the Australian Labor Party. It has no basis in fact and indicates the complete paucity of intellectual argument on the part of the member for Floreat.

The measures proposed by the constitutional reforms are quite easily supportable by anyone who studies the matter. I refer to some of the measures: First, I will address the negative argument that has been put forward against the proposals for changes to the Senate. The counter to that argument is simple: Nowhere in the constitutional changes is it proposed to alter the powers of the Senate. It will still have its power in relation to legislation and the major Supply Bills that go before it. None of those powers will be altered. The only alteration will be to the term for which it sits in the Parliament; it will go to the polls at the same time as members of the House of Representatives. Its electoral system will not alter,



the proportional representation system that elects senators will not change, the powers that senators have in that Chamber will not change; the only thing that will change is that when an election is called the senators will go to the people at the same time to be judged by the people. What is undemocratic about putting senators before the electors?

Mr Clarko: It is a change.

Dr GALLOP: Of course it is a change, but it does not substantially alter their power in relation to the House of Representatives.

Secondly, I refer to the issue of fair elections. It is a shameful fact that under our State and Federal Constitutions it is possible for a State Parliament to pass legislation which totally infringes the democratic rights of people in that State. It is perfectly possible for a State Parliament to pass legislation which takes away democratic rights from substantial portions of our population. That is not just a matter for the people of any particular State.

Mr Mensaros: Why did you vote for your Government's electoral reform bill?

Dr GALLOP: The member knows why we voted for electoral reform; any reformer takes that path.

Mr Mensaros: That is hypocrisy.

Dr GALLOP: The member is a hypocrite for even mentioning that argument.

We on this side of the House do not apologise for believing in the principle of one-vote-one-value. We have tried to establish that principle in this Parliament and, indeed, to this point we have moved closer to it, but have not established the principle. We believe in one-vote-one-value and as a last step in the process we are now supporting, along with other Liberal members of Parliament in this country at the national and State level, the inclusion of that principle in the Federal Constitution. It is true, as the member for Cottesloe said, that a system of single member constituencies cannot guarantee perfect consistency between the number of votes gained and the number of seats gained. As the Minister for Local Government pointed out, that problem exists with any system based on single member constituencies, but no system has yet been devised which will guarantee equality of rights without making sure that every voter in every seat can safely say the votes they are registering in any election are equal to the votes of voters in another seat, without guaranteeing an equal number of electors in each constituency. There is no other way of doing it. National and international authorities have acknowledged that and the Constitutional Commission has recognised that fact.

It is an unfortunate fact of life in the Australian Federal system that over the years both sides of Parliament throughout our history have attempted to rig electoral systems to favour their particular point of view. Slowly but surely in the last decade at State and now Federal level an attempt has been made to rid our system of that anomaly, and it is with great pleasure that I support the proposal.

The third proposal to be addressed establishes a constitutional right to trial by jury, freedom of religion and fair compensation for the acquisition of Government property. How can members of the Liberal Opposition oppose that measure which simply establishes an extra avenue through the High Court for ordinary citizens in this country to pursue their rights. The only reason they can oppose it is their hatred of anything that comes from the High Court of this nation. That has been indicated by the speeches made this afternoon on this matter. The Opposition cannot acknowledge that the High Court has a legitimate part to play in our system of Government and cannot believe that ordinary citizens can be given an extra avenue in the pursuit of their rights if they feel they have been infringed in our society.

Mr Greig: They have never been infringed.

Dr GALLOP: That is not the point. It is an extra constitutional right given to citizens in pursuing their rights. How can members opposite deny them that extra right? They cannot do so in all conscience.

Let us turn to the last measure, dealing with local government. It is very important that we read the clause upon which we are going to vote in the constitutional referendum. That clause says -

119A. Each State shall provide for the establishment and continuance of a system of local government, with local government bodies elected in accordance with the laws of the State and empowered to administer, and make by-laws for, their respective areas in accordance with the laws of the State.

There is a great advantage in including this in our Federal Constitution, for two reasons. The first is that local government would be given a status, as has been accepted for many years should be the case, in the same manner in which status was given to local government in the State Constitution section 52, as referred to by members of the Opposition in this debate. We will actually be telling local governments that they have a part to play in our society.

Mr Clarko: There is no need to say that.

Dr GALLOP: Why did the Opposition say it in 1979?

Mr Clarko: This is a State matter, not a Federal matter.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr GALLOP: Local government has a part to play in our system of Government, and that ought to be recorded in the Federal Constitution as well as the State Constitution.

The Deputy Leader of the National Party referred to an article, which I have not read, by George Winterton, a very respected constitutional lawyer. He has argued consistently, in journals and by other means, that the right of the Senate to have power over Supply ought to be rejected. I hope that the next time we debate this matter the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will also refer to Associate Professor Winterton's remarks, although it seemed to me, on hearing his arguments, that he was going a bit too far. No reasonable person, and I think that most members of the High Court are pretty reasonable people, could argue that this clause gives the Federal Government the power to introduce all sorts of changes to local Government.

Mr Stephens: He still had doubts about it.

Dr GALLOP: It does not seem to have sunk in on Opposition benches that academics do disagree on occasions. They have many points of view, not just one. Members opposite choose to quote the points which agree with them.

Mr Stephens: Learned attorneys before the High Court disagree on matters.

Dr GALLOP: Of course they do, and it is important in our society that people disagree.

It could be argued, on the basis of the proposed change, that any State Government which attempted to abolish local government and establish a situation in which some other power took over those traditional responsibilities, could be challenged by any person in the High Court. That is why local governments see this measure as being a good thing, because it could be that no State Government will ever have the power to abolish local government. I would have thought that members of the Opposition, particularly National Party members, would regard that as a big plus. Throughout our history it has been State Governments which have been more authoritarian in their relations with local governments - I am pleased to say this cannot be said about our current Ministers - than the Commonwealth Government has ever been to the State Governments.

Mr Cowan interjected.

Dr GALLOP: The Northern Territory is a different situation. It does not have an established history and traditions. The leader of the National Party will understand that, being a good conservative.

The effect of this measure will be to increase the rights of local government, and the rights of the people of this State. It will put another weapon in the hands of citizens who feel that their rights have been infringed by the trial by jury, freedom of religion, and fair compensation clauses. It gives extra status and power to the local governments in this country. More importantly, it gives extra rights to the voters in their claims to have equal voting rights with other citizens in this Commonwealth.

The measures ought to be supported, and the amendment moved to the Address-in-Reply by the member for Floreat indicates that the Liberal Party is not willing to debate these matters on their merits. The Liberal Party is totally hung up on its own ideological prejudices and will not confront the issue of extending the rights of the citizens of this nation.

**MR MacKINNON** (Murdoch - Leader of the Opposition) [4.56 pm]: We will see, from the well-spoken contribution from the member for Victoria Park, that when his colleagues next have the opportunity of electing their Cabinet, he will find himself at the bottom of the heap.

I begin by talking about question 2 which asks -

Do you approve of an Act to alter the Constitution to provide for fair and democratic parliamentary elections throughout Australia?

I will offer two quotations to members opposite. The first is as follows -

I would like to conclude my comments by repeating to you that the Government of this State believes that the State Parliament is the best and most appropriate place to see fair and legitimate electoral laws established for the election of members to the Western Australian Parliament.

The second says -

Western Australians could find themselves ordered to conduct the next election under a system not enacted by their State Parliament. This possibility ... is seen as undesirable by the State Government.

The source of those two statements is the presentation to the Federal Parliament Joint Committee on Electoral Matters. The first remarks came from the former Deputy Premier, Malcolm Bryce, the second was the submission endorsed by the former Premier and the members opposite. In 1985 members opposite wanted us to support a system which would impose upon this State laws from the Federal Government -

**Mr Thomas:** Democracy.

**Mr MacKINNON:** The member for Welshpool can call it democracy, or any other term. It was a law from Canberra which would be effective in this State. In 1985 the former Deputy Premier, the former Premier and the members of the loony left lined up at the back, supported a stance taken by their former leaders.

**Mr Stephens:** That was when they were freely speaking their minds, before they were called into account by the bosses in Canberra.

**Mr MacKINNON:** That is a very good point, and is bang on the button. What do we have in 1988? Shock, horror and outrage expressed by the former Premier, and his colleagues opposite voting in support of him in saying we do not want an imposition from Canberra upon Western Australia. Was the Deputy Premier wrong in what he said?

**Mr Troy:** Do you realise we are talking about local government.

**Mr MacKINNON:** He was talking about electoral laws in this State.

It would be preferable to handle that in this State. Let us take up the question of the Minister, because he did not hear what his former Premier said. Does he support the statement of his former Premier in that submission, that Western Australians could find themselves ordered to conduct the next election under a system not enacted by their State Parliament? Such a policy was seen as undesirable by the State Government. The Minister was a member of the Government which lodged that statement with Canberra. Does he support that submission?

**Mr Troy:** What is your position?

**Mr MacKINNON:** The Minister was a member of the Government which said, "We do not support the imposition of Canberra." He has done a 180° U-turn and now supports the reverse position. He is not worth talking to because he cannot explain his point of view. Perhaps the Minister for Local Government can.

**Mr Carr:** That is a quote which was misquoted. It was corrected at the time. What the then Premier said was, "It is preferable for us to have the electoral provisions provided in this State."

**Mr MacKINNON:** That is a submission to the committee from a member of the committee, not a misquote. This Government was responsible. Does the Minister deny that at that time he opposed the imposition upon this State by Canberra of its will in relation to electoral laws?

Mr Carr: Our position has always been that it is preferable for us to put our house in order and put our laws in place.

Mr MacKINNON: Why does the Minister not support this?

Mr Carr: Because the Government has not been able to do it.

Mr MacKINNON: That is an absolutely pathetic excuse from a pathetic Government which is prepared to sell out this State for a short-term political advantage. The people of Western Australia can be assured that this Opposition, including the National Party I am pleased to say, will continue to fight for the interests of Western Australians in this instance and in all others. We will not sell ourselves short.

Let us turn to what was called "democratic" by the member for Welshpool. The member for Welshpool says we should have a democratic system of election in this State. That is why we have this referendum question, "Do you approve of an Act to alter the Constitution to provide for fair and democratic parliamentary elections throughout Australia?" Perhaps the member for Welshpool and his colleagues are not aware of what occurred in Canberra yesterday, where their Federal colleagues had to admit that they had made another blunder, because the Bill they have introduced in support of this question, if passed, will make the electoral laws in Canberra illegal; it will render illegal the Legislative Council in New South Wales set up by Neville Wran, and the Legislative Council of South Australia. Members opposite support a Bill which would wipe out all these laws enacted by their own Government in Canberra - by their mate "Nifty Neville" who, like Premier Burke, saw the writing on the wall and got out just before the rot set in.

Let me repeat the words of Liberal Senator Amanda Vanstone, the Opposition spokesman for the Australian Capital Territory. In the Federal Parliament yesterday she expressed outrage that the Government had defined "fair and democratic elections", and on learning that its own proposal did not qualify, the Government changed the definition. I challenge the member for Welshpool to tell me what is democratic about that. Is what is in Canberra now undemocratic? It was democratic yesterday; is it a little more democratic today?

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: They have had to change their minds. The Minister for Local Government is claiming that the Opposition is in disorder. The Government in this State is in disarray. It has done a U-turn on the issue. Every member opposite supported his former leader when he said, "We do not want interference in our State." They now support that interference at a Federal level. This is a Federal Government which could not even draft the ID card Bill; now the Government cannot even draft a constitutional Bill, yet it is asking us to trust it.

We will have no part of the proposed constitutional amendments. Let me repeat, for the benefit of the member for Victoria Park, that this has nothing to do with ideology. However, it has a lot to do with the practical politics to which we subscribe. We oppose the first question because it will lead to the ultimate emasculation of the Senate as we know it. It will bring the Senate into line with the House of Representatives. It will do what this Government has done for the Legislative Council in this State; it will destroy its independence in the longer term.

I have already commented on the second question - the question about democracy the member keeps talking about. I pointed out the Government's hypocrisy, both at a Federal and State level. Fair and democratic elections depend on the Government's legislation from day to day and on how it sees issues in 1985 or 1988, and how the Bill is drafted, either correctly or incorrectly along the way.

As to the referendum question on local government, the Opposition is and always has been totally supportive of the role local government plays in this State. It is not this Opposition which has been ripping funds off local government willy-nilly, as our Federal Government is now doing. It is not the Opposition which has forced local authorities across the length and breadth of this State, by and large against their will, to change their electoral or ward boundaries. It is not the Opposition which at any time in its history has attacked local government. It was the Opposition when in Government which enacted legislation to provide constitutional recognition of local government in this State. I draw members' attention to page 29 of the Constitution of Western Australia. We plan, as my colleague the

shadow Minister said, to entrench local government even further in that constitution. It was also a Federal Liberal-National Party coalition Government which recognised local government by providing Federal funding of local government - funding which was reduced by a Federal Labor Government. We recognise local government, but we are not about to destroy its future for any short-term political advantage, because ultimately, whatever the wording of this referendum question, the Federal Government will seek to take over and control local government throughout Australia - nothing more and nothing less. We will have no part of that. Thinking people within local government throughout this country will likewise object to that proposition and reject it.

The final question is about trial by jury, the extent of freedom of religion, and how to ensure fair compensation for persons whose property is acquired by Government. If we had a Government so keen about basic rights, would one not have thought that this referendum question would contain a guarantee to all Australians of freedom of association - in other words, non-compulsory unionism? Labor Governments, both federally and at a State level, are not particularly interested in individual freedoms, therefore that referendum question says nothing about freedom of association. The referendum question ignores that fundamental freedom, which should be guaranteed to all Australians. I assure members that that freedom will be guaranteed to Western Australians.

This is one of the most important matters to come before the Parliament in recent times. The proposed constitutional amendments and the subject of the referendums to be held in September will be a matter of ongoing debate over the next few months. Until that time, the Opposition's position is crystal clear for the reasons I have outlined. I commend the member for Floreat, first for bringing this amendment to the Parliament today and, secondly, and more importantly, for the content of his Address-in-Reply speech, which I think was one of the best we have heard this session.

**MR THOMAS (Welshpool) [5.11 pm]:** I agree with a number of members opposite that it is very important that the role of the States in our Federation is protected. As a person who has sought a career in State politics, that is something to which I am personally committed. Under our Constitution the States have very important powers. Essentially we are the owners of the land and most of the powers of the States - planning, resource development, and so on - derive from that basis. However, I suggest to members opposite that they look at a book called *The Maligned States* - and I am afraid I cannot remember the name of the author - which concerns the Federal system in the United States.

**Mr Greig: A.A. Milne?**

**Mr THOMAS:** No. This book details the history of the States of the United States and how their powers have been whittled away over the years. It looks at why those States are in the rather sorry state they are in at the moment. If one looks at their situation on paper, they should have a number of quite substantial powers which in many respects are similar to the powers exercised by the States here; but in practice those powers have been severely diminished to a certain extent by Federal intervention. It is worthwhile looking at the reason for Federal intervention in the States of the United States, how that intervention came about and whether such circumstances are likely to occur here.

The simple fact is that the United States had, as some States here have - and this State is a very good example - entrenched power groups which would not allow democracy to prevail because it threatened their particular power bases. The classic example of that came in the 1960s when the civil rights movement tried to democratise the laws of the southern States of the United States. In the reconstruction after the Civil War, laws were established in the southern States which effectively prevented black people from voting. This was done using the constitutional powers possessed by those States. The position was so outrageous that ultimately there had to be Federal intervention; the Federal Constitution had to prevail, and the States lost their powers. In other areas, such as environmental protection and so on, there were instances where States were so out of kilter with modern day thinking that there had to be Federal intervention, through the Federal Constitution and the powers of the United States Supreme Court, effectively to take away the powers of the States.

Among the propositions in the referendums the Commonwealth is to put before the people of Australia is one that, reduced to its essence, says that the votes of all Australians ought to be of equal value. I think that statement is so obviously correct it hardly needs any debate. It

has been debated a number of times in this House and I do not really think the substantial merit of that proposition needs to be dealt with today. Certainly the vast majority of Australians believe that the votes of all citizens ought to be of equal value in parliamentary elections. The only instances where that proposition is opposed are in backwaters such as Western Australia and Queensland where there are entrenched power groups which wish to preserve their power bases. Therefore they try to justify weighting their vote against the rest of the populace. Inevitably that argument comes forward with some sort of proposition that they are in some sense more deserving of political power than the rest of us. However, when it comes down to the essentials, it is for the protection of the entrenched power base; ultimately Australian public opinion will prevail against that to enable intervention of one form or another if the States are unable or unwilling to put their own houses in order.

Mr Clarko: How will that happen?

Mr THOMAS: Either by the ultimate passing of a referendum or by an interpretation of the High Court. Ultimately that must happen because it must eventually be the case that the modern day view - which is that all people are deserving of votes of equal value - will prevail.

If members opposite are genuinely interested in protecting States' rights - or to put it in a more creative manner, in giving the States a proper and responsible role to perform within a Federal system, which I believe the States ought to have - the States must adopt those powers and exercise them in a responsible manner in keeping with modern day thinking. If there are pocket boroughs which seek to protect particular entrenched power bases, or situations such as that which occurred in Tasmania where the State Government was prepared to build a dam in an area of international environmental significance, ultimately the people of Australia will demand some form of intervention - either judicial, legislative or political - to prevent that.

Unless this State is able to get its house in order, that will happen here, as was indicated earlier by interjectors quoting the former Deputy Premier, who said it should be possible for electoral reform to be achieved within this State. Certainly that should be possible; nothing would make the members on this side of the House happier than to see proper electoral reform introduced in this State. The simple fact is that it has not happened because members opposite have used the fact that at present votes in this State are weighted unfairly so that some citizens are deemed to be more deserving of political power than others to successfully oppose it. That situation is not acceptable in this day and age. Ultimately history will catch up with the Opposition, and I suggest that members opposite could learn a lesson from members of the Liberal Party in other States who some years ago recognised the fact that it is entirely appropriate for all citizens to have votes of equal value. If that were recognised now, it would not be necessary to have referendums to provide them in the national Constitution.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

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Ayes (23)

Mr Blaikie  
Mr Bradshaw  
Mr Cash  
Mr Clarko  
Mr Court  
Mr Cowan

Mr Crane  
Mr Grayden  
Mr Greig  
Mr Hassell  
Mr House  
Mr Lewis

Mr Lightfoot  
Mr MacKinnon  
Mr Mensaros  
Mr Schell  
Mr Stephens  
Mr Fred Tubby

Mr Reg Tubby  
Mr Watt  
Mr Wiese  
Mr Williams  
Mr Maslen (*Teller*)

Noes (29)

Dr Alexander  
Mrs Beggs  
Mr Bertram  
Mr Bridge  
Mr Burkett  
Mr Carr  
Mr Cunningham  
Mr Donovan

Mr Peter Dowding  
Mr Evans  
Dr Gallop  
Mr Grill  
Mrs Henderson  
Mr Gordon Hill  
Mr Hodge  
Mr Tom Jones

Dr Lawrence  
Mr Marlborough  
Mr Parker  
Mr Read  
Mr Ripper  
Mr D.L. Smith  
Mr P.J. Smith  
Mr Thomas

Mr Troy  
Mrs Watkins  
Dr Watson  
Mr Wilson  
Mrs Buchanan (*Teller*)

## Pairs

Ayes

Noes

Mr Thompson  
Mr TrenordenMr Pearce  
Mr Taylor

Amendment thus negated.

*Debate (on motion) Resumed*

**MRS HENDERSON** (Gosnells - Minister for The Arts) [5.20 pm]: I wish to reply to remarks made by the member for Floreat before he moved the amendment. I am particularly disappointed that the member for Floreat chose to criticise the Government for its perceived lack of action on pornography and the standard of materials released for public consumption. No Government has done as much as this Government in that regard.

I am interested to know whether the member for Floreat has read the recently released report of the Joint Federal Committee on video material. Quite extensive references are made to the situation existing in Western Australia on page 95 of that report which was tabled in Federal Parliament on 28 April. It states that Western Australia has the harshest penalties of any State in Australia in relation to pornographic material. It says that some of our provisions are unique in Australia. Many of the provisions in our legislation have been recommended by both the minority and majority reports for adoption by other States. In particular, that very extensive report makes note of the fact that, in Western Australia, there is no provision for classification of any video material beyond the R classification.

**Mr Mensaros**: I was not talking about video material. I was talking about printed material. I acknowledged that the Government had done a good job in relation to video material.

**Mrs HENDERSON**: I did not hear the member acknowledge the Government's efforts in that area.

That report also points out that videos refused classification in Western Australia include videos that depict sex, drugs misuse, crime, cruelty or violence, or revolting or abhorrent phenomena in a manner that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult. In addition, our new Act also provides that a video which depicts child abuse, bestiality of any sort, or the promotion of terrorism, will also be refused classification. The member would be aware that it is also an offence for a minor of 15 years or over to purchase or hire R rated videos or any refused video tapes. It is also an offence to procure a child for the making of any child abuse films.

The Opposition and the member for Floreat have been loud in their condemnation of the Government in that area. During the Opposition's nine years, it took no action to make it an offence to procure a child for the making of a pornographic video or for using a child in printed pornographic material. Has the member for Floreat read the report?

**Mr Mensaros**: Do you think that makes it right?

**Mrs HENDERSON**: Has the member read the report?

**Mr Gordon Hill**: Of course he has not read the report.

**Mrs HENDERSON**: It goes on to say that the penalties are the harshest in Australia. For example, the fine for the procurement or attempted procurement of a child for the making of a child abuse film is \$100 000 in the case of a corporation and \$25 000 or imprisonment for five years in any other case. The fine for selling or giving an R rated tape to a minor is \$15 000 for a corporation and \$4 000 or imprisonment for 12 months in any other case.

Because Western Australia was the most recent State to draw up legislation in this area, the Federal report points out that Western Australia has incorporated some of the strongest recommendations from other States such as Queensland in its legislation. For example, no trailers which are of a higher classification than the video are permitted to be portrayed. The Video Tapes Classification and Control Act declares that it is an offence to possess an X rated video in Western Australia.

I expected the member for Floreat to give credit to the Government for that. Instead, he spoke about indecent publications and then tried to link those with cases of sexual abuse and assault. I remember very clearly when the Government introduced major amendments to the

sexual assault legislation in this State which increased the penalties for sexual assault and incorporated a number of other features into the legislation which were intended to protect -

Mr Mensaros interjected.

Mrs HENDERSON: I am pleased to hear the member say that. The first thing that the legislation did was to tackle the problem of lack of reporting of sexual assault cases because of the discomfort and trauma that faced most of the victims when they went to court. At the time that legislation was introduced, the member for Floreat said that Government legislation aimed at revamping sexual assault laws was pandering to a group of frustrated women. That was the first concerted attempt by a State Government to revamp the sexual assault laws in this State, to increase penalties, and to make it easier for victims to report cases of sexual assault by reducing the trauma they faced by unfair questioning when they went to court.

Mr Mensaros: I have much more respect for women than your legislation ever had.

Mrs HENDERSON: I am very disappointed that, 12 months later, with evidence from the Crown Prosecutor and the police that the legislation is working well, the member for Floreat has not changed his views. In fact, he said at the time that the women's rights business would not last long and everything would get back to normal. He said that women would go home and be happy like his parents and grandparents.

At that time, *The West Australian* sought the views of other Liberal Party members about the member for Floreat's views. On 20 November 1987, *The West Australian* said that most senior liberals were playing down the emotive and occasionally angry outbursts of two of their colleagues, Jim Clarko and Andrew Mensaros, and did not agree with Mr Mensaros that women would be happier staying at home than being at work. Some said they were privately shocked.

I am surprised and disappointed to find the member for Floreat has not changed his views and that he used this debate to berate the Government for not acting on an issue that he feels so strongly about.

Mr Mensaros: I commended the Government for its action on videos. I criticised it for its action on printed material.

Mrs HENDERSON: The member must have commended the Government in very few words because that view did not come across to members on this side of the House.

I remind the member for Floreat that section 7 of the Indecent Publications and Articles Act established the State Advisory Committee on Publications which is charged with the task of examining all printed material. That committee has been in existence since 1972. During that time it has examined thousands of publications and made recommendations to Labor and Liberal Ministers on whether publications ought to be restricted, banned, or made available over the counter.

Mr Mensaros: Why can't you do the same as with videos?

Mrs HENDERSON: I am talking about printed material. That State Advisory Committee existed during the nine years that the Liberal Party was in office. It was not removed from the Statute book. Its powers were not decreased and its charter was not changed during that time. It made recommendations to the Liberal Party Minister as it now makes recommendations to a Labor Party Minister as to what materials ought to be restricted and what materials should be freely available. The member for Floreat is aware that the Act allows people to appeal to the District Court when they are unhappy with a decision of that committee which is endorsed or otherwise by the Minister. I am not aware of any appeal being lodged. Perhaps the member for Floreat could tell me whether an appeal has been lodged against a decision of that committee which was endorsed by the Minister.

I do not set myself up as the judge or the guardian of the morals of the community. I would imagine that is precisely why the committee was established in 1972 and why that section of the Act has not been repealed. The committee has not been taken out of the Act. Its charter and its job have not been changed.

[Resolved, that leave be granted for the Minister to continue her speech at a later stage of the sitting.]

Debate thus adjourned.



**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DELEGATED LEGISLATION***Council Personnel*

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had appointed Hon Robert Hetherington, Hon John Caldwell, Hon Margaret McAleer and Hon Tom Helm as members of the Delegated Legislation Committee and, in accordance with the rules adopted by both Houses, invited the Legislative Assembly to appoint a like number of members to the committee.

**JOINT HOUSE COMMITTEE***Council Personnel*

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had appointed Hon Tom McNeil to replace Hon H.W. Gayfer as a member of the Joint House Committee.

[Questions taken.]

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.15 pm*

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY - SEVENTH DAY***Motion*

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MRS HENDERSON** (Gosnells - Minister for The Arts) [7.15 pm]: I do not want to delay the House unduly on this. I notice that the last time this issue was debated here there was a headline in *The West Australian* which read, "Libs squirm after stormy sex debate". I hope the Liberals will not squirm tonight.

I am concerned that the member for Floreat raised a question he sees as a problem without offering - as members of the Opposition often do - any solution. The member for Floreat raised what he considers to be a problem in terms of printed material. He acknowledged that the Government has taken firm and strong action on videos, and I am pleased he did so because I think the action the Government took in that respect is the strongest any State Government has taken. The member for Floreat said he believed strong action needed to be taken in the area of publications, and yet during the whole time the Liberal Government was in office it took no action at all in that area. I would be interested to know what action the member thinks should be taken.

**Mr Mensaros**: That is not the argument. That does not make it right.

**Mrs HENDERSON**: If the member for Floreat believes the Government should disband the advisory committee and that the Minister ought to be the sole arbiter of what sort of printed material should be available in shops and what should not be, he should say so. However, he has not said so. He said he was offended by various publications available in a restricted form - and he referred to restricted magazines available at certain outlets in Perth for which a person must go to the counter and apply to have the material brought from under the counter. It is not available on display, nor is it available for anyone to peruse. A person actually has to ask for the publication by name and it has to be brought out from under the counter.

The member for Floreat implied that this system is not good enough and does not weed out the kind of publications he believes are offensive. However, he made no suggestions in respect of the way he thinks the existing structure, which was set up to assess those publications, ought to be changed. That structure has been in place since 1972; it was in existence for the whole of the nine years the Liberal Government was in office. The State Advisory Committee has sifted through many thousands of publications. It recommends to me, as the Minister, which publications ought to be restricted and as a general working practice, where the members of the committee unanimously agree on whether a publication ought to be restricted, banned or freely available, I do not normally peruse that publication. I normally peruse the publication when the committee disagrees, which means that the vast majority of those publications are examined by the committee set up by Statute to look at them. If the member for Floreat believes that mechanism is not adequate and up to date in

dealing with the kind of publications now coming out, he ought to say so. However, it is my understanding that the publications available today are not vastly different from those available in 1972, 1976 or 1980.

Mr Mensaros: That is your argument, but it does not make it right.

Mrs HENDERSON: If it is wrong now, it was wrong in 1972 and it was wrong during the nine years the Liberal Government was in office. It cannot have suddenly become wrong since this Government came into office.

Mr Mensaros: I would introduce a private member's Bill, if you would support it. You would be against it, as you were against the legislation I introduced dealing with the confiscation of criminal assets. I have brought in about four or five private members' Bills, which were all rejected.

Mrs HENDERSON: I am not saying I am against any vetting of these publications. I am saying that the structure was set up by Statute to vet them, and as far as I am aware the structure has worked adequately since 1972. That structure is still in place and I have not changed the rules that guide the operations of the committee. If the member for Floreat does not believe that the committee is the best way for us to operate, he should say so. If he believes the Minister should personally examine every magazine that comes into this State, and be the sole arbiter of the moral standards of the community, he should say so. In my view it is not the role of the Minister, no matter who he or she is, to be the sole person who decides what everyone else in the State should or should not see. That is why the legislation enabled a committee to be set up. The role of the committee is quite clearly defined in the Act. There are certain constraints in that one member must be a woman, one a recognised expert in literature, art or science, and one a legal practitioner. The committee consists of up to seven members, and they take their job extremely seriously. I have been to the arts department and have seen the room that is set aside for those people to use. They go in not as a group, but separately, and look through the publications. They spend many hours doing the job for which they have been appointed.

Mr Mensaros: Why did you then ban the videotapes? They were not banned under our Government. You banned them and I gave you credit for it. Why can't you ban the publications? You can do it by amending the legislation and putting in "printed matter". That would do it.

Mrs HENDERSON: The difference is that we did not have in this State a committee which looked at videos in the way in which a committee looks at publications. We have a national classification system of films which has been applied to videotapes. As the member for Floreat would know, magazines have been around for a lot longer than videotapes and the legislation have been in place.

I do not have a closed mind on this matter. If it becomes evident to me that things have changed dramatically in the last year or two and I am required personally to look at these publications - the hundreds of magazines that come into this State - I will make it my business to do so. This has never been the practice in the past and there is no reason for me to suspect that the seven people who have been charged with this responsibility are not carrying out their task faithfully with a full understanding of the intention of the Act.

I am pleased that the member for Floreat recognises the action that the Government has taken. It was time that a Government cracked down on those people who use children for pornographic purposes. The Liberal Government never tackled that problem. This Government has been at the forefront in tackling the problem where children are most likely to be exploited for pornographic purposes. In particular, the Government has cracked down on any kind of violence associated with sex in videos and magazines, and ought to be commended for what it has done.

MR TOM JONES (Collie) (7.25 pm): I join with other members in welcoming the member for Ascot, the member for Balga and the member for Dale. I hope that their lives in this place will be as enjoyable as mine has been over the last 20 years. I have thoroughly enjoyed politics and I hope they have the same experience.

When the Burke Government came to power approximately five and a half years ago it was forced to make bold decisions in relation to the electricity supply for Western Australia. It will be remembered that the previous Government committed this State to buying a certain volume of gas. I do not want to go over a speech I made in this place on 28 August 1985, but

when I made that speech I referred to the fact that the Minister of the day, Hon Peter Jones, did not accept the warning of the State Energy Commission when he was advised not to contract for the purchase of additional gas for the SEC in Western Australia. As a consequence there was a surplus of gas, which created a problem for the Labor Government when it came into office.

During my speech I referred to the views of a former Minister for Fuel and Energy, Hon Andrew Mensaros, who said -

A Labor Government is much harder put to utilise gas for fuelling electric power stations because it always has to consider what effect that would have on the Collie coal industry. It is easier for a Liberal Government not to increase the use of coal and advocate a greater use of gas.

That clearly demonstrated the Liberal Government's attitude to the coalfields in relation to the supply of energy for Western Australia.

On coming into office the Burke Government, faced with the problem of surplus gas to which the State had been committed, made the decision to convert the Kwinana power station from coal to gas. This robbed the coalfield of one million tonnes of coal a year and adversely affected the annual income of Westrail to the tune of \$8 million. The Burke Government then had the problem of what to do with the work force and the surplus coal supplied under contractual arrangements. The Government made the right decision to stockpile coal, in the interests of the coal industry and the families of the men employed in it. If that decision had not been made, 250 or 300 men would have lost their jobs in the coalmining industry, and one readily appreciates the effect this loss of skilled labour would have had on the industry, and the families of those retrenched men. The Burke Government is to be applauded for making that decision.

There were many calls for inquiries, including one from the then Leader of the Opposition, now the member for Cottesloe. He issued the following Press release, which appeared in *The West Australian* in January 1986 -

The State Opposition called yesterday for an urgent and non-political inquiry to establish the truth about plans to stockpile coal worth more than \$100 million at Collie . . . The decision defied logic and smacked of gross negligence by the Burke Government.

This situation was a legacy from the previous Government which had ignored the warnings from the State Energy Commission and made a commitment for additional gas; it caused a problem for the Burke Government.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Nedlands, has been in Collie recently. Now he is the shadow Minister for Mines, he visits the town quite regularly, asking questions about the future of the stockpile. A member of the National Party has been asking similar questions when he has been to the coalfield. They are making all sorts of criticisms of the decision of the Burke Government. I will prove the decision was wise and made in the interest of Western Australians, and that stockpiling of coal resulted in a saving of more than \$40 million.

The National Party candidate who opposed me in the last election was quoted on 9 January 1986 as follows -

Doctor Turnbull said yesterday that stock piling six million tonnes of Collie coal represented little expansion for the Collie Coal fields.

From where did those figures come? The figures were used to criticise the Government's decision on the basis that it would interfere with job opportunities for young people at the coalfield. The decision changed the situation completely as the Griffin Coal Mining Co Ltd has ceased to stockpile coal, and Western Collieries Ltd, which was dumping production on to the stockpile has now reduced the dump by 50 per cent resulting in only 1.799 million tonnes being in the stockpile. The State Energy Commission considered that the stockpiling could cease in a very short time due to increased demand for electricity in Western Australia. In previous years the annual increased demand was around two per cent; recently it has risen from seven per cent to nine per cent, brought about by the effect of the stockpile in Collie.

Not only is the decision to stockpile coal a credit to the Burke Government but also it results

in industries being attracted to Western Australia. The improvement in the situation on the goldfields has helped the situation but we have also seen an improvement in the performance of the SEC. I do not know where the figure of six million tonnes came from but I repeat that the tonnage in the stockpile is lower than anticipated. This demonstrates that the decision criticised by the Opposition - in fact, it called for a public inquiry in the interests of the coalmining industry - was the correct decision, and that the Government has been vindicated.

The Opposition is very quiet when I talk about coal. I usually face interjections, but the Opposition knows it is wrong - as was the case with the oil deal.

Mr MacKinnon: We are not interjecting because we cannot hear you!

Mr TOM JONES: The Leader of the Opposition knows what I am talking about, as he was a Government Minister at that time. It cost this State \$175 million to convert the power station to oil and then back to coal. That was a wise decision, was it not?

Several members interjected.

Mr TOM JONES: I can answer only one interjection at a time. Perhaps I could give the sacked Whip the first opportunity.

Mr Williams: As this is the last speech the member may make in this House, we are showing the proper courtesy.

Mr TOM JONES: I am just proving our decision was right. The member for Clontarf can say what he likes. The Burke Government has been criticised. The member's leader called for an inquiry, saying that something underhand was going on. In *The West Australian* of January 1986, the Liberals demanded an inquiry into the stockpiling of coal. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition knows what I am talking about. He went down to the coalfields to stir up trouble prior to the State election. He was attempting to catch the eye of the Press and to throw his weight around. I wonder what his views are now.

Mr Court: I doorknocked at the member's house; it is a well kept house.

Mr TOM JONES: I do not care whether the member doorknocks at my house. He would be surprised to know I have given even Liberals cups of tea. On a hot day I may even consider offering a beer. If the member wishes to call while I am not there I cannot extend that courtesy.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is worried about the Rothwells takeover. They will take over Griffin and do all sorts of things. I will make a statement on behalf of the Griffin Coal Mining Co because it has asked me to do so. *The West Australian* today ran an article on the Rothwells \$130 million coal deal.

Mr Lewis: I think the member should serve his apprenticeship before he makes statements like that. He has not been here long enough.

Mr TOM JONES: If the member for East Melville serves as long as I have he will be doing a good job for the Liberal Party.

After that rude interruption, I point out that the *Sydney Morning Herald* ran an article this morning headed "Rothwells' WA Collieries buy may lead to a public trust float". The article mentions that according to director Laurie Connell, because of the takeover by Rothwells of the CSR interest it could bring the industry on to load which will allow the Kwinana station to get back on coal firing much earlier than anticipated and will bring additional orders to the coalfields.

The Griffin Coal Mining Co made a statement today couched in the following terms -

Griffin Coal which has a long and ongoing association with Collie and the coal industry in Western Australia are surprised at suggestions made in the *Sydney Morning Herald* today that it is "keen to sell Griffin Coal". On the contrary, Griffin is not conducting any negotiations regarding the sale of its interests.

Griffin Coal's approach is to co-operate with the State Government to improve the efficiency and secure the future of the Collie Coal field.

Indeed Griffin have recently put proposals to Government outlining future options for the development of the Collie Coal fields and electricity generation in the State.

Griffin believes that these proposals will result in lower coal and electricity costs to consumers in Western Australia.

Of course the Liberal Party, aided by the National Party, is putting rumours around about unrest in the coalfields. That is another trick and it will fail, just as the rumours about the stockpile failed. The rumours are being put around to create discontent on the coalfields.

Mr Trenorden: What did the National Party say?

Mr TOM JONES: The member has not been in the Chamber. I suggest he have a good read next week.

The industry has had lengthy discussions on the Rothwells takeover, at management and union level. The industry has been guaranteed that no change will take place in the operations at the coalfields. Changes could take place in the operations in the deep mine which could drastically change productivity, and benefit the State Energy Commission.

The Burke Labor Government has been condemned for taking no action in the south west. However, we have not had better stability in Collie, and other parts of the south west since the coalfield was established in 1897. We have not enjoyed such stability before. What I say will clearly demonstrate the stability enjoyed in the town not only through the actions of this Government, but also through the actions of the private sector.

When the Liberal Government was in power in this State it did not make any approaches to the Federal Government to negotiate initiatives to assist the Collie coalfields. However, the Opposition is now criticising the Labor Party for being slow in the initiatives it has taken.

Recently an announcement was made concerning the Harris River Dam project which will cost \$30 million. The project is under way and will improve the quality of the water. All members are aware of the problems of salinity in the Wellington Dam and because of the decision that has been made the Labor Government is in a position to provide land to be developed as farmlets. It has announced that 80 farmlets will be available in the area and this is something Collie has not enjoyed previously.

The Burke Government achieved the signing of a 20 year coal contract. In 1957 a short contract was signed and prior to that the coalmining companies worked with their customers by agreement. The companies did not know where they were going. When I was general secretary of the coal miners' union it was trying to extend the contract in order that companies could operate on a viable basis. The companies now enjoy a 20 year contract.

An area west of Collie has been made available to the shire to develop as building blocks. Building blocks have also been made available in the north of the town.

The Collie Hospital has been condemned by some - a former National Party candidate, Hilda Turnbull, asked the following question about the hospital in the *Collie Mail* on 22 August 1985 -

Is it because the A.L.P. now finds it has to deliver to Collie electors because the seat is under effective challenge?"

I reminded her that I made a statement on 1 November 1984 that development would take place and that was long before the announcement of a redevelopment program was made. The redevelopment program has now been contracted at a capital cost of \$4.6 million and this clearly demonstrates the development on the coalfield. Stage two is under construction at a cost of \$2 million.

The Government has allocated \$350 000 to improve the sporting facilities at Roche Park which will assist the children who live in the town. The School of Mines was opened prior to Christmas by a prominent citizen whom I will not name in the House. The project cost \$800 000 and it will provide a better opportunity for students in the area to study mining as a career. Last year a gymnasium, at a cost of \$350 000 was opened at the local high school and extensions to the Amaroo school cost \$750 000.

The increased levies payable on the amenities fund has resulted in the Burke Government providing an additional \$30 000 to assist cultural and other groups in the Collie community. An announcement has been made about the construction of a senior citizens' centre and it is going out to tender at a cost of \$1.5 million in the next two weeks. An announcement has also been made about the provision of a day care centre and that also will go out to tender in a few weeks at a capital cost of \$400 000.

The projects I have mentioned clearly demonstrate the stability in the coalfields and the only time this sort of thing happens is when a Labor Government is in office.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr TOM JONES: Members of the Liberal Party hate the coalminers - they certainly do not have a love for them.

Mr Gordon Hill: Why should that be?

Mr TOM JONES: I do not know.

The Collie coalfield has the best industrial record, not only in Australia, but also of any coalmining centre in the world. It has lost only three days work in the last 27 years and no coalfield in the world can boast that record. Last year I toured the United States of America and Germany and I could not find any coalfield that had a better record than Collie. Whether members opposite like it or not, I had a small hand in the introduction of conciliation in the Collie coalfield.

An officer from the South West Development Authority will be stationed in Collie to aid further development in the town. A housing program will be introduced by Homeswest. However, a big announcement was made on 19 May when the State Energy Commission said that it had bought land to the value of \$2.7 million to construct a new powerhouse. This project will bring added stability to the coalfield. Members may have read a report that Sweden, which has been dependent on nuclear power, has embarked on building the largest coal-fired power station in the world. I am proud of the decision that my Government has made regarding the new power station and it will bring about the stability to the town which I have been talking about.

Several members interjected.

Mr TOM JONES: The Leader of the National Party has obviously been listening to me in his office. I did try to draw him into the debate so that he would join us in the Chamber. If he wants to talk about the matters I have raised I am willing to talk to him after I have finished my speech.

The private sector has also played its role in providing stability to the town. A new shopping complex was announced in the *Collie Mail* on 6 May and it will cost \$4 million. A village concept at a cost of \$1 million was announced prior to the announcement of the shopping complex.

I have lived in Collie for 49 years and I have never seen this sort of stability in the town. As secretary of the coal miners' union for many years and as a member in this place for 20 years I have heard arguments about nuclear power and at last we have something around the corner that will bring stability to the coalfield. It is something for which we have been fighting since the coalmines were opened. The projects I have outlined clearly demonstrate that the policies introduced by the Burke Government have been correct, irrespective of what both Opposition parties think. The decision about the stockpile and the decision to construct another coal-fired power station is in line with world policies. When I visited the United States and Germany and spoke to representatives from the Thatcher Government in Britain in November last year, I queried their coal policies and I was told that those countries will depend on coal for power generation for a long time to come.

It will be clearly seen that the Government's decision to purchase part of the Coolangatta farm to erect the new power house is a very wise decision. Of course, Collie will benefit from the Harris River Dam, the opening up of land which was not previously available because of salinity problems in the Wellington Dam catchment area, the Government's initiatives, and the private sector action throughout the town which have added to its stability.

This will probably be my last speech in the Address-in-Reply debate in this House. Not many of the members present were around in 1968 when I first came to this place, although the member for Warren, Hon Dave Evans, and the member for Floreat, Mr Andrew Mensaros are still members. I came to this place arguing about coal and about the bad decision made by the then Government to convert the coal burning station at Kwinana to oil. I argued against the proposition by the then Premier, Sir Charles Court, to build a nuclear power station at Ledge Point. I remember that he was on that bandwagon at the time. He had a

dream that the Government would build a nuclear power station by 1995. What happened? He had another dream and he forgot about the first dream because he knew of the trouble such power stations had encountered in other parts of the world. In America particularly, many lives have been lost and distress caused to numerous people as a result of these nuclear power stations. Numerous companies which set them up in the past are not now operating for reasons well known to us all.

Mr Court: It was good to hear your Deputy Premier advocating the nuclear power industry throughout the world.

Mr Parker: I did not; I specifically discounted nuclear power in Western Australia.

Mr Court: I said "throughout the world".

Mr TOM JONES: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition can place any interpretation he likes on the Deputy Premier's comments, but not in my last three minutes in this debate. If he wants to make some comments in the next hour, when some other member is on his feet, he may do so. I have said enough about the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's daddy, have I not? He was responsible for changing to oil at Kwinana - a big bold mistake. He was going to do all sorts of things but, of course, we proved the member's daddy wrong. I have never seen the Deputy Leader of the Opposition so quiet; he has not mentioned coming to Collie and talking about the stockpile.

Mr MacKinnon: We cannot say the same for you.

Mr TOM JONES: In the last 28 minutes I have tried to draw out the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but I cannot because he knows his party made a blue.

Mr Court interjected.

Mr TOM JONES: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should forget about that. He can tell the *Collie Mail* what he likes; I have read a report of his comments to that newspaper, but he must be a realist and understand the Labor Government's decision to stockpile coal was the correct decision which took a lot of guts at the time. It was roundly criticised but it was the correct decision in the interests of the Collie miners and the town, because otherwise coalmining in this State would have been disrupted.

That concludes my last speech in the Address-in-Reply debate in the Parliament of Western Australia.

Members: Hear, hear!

MR SCHELL (Mt Marshall) [7.54 pm]: How does one follow a speech such as that? It is with pleasure that I address this Parliament in reply to His Excellency's speech. This is a year of reflection for the electors of Mt Marshall in that, due to electoral redistribution, the electorate will disappear at the next election into the new seats of Merredin and Moore. I am sure many of my electors' thoughts will go back to the days when such colourful Country Party characters as George Cornell and Ray MacPharlin held the seat. I am sure they would feel at home listening to the member for Collie. I assure members that the electors of Mt Marshall can look forward to the same excellent National Party representation in this place as they have experienced for many years in Merredin and Moore under the Country Party.

I take this opportunity to welcome the new members for Ascot, Balga and Dale to this place; I hope their stay is memorable, and that when the time comes for them to leave they can say it has been a rewarding experience and that they have contributed to the State of Western Australia.

I intend to discuss two issues tonight which are of great concern in my electorate and in the rest of the State; that is, water and education. Regardless of where Western Australians live - whether in cities, regional towns, pastoral areas, or the wheatbelt - the Water Authority's ability to meet the ever growing need for an adequate fresh water supply will be of paramount concern to them all. The largest user of water in Western Australia is metropolitan Perth with its population growing in excess of two per cent per annum. With the rate of water usage increasing at twice the rate of population growth Perth will need about double its current water supply in the year 2010, only 22 years away.

As a pilot I have flown over the dams and hills in the last 22 years and I have never seen water levels as low as they now are; overall the water levels have become progressively

lower. This worries me. I know we shall rely more on underground sources of water in the future, but the water table is lowering because of the dry years and this worries me intensely. If the rural water strategy is to meet the needs of all water deficient areas in the country and the increased needs of country areas currently receiving an adequate supply, the needs in this area could also double by the year 2010.

I am concerned that a large number of Western Australians - from members of the Government to members of this Parliament and citizens in the street - have become too complacent about the water needs of this State.

Mr D.L. Smith: Certainly not members on this side.

Mr SCHELL: That is not the information I get, and I would like to see more concern from all members. We are living in a fools' paradise - with the emphasis on the word "paradise" - with our beautiful Mediterranean climate, and plenty of sunshine and water, which we have enjoyed in the past, we have created a suburban oasis in Perth and in many of the country towns. Any members who have visited the seaside fishing villages up and down the coast and seen the development in those areas, will be aware that the environment is not as pleasant as the beautiful, leafy suburbs of Perth. It can be seen that the picture would be very different if these towns had an unlimited water supply. I have first hand experience of the effect an adequate water supply can have on a country town: I refer to Dowerin which is close to my home. As a child I remember this town being a dust bowl; I remember saving water to keep a few pot plants alive, and that everyone had to use the same bath water with poor old dad being the last in the bath. How is that for women's lib? The water supply came through and the newer area of that town has developed similarly to the northern suburbs of Perth. At the top end of the town one could easily think one was in Duncraig, Hillarys, or one of those areas. That is the effect water has had on the town.

With the rapid growth of Perth, increased rural needs and an unlimited water supply, the continuation of our current lifestyle will be subject to the ability of the Western Australia Water Authority to use current reserves wisely and to develop new supplies in advance of increasing needs.

The current Minister for Water Resources and his Government have lifted their game in this area and have given water needs a far higher priority than previous Administrations on both sides of the political fence. At last we are starting to see some action in extending water supplies to some water deficient areas in the country. Whether the Minister's water strategy will eventually adequately meet the need remains to be seen.

Mr Evans: His heart is in the right place.

Mr SCHELL: I agree, but I would like to see this Government standing by him a little more. It is time the Government reassured the public - by greater publicity and by backing up the Minister - that its strategy for water development in this State is fair dinkum.

I am pleased to see that the Liberal Party has lifted the portfolio of shadow Minister for Water Resources to the responsibility of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition - which is the way it should be - and that it has now joined the National Party in its concern in this area. I am sure that after the next State election the new coalition Government will make the greatest contribution to the development of water resources that we have seen since the bringing of water supplies to the goldfields at the turn of the century.

Mr Marlborough: I would like to get that in writing.

Mr SCHELL: I believe we will achieve that.

The south west area of this State is in the unfortunate position of not having any major sources of fresh water. It is dependent upon pipe heads and small dams in the hills. It does not have the topography or the rivers which would enable the construction of major dams, such as the Warragamba Dam near Sydney. The south west area is dependent also on treated ground water and artesian water, and on many local supplies throughout the State. It is important that we develop and conserve to the maximum our known reserves of water. As far as I can ascertain, the Minister and the Water Authority are starting to work in this direction, although they do not necessarily let us know a great deal about it. We must recognise also that our water resources cannot adequately meet the needs of the future, and supplies of water must be developed before major shortages occur.



The greatest challenge is not to find water but to get it to consumers at a price they can afford. We could, as a last resort, pipe sea water from Cottesloe and put it through a desalinator. However, the Water Authority estimates show - if they are correct - that this would result in consumers paying 15 times the price they now pay for water. The Water Authority states that it would be less expensive to develop other water sources within a 750 kilometre range of Perth. This opens the possibility of bringing in artesian supplies in the Murchison and many other northern rivers south of Carnarvon at a cost less than the desalination of sea water, but still at a cost higher than our present water supply.

If the water that recently came down the Murchison and Greenough Rivers through the heavy rains last week could have been conserved or dammed, I am sure that would have boosted significantly the State's water supplies. From what I heard the amount of water rushing down the Kalbarri Gorge was enormous and would probably have filled all the dams around Perth. We have not seen that happen for a long time. We should be looking at ways of conserving water supplies of that nature and using them for future metropolitan and agricultural water development. It is important that, whatever future supplies are to be developed, research and development start now so that when the traditional water resources are no longer sufficient, we can swing new supplies into the system.

The recent rise in the price of wool and the increase in the value of sheep have highlighted the inadequacies of the rural water supply scheme in many areas of the wheatbelt. Farming in the wheatbelt is a far more successful enterprise if farmers do not have all their eggs in one basket. Experience has shown that keeping a balance between cropping and livestock is the safest method of farming. The seasons in the eastern wheatbelt in recent years have been bad so far as grain growing is concerned. Many farmers were not able to switch over to wool production or to keep their sheep numbers up throughout the poor wheat crop years because they did not have the water to do so. In areas where there are adequate on-farm or reticulated water supplies, farmers have been able to balance successfully their wool and livestock against low grain prices. This alternative has not been so readily available in areas where farmers have to rely on carting water for great distances, so the failure rate of farming enterprises has been greater than in other areas during this recent time of rural depression.

This Government and future Governments have a duty to the people living in marginal areas and to the State as a whole to continue to upgrade and improve water supplies to these areas until all agricultural, regional and mining communities have a reliable supply of water. We can see a start towards making these needed extensions into the agricultural areas with the development of the Harris River Dam, the Bindi Bindi supplies and the planned Mukinbudin, Bencubbin and Nyabing schemes.

I am pleased that the Minister is placing emphasis on furthering the development of on-farm supplies and local supplies. We have in the past gone in the wrong direction. Incentives have existed within the water supply loan scheme for people in the areas not on the reticulated scheme to get low interest money to develop on-farm water supplies. The areas where we should be concentrating in the future on developing on-farm water supplies are those which already have reticulated water, such as in the wetter areas of the wheatbelt, because it is necessary to have a high rainfall before water can be conserved. In the wetter areas of the State, such as the Avon Valley and around Cunderdin, the topography and soil types are better suited for the construction of farm dams. So if the incentive had been there, we would perhaps today have more water from the scheme available to pipe out to the drier areas. We should assist farmers to develop on-farm water supplies so we can conserve the water in the scheme for these drier areas.

We will not achieve the full development of agricultural water needs until we bring the Agaton water scheme into development, which would bring into the scheme another major water supply. The Harris River Dam in the south and the Agaton Dam in the north would take care of the needs in the agricultural and goldfields regions for many years into the future. Looking beyond the near future, we must also look at the possibility of developing water supplies in the Murchison artesian basin and bringing those into the goldfields. I am sure new developments in that area will be initiated by the new Government that will take over in this place next year.

I wonder what the reaction of members in this place would be if they were to read, when browsing through the employment section of *The West Australian*, an advertisement which

said, "Wanted: Senior executive to run a tough, \$700 000 business in a modern, high tech environment. The applicant must have left school at 14 and have no subsequent training."

Mr Lewis: It would be discriminatory to have an advertisement like that.

Mr SCHELL: It would be, but there will not be much chance of anyone finding an advertisement like that. Australia's largest export dollar earner, the agricultural industry, is still managed overwhelmingly by people whose academic qualifications are reflected all too often by that type of advertisement. Only one Australian farmer in four has an education higher than grade 10. In Europe, 90 per cent of farmers are more highly educated; and so are 50 per cent of farmers in New Zealand and the United States.

Most of the 75 per cent of farmers with less education have still managed to become expert agricultural operators without the full academic education and training. They have had to survive and have developed very sophisticated skills to do so. Without developing those skills they would not have survived, and survival against the odds I have described has been one of the miracles of this nation and shows the resourcefulness of Australians when put under stress. However, we are entering an era now where business is of modern high finance, and high tech and high risk farming, and it is rapidly becoming more complex and demanding. Without higher education in the agricultural field I do not believe that farmers will be able to meet the challenge.

People entering agriculture at such levels will need more formal and more technical education and this will obviously be important to improve the farming economy. It has been accepted for many years in most other areas of endeavour that an increased level of education is needed, and this has been rightly expected by the community. Although most people realise that agriculture is no different from any other industry in this regard, reaction to meet the need has been much slower.

Many changes to agricultural education have taken place in university colleges, TAFE, and agricultural schools throughout Australia but from reports from the Federal Government's working party on post secondary rural education and a Federal schools report called "Schooling in Rural Australia", current developments are falling short of meeting the challenge. Even the Federal Minister for Primary Industry admitted, when referring to the Government's working party recently, that efforts made to adapt educational approaches and structures to rural needs in Australia were not good enough.

The challenge to rural education is one that only a concerted effort between the Government - both State and Federal - the industry and the community in cooperation can address. Young farmers today are learning their trade in a very disjointed way. Only a minority have an agricultural college background, and most learn from agricultural seminars, from discussions with other farmers, and, of course, they learn a lot from dad, who learnt the same way. In many cases they learn his bad habits, although I must stress that they also gain a lot of valuable information from dad. If that could be backed up by a good academic level of education I am sure it would be beneficial to future farmers.

I put forward a challenge to the Minister for Education and the Minister for Agriculture to continue their current work in this area and to seek more community help to see that in Western Australia we lead the nation in rural education improvement.

Mr Gordon Hill: We will.

Mr SCHELL: Recently I had the great privilege of going around to a number of schools in my electorate to present the bicentennial medallions. Meeting many school children was a great experience. In fact I was in one of the towns in my electorate only yesterday and on three separate occasions children came up to me and said, "I know you, you are our member of Parliament. You came and gave me a medallion at the school." That is great. School visits give us an insight into the needs of schools and also, through going to these schools, members of Parliament get valuable contact with teaching staff and learn a little more about the educational problems and needs in their electorates. It was a tremendous exercise for me.

While I am on this subject, I must say I am very pleased to see that the Government has decided to issue the medallions to the preprimary children. It was a very embarrassing situation for me. In small country schools, usually all the kids go out and sit down for the assembly, including the preprimary students. Fortunately some of the schools were prepared for the situation. At one school those preschool children were given a little silver spoon with

a Western Australian crest on it; at others they gave certificates so that the children would feel a part of things. I believe it was an oversight by the Government and it is pleasing to see that the situation has been corrected.

Also while on the subject of schools, over the last two years I have taken part in the parliamentary awareness tours to the schools by officers of this House. I believe this is very important. The children at the schools will be voters in a few years' time when they turn 18 and it is terribly important that they understand by the time they reach that age exactly what Government and this place are all about, and that they can cast a responsible vote. I have found children very responsive to this kind of education and I pay tribute to the officers of this House for the wonderful job they are doing in this regard. It certainly has been a pleasure for me to go to the schools with them and be a part of the tour. When the officers describe to the children the duties of a member of Parliament we, the members, are then in a position to address the children and give them a first hand account of what our duties are.

This brings me to the Better Schools report. I do not believe the community is really aware of what it is all about; in fact, I am not sure I am aware of what it is all about and what the Government wants. We are told that through the Better Schools report parents and the community will have much more say in the running of their schools, the curriculum, and so on, but this is not happening yet. At some time when she is in the House and can address us, perhaps the Minister would like to enlighten us a little more on what will happen in the near future.

One example in my electorate is the school at Dalwallinu. A group of Year 8 high school students - about a dozen of them, or perhaps 15 - took a particular interest in maths, probably due to the fact that they had an excellent maths teacher there at that stage. These children are now in Year 10 and do not have a suitable maths teacher, even though representations have been made by the P & C association. The person teaching maths at the moment is the headmaster, who also has administrative duties and who has not taught maths for 15 years. The curriculum has changed markedly since then and the children are not receiving the adequate tuition in maths that they should be getting. The Better Schools report tells us that parents and the community should be having a greater say. Those parents have tried but have not yet got what they want.

Country people are beginning to become more aware of the different standards between country and city schools. They are now asking that something be done about it. In the past, as members can gather from what I was saying earlier about rural education, the standard of education was even lower in the country than it is now. People accepted it and did not worry about it. In past generations boys either went onto the farm with dad or to one of the local businesses in town and learnt what they needed to, but now more and more students from the country have to compete on the job market. When they have not had an education equivalent to what is available at a city high school they are one step behind the rest of the community in the employment stakes. We certainly need an improvement in this area. I know it is a hard task for the Minister and the Government to get the right curriculum and the right education to students in the country with the low numbers and vast distances but we must do something about it because these kids are falling behind their city peers.

Mr Gordon Hill: One of the problems is that over 40 per cent of school leavers leave school without vocational skills which can be used in employment.

Mr SCHELL: That is one area on which we can concentrate. We need such things as the post-compulsory education scheme, about which I still have to read a lot more to see what its merits are. We can talk about TAFE courses where they teach the various trades required in the districts throughout the country; but, getting back to formal education, we must lift the standard and have more students who are prepared to extend their education to reach TEE level.

It is not so bad for people like me who can scrape up enough money to send our children away to the city for the two final high school years, but it is an exorbitant cost and a tremendous drain on the budget. I, and other members of this place, have first hand experience of this. Many people out there do not have the funds to do this. Through Austudy they can get nearly enough funds to cover the cost of boarding at a hostel, but there are many more costs involved. It costs a lot of money to take a car 200 or 300 kilometres to pick students up for the weekend and bring them home, and this problem of cost, and others, are not addressed.

Many people are opting out of sending their children away because of the costs. I believe that we can address this problem in certain areas through the mixed mode system which appeals to me. Obviously, it is not an ideal form of education, but at least some students on stations and in small mining and farming communities will have the opportunity to reach TEE standard by this form of correspondence. As I said, it is not ideal, but at least it would be an attempt to help students to reach that high level of education, giving them the chance to obtain better jobs.

Until now I have concentrated on only two areas - water and education. Two other areas - one of which is health - should be raised, if only briefly. The Kamien report emphasised the importance of doctors going to country areas. It also indicated that one way to achieve that would be to sell country towns as great places to live. If the greater community accepted that country towns were a healthy place to live and that they had good sporting facilities and so on, we would have no trouble in getting doctors and other people to go to them.

I also believe that there is a great need to maintain the existing facilities at country hospitals. Those facilities may not be used very often, but, with the great distances involved in this State -and accidents do happen - if only one life is saved every 10 years, those facilities pay for themselves many times over. There is also an increasing number of aged people living in country towns. The community is aware that aged people require more medical attention than young people. For that reason also we need to maintain the facilities at our country hospitals.

Something also needs to be done about the increasing law and order problems. I know that my colleague, the member for Avon, will raise and enlarge on this problem because he has done a lot of research into it. I will leave most of this area to him. The people of Wannamal, in the electorate of Moore, intend holding a public meeting to be attended by people from the Moore, Mount Marshall, and Avon electorates. The meeting has been called for next week. The people of Wannamal are fed up with the car and sheep stealing that has gone on over the years, as they have decided to do something about it. Some excellent guest speakers will talk at the meeting at which an attempt will be made to resolve the problem by coming up with some resolutions for Government. A citizens' group has been formed also in Nungarin to combat sheep stealing. Farmers of that area have been trying to get over drought conditions and rural recession. Now they are faced with losing their only profitable enterprise - livestock.

I have spoken tonight about water and rural education, and briefly about health and law and order problems of my electorate. These matters, however, are important to all Western Australians. Members of the National Party intend to monitor the Government's actions in rectifying these problems and intend to speak out when the Government does not make the grade or when it attempts to mislead the public.

**MR REG TUBBY (Greenough) [8.25 pm]:** It is a pleasure for me to take part in this debate and to raise a few matters concerning my electorate of Greenough. Firstly, however, I congratulate the new members for Balga, Ascot and, especially, Dale. I have known the member for Dale for a long time. He was the first born of the family of four given to me by my dear wife, Marj. We are certainly very proud of our four children. We are also proud of Fred's success in his chosen career of education. He has passed through the system fairly quickly to a position of responsibility. I am sure he will now make a great contribution in this place.

It is also a proud time for me to be here because it is one of only two occasions that a father and son have sat in this Parliament together. I know that, in the 1960s, Harry May and his son Don served a term together as members of the Australian Labor Party. I appreciate now how proud they were to serve together in this place.

In the 12 years that I have been a member of this place, I have spoken about some sad occasions relating to seasonal conditions in my electorate. In those 12 years there have been many inclement seasons indeed. However, I am pleased to be able to report that, at this stage, this season is one of the best on record. Rainfall in some areas of my electorate has exceeded the average for the year and, in a number of areas, is more than double the amount of rain that fell in 1987. We hope that the excellent rains that we have had for the opening of the season are followed by good finishing rains. The farming community is faced with huge costs in putting in crops these days. Farm equipment and fertilisers are expensive and many

have had to arrange finance to carry on. The rains, coupled with the good wool prices, will lift the industry considerably.

The heavy rains a week ago did cause concern, however. The front and back flats as they are known through which the Greenough River passes as it heads towards the sea were inundated. The watershed area is station country and is about 150 kilometres north east of Geraldton. The Greenough River wanders through large areas of farming country to those flats which do not flood in normal rains. In some areas, five and six inches of rain fell within 24 hours so the water flowing down that river was considerable. Fortunately, communications were good and the people living on those flats received plenty of warning.

This was a little different from 100 years ago. In 1888, the Greenough flats had been settled for only some 30 years and there was no communication. In 1888, the whole of the Greenough flats were completely flooded and lives and stock were lost, homes were flattened and fences washed away. Generally, the rains caused great devastation indeed. The sad part was that in 1888 very little rain fell on the flats and it was a great shock to the people who were just developing their properties on the very rich fertile flats. At that stage the Greenough flats were known as "The Granary of the West" because there was such rich, highly productive soil.

Fortunately, with the warning of potential flooding that was given last week, the local emergency service, the Greenough Shire and the community were able to get together and prepare for what was expected to be a considerable problem. With community effort on the part of the owners of bulldozers and front-end loaders, and people with shovels, a levee bank about six foot high and about a mile long was constructed in a few hours. It was a considerable achievement. About 50 or 60 people filled up sand bags and the sandbag reinforcement was put along some of the weaker areas of the levee. It was quite an impressive sight to see what was done and how this raging river was controlled by the efforts of the community.

Congratulations are due to the local emergency service, the Greenough Shire, and the community as a whole for the way in which they got together and helped one another in a tremendous community effort to save considerable damage along the flats. A number of people had to make important decisions, one of which on Sunday night was to prepare to open up the bar at the mouth of the Greenough River because the bar was considerably higher than the lowest point of the levee that had been constructed. It was quite obvious that if the bar were not released on the low tide, the levee would overflow. They got to work with graders and bulldozers and they were able to open up the mouth of the Greenough River. At low tide they were able to release the pressure on the river by letting it into the sea at the right time, thus preventing further damage to the levee that had just been constructed. That action removed the threat to many of the homes along the Greenough flats and, in particular, the threat to the Hampton Arms Hotel, which is a rather beautiful old place which had just been completely restored. The people of the area are very proud of what was done and although the hotel was completely surrounded by water the levee and sandbags that had been put around it protected this wonderful building.

The shires inland where the heavy rain fell were naturally concerned about the damage that was being done to roads, floodways and bridges. On the Monday after the rains on the Friday night, I was able to contact most of the shires. The general feedback was that the damage was minimal compared with the enormous advantages that the rain would provide throughout the Greenough electorate. It was certainly very pleasing to know that the damage was not great. Apart from wash-outs around culverts and bridges, the damage to roads appeared to be quite minimal. However, the damage that was done to roads in the shires is still of concern because, as members would be aware, it is very difficult to come by the funds needed to repair and maintain roads. The shires are approaching the Main Roads Department for assistance because the damage is well outside the limits of their budgets.

In the Morawa district a group of farmers in a watershed area have formed a soil conservation group. I know that this was encouraged by the State Government and it was certainly encouraged by local government. The area was a relatively confined one which shed a tremendous amount of water, causing considerable problems to roadways and railway lines. With the amount of rain which fell last week we would normally have expected the railway line to be taken out, but no damage was done. In having the soil conservation area

declared, the committee that was formed approached the Federal Government and found that it qualified for a subsidy of \$1 for every \$3 spent. This proved to be a great encouragement to people in the area to put up interceptor banks.

The interceptor banks had to be surveyed by officers from the Department of Agriculture. There were strict guidelines with respect to the height and type of construction of the interceptor banks and the distance between them. These figures were determined by soil testing and the general ability of the soil to absorb water. The length of the banks also had to be correct because interceptor banks are perfectly level. They are unlike, for example, the WISALTS type of bank which looks very similar in construction but which has to be sealed with clay and has to carry the water away. Therefore it is a grade bank rather than an interceptor bank which is perfectly level. The construction of the banks is quite a skilled operation because they have to be perfectly level on top and at the ends of the banks. The banks can be quite long. For example, a bank on our property is two kilometres long. Therefore, there has to be a safety spillway to enable the water to move away slowly into an established waterway without doing a great deal of damage.

There are interceptor banks on 7 000 acres of our property running to the tops of the hills and into the remaining bush, so there is no opportunity for water to shed. A very good friend of mine who is a pilot with his own aircraft flew over the area last Saturday following the rain and said it was an impressive site to see those 7 000 acres of interceptor banks with shining water being held where it had fallen. This is very important, from the point of view of the conservation of moisture, which is so essential and which has been so lacking in these areas in recent years, because it allows the moisture to be absorbed into the soil where it falls.

For financial assistance to be given for the construction of interceptor banks there had to be a proven community benefit as well as a benefit to the farmer. With the construction of these banks the recent rainfall clearly indicated that there is a definite community benefit because of the reduction in damage to roads, waterways, railway lines and to other farms further down the watershed area leading to the rivers and various lake systems.

I hope that the Government will study the report relating to the effectiveness of interceptor bank systems and will give full support and encouragement for further soil and conservation groups to be set up throughout the State because for the farmers concerned it is an enormous production benefit and it is of enormous community benefit as well.

It is not known what effect these banks will have on salinity problems that exist in many agricultural areas. Our property has some salt affected areas. It remains to be seen whether the interceptor banks will cause a further deterioration of the land because of the salinity in low lying areas and the absorption of water in soils higher up the slopes which travels underground and builds up a watertable in the flats which are going salty. It may be that there will be a problem there. I believe that there will be enormous benefits so that even if we lose a bit of land to salt we will be well rewarded so far as the remainder of the area is concerned.

It may be necessary to use some other form of treatment in salt affected areas, perhaps grow saltbush or do something like that to make those areas productive. There is a farmer at Perenjori who has worked out a system whereby he plants trees along the bottom side of his interceptor banks to use the moisture seeping under those banks. He started this four or five years ago when it was not so attractive to run sheep and kept stock off the area until the trees were well established. Those trees are now 15 to 20 feet high and are almost touching each other over an area of about 500 or 600 acres. It is an impressive sight indeed and something that can be done to encourage and promote the greening of Australia that is also of some assistance to farmers.

Speaking of the greening of Australia, I received a letter from the Mullewa Shire last week concerning the Department of Conservation and Land Management's withdrawing funds for people who have been employed to promote the planting of trees. That letter is very important and states -

Dear Sir,

During last year, funding was made available through the Department of Conservation and Land Management or Greening Australia for the appointment of regional "tree persons", and an appointment was made to this region. Unfortunately

the programme was short-lived and funding has now been withdrawn, preventing the continuation of this function.

This Council used the tree person on a number of occasions, and it is believed to good effect. The Council believes that programmes which are initiated and shown to be of benefit to the community should be retained where possible. If they were at the outset to have a limited life, an evaluation at the completion of the period should be made to ascertain the effectiveness prior to their cancellation on funding grounds alone.

It would be appreciated if you could consider approaching Mr. Schaper of Greening Australia to offer support for the programme.

That is very important indeed, because when a program is not effective it is reasonable that funding be withdrawn and the money spent elsewhere, but where there are programs such as the one I have indicated the Government should continue them and foster them in other regions because of the great benefits gained from them.

A new venture, emu farming, has been established in my electorate and in a number of rural areas of Western Australia. The Government should be giving much more encouragement to the people who have pioneered these farms. I recently inspected the emu farm of Kevin and Betty Heitman with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Richard Court, and the shadow Minister for Local Government, Jim Clarko, who were interested to see what these people were doing and to hear about the potential of this industry.

Mr Gordon Hill: What are they doing?

Mr REG TUBBY: These people bought 100 young emus for which they paid dearly, some \$260 a head for four week old chicks. Those chicks are now almost mature birds and are really doing well. They lost only two of those chicks. However, they must report almost daily on the activities of these emus and when they lost a bird they could not destroy the carcass until they reported to the department and got permission to do so. It happened that it was on a weekend, so they had to put the bird in a bag in their freezer until they got permission to dispose of the carcass.

Mr Gordon Hill: What will they do with the birds? Do they intend using them to produce leather?

Mr REG TUBBY: No, the birds they have presently will form the nucleus of their emu farm operation and will be used for breeding purposes. No doubt the area they are running presently will become too small and they must look to letting them out into a more open range situation. This leads to my concern about regulations so far as fences are concerned. My two parliamentary colleagues who were with me on that day could indicate clearly that one is not dealing here with wild birds that will crash through or climb over fences - these are docile and tame birds. It is almost a problem to push them out of the way, they are so tame. I firmly believe that a well constructed farm fence would be sufficient to retain these birds on the open range and would reduce considerably the cost of establishing an emu farm. I spoke earlier about the products that come from emus - leather, oil, feathers, and even meat. Emu oil is worth about \$50 an adult bird. The possibility of turning emu feathers into felt is being looked at.

Mr Gordon Hill: Are there tanneries to treat the leather?

Mr REG TUBBY: I believe tanneries are manufacturing emu leather on a limited scale. Slaughterhouse and tannery facilities would be required in those areas if emu farming proves to be a viable proposition. I am concerned about the restrictions that have been placed on the people operating emu farms. Emus are expensive birds to buy and rear, so these people are not going to take the risk that the birds might escape. I do not think the emus would escape if they did crawl over the fence; they have been so well treated and are so tame they would probably break their necks to get back into captivity.

I am sorry to see that the Minister for Water Resources is not in the House at the moment because I would like to compliment him on the job he is doing in many of the problem areas. I have a number of them in my electorate, and I mention Latham in particular. Funds have been allocated to extend water supplies to Latham. Funds have also been allocated for exploratory work in the Port Gregory area in the Shire of Northampton, to provide water to

what is a fishing village and nice holiday spot. The garnet mineral sands operation has also been in need of water supplies, and it is pleasing to see that water is now likely to be provided.

*Amendment to Motion*

I move the following amendment -

That the following words be added to the motion -

But we regret to advise your Excellency that the Premier and his Government have failed to subscribe to one of the basic principles of the Westminster system; i.e. to be accountable to the Parliament for their actions, and as a result deserve the condemnation and censure of this House.

**MR MacKINNON** (Murdoch - Leader of the Opposition) [8.55 pm]: I formally second the amendment. The member for Greenough has moved an amendment to the Address-in-Reply because we have seen this evening the latest of a long line of examples of where important questions, to which this Parliament is entitled to have answers, have been sidestepped and eluded by the Government. The question I am referring to is important in terms of the whole system of this Parliament and how it is supposed to operate. The Premier, in answering the question I asked about the funding being supplied by a Government agency to Rothwells, indicated that the only form of accountability that he believed was necessary from any Government agency was that we await the tabling of the relevant accounts in Parliament. He said the Government was not accountable in any way to the people of Western Australia for its day to day activities in relation to any of its agencies. It is necessary to bear in mind that one of the agencies I referred to - the Western Australian Development Corporation - is not accountable to this House, but the others are.

The Premier's answer is not acceptable so far as the standards of this Parliament are concerned, and we want to ensure that our protest at the handling of this question is strongly made. This latest question which the Premier has refused to answer joins a growing list - and it seems to grow day by day - of questions which are put aside. The example to which I refer is the question about the casino report. We know now that the final report of the former Commissioner for Corporate Affairs was prepared in June. However, we now find that in October last year he reversed his decision in relation to that report. We have asked repeated questions as to what occurred, but no answers have been given. Claims have been made that three days prior to the former commissioner releasing his final report, Queens Counsel were briefed. I understand also that the Crown Law Department provided advice to the former commissioner, on two occasions, in support of the decision made in June. We have asked questions relating to that matter, as have other people in the community, and we have not received other than stony silence. We have received the usual answer: The information is commercially confidential.

**Mr Peter Dowding**: That is not true. The answer you have received is that it is up to the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs whom he prosecutes; it is not up to me or the Attorney General. It is certainly not up to you.

**Mr MacKINNON**: It is up to the Premier and his Government to answer the basic questions. The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs is answerable to the Parliament, via his Government and his Attorney General. The basic questions have not been answered. The Premier said in this Parliament that the matter was commercially confidential.

**Mr Peter Dowding**: Which question has not been answered?

**Mr MacKINNON**: Why did the former commissioner change his mind?

**Mr Peter Dowding**: That is up to him.

**Mr MacKINNON**: The Government is accountable to this Parliament for that decision. We are seeing now members in another place having to go through the exercise of appointing a Select Committee; and it will take time and cost money to the State to find out the answers to those questions. The Premier and the Attorney General are responsible for answering those questions, but the only answer we have received is that it is commercially confidential.

**Mr Peter Dowding**: What were your alternatives?

**Mr MacKINNON**: I put forward three alternatives, which the Premier should know about



because they were in my Press statement. I do not have time to go through them now. We have to resort to a Select Committee of this Parliament. The Premier or the Attorney General could have taken any one of the three suggestions I made to the Premier during the weekend, but they have chosen not to do so.

Mr Peter Dowding: Which one?

Mr MacKINNON: The Premier could have taken any one of those three suggestions, but he has chosen not to take action; so, because the Premier and his Government refuse to answer the question, we must establish a Select Committee to get to the bottom of the question.

Mr Peter Dowding: Do you think there would be a better option than a Select Committee?

Mr MacKINNON: It would have been easier if the Premier had come clean right from the beginning and tabled a report in Parliament. We could have examined the report and determined whether a Select Committee was necessary.

Mr Peter Dowding: On Monday you put out three options.

Mr MacKINNON: On Sunday I put out three options; they were published on Monday.

Mr Peter Dowding: Are they an alternative to a Select Committee?

Mr MacKINNON: No. I have told the Premier that already.

Mr Peter Dowding: So what is the point of them?

Mr MacKINNON: As I have said previously, and I repeat it, if the Premier had come clean right from the beginning - and the Premier, by his questioning is now admitting it is his responsibility to answer the question; he should be answerable and accountable to the Parliament - we would not have had to consider a Select Committee. But members must bear in mind that the appointment of that Select Committee came only after our persistent questioning and the Premier's refusal and his Government's refusal to provide any answers.

The next example is the SGIC, where the Government has participated in extraordinary events. These are not my words; they are the words of almost every informed commentator across Australia. We have seen the purchase of speculative shares, gambling on the stock market with the funds of the SGIC, placing the SGIC's funds at risk. The latest body to make that comment is the Western Australian Chamber of Commerce in a statement issued today saying the SGIC must reduce its exposure. Everybody is now aware of that exposure. Everybody continues to put questions to the Government, but we continue to receive the same old answers.

Let me draw the attention of members to three questions asked last Thursday. The first was asked by my colleague, the member for Cottesloe, of the Treasurer. All these questions are to do with the SGIC.

The first is question 217, which was -

Did the Government either directly or through the SGIC invite expressions of interest or detailed submissions for development of Perth Technical College site together with adjacent buildings owned by the SGIC?

A pretty straightforward and simple question wanting to know what process was gone through to invite submissions of interest for those buildings. I would have thought we were entitled to an answer to that question. The question had seven parts to it, but the answer provided by the Treasurer, the fountain of all knowledge, the man who is supposed to be accountable to this House for his Government's actions, but obviously afraid to be, was this -

The details of the SGIC's commercial activities are confidential.

What is commercially confidential about the first question? As usual, we either have stoney silence or just "commercially confidential".

Mr Peter Dowding: I will give you the answer to that: It is because the seven elements of the one question all address the fundamental issue of how the SGIC is to deal commercially if it has constantly to reveal its situation, except in relation to this House.

Mr MacKINNON: An absolutely fatuous and insulting answer to both the Opposition and the Parliament! It has absolutely nothing to do with that question, and nothing to do with these ongoing activities. All we wanted to know was how the SGIC dealt with an asset. Did

it actually invite tenders or submissions? Did it actually go out and offer the deal to Mr Anderson and to Mr Packer with an underwritten guarantee at the end in terms of the leaseback? Is that what occurred?

Mr Hassell: It did invite offers from around the town, and a number of companies spent a lot of money preparing those offers. Then, by a political, not a commercial, decision the Government cut right across that process and decided to deal with Mr Packer and Mr Anderson.

Mr MacKINNON: Perhaps that is why the Treasurer refused to answer that part of the question. I do not think it had much to do with the first answer he gave. It probably had a fair bit to do with the second, but let us turn to question 219. We have the same answer - that these matters are commercially confidential to the SGIC.

The first question was -

Is it correct that Salomon Brothers, who reportedly advised the SGIC on the purchase of 19.9 per cent equity in Bell Group, were also advising Bond Corporation?

It goes on with a few more questions there.

Mr Hassell: I bet that was commercially confidential.

Mr Peter Dowding: That is not the answer at all.

Mr MacKINNON: I do not know who has been advising Bond Corporation on any matter; the Premier is right in that.

Mr Peter Dowding: Thank you.

Mr MacKINNON: Question (2) asks, "If so, who recommended the employment of Salomon Brothers to the SGIC for this purpose? The answer to questions (2) to (8) was, "These matters are commercially confidential to the SGIC." Interesting!

We then go on to question 222. Questions (1), (2) and (4) are answered the same way: "These matters are commercially confidential to the SGIC." Most questions there have little to do with commercial confidentiality. Nearly every single question is one to which this Parliament is entitled to know the answer. The basic reason we are not receiving the answers is because it is politically sensitive, and it has little if anything to do with the answer provided. The Government continues its practice of failing to be accountable to this Parliament. It fails in its fundamental responsibility.

If one is in Government, and one has little to hide, why not provide answers to the questions? Why hide behind a suitcase?

Turning to the Teachers Credit Society, we heard the Premier tonight wax lyrical about Government inquiring into this, that and the other. But why does the Government refuse to answer questions or have any inquiry into the registrar and the actions of the Government in this matter? They were the key players in the game, along with some of the directors of TCS. Why is it that we have a continual stone wall when questions are asked about those people and the involvement of Mr Edwards in the deal? No inquiry will be held into that matter; it is commercially confidential; nothing to do with the Government. They say, "We acted magnanimously to rescue the Teachers Credit Society." But why did the Government take no action in July 1986 when it and its registrar knew of the difficulties being experienced even then by TCS? Why did the Premier not take action when he knew in December of that year - and that is when he admits he knew; I put it to members he knew earlier. The Government took no action then. Why did the Government then intervene to approve the \$25 million loan from the R & I Bank at the same time as the \$5 000 came from the TCS? We have inquiries about everybody, but not into the fundamental question which is really important.

I am sure the people of Western Australia want to know who did pay the \$5 000 to the ALP. When did it go to the ALP? Is it a fact that Mr Edwards received the cheque, and if he did, did it contravene Federal legislation or not? The Premier claims not to be interested. It is commercially confidential. It is politically confidential and sensitive, and has little to do with the excuse provided; it has everything to do with the Government's failure to be accountable to this Parliament.

We asked questions in regard to the State Superannuation Board. Again the answer was "Commercially confidential." We are not allowed to know the answer. We are told, "You will get the answer when you have an annual report presented to the Parliament." That is the only accountability the Government will give. In the meantime it will not answer any other questions, particularly if they are politically sensitive.

And now what do we have? What is the latest revelation that has been brought on today? Rothwells was provided with a guarantee by the Government last year - a guarantee to rescue it in time of need; a guarantee that the Opposition did not support. The same company, under the strength of that guarantee, then entered into major investment decisions. The Western Collieries purchase, reported to be in the order of \$130 million, must be in that category. It is a major investment decision undertaken by a company, which was but months ago on the brink of disaster, under the protection and strength of a Government guarantee. What other company in Western Australia enjoys such privileges? What other company has the benefits of that guarantee which enable it to enter into such a contract?

What then did we find today but an admission by the Premier in his answer to me at question time that other Government agencies, since the time of the rescue, have been investing funds in Rothwells.

Mr Peter Dowding: Who said that?

Mr MacKINNON: Is the Premier denying that?

Mr Peter Dowding: Are you suggesting I said that?

Mr MacKINNON: It is exactly what the Premier said today. I asked the question today. The Premier again refuses to deny it.

Mr Peter Dowding: Oh, come on!

Mr MacKINNON: It is just like the Premier sitting over there and saying "There is no \$5 000 donation".

Mr Peter Dowding: Make your point, but don't tell fibs.

Mr MacKINNON: Has there been any \$5 000 donation? Is that a fib? Let the Premier respond. Have WADC, SGIC, the SSB or Exim deposited money with Rothwells since October?

Mr Peter Dowding: You just said that I had said something which was not the case.

Mr MacKINNON: Did the Premier say that? Has that occurred?

Mr Peter Dowding: I have told you the answer to that will not be given.

Mr MacKINNON: Exactly, and that answer is yes. One of those agencies has deposited money. I put it to the Premier that it is more than \$40 million. That money has been invested by one of those agencies in Rothwells after the guarantee was extended; and, more than that, this Government has been asking companies around Australia to endorse bills of Rothwells at the same time, providing further support to that company.

The fundamental point to be made out of all of that is: Why are we not told? Why does the Premier continue even to this minute to refuse to answer that question?

Mr Peter Dowding: A minute ago you said I answered it.

Mr MacKINNON: Are the State Superannuation Board's moneys his? They are trust moneys. Are the SGIC's moneys his? No, they are not. The Premier bears direct responsibility to this Parliament for those funds and what they are doing, and a continual refusal by him to answer those questions is nothing more nor less than an abrogation of his basic responsibility. He is the Premier; he is the Treasurer. He personally is responsible for each of the agencies, other than the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs, that I have mentioned tonight and he, personally, continues to refuse to answer the simplest question. Even if we know what the answer is, he refuses to provide it, with the trite old answer that it is commercially confidential. It is not good enough. This Parliament deserves better and this Premier deserves the most severe condemnation of this House.

MR COURT (Nedlands - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.15 pm]: Accountability or lack of it is certainly becoming a major election issue in this State. At question time tonight

we saw the Premier again refuse to answer two very important questions. We have been in this House three weeks now and we have still not been told what is the situation in relation to that financial political donation to the ALP. The Premier just wants to ignore it and shrug it off, but one cannot shrug off an incident whereby the Government has said to the R & I Bank that it will help support it in extending a credit line to the Teachers Credit Society because it is in trouble, and after that occurs a donation then goes across to the ALP, and the Premier, for three weeks in a row, refuses to do anything about it.

Mr Peter Dowding: What are you suggesting by that?

Mr COURT: I am suggesting that it is one of the most improper things that can occur.

Mr Peter Dowding: What is improper?

Mr COURT: For the Premier's party to accept a financial donation from a financial institution which had just been financially assisted by the taxpayers of this State. That is a very improper thing to have taken place.

Mr Peter Dowding: The R & I Bank says it was a commercial judgment of its own.

Mr MacKinnon: And with a cheque going to a senior public servant.

Mr Peter Dowding: You make up stories all the time.

Mr COURT: It is one of the most improper things that can occur, for taxpayers' funds to be used in this way. As to the other question asked tonight, when the question was asked last week the Premier said it should be put on notice, but now that it is on notice the Premier refuses to give full details of it. By his refusing to give the answer again, the taxpayers of this State do not know what is going on. When Governments get involved in these entrepreneurial activities - in which this Government has become heavily involved - without fail in other countries the track record has been that they run into trouble. We now have a situation in this State where members opposite, the Government, are playing entrepreneurs; they are wheeling and dealing with taxpayers' funds. They have been in Government for five years now and unfortunately we are starting to uncover some of the very concerning and serious things that have been taking place.

One of the most concerning things as regards the question of accountability is that a body such as WADC has begun investing in a wide range of businesses. We do not know in which businesses it is investing. If one prepared a list by hearsay of what they are involved in, it is a very substantial list of businesses. Surely the taxpayers of this State, without having to sift and wheedle this information out of the Government, should know just where the WADC has its money invested. We tend not to find out until they have gone bad in business or come up against a competitor in the private sector which has become pretty annoyed that it is competing against a Government backed business. When we are talking about accountability it is all very well for the Premier to say, "Read their annual report." I will give one example from the WADC annual report. I read its report for a couple of years, in which it said it had an interest in Wesfi Pty Ltd or one of its subsidiaries. When I read the next year's report, it had increased its interest in that business. When I started asking questions about it I could not get any answers, but when I got to the bottom of it I found that WADC had never had an investment in that business. So for two years its glossy report had stated that WADC had an interest, but when I finally got to the bottom of it, WADC did not have an interest in that business. It is totally misleading.

Mr Peter Dowding: Come on! What are you saying?

Mr COURT: The Premier should read the questions asked last year. I am saying that WADC, in two annual reports, gave totally misleading information about investments.

Mr Parker interjected.

Mr Peter Dowding: Are you saying they never ever did?

Mr COURT: Yes. I am quite prepared to sit down with the Premier and the Deputy Premier and give them chapter and verse on the misleading information that came from those reports. It did not worry the former Premier when it was explained to him, so it will not worry this Premier.

Mr Parker: I think you will find that your position is wrong.

Mr COURT: My position is not wrong. I raised it in this House last year and nobody disagreed with what I said. The Deputy Premier cannot disagree; it is in black and white - or in colour, should I say - in that report.

Mr Peter Dowding: Give me a note about what you are saying at some stage.

Mr COURT: I will do more than that. I will give the Premier the report and all the details on it.

Mr Peter Dowding: I will look forward to it. If you are wrong, what can we expect from you?

Mr COURT: If I am wrong, I will apologise to the Premier.

Mr Peter Dowding: Not me, mate, but to the people you are constantly maligning.

Mr COURT: Hang on, if I am right, what will the Premier do about it? Nothing, that is the answer.

Mr Peter Dowding: Your leader promised to apologise -

Mr COURT: Mr Premier, we do not malign people; we only deal with the facts in this place. It concerned me greatly to hear a journalist, when commenting on the SGIC's latest deal, describe it as a gambler bankrolled by the taxpayers of Western Australia. He went on to talk about the SGIC being a high flyer.

Mr Peter Dowding: Who fed him that line? Mr Hassell?

Mr COURT: It concerns me that that is the type of media report now coming out about the operations of financial institutions in this State. This Government is playing the stock market and it is playing the property market. It also concerned me to read reports about the SGIC, in the event of a decline in the property market or if the market fell by 10 per cent, having its capital wiped out. It is very worrying when these sorts of things occur. It might be great fun for the members opposite to be in charge of these millions of dollars. Many members opposite, like all members of Parliament, do not have a lot of financial skill when it comes to handling these millions of dollars. However, it is unfortunate that the Government has brought in many inexperienced advisers and put them above the professional public servants. These people are guiding the Government on some of these absolutely fascinating deals. These deals will make very good reading. Unfortunately it will not be fictional, it will be factual in years to come. That is the sort of thing we do not want to see happening.

We started examining some of Exim's early deals. One of Exim's first deals was when it went into a jewellery company. In this House we made it clear that the people involved gave interest free loans to their friends and relatives. That to me was a very serious offence, but nothing happened. The Government accepted it. The people involved were actually promoted. There is a total lack of accountability when that sort of thing happens in Government. How does the Government expect the rest of the Public Service to react when its members read and hear of such deals taking place? It is totally improper.

When it came to the Teachers Credit Society, the Government became involved with the Superannuation Board. Again the Government appointed one of its political friends as the chairman of that board. We saw the chaos that resulted and we saw the improper dealings that took place in the Superannuation Board, when the Teachers Credit Society and the Swan Building Society were allowed to get out of control by not properly administering the Acts of Parliament concerned. Now we have this inquiry. The Government thinks it has been very clever having a Select Committee. Only certain people will go before this particular inquiry. It is interesting that they call up some of the directors and lawyers involved with the Teachers Credit Society, but one of their political appointees, Ann-Marie Heine, is not to be called before this inquiry. She is secretary to the board of directors, but she is excluded.

Mr MacKinnon: A member of the ALP.

Mr Peter Dowding: Should that disqualify her from every job? Is that what you are saying - that membership of the ALP should disqualify people from jobs?

Mr Hassell: Why don't you just say why she is not being called?

Mr Parker: Because she is not a board member. She is a member of the staff.

Mr COURT: There are other people who are not board members who are being called before the inquiry. It is a select inquiry.

Mr Parker: They are either employees or they are board members.

Mr COURT: The main people involved in that exercise were Government people. We will not get to the bottom of what took place until the Government itself is examined.

Mr MacKinnon: What was she doing there - just passing the time of day?

Mr Peter Dowding: You have just heaped a whole lot of criticism on somebody and made implications about them -

Mr COURT: Does the Premier think it is critical to ask why certain people have been selected? It is all right to bring Mr Clarke and these other people onto the inquiry.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Thomas): Order!

Mr Peter Dowding: Let me just ask you to take it through: The person who calls people before the inquiry is the Registrar. If you are suggesting that Ann-Marie Heine was not called before the inquiry for some political purposes, then all of a sudden you are criticising the Registrar. That is exactly what you do all the time. Ann-Marie Heine was not called because she is not a board member; she is a staff member. Do you see how incompetent you are?

Mr COURT: There are other people who are not board members who are going before that inquiry.

Mr Parker: They are staff members; the ones who are not board members, are staff members.

Mr COURT: Is the Minister saying that the secretary to the board of the Teachers Credit Society at the time it went through one of the biggest financial scandals this State has seen just happens not to be brought before the inquiry?

Mr Peter Dowding interjected.

Mr Hassell: Do you mean to suggest she is not relevant to the inquiry?

Mr Peter Dowding: That is up to the Registrar. The Registrar has never asked me who should appear and I hope he never does.

Mr COURT: The Premier leads me to my next point, which is that the Government and the office of the Registrar had direct roles in this particular exercise. We want to know the people involved in administering the legislation leading up to the Premier himself, who was responsible at the time. At the end of the day I hope we get the full story.

Mr Peter Dowding: What if you are wrong? What if this inquiry -

Mr COURT: What does the Premier mean - "What if"? Does the Premier think it is a crime for the public to know what took place?

Mr Peter Dowding: You have accused the Registrar of impropriety and you do not even know the answers.

Mr COURT: The Premier does not have to laugh while he says it.

Mr Peter Dowding: I am not laughing; I am affronted that you use your privilege like that.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COURT: It is an absolute insult that the Premier should have laughed. All we are asking for is full accountability on the Teachers Credit Society. In addition to that the Government should tell us about the donation that the ALP received.

I refer now to Rothwells Bank Pty Ltd. What a cheek the Opposition has in asking questions about it! What a nerve we have! One hundred and fifty million dollars went in as a guarantee, and we have the nerve to ask what will happen to it. We have the nerve to ask about the form of the guarantee. Is the guarantee currently being used? What is the liability associated with it? Was it an important part of the Western Collieries deal? Normally we do not care about Western Collieries deals because they are none of our business, but when there is a \$150 million Government guarantee involved, it is our responsibility to ask questions.

Mr Parker: It has nothing to do with Western Collieries.

Mr COURT: What does the Minister mean - "nothing to do with Western Collieries"? Is the Minister saying that they could go out and spend \$150 million without that Government guarantee in place?

Mr Parker: It has been explained to you on a dozen occasions that the guarantee is a guarantee to the National Australia Bank to secure bills which represent bills held against creditors of the bank. That has nothing to do with Western Collieries.

Mr COURT: That is one of the most naive explanations I have ever heard. Mind you, it is about the most we have heard so far about this particular guarantee. We would like to know a few more details about it. The Government said the guarantee would only be used as a last resort if all else failed. It is currently being used to the limit.

Mr Parker: You are just being dishonest. What we said last year was that it would only be called on; that is, we would only have to fork up all or any of the \$150 million - in the last resort. In other words, not one cent of the guarantee has been called on.

Mr COURT: What does the Minister mean - "called on"? Is he saying that there is no liability associated with that guarantee? What an absolute nonsense. If the guarantee is not required, why does not the Government withdraw it? Is the Minister saying that the National Bank would have extended credit to Rothwells without the guarantee?

Mr Parker: Of course not. That is a different question.

Mr COURT: Then the Minister said the guarantee is not being used.

Mr Peter Dowding: He said it was not being called on. Can't you tell the truth?

Mr COURT: No wonder we have financial problems in this State. We asked the question tonight, "Did other financial institutions ask to put money into Rothwells?" The Government cannot tell us. We asked, "Did the SGIC put money into Rothwells through different vehicles?" The Government cannot tell us that. Surely the taxpayers should know what takes place.

When the new Premier took over, I was hoping he would not continue the practice of the former Premier of being involved in high flying entrepreneurial type deals. I thought the new Premier would disown that practice and things would be cleaned up a bit. Instead this Premier has continued the practice and has become further involved in the gymnastics associated with property deals around town. We need flow charts to work out what is happening.

At a time when we desperately need the situation to be calmed down, unfortunately we are getting further involved in more deals. The SGIC is another story as it has become a lead player in property trading and share trading. It has become a wheeler dealer institution. We are concerned to read financial analysts' statements saying that the SGIC has a lot to answer for as it is getting into very risky businesses. It is all very well to say a large profit may be made one day but when so much of a person's portfolio is placed into a small number of investments, with a swing back the other way the result can be disastrous and people can be wiped out. Surely the Government has learned that over recent years.

Backbenchers opposite must be concerned about the change in the financial reputation of this State. We used to be able to hold our heads high and say that we were from Western Australia, as we had a good financial reputation. We are now being made the laughing stock of Australia by the deals being done by the other side. The Government has severely damaged this State's financial credibility; no-one trusts its high flying deals. Accountability, or the lack of it, will be a major election issue.

As the Government recklessly plays these risky games with taxpayers' funds, it will not only harm this State but also make it easier for the Opposition to get back into Government. I am not proud when I hear about the financial dealings of this State. The Premier and the Deputy Premier can try to stop answering questions but it would be far more productive if they came out into the open.

Currently the SGIC faces a difficult situation with pay-outs associated with the asbestosis cases. I urge the Premier to be completely open about the situation. If a major liability is tied back to the SGIC, if a problem is to be faced, do not hide it. Do not string the problem

out. Bring the details out into the open. The immediate reaction we see is one of pushing back. The Opposition asks, "What is the liability?" We receive no answer. The position should be made clear and I urge the Government to become more accountable.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

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Ayes (18)

Mr Blaikie  
Mr Bradshaw  
Mr Cash  
Mr Clarko  
Mr Court

Mr Crane  
Mr Grayden  
Mr Greig  
Mr Hassell  
Mr Lewis

Mr Lightfoot  
Mr MacKinnon  
Mr Mensaros  
Mr Fred Tubby  
Mr Reg Tubby

Mr Watt  
Mr Wiese  
Mr Maslen (*Teller*)

Noes (25)

Dr Alexander  
Mrs Beggs  
Mr Bridge  
Mr Burkett  
Mr Carr  
Mr Cunningham  
Mr Peter Dowding

Mr Evans  
Dr Gallop  
Mr Grill  
Mrs Henderson  
Mr Gordon Hill  
Mr Hodge  
Dr Lawrence

Mr Marlborough  
Mr Parker  
Mr Read  
Mr Ripper  
Mr D.L. Smith  
Mr P.J. Smith  
Mr Taylor

Mr Troy  
Mrs Watkins  
Dr Watson  
Mrs Buchanan (*Teller*)

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Pairs

Ayes

Mr Thompson  
Mr Trenorden  
Mr Williams  
Mr Schell  
Mr Stephens

Noes

Mr Pearce  
Mr Donovan  
Mr Wilson  
Mr Bertram  
Mr Tom Jones

Amendment thus negatived.

*Debate (on motion) Resumed*

**MR GRAYDEN** (South Perth) [9.37 pm]: I congratulate the members for Dale, Balga, and Ascot on the results of the recent elections. I express the hope that the members' time in this Parliament will be long and rewarding.

I wish to deal with the asbestosis problem. Due to the lateness of the hour, I will not touch on the question of liability for payments which may accrue as the consequence of court judgments because that is something which should be dealt with in greater detail. The question I wish to pose is, "How could this ever have been permitted to occur?" If there is any liability, action should be taken against those who are responsible. Mesothelioma is a very serious disease and the incidence of it in Western Australia is the highest in Australia - I do not know about the rest of the world.

**Mr Peter Dowding:** Wherever there has been asbestos mining, there have been similar counts; I suspect that is what the literature supports.

**Mr GRAYDEN:** I appreciate that. It occurred in South Africa a long time ago and, in all probability, still occurs.

According to a recent statement, Western Australia has the highest incidence of this sickness in the world. In 1987 there were 223 confirmed cases. There will be more in the next 10 years. We know that there were approximately 7 000 workers at Wittenoom, 6 000 of whom were men. We know also that one in five of those 7 000 workers is expected to get asbestosis. In addition, many people on wharves and ships carted the asbestos to Perth and many others processed it when it reached Perth. Who permitted that to occur? Were people responsible and, if so, which ones? The other day I read an article in the *Sunday Times* headed, "Dust alarm was sounded long ago". The article stated -

Dr Jim McNulty remembers the day in 1959 when a young prospector from the WA goldfields town of Menzies walked into Kalgoorlie Hospital.

It states that, even though the Public Health Department was warning people at that time



about asbestosis, those warnings were met with apathy. I will challenge some of those statements in a moment. Because the Public Health Department at that time did very little to alert the public of Western Australia to the dangers of asbestosis, were those warnings met with apathy, was the department remiss, or was pressure brought to bear on the department in some way to suppress information which was available at that time on the dangers of asbestosis?

Mr Hodge: The records don't show that. All of the records have been made available to the Asbestosis Diseases Society.

Mr GRAYDEN: I have annual reports of the Public Health Department which I will read later. They give a view completely contrary to that put by the Minister. We have just found out that, many years before Wittenoom was developed as a mine, mining for asbestos had taken place in South Africa and asbestosis had been a serious problem causing many casualties. That was years before. Anybody engaged in asbestos mining and people in the public health area should have been aware of what was happening in South Africa.

In 1931, health authorities in Great Britain were so disturbed about the seriousness of asbestosis that the Government introduced legislation regulating the exposure of workers to asbestos. That was done on the basis of the experience that had been obtained from South Africa in the 1900s. It is extraordinary that all that experience was available from Great Britain which had introduced health legislation, yet 17 years later in Western Australia, we allowed that work force to be exposed to asbestos.

Mr Hodge: But there were regulations even in those days. They were not rigorously complied with.

Mr GRAYDEN: I have no doubt that there were regulations, but none of them could possibly have been effective against the dust menace to which the workers at Wittenoom were subjected.

From 1949 to 1956 I was a member of a syndicate which mined in the Pilbara. We mined columbite and tantalite not far from Wittenoom at Turner River. Later we moved to Shaw River where we mined tin; we were also operating at Woody Woody, which is 256 miles south east of Port Hedland, where we mined manganese. We visited Wittenoom on many occasions. I was always horrified at the conditions under which the people there worked. The office was about 100 yards from the mill and it was difficult to see the typist on the other side of the room because of the thickness of the asbestos dust. Visibility in the mill was confined to a couple of yards on many occasions. The whole plant lay in a cloud of asbestos dust. We admired the people who worked under such conditions. They had come from other parts of the world to work in conditions of extreme heat in the summer, and in that dust. In those years we did not dream that the asbestos dust was already well known around the world to be lethal to the extent that, today, one in five people would develop asbestosis. Everybody in the Pilbara had an opportunity to visit Wittenoom and witness those conditions. Now, at this late stage, we find that, in all probability, management was aware of how lethal the asbestos dust was. In all probability, the original owners were also aware of it, and the Public Health Department at that time was certainly aware of it.

Mr Hodge: It did its best to enforce the regulations.

Mr GRAYDEN: I appreciate the Minister's defence of the Public Health Department, but I do not think that was the situation at all, and I say that advisedly.

I have taken the opportunity to examine Public Health Department reports of the time because, as I said, we visited Wittenoom constantly and did not dream for one moment that asbestos dust would be proved to be as lethal as it is today. The first report in which I can find any reference to asbestosis is the 1959 annual report of the Public Health Department. Under the heading, "Occupational health", paragraph (2) refers to silica and asbestos and lists a number of places of work, including foundries, quarries, rock-crushing, potteries and brickworks. They visited 15 foundries, five quarries, two rock crushing establishments and three potteries and a brickworks - 25 in all. A total of 356 employees were X-rayed and 14 X-rays showed evidence of silicosis, not asbestosis.

Under the heading of "asbestosis" we find the department visited one factory which had nine employees and X-rays of three of them showed evidence of asbestosis. Another premises they visited had four employees but none of the X-rays showed evidence of asbestosis. The report states -

The employees in Group 1 were a selected group. The sputum of two of the three employees suffering from asbestosis contained asbestos bodies. This hazard has within the year, been reduced by enclosing some, and improving the exhaust ventilation in other, dusty processes. The silicosis and legal surveys will be continued and probably completed in 1960.

In 1959 as a consequence of asbestosis a report was received from Dr McNulty, the conclusions of which were included in the same annual report as follows -

The percentages quoted above (i.e., 12 per cent. of asbestos workers suffering from industrial chest disease with over 4 years exposure compared with 1 per cent. of goldminers with over 10 years exposure) are proved and probably paint too black a picture of the conditions which existed. With a shifting working population, it is almost impossible to work out accurate incidences. However, the very high labour turnover at Wittenoom is necessarily associated with a short average exposure per worker and many workers at risk were protected simply because their exposure time was too short. At least one of these short-term workers has been diagnosed as suffering from Asbestosis, many years after he left the industry.

The problem is essentially one of ventilation conducted with a proper appreciation of the relative importance and medical significance of the asbestos fibre as distinct from the silica particle. Despite the many marked improvements which have been effected at the Mine and Mill, I am not satisfied that the risk of industrial chest disease has been eradicated or even brought to par with the risk of Silicosis in the gold-mining industry. The prevention of industrial chest disease is a medico-engineering problem and requires close liaison between the Mines Department, who are responsible for ventilation and dust counts, and the medical officers who are responsible for the periodical pinnacle and chest X-ray examination.

It was then that the Public Health Department allegedly became aware of the seriousness of the problem. I would think that any member of Parliament who read that report would feel that the department had the matter well and truly under control. There were a few incidents of asbestosis but the report referred to ventilation and one assumes something would have been done about it.

The following year there was no report, but in 1961 reference was again made to asbestosis in the department's annual report under the heading "Occupational Health". The report stated -

X-rays, 17 in. x 14 in., were taken of 21 employees in a factory which manufactures asbestos lagging for water pipes. One case of asbestosis was found. Total figures to 31st December, 1961, are -

The report goes on to state that the places of work were the manufacturer of asbestos products, the packing of asbestos fibres in installation and asbestos lagging. A total of three places were visited; 34 employees were involved and X-rays of four of those employees showed evidence of asbestosis.

That is two years later and it was the only reference by the department to asbestosis, notwithstanding that Wittenoom was in full swing at that stage. In 1962 the Public Health Department's annual report again made reference to this subject under "Occupational Hazards". It stated -

A survey of employees was completed and one further case of asbestosis reported. Dust counts were taken in one asbestos manufacturing plant, and were commenced in a plant associated with the manufacture and handling of lagging for water pipes.

In the asbestos manufacturing company from which there had been three cases of asbestosis and one probable case, the dust counts were satisfactory.

A survey was made on two occasions and in no case was the count above 150 particles/cc (Midget Impinger). This was not surprising, as the firm had gone to considerable pains to reduce the dust by various means, most notably by mechanisation, enclosure and exhaust ventilation.

The counts in the second Company were all high and indicated a significant exposure to silica as well as asbestos.

When a survey was made on employees of this firm, two cases of suspected asbestosis were discovered. It is planned to repeat the counts if necessary and advise management on measures of prevention of dust.

Again that report, when presented to Parliament the following year, did not contain anything to cause alarm to members of Parliament, the media or the public of Western Australia. There was nothing to indicate that the Public Health Department of Western Australia viewed this matter seriously. Surely it must have done because in Great Britain in 1931 legislation was introduced to minimise the incidence of asbestosis.

That was not the end of it. Again in 1963 a section appeared in the department's report headed, "Division of Occupational Health" and reference was made to asbestosis. The report stated -

There were six new cases of asbestosis in non-mining industries in the metropolitan area. The dusty conditions which produced these asbestosis cases had been rectified.

A new method of spraying asbestos on ceilings during building construction exposes the workers to heavy concentrations of asbestos dust and adequate respiratory protection is essential.

Would anyone gain the impression from that report that asbestosis was a serious matter in Western Australia when literally hundreds of people were working at Wittenoom and regrettably they were working in conditions that caused asbestosis? They certainly would not. That was the only reference to asbestosis in the 1963 annual report of the department.

The 1964 report of the Public Health Department under the heading "Occupational Hazards" states -

No new cases of silicosis or of asbestosis were presented this year.

The heading in the annual report of 1965 again is headed "Division of Occupational Health". This time there is a subheading "Asbestosis". The report states -

There were five new cases.

Fresh cases of asbestosis continue to arise after relatively brief exposure to asbestosis at both the mine and the mill at Wittenoom. Though dust control has been improved in recent years, more needs to be done. There is a need for more satisfactory dust sampling techniques.

That is the sole reference in the 1965 report to asbestosis at Wittenoom. Who in this House reading that report would ever have gained any impression that the matter was a serious one? The media certainly would not have looked at that report and thought it worth publicising. They would not have done so and therefore the people of Western Australia were left unaware of the situation which obtained at Wittenoom.

The final reference in the annual reports occurs in 1966, because the mine at Wittenoom was closed that year. Under the major heading of "Division of Occupational Health" is a subheading "Australian Blue Asbestos Mine - Wittenoom", under which it is stated -

Mr G. Major, Physicist, of the Commonwealth School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, at the request of this department, made an extensive survey of dust conditions in the mine and mill. He completed the survey in mid-November; results will not be available until next year.

The mine closed on 30th December. At this time, 90 men were known to have developed pneumoconiosis, frequently a mixture of silicosis and asbestosis. It is asbestosis which has made the significant contribution to morbidity and mortality.

Of these 90 men, there were 30 who had had previous exposure to pneumoconiotic dusts. Of the remaining 60, 41 had worked in the mill and 19 were underground miners. There is no doubt that, over the past years of the company's operations, the mill made the greatest contribution to morbidity and mortality. Of the total of 90 men, 12 have died primarily as a result of asbestosis. Almost all the survivors are disabled - some severely. Many of these men are under 40 and there are even a few under 30 years of age.

The salient point I make in connection with all these reports is that even though the Public

Health Department was well aware of the hazards of mining asbestos, it did nothing to alert the public and the workers in the industry to the danger of the industry. That leads me to ask whether the department was remiss. Were its reports in some way suppressed? Was pressure brought to bear on the Public Health Department in order that it would tone down its reports? I simply cannot find any other explanation for it.

I have only a few minutes left to speak and will therefore have to skip over many of the points that I wanted to make. However, there is obviously some liability to be sheeted home somewhere in respect of asbestosis. Were the original owners of the mine aware of what had taken place in South Africa? Were they aware of the legislation which had been introduced 17 years before in Great Britain? Were the management of Micalco and CSR also aware of the legislation? We have heard reports that they were, but were they aware of the dangers which mining asbestosis presented?

Was the Mines Department, or officers of that department who also had responsibility, aware of the situation? What were officers of the Department of Labour doing? If the original owners, the management, or officers of Government departments were aware that asbestos mining presented hazards and if they concealed that information and allowed recruiting officers to go down to the wharves at Fremantle to recruit Italians and other Europeans coming off the boats to work at Wittenoom, they are as culpable as war criminals. There can be absolutely no doubt about that. They would have been guilty of crimes of equal consequence to those committed by war criminals. We prosecute war criminals, whether they committed crimes on a relatively small or large scale. If in Western Australia people in Government departments, people in management or the owners of mines had a knowledge of the hazards involved with the industry and still allowed people to work under those circumstances, we should ascertain who was responsible and even at this late stage do something about it.

**MR TRENORDEN (Avon) [10.07 pm]:** I agree with the remarks made by the member for South Perth, who made his speech with a great deal of feeling.

There is a movement in the State which cannot be ignored. It is greater than that connected with the ID Card and it strikes at the very heart of society. It covers the base building blocks of the pyramid of society. In cameo, it is called law and order. It covers the law, courts, the family, education, human rights, immigration, Aboriginal affairs and many other issues. In 30 minutes I do not have the time to cover all those issues, so I will raise only one in detail, that of car theft.

Before I deal with that issue, I will recognise a couple of my critics who came out last Friday in the *Daily News* in an article entitled "Seven MPs accused of racism". My name is there with several other members of the Western Australian Parliament and the Federal Parliament. Ted Wilkes was quoted as saying of the seven MPs that, "as soon as they see an Aboriginal head that is making progress they want to kick it". I do not know any of the people who have accused me of being a racist, but I can understand their accusing me of being involved in some criticism of Aboriginals in my town who break the law. I have criticised only those people, white and Aboriginal, who have broken the law in my electorate in recent years.

I know one has to have a fairly thick skin to be in politics but I wonder how any of the individuals who accused me of being a racist and of kicking Aboriginal heads could do so without knowing me. I am sure that none of them knows me. I will not go into a Max Trenorden praise campaign tonight, but I could point to a number of times I have directly helped Aboriginals. I will mention one case in particular, that of Mr Paul Parfitt. I am responsible for his being at the Northam High School. I would put that man on a pedestal anywhere. He has changed the whole face of the Northam High School and is doing a fantastic job with all students at the school.

I wish to say a few words about Aboriginal affairs in the State and nationally. I am disturbed about the issue because there is growing resentment in my electorate at the manner in which our nation deals with Aboriginal affairs. There is an urgent need to raise the debate beyond party politics, vested interests and emotional rhetoric. I would like to make an honest attempt to address some of these issues; some may claim I am being racist but one cannot bow to these criticisms if one wishes to make some progress. The goal for all Australians must be to create a nation for all.

I am no expert on Aboriginal culture and I do not claim to be, but I know that Aborigines fall into three groups: full bloods who live in their ageless environments mainly in the north of the State, rural urban dwellers, and city dwellers. The three groups have different needs, and among each group are strong family feuds which split those groups into sub groups. There is not one Aboriginal movement or one Aboriginal dream. The breakdown of Aboriginal culture is the core of the problem; in short, it is a problem of the family. The whole thrust of Government activity in this nation is poorly structured; the emphasis and direction are wrong; it is inefficient and, above all, it is not helping Aborigines. A new direction must be found and it must come mainly from the Aboriginal people. We need a leader from their people to give them direction and insight. They need someone to promote their cause and, because there is no such person in Australia, I will quote a great American, Martin Luther King, who was murdered 20 years ago last April.

Mr Thomas: We have a great Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

Mr TRENORDEN: I agree and I will comment on him in due course. However, many of the Aborigines in my electorate do not like Ernie Bridge. There is a split in the Aboriginal community and he is on the wrong side for some people.

Mr Carr: The Aboriginal community is a very diverse community.

Mr TRENORDEN: I have just said that, and that is why it is a difficult problem and we need a new direction. Imposing on them from above is not working. In his famous speech entitled "I Have a Dream" Martin Luther King said -

America has given the Negro people a bad check;

He later said -

We refuse to believe there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation.

Those words can be directly related to our situation. Our Government is writing cheques that are not opening the great vaults of opportunity; these cheques are bad because they are taking away the soul of the people. The cheques are supplying the destruction of the flame of enterprise by the dead hand of welfare.

A good article appeared in *The Weekend Australian* dealing with the smothering of self reliance. I commend this article to members; it states that we are making too many people dependent on the State. That is a very true statement. The No 13 paper on trends and issues on Aboriginal Criminal Justice suggests that a fundamental prerequisite for changing this situation is the enhancement of the quality of Aboriginal life. It is referring to law and order problems and I am sure all members would have received this issue in the mail. It recognises that a fundamental change must occur before we can start dealing reasonably and equitably with Aboriginal people.

As already stated, enhancement must come to cover many levels of Aboriginal expectations; current solutions of cheques to the value of \$700 million do not cure all. Some issues must be met head on, such as truancy in primary schools. Statistics are not available, but discussions with people involved in primary schools in my electorate over the years - including the time before I became a member of Parliament - indicate that Aboriginal children have extremely high absentee rates. The result is that despite their ability, by the time Aboriginal children reach Year 7, they have missed up to one third of their schooling and, therefore, have no future in education. As a result only a slight trickle of youths gets to Year 12 and very few go beyond that. Aboriginal aides in schools are scarce because there are no funds for them; yet \$700 million is spent. Where does it go?

Another area where cheques are destructive is in payments direct to Aboriginal people: Payments to remain at school, extremely cheap housing, free specialist legal aid, direct assistance in meeting Government charges, special family payments, and many more. These cheques are causing great disquiet in the community, particularly felt by single income families or low income groups. These people are suffering difficult financial times and view Aboriginal families as receiving the "fruits of the vine" at their expense. I realise that my statements will bring howls of protest from those who put out the Press release, but I make them because they are true. Many people are becoming bitter because their nation deliberately divides the people into classes of citizens. The only result of that is tension. A

recent example was a Government employee who approached me because he could not meet his SEC bill; his working friend was an Aborigine who had the same problem, and he presented his bill and had it paid.

A further example of tension is the fact that Aborigines in 1988 must be treated with kid gloves. Teachers are nervous about administering simple punishment because of accusations of racial bias. Policemen are instructed to arrest Aborigines only in extreme cases; the police are asking people not to press charges when militant young Aborigines trespass, claiming land ownership rights. Physical confrontations occur, such as the incident at the Goomalling golf course last week, when women were intimidated to the extent that no complaint was made to the police for fear of reprisals. People no longer walk the streets of some country towns for fear of Aboriginal youths, mainly based on the perception that these youths are beyond the law. The fear of street violence is escalating. In Northam two years ago street fights involved about 30 people. The battle of Byfield Street involved 80 people; the next bout may involve 160 people - who knows? It is a miracle that no-one has been killed but it is only a matter of time before that happens if current feelings continue.

Claims of guilt for past deeds and the need to create "homelands" within our nation are recipes for disaster. Those people who believe that giving land rights in the Kimberley will please Balga or Northam Aborigines are badly informed. Balga Aborigines do not want to live in station conditions; they will want Dalkeith land rights. Martin Luther King said -

This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality.

His statements were made at a different time and in different circumstances, but as a nation we need an invigorating autumn of equality.

King also said -

In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plain of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence.

He later said -

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment I still have a dream.

King had a dream and those members who are familiar with the full text of his speech will know that many of his dreams have come true. He was certainly a great American. It is time we had a dream - a vision for our nation. We must go in one direction together or the benefits awarded to sections of the community will cause internal upheaval and serious future problems. I quote now from John Marshall Harlan who said -

In view of the Constitution, in the eye of the law there is in this country no superior, dominant, ruling class of citizens. There is no cast here. Our Constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law. The humblest is the peer of the most powerful.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Alexander): Order! The level of background conversation on my left is too high.

Mr TRENORDEN: They are strong words, ones that I would like to say could be very much related to our nation. The future for our next generation of Aborigines is very bleak. If aggression is to be the hallmark, then we will all pay the price. Yesterday's crimes and bad decisions are to be learnt from. They are not to be highlighted as signposts, and it is important to point out that Aborigines have no future other than as Australians with full and equal rights whose special needs and requirements need to be identified and addressed.

The actions that have been taken in this country have to be drawn into focus quickly as I can see great anger in the young Aboriginal people in my area. I have coached them at football and basketball and have a warm feeling for many of these children, and particularly for the way in which they apply themselves.

Mr Greig: You respected them and they respected you.

Mr TRENORDEN: Many of them still do. I see that changing. That is what has made me say what I have said tonight. Children I have known for 10 or 15 years are changing before my eyes. There is an aggression there that is most unhealthy. I hope that my fears for the future are never met.

I come to the subject about which I wish to speak principally - car theft. I have been involved with a committee in Wannamal near Gingin for some months. In fact, their efforts were outlined on *State Affair* tonight. There has been a rash of car thefts in that area so a committee called "People against Crime" has been established which is making a genuine attempt to deal with this issue. They are having a public meeting on 7 June at which they intend to try to bring forward solutions and not just bitch at people. In fact, the Commissioner of Police has not received an invitation to the meeting - they have invited the Attorney General because they wish to talk about changes to the legislation rather than complain about the police. I will be saying something about the police later. However, these people do not complain about them at all. I have written a paper on this issue which runs to seven or eight pages and from which I will quote in part. Anyone wishing to look at that document is quite at liberty to have a copy of it.

The problem of car theft is threefold, involving detection, protection, and punishment. Offenders fall into four categories; joyriders, who account for over half the cars stolen, about 60 per cent; professional car thieves, who take about 25 per cent; petty thieves who take the contents from cars; and fraud involving motor vehicles, that is, fraudulently disposing of motor vehicles.

The cost to Western Australia of vehicles not recovered last year was \$4.5 million. The RAC paid out \$6 million in claims related to car theft. I am not sure whether the RAC or the SGIO is the biggest insurer. This adds approximately \$60 to the public's insurance bill. In Western Australia alone 13 500 cars were stolen, an increase of eight per cent over 1986. The average cost to each victim was \$2 000, and by cost I mean before insurance claims, and not everyone has insurance.

A lot has been said about public campaigns in relation to prevention. In fact, campaigns have been run in other parts of the world, particularly in the United Kingdom. One well recorded campaign showed that a well publicised campaign had almost no effect on people securing their cars. In fact, Professor Ron Clark of Pennsylvania University of Philadelphia believes that publicity campaigns have very little effect in getting people to secure their vehicles, so the number one push has to be in the area of manufacturers improving security measures for their cars.

To do that we can either place pressure on ourselves to legislate to make manufacturers meet certain criteria, or do it in a consumer oriented manner - which I favour - under which there is a rating for vehicles so that people buying cars know that certain cars are easy to steal; for instance, 65 per cent of the cars stolen in Western Australia are Holden Commodores. If people have a sales resistance to buying certain cars then perhaps that will make the manufacturer a little keener to do something about producing a more secure vehicle.

Also, people who have purchased a vehicle have a responsibility to look after it and need to secure it. There are many things that people can do in this regard; they can put isolator switches in their cars which are hidden and which cut off the ignition or fuel; they can install sirens or locking devices, and we have talked about such things in this place before. Use of those types of deterrents will not put off professionals, but as professional car thieves take only 25 per cent of the cars stolen and 60 per cent are taken by joyriders, if the incidence of car theft is reduced by 60 per cent the chances of one's car not being stolen will improve rather dramatically.

English studies show that stolen cars can be directly related to the purchase price or repair cost of a vehicle, so as the cost of cars and repairs increase the theft rate is likely to increase. One English report says that over 90 per cent of car thefts involve young males. The study relates that the criminality is akin to motivation, what psychiatrists call "drive signs". Such drive requires discretion in action and many young males use car theft as a medium. The same report says that people choose to commit crime where the benefits outweigh the perceived effort and risk, so we have to make sure that people are detected and charged more

often. The number of people detected for car theft is between four and seven per cent, so the chance of catching them is not great. The question is what we do with them when we catch them.

The main point that must be made that is not made often enough is that crime diminishes the quality of life. Car theft and burglary are making people get in contact much more than ever in the past. A single experience as a victim of burglary or car theft can have an enduring effect on a person's quality of life, more than a drop in a person's financial situation. Being a victim of crime is the greatest violation against the civil liberties of Australians. We must not follow in the footsteps of the United Kingdom and the USA which, when they heard alarm bells, did little about them and waited until it was unsafe to walk the streets, organised crime was undermining the Government, and racial problems had reached boiling point before they did something about them. Both countries now admit that they should have acted many years before.

The two primary considerations are detection and punishment. It costs \$1 500 a week to gaol an individual, and that does not work. First offenders mostly do not offend again, so we need to address education, self respect and respect for people's property and privacy, which is the core of any society and a message we need to ram into our youth. The reoffender is important and people engaged in criminal activity must face a high risk of apprehension. Those who commit a crime should be brought before the court as soon as possible and, if convicted, should face the prospect of punishment.

When one speaks with people in the community one hears suggestions such as use of the birch or the stocks, or the reintroduction of corporal punishment in schools. The schemes go on to include financial compensation by the offender to the victim. Those are all things that are raised in the community. The question is how we should deal with reoffending juveniles. First, there should be a properly established community work order system structured as an entity and not half hearted like Western Australian experiences of the past. It should be funded and structured by itself and have clear objectives. The second alternative, which is floated often, is a new form of deprivation of liberty under which repeating offenders would be put into well structured formal institutions which would run highly disciplined activities.

The aims of this activity would be to instill respect for authority and property, to raise self respect and esteem, and to broaden the offender's goals and ambitions in life. There are problems in establishing this type of activity because we have to ask who should run it. There is a program in New South Wales called the Wildmess Program, which is very successful, but it is run by private individuals. If the scheme were administered by the Department of Corrective Services, it could end up being just another gaol, and if it were administered by the Department for Community Services it could end up as a holiday camp.

We have been told that the Government will bring forward legislation to deal with the problem of joy riding. We will be interested to see the proposed changes to the Act. I believe that juveniles, and others, should work for the dole, and that would take a lot of juveniles off the streets. Truancy is another problem related to juvenile crime. I congratulate the Government for instituting measures to reduce truancy. Many youths are taking to the streets when they should be at school and when their parents believe they are at school.

I get a clear message that the public sees the Department for Community Services as doing an excellent job in looking after disadvantaged people, but a poor job in handling juvenile offenders. There is a strong perception that the department should have only an advisory capacity in relation to the Children's Court.

Alcohol abuse is a major problem. Alcohol is involved in the majority of cases of juvenile offending. Calls have been made to punish publicans or to change the drinking age, but the fact is that alcohol is freely available to the whole community, regardless of the drinking age limit; and juveniles receive their alcohol in the main from their parents, brothers, sisters, uncles or friends. Seventy per cent of all alcohol sold is consumed away from drinking establishments. The Government has been successful with its Quit program and with its anti litter program. We need to educate those people providing alcohol as to the damage being done.

Mr Taylor: This year the Government is spending \$500 000 on the Drink Safe campaign, which is a good start. Alcohol abuse is, however, an issue that all of us have to treat seriously.



Mr TRENORDEN: I could not agree more, but the argument should be logical because I know from watching the children in my town that it is not the publican who is providing the alcohol; it is parents, brothers, sisters and uncles. We have to make those people aware of what they are doing to those children. I am happy to support the Minister in that area.

It has been my experience when discussing law and order that very little criticism has been levelled at the police. The only thing that is often mentioned is the role previously taken by those policemen who used to grab the children by the ear and boot them out of the pub. It is a pity that sort of direct relationship to the community has gone from the Police Force; I guess it has gone forever. There has been little criticism in the community about what people see the police as doing; most people perceive policemen as doing an exceedingly good job. We need to listen to those people who are forming committees around the State. There have already been five or six meetings of those committees. Issues of law and order are paramount. People have a feeling that the problem of maintaining law and order has gone too far. If members in this House have a purpose, it is to listen to the community. The number one priority is to tell those people that they must take much of the responsibility for setting community standards; the community is now saying we have allowed the situation to go too far and that people wish the community standards of law and order to be reined in. It is time we listen to that noise.

[The member's time expired.]

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Clarko.

*House adjourned at 10.35 pm*

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## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TASK FORCE

#### *Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee - Recommendations*

77. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) Which recommendations arising from the Domestic Violence Task Force have been implemented by the Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee?
- (2) In each case, when were those recommendations adopted?
- (3) What recommendations of the task force will not be implemented, and why?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

(1)-(3)

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee which was formed in November 1987 is developing a coordinated response to domestic violence, for both the Government and non-Government sectors. The committee is presently researching the most appropriate method of implementing the recommendations of the Domestic Violence Task Force in the context of this overall program. Several measures have already been implemented in consultation with the appropriate Ministers.

Changes have been introduced to police in-service courses and recruit training to include information on restraining orders. Police routine orders have been revised to clarify police powers and responsibilities in domestic violence situations and to emphasise the criminal nature of domestic violence.

Changes to the law regarding restraining orders are being drafted, a health policy statement is being developed and in-service training courses for Homeswest staff are under way. Research is being undertaken into the establishment of an Intervention Unit in the Police Department and a community education program on domestic violence.

Staffing and resources have been increased in the Crisis Care Unit and funding and staffing increases have been made to women's refuges.

Counselling programs for violent men will be developed and appropriate services and support for women in violent domestic situations are under consideration.

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee is administering the self help group grants which were made available under the 1987-88 family package.

The committee will report to the Government at the end of the two year implementation period.

### ROAD CONSTRUCTION

#### *Kwinana Freeway*

244. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When is the Kwinana Freeway intended to be constructed from South Street to Thomas Street?
- (2) What is the estimated cost of this section of the freeway?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Work is expected to commence early in 1989 and it is hoped that work could be completed by late 1994. However, until final design is completed and construction timetables laid out, the completion date may be subject to change.

- (2) At current prices, the preliminary estimate for construction and land cost is \$30.4 million. This estimate is, of course, subject to any changes which may emerge as detailed design issues are resolved and contracts are awarded.

### LEGAL AID AND ASSISTANCE

#### *Non-residents*

250. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

How much in legal aid during the current year has been extended to and expended upon non-residents of Australia?

Mr GRILL replied:

These statistics are not kept by the Legal Aid Commission. The information could only be obtained by physical search of over 16 000 files and I am not prepared to divert resources for that purpose.

### POLICE ACADEMY

#### *Recruits*

267. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

How many recruits were inducted into the Police Academy during the 1985-86 year?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

Four hundred and seventy three recruits were inducted into the Police Academy during the 1985-86 year.

### METAXAS, MR

#### *Registrar of Cooperative and Financial Institutions*

291. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

When was Mr Metaxas appointed as Registrar of Cooperative and Financial Institutions?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

Mr Metaxas was appointed, and took up duty, on 23 February 1987.

### "DAILY NEWS"

#### *Criminal Investigation*

318. Mr COWAN, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

Who authorised last week's raid of the offices of the *Daily News*?

Mr GRILL replied:

The search of the *Daily News* was carried out by officers of the Western Australian Police Force as part of their investigation into the unlawful public disclosure of a Corporate Affairs Department document. The manner in which their investigations are conducted is entirely a matter for those police officers.

### SEMINARS

#### *Ozone Depletion - Greenhouse Effect*

341. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many people attended the -

(a) Busselton;

(b) Murdoch

seminars to discuss ozone depletion and greenhouse effect?

- (2) Can he advise those Government agencies -
  - (a) participating;
  - (b) attendingtogether with the individual members of personnel involved?
- (3) What was the total cost of the seminars?
- (4) What was the cost of -
  - (a) fees;
  - (b) accommodation expenses;
  - (c) travel coststo participating speakers?
- (5) What is the anticipated cost of the seminars to the -
  - (a) Government;
  - (b) South West Development Authority?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1)
  - (a) Approximately 500;
  - (b) approximately 400.
- (2)
  - (a) South West Development Authority;  
Environmental Protection Authority;  
Department of Conservation and Land Management;  
Western Australian Water Authority;  
State Planning Commission;  
Department of Agriculture;  
Commonwealth Bureau of Meteorology;
  - (b) as per (2)(a), and additionally -  
  
Department of Marine and Harbours;  
Education Department;  
Western Australian Tourism Commission.

- (3)-(5) The estimated budget for both seminars was \$20 000, which does include fees and accommodation. Some costs associated with air fares have been included in the budget estimates. The final cost will not be known until the various accounts have been received.

#### CHILD CARE CENTRES

##### *Building and Construction - Government Policy*

343. Mr BLAICKIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) What is the Government's policy related to the child care building program?
- (2) How many centres -
  - (a) private;
  - (b) Governmenthave been opened in Western Australia in each year since 1984?
- (3) What are the levels of financial assistance provided to parents whose children attend -
  - (a) private;
  - (b) Government centres?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) The Government is seeking to enter into a further three year Commonwealth-State child care agreement.

## (2) (a) Private - for profit

1984	1
1985	5
1986	3
1987	4
1988	4

## (b) Subsidised - by the Commonwealth Government

1984	5
1985	6
1986	17
1987	15
1988	6

## (3) (a) Nil;

(b) the Commonwealth Government subsidises fees according to a sliding scale based on assessed family income.

### RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION

*Suburban Rail Network*

355. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When was the initial announcement made by the Labor Party to electrify the suburban rail network?
- (2) What is the estimated saving per year of the electrification of the suburban rail network?
- (3) What is the current program/timetable for the electrification of the suburban railway network?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Decision in principle - September 1985.  
Decision subject to certain conditions - April 1987.  
Decision to go ahead - February 1988.
- (2) Compared with existing railway, about \$13 million operating cost. Compared with upgrading of existing railway and new diesel cars, about \$3 million.
- (3) Armadale line electrified by late 1989 early 1990. Midland-Fremantle line electrified by mid 1991.

### HOSPITALS

#### *Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital - Facilities*

358. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Respecting a Ministerial statement by the Minister for Tourism on 18 May on health care developments, what is the bed average of the Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital?
- (2) Will the number of operating rooms and support facilities at Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital be increased?
- (3) Where will the patients be accommodated when the increased number of orthopaedic operations are carried out?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) There are 230 available and staffed beds at Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital. During April 1988 the average occupancy of these beds was 90 per cent.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Appropriate arrangements are currently being finalised.

# SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME

## *Statistics*

359. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many infants in Western Australia died in the last 12 months from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome?
- (2) Has the number of infants dying from SIDS altered greatly over the last five years?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Statistics for 1988 are not yet available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics -

	SIDS	Livebirths	Rate
1983	40	23 087	1.73
1984	55	21 625	2.54
1985	39	23 109	1.69
1986	53	24 236	2.19
1987	53	23 271	2.28

Rate - SIDS/1 000 livebirths.

- (2) The number of SIDS has fluctuated over the past five years and is indicated in the table above (1).

# STATE ENGINEERING WORKS

## *North Fremantle Site - Proposals*

383. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government finalised proposals for the redevelopment of the State Engineering Works site at North Fremantle?
- (2) Has the Government set out any planning guidelines for the redevelopment of this site?
- (3) If yes, do these guidelines include the provision of public access around the riverfront areas?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1)-(3)  
No.

# EDUCATION

## *Austudy*

385. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is she aware that the start of the 1989 academic year has, once again, been plagued by delays and confusion in the administration of Austudy?
- (2) Has she made any representation to her Federal counterpart to explain the considerable uncertainty and hardship that such delays and confusion cause?
- (3) If yes to (2), has she received any assurance that this perennial problem will not occur in the future?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1) As the start of the 1989 academic year is still nine months away, I am surprised that there could be problems of the type to which the member refers.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) Not applicable.

## TRUCKS

*Motor Vehicle Registration - Burns, Mr B.J.*

386. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Is he aware of a letter from Mr B.J. Burns of Albany, the operator of a house transporting business, concerning a reduction in the cost of licensing his Volvo tandem drive prime mover truck and trailer which is used in the house transport business?
- (2) If yes, does he share the view of Mr Burns that the use of hub meters on heavy duty trucks may enable a more equitable licensing system, utilising the user pay principle?
- (3) Is he able to assist Mr Burns in his request for a reduced licence fee for his vehicle?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

I refer the member to the answers to question 303 of Wednesday, 25 May 1988 on the same subject.

TRANSPORT, DEPARTMENT OF  
*Under Recovery Tax - Hub Meters*

388. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Transport:

In view of his department's apparent penchant to introduce an under recovery tax in the guise of a permit fee, is he or his department considering the use of hub meters to determine the kilometres travelled by heavy duty long distance trucks?

Mr PEARCE replied:

No.

AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF  
*Pesticides - Beef Industry*

389. Mr BLAICKIE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has he commissioned a report to examine the Department of Agriculture's knowledge of problems related to pesticides in the beef industry and the responsibilities it has accepted to communicate these problems to the growers?
- (2) If yes, what have been the results of that investigation?
- (3) If no, will such an investigation be instigated?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1)-(3)

I have not commissioned a report on the Department of Agriculture's knowledge of pesticide problems in the beef industry. The department has clearly demonstrated its competence in this area since the problem was highlighted in mid 1987. The department will announce its policy for the long term management of organochlorine pesticide residues in the near future.

## EDUCATION

*Parent Learning and Educational Development Group - Government Grants*

390. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) Can the Parent Learning and Educational Development Group expect to continue to receive Government funding?
- (2) If yes, at what level?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Parent Learning and Educational Development Group is currently receiving \$78 458 per annum.

**NURSING EDUCATION**  
*Mothercraft Nurses*

391. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Services:  
Adverting to question 2420 of 1987, has it now been determined who will run the refresher course for mothercraft nurses?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

This matter is still under consideration.

**FOXES**  
*Breeding - Fur Trade*

392. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Agriculture:
- (1) Has an application been lodged with his department for a permit to establish a commercial fox breeding business to produce for the fur trade?
  - (2) If so, what is the department's attitude to the proposal?
  - (3) If approved, what conditions are likely to apply?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Yes. An application was lodged but has now been withdrawn.
- (2)-(3) More information was sought from the applicants before conditions could be set and a final decision made.

**HOSPITALS**  
*Armada-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital - Paediatric Facilities*

393. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:
- (1) Is he prepared to upgrade the inpatient paediatric facilities at the Armada-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital?
  - (2) If so, how?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) The Health Department is currently reviewing the need for paediatric inpatient facilities within the context of a total review of the services provided from Armada-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital. The review will undoubtedly result in an upgrading of the paediatric facilities.
- (2) Not applicable.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
*Bills*

395. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:
- Will the Minister please list the titles or description of Bills which he is going to introduce during the current sitting of Parliament, other than those mentioned in the Governor's Speech when opening Parliament, viz. -
- (a) amendments to Criminal Code;
  - (b) amendments to Justices Act;
  - (c) Bail Act amendments;
  - (d) Jurors Act amendments; and
  - (e) Crime (Confiscation of Profits) Bill?

Mr GRILL replied:

A final decision on the introduction of other legislation has not been made at this stage.



TENNIS  
*State Tennis Centre*

396. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

Further to his reply to question 5 of 1988, and in view of the fact that there is no statutory provision to the contrary, would the Minister undertake that the residents in the neighbouring areas will be notified about the planned tennis centre well before the decision is taken, so that these residents - confident that a Minister like the Minister for Sport and Recreation would never act against the majority wish of the involved community - can express their approval or opposition to the plan?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

No specific proposal for a tennis centre has been received by the Government, nor has the Government initiated any planning for such a centre. Should this situation change, it would be expected that public discussion would be initiated by releasing concept plans to the media.

PESTICIDES  
*Testing Program*

397. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it fact that the Government purchased new equipment and employed new permanent and/or temporary staff to undertake the current pesticide testing program?
- (2) If yes,
  - (a) what was the total cost of the new equipment purchased;
  - (b) what has been the total cost of the current pesticide testing program, including salary costs, to date; and
  - (c) what is the anticipated annual recurrent cost of the program?
- (3) Is it fact that the pesticide testing program could be carried out by private laboratories?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) If yes to (3), why did the Government purchase new equipment and employ extra staff to undertake the pesticide testing program rather than approach private laboratories to tender for this work?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Yes. Only temporary staff have been employed.
- (2)
  - (a) \$201 624.86;
  - (b) \$779 050.79, including \$318 692 for the buy back of chemicals;
  - (c) \$490 000 for 1988-89  
\$400 000 for 1989-90  
\$ 92 000 for 1990-91.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) In the second half of 1987 a greatly increased pesticide testing program was required urgently. It was considered that the most rapid and cost effective response was to expand the existing laboratory facilities of the Department of Agriculture and the Government Chemistry Centre. The total cost of analysis at private laboratories is considerably higher than at Government laboratories. The use of private laboratories would incur an additional cost of at least \$450 000 per year.

**CHEMISTRY CENTRE**  
*Food Analysis*

398. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Will he please list the type of food and agricultural products that are analysed at the Chemistry Centre of Western Australia?
- (2) What is the cost of analysing each of the products listed in question (1)?
- (3) Which of these foods or agricultural products could be analysed by private laboratories?
- (4) Will the Government consider contracting out part of this work?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) The Chemistry Centre is involved in the analysis of a very wide range of foods and agricultural products. Among the most common are: Fish, oysters, coconut, tripe, sausages, honey, peanuts, fruit, vegetables, dairy produce, wool, lupinseed, other grain and foodstuffs.
- (2) A wide range of different analyses are carried out on the above items. The cost depends on the particular analysis required and the numbers of samples analysed. In many cases, batch analysis can be carried out at a much lower cost per sample than if single samples are analysed. The cost is determined on a time basis and is based on the chemist's salary plus 150 per cent for overheads, full cost recovery being obtained.
- (3) Some analyses, such as mercury in fish, meat content of meat products, formaldehyde in tripe, sulphur dioxide and methyl bromide in coconut and some pesticides in vegetables could be analysed by a private laboratory.
- (4) In order to maintain an effective service at times of peak demand, some Government departments are contracting out some routine pesticide work traditionally handled by the Chemistry Centre. The Chemistry Centre will investigate the feasibility and the implications of contracting out some routine work.

**POLICE DOG SQUAD**

400. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Has the Police Department given consideration to forming a dog unit with the Western Australian Police Force?
- (2) Is it considered that such a unit may be of assistance in the detection of drugs and in other police duties?
- (3) Is he aware of the success or otherwise of dog units which operate in other Australian States, and if so, will he comment on the success of these dog units?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. However, it should be noted that at present the Drug Squad, by mutual agreement, obtains the services of the drug sniffer dogs trained and handled by officers of the Australian Customs Service.
- (3) Initial inquiries indicate that they are operationally successful in their assigned areas.

**FISHING**  
*Diesel Fuel - Price Increases*

401. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Is he aware of reports that the Australian fishing industry may soon be forced by the Federal Government to pay high diesel fuel prices by the removal of excise rebates on diesel fuel and further increase the excise on diesel and petrol fuels?

- (2) Is he further aware that operators within the fishing industry have stated that fuel costs are by far the greatest component of the operating expenses of a fishing vessel and removal of the current rebate on diesel fuel could mean an increase of up to \$80 000 to the costs of operating an average size northern prawn fishery trawler for the period of the fishing season?
- (3) As the fishing industry in Western Australia contributes around \$160 000 000 in export income, what action has he taken to make representations to the Federal Government Ministers to ensure that the fishing industry in Western Australia is not disadvantaged by such fuel increases?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1)-(3)

Yes, I was aware of the fishing industry's concerns at the prospect of the removal of excise rebates on diesel fuel used by fishing boats. The May economic statement released by the Federal Treasurer did not remove the diesel fuel excise concessions as feared by the industry and reported in the Press. I am not aware of any actions being proposed by the Federal Government to alter the status quo.

#### STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

##### *Substation - Marvel Loch*

403. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

- (1) Were tenders called for the earthworks associated with the site preparation of the SEC substation at Marvel Loch?
- (2) If yes, in what newspaper were advertisements placed, and when?
- (3) What were the specifications of the project as outlined in the advertisement?
- (4) How many tenders were received?
- (5) Is he aware that the contract was awarded to Kalgoorlie Contractors, a subsidiary company of Industrial Investments, which then subcontracted the work out to local companies?
- (6) Is he also aware that Kalgoorlie Contractors appear to be either bankrupt or in receivership and that the local contractors have not been paid?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Due to short lead time, quotations were sought from four firms.
- (3) A specification was sent to the four firms.
- (4) Four.
- (5) Yes. Work subcontracted was a small part of the total cost. Fencing and soil sampling were the only components subcontracted.
- (6) Yes.

#### PETROLEUM EXPLORATION

##### *Expenditure - Drilling Rules*

404. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) When will the Western Australian Department of Mines be relaxing the strict expenditure and drilling rules under which oil explorers operate in this State?
- (2) What is the anticipated increase in exploration activity if these new guidelines are introduced?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) The present regime will not be changed, but it is proposed to provide new initiatives to encourage exploration such as "drilling reservations", a scheme which has operated successfully in Canada.

- (2) It is expected several companies expressing interest in commencing exploration will be encouraged by this initiative.

**PERTH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**  
*Horrie Miller Drive - Improvements*

405. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Tourism:

What action has been taken to improve the entrance to the international airport along Horrie Miller Drive?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

Major development and beautification programs for Perth International Airport and the Horrie Miller Drive approach are to be announced by the Federal Airports Corporation next month. Close liaison between the State Government and the Federal Airports Corporation is being maintained on these proposals, which are a Federal Government responsibility.

**IRON ORE MINING**  
*Koolyanobbing*

408. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Has he received any proposals for the reopening of the Koolyanobbing iron ore mine?
- (2) Are these proposals related to the reopening of BHP's Kwinana blast furnace?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) No proposals have been received.
- (2) Not applicable.

**WA EXIM CORPORATION**  
*WA Investment Advisory Service - Business Immigrants*

414. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

- (1) Has the Western Australia Investment Advisory Service, a subsidiary of Exim, been successful in attracting a greater proportion of business migrants to Western Australia than has previously been the case?
- (2) Are quarterly figures available as to how many of these business immigrants intended to settle in Western Australia as against other states?
- (3) Are these figures available for the past two years?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1)-(3) Yes.

**MINES, DEPARTMENT OF**  
*Cue*

415. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Mines:

Since the closure of the Department of Mines office in Cue, has the Government received any complaints from prospectors or mining companies operating in the Murchison region concerning -

- (a) the closure of the Cue office; and
- (b) the inconvenience of travelling to Mt Magnet and Meekatharra to transact their business?

Mr CARR replied:

No written complaints have been received by the Department of Mines. Several prospectors and one company representative have complained verbally to the Mining Registrars at Mt Magnet and Meekatharra.

## TRADE AGREEMENTS

*Exim-Mitsui*

416. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

In 1986 the then Premier announced an agreement between Exim Corporation and Mitsui to join forces to help Western Australian manufacturers to break into overseas markets.

- (1) When was this agreement formalised?
- (2) How many companies have been involved in exporting their products through this arrangement?
- (3) Is this arrangement still in operation?
- (4) If not, when did it cease?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1)-(4)

The feasibility of an arrangement between the Western Australian Exim Corporation and Mitsui was evaluated over a 12 month period ending in December 1987. It was then agreed by both corporations that the proposed agreement would not proceed. One factor in this decision was the orientation of Mitsui's Western Australian office towards primary products, rather than manufactured products. Nevertheless, it was agreed that investigating the feasibility of a trading agreement between the two bodies was a worthwhile exercise.

It is worth mentioning again that Exim's efforts to promote exports from Western Australia and to encourage investment into the State are not helped by public criticism and ill informed comments, which can only damage the credibility of the corporation and its officers in the eyes of foreign Governments, companies and individuals.

## POLICE STATIONS

*Yanchep-Two Rocks*

418. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) What progress has been made on the provision of a police station at Yanchep-Two Rocks?
- (2) When can it be reasonably expected that a police station in Yanchep-Two Rocks will be operative?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Acquisition of a 1.5 hectare site at the corner of Yanchep Beach Road and Welwyn Avenue, Yanchep for an integrated police station-traffic licensing complex is being finalised on my behalf by the Building Management Authority with funds allocated from the 1987-88 General Loan Fund budget.
- (2) On completion of the building program.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

*Recognition - Australian Constitution*

420. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is he aware that the Constitutional Commission's Distribution of Powers Advisory Committee opposed "recognition" of local government in the Australian Constitution?
- (2) Is he able to inform the House of the grounds of that opposition?

Mr CARR replied:

(1)-(2)

Yes. The Constitutional Commission received two reports from its advisory committees on the recognition of local government in the Australian Constitution. Its Distribution of Powers Advisory Committee opposed recognition. The commission's Trade and National Economic Management

Advisory Committee supported the recognition of local government. The commission's own final report recommended constitutional recognition. Further information can be found in the reports of the two advisory committees, and in the commission's final report.

# TELEPHONE SYSTEMS

*Broome*

421. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for The North West:

- (1) Is he aware of the standard of the telephone service in Broome?
- (2) If yes, what action has he taken to try and ensure that the difficulties being experienced by local businesses as a result of that telephone service are removed?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Telecom has advised that -
  - (a) A new AXE computerised switching exchange is due to come into service on 9 July. This will complement the existing ARK exchange. The building to house the new exchange has been completed and work is currently proceeding on the installation of the technical equipment.
  - (b) The existing switching exchange was upgraded eight months ago to increase its efficiency.
  - (c) In May 1988, technical experts checked the existing switching exchange to ensure that there were no technical faults and that the exchange was functioning properly.

# NATIONAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

*Organochlorine Products - Prohibition*

422. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the Government accepted the National Health and Medical Research Council's - NHMRC - recommendation of November 1987 to prohibit small pack size organochlorine products by pesticide registration?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If yes to (1) -
  - (a) what steps have been taken to implement the recommendation; and
  - (b) when is it anticipated that small pack size organochlorine products will cease to be available to the general consumer?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) The Government fully accepts the recommendation of the NHMRC in November 1987 regarding aldrin, dieldrin, chlordane and heptachlor. The NHMRC does not recommend prohibition of small packs but recommends prohibition of certain uses. These uses were already prohibited in Western Australia.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3)
  - (a) To safeguard against the possibility of misuse, the last remaining product of cyclodiene insecticide available to the ordinary consumer - a 25 per cent 500ml pack of chlordane - will not be reregistered as a pesticide after 30 June;
  - (b) the manufacturer of this product and the retailers have been advised to run down stocks. It is anticipated that virtually all supplies will be used up within three months.

There is no evidence of misuse or misadventure with this product.

## PASTORAL INDUSTRY BILL

*Introduction*

423. Mr LEWIS, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Will she be introducing within the third session of Parliament a Bill to do with pastoral industry management of certain lands?
- (2) If yes, what is the expected date of its introduction?

Mrs HENDERSON replied:

(1)-(2)

There are a number of issues requiring consideration in regard to the pastoral industry. I will be visiting the Kimberley region soon and will be viewing the pastoral industry at first hand to gain an appreciation of these issues. It is my intention to give full consideration to all of these issues. Accordingly I am unable to say when a Bill will be introduced.

## PRIMARY EDUCATION

*Rostrata Primary School - Building and Construction*

424. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

Referring to question 34 of 18 May, when will the additional six permanent teaching areas and extension to ancillary facilities be constructed at the Rostrata Primary School?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

It is proposed to construct the six classroom addition during 1989, subject to the availability of funds.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

## TEACHERS CREDIT SOCIETY

*Australian Labor Party - Donation Inquiries*

57. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Premier made further inquiries in relation to a \$5 000 donation made to the Australian Labor Party from the Teachers Credit Society?
- (2) If yes, what is the result of those inquiries?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(2)

No.

## TEACHERS CREDIT SOCIETY

*Australian Labor Party - Donation Inquiries*

58. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it correct that the \$5 000 donation to the ALP from the Teachers Credit Society was given to Mr Kevin Edwards with a note of appreciation?
- (2) Will the Premier make further inquiries in relation to this donation, particularly in view of the fact that, as a recent former Treasurer of the ALP, he would be aware of the reporting obligations related to the receiving of donations just prior to a Federal election?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(2)

I have made the position perfectly clear in the House and publicly. If the Opposition wants to go on a fishing expedition about something that it regards as inappropriate, no doubt it will do so; however it will be seen for what it is. The basic issue comes down to the question of what happened

in respect of the Teachers Credit Society that was wrong or could have been wrong in terms of the way the Government acted. The Government acted on the advice of the Registrar of Building Societies to ensure that ordinary Western Australians did not lose their deposits with the Teachers Credit Society. We have heard nothing but carping, complaining and criticism by the Opposition.

Mr Lewis: Twelve months too late.

Mr PETER DOWDING: What does the member suggest we should have done? Members opposite should have heard the Governor of the Reserve Bank say recently how difficult it is and what a fine line it is when Governments are responsible for administering and influencing the financial activities of the private sector. On the one hand, if Governments step in too early, they can justifiably be accused of interfering with proper commercial activity. On the other hand, if intervention is left too late, the Governments will be blamed for things going bad.

The Registrar of Building Societies is currently conducting an inquiry into the reasons why the management, the staff and the board of the society allowed certain things to occur and why those things occurred. The inquiry, in a sense, is being conducted by the Government because the Government wants to know certain things. The inquiry is being conducted publicly and at the end of the day, if responsibility is sheeted home, there will be litigation. That litigation will be pursued.

Mr Lightfoot: Will you pursue the \$5 000 donation?

Mr PETER DOWDING: What is the member saying? Is he saying that there is something commercially wrong with our doing that, that we are failing in our duty to the public by ensuring that there is a full and fair inquiry into the matters?

Mr Hassell: A donation was paid for by the taxpayers of this State. That's exactly what it amounts to and you know it.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Is the member suggesting that somebody in the building society acted improperly?

Mr Court: You acted improperly by taking the donation.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Government did not take anything.

But let us come back to the comments of the shadow Leader of the Opposition. Is he saying that someone in the Teachers Credit Society may have made - not did make - a payment out of his funds or the society's funds, or some other thing, which was wrongly and improperly made?

Mr Hassell: I am saying that a bankrupt society made a donation to the Labor Party in exchange for favours by the Government.

Mr PETER DOWDING: That is about as absurd a proposition as I have heard.

Mr Hassell: You now have it very clearly.

Mr PETER DOWDING: What was the favour?

Mr Hassell: All kinds of support that was given to all kinds of people. You know very well.

Mr PETER DOWDING: When the member for Cottesloe lives with such an internal conspiracy concept, when he erects that castle of cards, he misses something - that is, any foundation. Is he saying that the Government, in return for a \$5 000 donation to the Labor Party, paid \$25 million? Is he suggesting that for \$5 000 we propped up the hundreds of individuals who had deposited their life savings with the Teachers Credit Society? Is that what he is suggesting?

Mr Hassell: I will tell you.



Mr PETER DOWDING: The answer is that that is absurd.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE  
*Coastal Surveillance*

59. Dr ALEXANDER, to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Premier aware of reports that patrols by the RAAF of Australia's fishing zones, particularly off this State, have been halted?
- (2) Can he say what action he has taken in response to those reports?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(2)

While shaving this morning and thinking about the way the world would progress during the course of the day, I was positively alarmed when I heard the Leader of the Opposition say that terrible things were going to take place on the north west coast. I got the impression that drug smugglers and people with awful, exotic diseases were about to invade the north. The Leader of the Opposition caused alarm in my mind, so I made some immediate inquiries to ascertain whether he was giving the public a fair comment on a matter of public importance using facts as the basis for his comments, or whether he was just sowing despondency and alarm because that is all he can think of doing nowadays.

I found to my horror that the latter surmise was correct. The Leader of the Opposition had made a statement that would cause alarm to the average person in Western Australia without any foundation in fact. I rang the Minister for Defence immediately and asked him what was the story. The story is that the coastal surveillance that was instituted by the Labor Federal Government at the instigation and calling of the Labor Party State Government will continue unabated. The occasional sweep over the ocean by an Orion aircraft, often as infrequently as once a week, has been discontinued while the Government reviews whether it is effective. I understand the aircraft have been on patrol for hour after hour without seeing anything and all of the activity and all of the success of the coastal surveillance comes from the contract that Skywest has.

It does a very good job and has numerous successes in coastal surveillance. So I am able to reassure the people of Western Australia that coastal surveillance will continue and that the Minister for Defence has undertaken to keep me informed when this review is concluded about the effectiveness of the Orion sweeps and whether it is regarded as a useful expenditure of taxpayers' money.

PEARCE, MR

*Moore, Hon N.F. - Sacking Call*

60. Mr P.J. SMITH, to the Premier:

Is the Premier aware of the call by the Opposition spokesman on education, Hon Norman Moore, for the sacking of the former Minister for Education?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

I did hear that. My good friend, the Minister for Transport, is on urgent Government business in the Eastern States. I am sure he will be back at his most effective best tomorrow.

Mr Hassell: Which motion do you want to lose at the national conference? Is he lobbying for you?

Mr PETER DOWDING: Which one is that?

Mr Hassell: I am asking which one you want to lose?

Mr PETER DOWDING: I do not want to lose any. I am happy that we on this side of the House are winners and that in February next year are going to ram this right home to members opposite, because we will win that one, too.

I heard this strange suggestion and went to have a look in my old stamping ground, the Legislative Council, at what was going on with a call like this coming from my old sparring mate, Hon Norman Moore. When I got there, what did I see? To my surprise, Hon Norman Moore was not in his usual place next to the Leader of the Opposition in the upper House. He had moved, and in his place was a very smug looking Phillip Pandal. That was extraordinary.

I know Hon Phillip Pandal is a strong supporter of the current Leader of the Opposition and that Hon Norman Moore is a strong supporter of the former Leader of the Opposition. It seems that while Norman was calling for the removal of the Minister there was a bit of a palace coup and he was moved sideways. That really does say something for what is going on inside the Liberal Party.

**EDWARDS, MR KEVIN**  
*Newspaper Articles - Photograph*

61. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Premier aware of the publication of this photograph in *The Australian* of 24 May and the *Sunday Times* of 29 May?
- (2) Can he confirm that the person hiding behind the briefcase - in the Premier's words "a senior public servant" - is Mr Kevin Edwards, a senior public servant and the Government's most senior political and economic adviser, and the Deputy Chairman of the SGIC?
- (3) Was Mr Edwards acting on instructions from the Premier to avoid any publicity so as to conceal his involvement in the SGIC purchase affair?
- (4) Do the Premier and members opposite believe that his behaviour is befitting of a senior public servant?
- (5) If not, what action has been taken and does he intend to discipline Mr Edwards for his most unprofessional conduct which has further damaged Western Australia's already tarnished financial reputation in both eastern Australia and Western Australia?

The SPEAKER: Before asking the Premier to answer that question, and in view of the well known fact that *Hansard* cannot see but can only hear, I would be most appreciative if either the Leader of the Opposition or the Premier will tell me precisely what that photograph is of.

Mr PETER DOWDING: I will do that. I went to school with the shadow Leader of the Opposition and a bloke called Mallabone. I think that whoever owns this briefcase should go and see our old school buddy and buy a new briefcase. This is a photograph which purports to show Mr Kevin Edwards shielding his face with a briefcase after leaving the NCSC yesterday. It has obviously come as a great surprise to the Leader of the Opposition, but it appeared in the paper.

The implication that Mr Edwards' appearance before the NCSC was a matter of some sort of secrecy is nonsense.

Mr MacKinnon: Why did he hide his face? Why did he behave like a criminal?

Mr PETER DOWDING: There has been a public announcement, that is how absurd the Leader of the Opposition is; he lives in a state of constant conspiracy. The fact that he gave evidence has appeared in the paper.

Mr MacKinnon: Has the Premier seen a senior public servant in any other State of Australia hiding behind a briefcase?

Mr PETER DOWDING: Just a moment! The Leader of the Opposition's question is whether it was to get secrecy about his appearance before the NCSC and, if so, why did he do that? I do not know why he did that, if he did it.

Mr MacKinnon: Is it befitting a senior public servant?

Mr PETER DOWDING: I do not know why he did that. However, it has been a matter of public record that Mr Edwards would speak at the private inquiry of the NCSC, so the question of Mr Edwards -

Mr Hassell: And well he might speak with them.

Mr PETER DOWDING: He was asked -

Mr Hassell: As he left he hid his head.

Mr PETER DOWDING: One sees where the member gets to. There is absolutely no justification for the Leader of the Opposition suggesting that Mr Edwards was trying to be secretive about the fact that he had been before the NCSC. It comes down to this: Mr Edwards is, on any view of the matter, an extremely hard working, loyal, and I think very honourable person.

Mr MacKinnon: Is that why he hid behind the briefcase - because he is hard working and loyal?

Mr PETER DOWDING: If and when the day comes -

Mr MacKinnon: Because he is guilty.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Leader of the Opposition says things like that, a man who is meant to be a leader. It is outrageous to say in a forum like this that it is "because he is guilty". That is absolutely unconscionable.

Mr MacKinnon: Why should he hide?

Mr PETER DOWDING: It is absolutely unconscionable that the Leader of the Opposition, as the leader of a responsible political party, should say that sort of thing in this Chamber.

Mr MacKinnon: No public servant under my Government will hide his face.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PETER DOWDING: If and when the Leader of the Opposition ever gets into Government, and if and when he is ever able to stop the people around him trying to shaft him all the time and saying the things that they do about him and performing in the way that the member for Cottesloe does, he will need people working with him on whom he can rely and who do their best for the State.

I think people would be affronted by the constant allegation that somehow or other these people are, to use the words of the Leader of the Opposition, "guilty", or to use the sort of insinuation that somehow or other they are doing something dishonourable.

Mr Hassell: Kevin Edwards is another Len Brush, make no mistake about that.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PETER DOWDING: What is wrong with the Opposition at the moment is what will in the end drive people away from it and not to it. What the member for Cottesloe does is hate so deeply that he cannot address the real issues, and what the Leader of the Opposition does is act so weakly that he cannot control the people around him.

### HOME OWNERSHIP

#### *First Home Owners' Scheme - Reduction*

62.

Mrs WATKINS, to the Minister for Housing:

Can the Minister advise what effect the announcement by the Federal Treasurer of a reduction in the first home owners' scheme will have on consumers?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

The Government is concerned about what impact the reduction in the First Home Owners' Scheme may have on those people in receipt of low incomes, who would be at the highest risk of now being unable to afford home ownership because of the reduction. But members here would know that through Homeswest we operate a number of very flexible schemes which have enabled low income families to achieve their home ownership aspirations, such as the flexi-deposit scheme, the shared-equity scheme, the first mortgage scheme and senior citizens' schemes.

However, from the short time we have had to study what the reduction will mean to these recipients, it seems that only a few people will be affected to the full extent and the remainder will be affected only on a downward sliding scale depending on their income. I will give members an example. A family with two or more children with an income halfway between the upper and lower limits - say of around \$30 000 - will lose only \$250 off the lump sum for which they would formerly have been eligible, and \$250 over five years off the monthly subsidy payments.

The State Government will be closely monitoring the impact of the reduction as it affects those people in that bracket, and through Homeswest we will ensure those applicants who would have been eligible prior to this reduction will still be able to buy their own homes. I think it is much too early to speculate on the overall impact on the industry as a whole but, given that the industry is in a very healthy state and that the State Government is absolutely committed to ensuring that there is little or no impact on those at the margin, I would consider it highly unlikely that there will be any downward effect on jobs or the economy of the housing industry generally.

#### LEE REPORT *Recommendations*

63. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has the Government accepted the recommendations of the Lee inquiry?
- (2) If so, when will they be implemented?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

(1)-(2)

A number of measures were contained in the Lee report which we are currently working on with a view to their implementation. Ongoing discussions are taking place on other aspects of that report and we will continue those discussions with a view to reaching some basis of agreement on those other aspects.

Mr Blaikie: Could the Minister speak a bit louder? The Hansard reporter might not be able to hear him.

Mr BRIDGE: The Hansard reporter would not have any difficulty hearing me. My voice has been tested for recording purposes, and there is a little graph that tests one's ability to project one's voice. I understand from the little meter used that I reached quite a satisfactory level.

Anyway, that is the position and I hope to be able to make a decision fairly soon on those matters that are being considered.

#### EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING, DEPARTMENT OF *Skills Development*

64. Dr GALLOP, to the Minister for Employment and Training:

Does the Government support a bipartisan approach to promoting awareness within industry and the community generally about the importance of skills development to the future of the Western Australian economy and community?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

First, we are very keen to support a bipartisan approach to promoting skills development in this State. As a Government we have recognised that unless a major effort is made to lift the quality and quantity of skills development in Western Australia, we will constrain our great potential for high economic growth and hence improved living standards during the 1990s and into the twenty-first century. This is why skills development has been given a prominent place in the economic blueprint recently released by the Premier.

When this Government came to office we inherited a rigid, and indeed moribund, industrial training system. TAFE was buried in a mammoth education bureaucracy. Training carried an extremely low profile within the now defunct Department of Labour and Industry; industry had little interest in the notion of investing in training. Unions were opposed to even the mention of words like multi-skilling and cross-skilling. The community generally was almost completely unaware of the importance of skills development to economic growth. Numerous young people were leaving school at an age too early to have the maturity and skills necessary for employment.

The fact is that we have intervened to change this downhill scenario and in so doing we have sought to involve all groups in the process, including members opposite. Members of this House would be aware that the Premier, my predecessor in the employment and training area, was the first to provide members of the Opposition with briefings about issues of interest in the area of employment and training. It is a policy which I have continued, in giving appropriate members opposite a briefing or briefings from my departmental head on issues relating to employment and training. In addition, the Premier, the former Minister for Employment and Training, organised a tripartite overseas mission on productivity and training in 1987. Some members opposite attended that mission and, I understand, made a significant contribution to the mission's report. I was therefore extremely disappointed to discover that skills development failed to get a mention in the Opposition's program of policy initiatives announced by the Leader of the Opposition recently for the next State election.

Mr Peter Dowding: Weren't they interested in it?

Mr GORDON HILL: There was no reference at all to skills development and training.

Mr Peter Dowding: And we tried so hard to educate them about it.

Mr GORDON HILL: Apart from an obscure reference to the relevance of secondary school education to the work force, the major thrust of the policy statement focused on the usual rhetoric that the Opposition comes up with from time to time - secret ballots and the way in which it intended to deal with the trade union movement. It seems the Opposition has learnt nothing from the State Government's policies, the State Government's thrust on skills development, and its desire to ensure that there is a cooperative approach to dealing with these issues.

I reiterate that we are committed to the idea of enabling the Opposition to make a real contribution to skills development in this State. I urge members opposite to support the innovative and practical skills development initiatives of the Dowding Labor Government.

#### ROTHWELLS

##### *Government Agencies - Investment*

65. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) Since the time of the Government's commitment to Rothwells last year, have any Government funds been invested in Rothwells by any

Government agency such as the State Government Insurance Commission, the Western Australian Development Corporation, the R & I Bank, or the State Superannuation Board?

(2) If the answer is yes, by whom, how much, and when was it invested?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(2)

I guess the Leader of the Opposition knows what the answer will be and I guess he wants that answer for some sort of political purpose. He knows that it is perfectly inappropriate to start talking about individual investment decisions of Government agencies.

Mr MacKinnon: What is the answer?

Mr PETER DOWDING: That is such a cheap trick.

Mr MacKinnon: Why not answer the question?

Mr PETER DOWDING: Because immediately one answers a question about this investment there is a question about that investment, and then there is a question about another investment.

Mr MacKinnon: What have you to hide about your investment program?

Mr PETER DOWDING: At the end of the day -

Mr MacKinnon: In other words, you are not going to answer.

Mr PETER DOWDING: At the end of the day there are people charged with -

Mr MacKinnon: The answer is no answer.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Leader of the Opposition asked the question and I am going to give him an answer whether he likes it or not. He will regrettably have to cop the answer. The answer is this: The Leader of the Opposition knows perfectly well that agencies which are entrusted with investment decisions must make commercial decisions.

Mr Hassell: And are answerable to the Parliament.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PETER DOWDING: Members opposite know perfectly well how that answerability to the Parliament occurs. They know at the end of the day when the annual report comes in.

Mr Hassell: That is parliamentary accountability. Answer the question.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order! I am not going to tolerate that. The member for Cottesloe cannot deliberately choose to ignore me when I call order. I am not going to tolerate it any more. All members of this House know full well that I have been very tolerant in this session of Parliament to date. The member for Cottesloe, with that sort of action, and other members who choose to ignore me, are wearing that tolerance very thin. I do not want to take any more serious action than I have to date, but if members choose to ignore me and continuously do so, I will.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Members opposite know perfectly well that these agencies are making commercial investment decisions and that these commercial decisions must operate within a commercial environment where they report to Parliament; and they do report to Parliament, and they will continue to report to Parliament.

The Opposition is being driven by a lust for power and the pique that the Opposition has that the people of Western Australia have twice rejected members opposite as people who should be sitting on this side. The Opposition's lust for power has coloured its judgment. The truth is that the Opposition has entered the mode where it would destroy any commercial

operation; it would destroy any credibility of any Government agency, and destroy the credibility of the WADC. The truth is the Opposition has its riding instructions from a former Premier who has told the Opposition to get out and sling as much dirt and make the situation as uncomfortable as possible for Government agencies and anyone connected with Government. That is the agenda and that is what drives the member for Cottesloe to actually ring the NCSC and encourage it to get into the commercial dealings of the SGIC. That is what drives people like the Leader of the Opposition to continue to besmirch the name of Government agencies and the Government civil service. In the end result the Opposition hopes that people will be so frightened by Opposition attacks they will go to water. This Government will protect the right of those agencies to operate fearlessly in the interests of the Western Australian community as a whole and not in respect of the nasty little sectional interests that the Opposition apparently represents.

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