

# Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 20 October 1988

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett) took the Chair at 10.45 am, and read prayers.

## PETITION - EDUCATION

### *Ardross Primary School - Building Improvements*

MR LEWIS (East Melville) [10.48 am]: I wish to present a petition from certain persons throughout the electorate of East Melville which is couched in the following terms -

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

We, The undersigned request that an urgent review be made of the state and suitability of the buildings at Ardross Primary School. Since 1981 the school has repeatedly been told that it was under consideration for a building upgrade but nothing has eventuated.

Even an offer of \$10 000 to subsidize some building improvements has failed to receive a definite reply. We urgently request that our children be provided with conditions in their school which equate with others around the State.

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 192 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 88.]

## PETITION - AUSTRALIA DAY

### *26 January - Observance*

MR TOM JONES (Collie) [10.52 am]: I have a petition couched in the following terms -

To The Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled.

The Petition of the undersigned citizens in the State of Western Australia respectfully sheweth:-

1. That the 26th January is the date chosen for our national day (Australia Day) and should be a day of observance and celebration for all Australians.
2. That it is quite inappropriate for the Australia Day Public Holiday to be held on any day other than the 26th January.

Your Petitioners, therefore, Humbly Pray that the Parliament of Western Australia will amend the Public and Bank Holidays Act to make provision for Australia Day Public Holiday to be observed on the Twenty-Sixth Day of January each year.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever Pray.

The petition bears 38 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 89.]

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND EXPENDITURE REVIEW COMMITTEE

### *Report - Government Motor Vehicles*

On motion by Mr D.L. Smith, resolved -

That the report be printed.

**BILLS (3) - INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING**

1. Land Tax Assessment Bill  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Peter Dowding (Treasurer), and read a first time.
2. Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Hodge (Minister for Conservation and Land Management), and read a first time.
3. Strata Titles Amendment Bill  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Stephens, and read a first time.

**MOTION - FORESTRY***State Forests - Revocation of Dedication*

**MR HODGE** (Melville - Minister for Conservation and Land Management) [10.56 am]: I move -

That the proposal for the revocation of State Forest No 42 and the partial revocation of State Forests Nos 14, 36, 39, 58 and 64 laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly by command of His Excellency the Governor on the 19th day of October 1988 be carried out.

The proposal I have tabled relates to the revocation of six areas of State forest and involves about 5 640 hectares. Of the six areas three directly relate to proposals contained in the regional management plan for the Department of Conservation and Land Management's southern forest region and are the first step in having these three areas reserved as a national park. It gives me great pleasure to sponsor this proposal. It continues the pattern this Government has followed in converting to national park areas of State forest which are of considerable value to recreation and conservation. The three areas in question are listed as areas two, three and four in the tabled proposal.

Area two relates to portions of State Forest Nos 36 and 39, with an area of about 1 630 hectares. It is situated approximately 12 kilometres south west of the Pemberton townsite and is currently known as the Hawke-Treen management priority area. The purpose of the MPA is to conserve stands of virgin and regenerated karri. In accordance with the regional management plan it is proposed that the area be added to the adjoining Warren National Park. Area three contains an area of about 890 hectares and is adjacent to the Pemberton townsite. This portion of State Forest No 39 is currently known as the Brockman management priority area. It supports a high quality karri forest and contains perennial streams with cascades suitable for fishing. Its outstanding landmark is the Gloucester tree. The intention is to change the tenure of the area to an A class national park vested in the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority. Reservation of the area as a national park is consistent with the regional management plan. Excision will also allow a proposed rationalisation of the Pemberton townsite boundary, currently under consideration by the Shire of Manjimup. Area four is an area of about 3 110 hectares situated approximately 14 kilometres east of Walpole, being the whole of the land contained in State Forest No 42. The common name of this area is the Valley of the Giants. It has impressive stands of karri and tingle. Pursuant to the regional management plan, it is intended that the area be added to the adjoining Walpole-Nornalup National Park.

The remaining three proposals may be of less significance than the foregoing three but nonetheless are considered of sufficient merit to warrant excision of the relevant areas from State forest. Area one is an area of just under a quarter of a hectare - 2 492 square metres to be more precise. It is a small area of State forest situated approximately five kilometres south east of North Dandalup. It is separated from the rest of State Forest No 14 by Del Park Road and could be described as a wedge of land between the adjacent property and the road. The owner of the adjacent property has sought the inclusion of the area into his property and this is seen to be a reasonable request. Retention of the area as part of the forest estate offers no real advantages from either the conservation or timber production viewpoints. Release of the area would permanently remove what is an unnecessary management problem.

Area 5 is also a small area of about a quarter of a hectare; in this case it is 2 550 square

metres. It is situated approximately five kilometres south of Nannup on the Vasse Highway which isolates it from the remainder of State forest No 58. The area has no special features and, together with the adjoining vacant Crown land, is proposed for release to the only neighbouring property owner as part of a mutually beneficial land exchange. Release of the area will result in an improved management boundary of the State forest.

Area 6 is a portion of State forest No 64 situated approximately six kilometres north east of Denmark. It comprises about 10 hectares and is to be exchanged for about 26 hectares of adjoining vacant Crown land which will become State forest. The exchange has been proposed by the Department of Agriculture to enable the establishment of an agricultural research site for future clover disease screening. In terms of vegetation, the areas intended for exchange are very similar. Both support a jarrah forest with casuarina understorey over sandy gullies and laterite ridges and both contain several hectares of non forested flats. Aside from a net gain to the forest estate of about 15 hectares, the proposed exchange would rationalise the forest boundary and thereby facilitate management activities such as fire protection.

I commend the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Watt.

## POTATO GROWING INDUSTRY TRUST FUND AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

MR PEARCE (Armadale - Leader of the House) [11.02 am]: On behalf of the Minister for Agriculture, I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill before the House proposes to amend the Potato Growing Industry Trust Fund Act. This Act authorises and provides for the administration of a trust fund in relation to the potato growing industry and for the application of moneys in the fund. The fund is made up from a levy which is deducted from the proceeds of all sales of potatoes. The fund is administered by the potato growing industry trust fund advisory committee.

The Bill proposes to alter the method of collection of the levy, to allow for the rate of the levy to be varied, and to provide for greater flexibility in the allocation of expenditure from the trust fund. At present the rate of contribution is \$1.20 per tonne of potatoes sold, regardless of whether the potatoes are sold to the potato marketing authority, to processors or to potato exporters.

After the payment of administration of the trust fund and its committee, the Act allows the fund to be used for the following purposes -

- (a) The payment of the whole or portion of the costs and expenses of measures taken to prevent or eradicate pests and diseases affecting potatoes;
- (b) the payment of compensation to growers for the whole or portion of losses suffered by them as the result of measures taken to prevent or eradicate pests and diseases;
- (c) the payment of the costs of the promotion and encouragement of scientific research for the improvement and transport of potato crops;
- (d) the provision of financial help recommended by the committee, and approved by the Minister, for the Potato Growers Association and its branches in carrying out its activities for the benefit of growers; and
- (e) any other purposes which, in the opinion of the Minister, will promote and encourage the potato growing industry.

The request to amend the Act came from the potato growing industry trust fund advisory committee, which recommended that the method of levy collection be changed from the current rate per tonne to a levy based on the percentage of gross proceeds available to growers from the sale of potatoes. The background to the recommendation is that, with the development of the potato processing industry, the present system of a charge per tonne is inequitable when compared with the returns for potatoes produced for the potato marketing authority which handles the ware trade.

In addition, the committee has stated that subsections 22(3)(a) and (b) of the Act, concerning the annual percentage of the fund's income which can be expended on particular purposes, unnecessarily restricts flexibility. The committee argued that it should be responsible for recommending to the Minister for Agriculture on the manner in which the income of the trust fund should be expended, according to industry priorities.

At present these sections of the Act restrict the committee from recommending that more than 50 per cent of trust fund income be committed to either research, administration of the Potato Growers Association, or specific activities approved by the Minister. In addition, the Act restricts total expenditure on these items to less than 80 per cent of the income of the fund in any one year. These restrictions were incorporated in the Act in 1982, following representations from the Potato Growers Association. At that time the potato growers wished to restrict the way the fund was expended because the cost of running the association had risen almost to the level for the total annual income of the fund and it was considered that some brake should be placed on funds being allocated to other activities. I am advised that the trust fund committee has reviewed the opportunities available to it in lieu of the present per tonne levy. It is believed that a levy based on a percentage of the gross value of potatoes sold by each grower as defined in the Act is the most equitable system. Initial calculations indicate that the rate will be of the order of 0.5 per cent. Specifically, the rate will be set annually by the Minister.

To give effect to the desire of the association to have more flexibility in recommending the distribution of funds, it is proposed to repeal section 22(3) of the Act. This subsection prescribes that no more than 80 per cent of total revenue may be expended in any one year and that no more than 50 per cent may be spent on any one specific area of activity.

To ensure the continuation of the growers association, I have given an assurance that adequate funds will be made available in future years to fund the association.

The changes proposed in the Bill are supported by the potato growing industry trust fund advisory committee, the Department of Agriculture and the Potato Growers Association. In addition, the Edgell-Birdseye potato processing negotiating committee has indicated that it supports the proposed change to the method of levy collection. The potato growing industry trust fund has been of significant benefit to the potato industry in Western Australia. It has supported a strong Potato Growers Association and has provided valuable research funds to the Department of Agriculture and universities to undertake research on potatoes.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Maslen.

## ROAD TRAFFIC AMENDMENT BILL (No 3)

### *Report*

Report of Committee adopted.

### *Third Reading*

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House), and transmitted to the Council.

## APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

### *Committee*

Resumed from 19 October. The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr Thomas) in the Chair; Mr Peter Dowding (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

**Division 19: Corporate Affairs, \$7 351 000 -**

Progress was reported after the Division had been partly considered.

**Mr HASSELL:** Has the Minister had the opportunity, since I raised matters under this Division last night, to inquire about the failure of the Corporate Affairs Department to have the annual returns of McLean Brothers and Rigg for the years 1987 and 1988 lodged at the corporation? In respect of the year 1987, McLean Brothers and Rigg is significantly in

default for failing to lodge annual returns. The point I made last night is that the Western Australian Development Corporation, as a Government corporation, is doubly involved with that firm. According to the public assertions of the Chairman of WADC, Mr John Horgan, McLean Brothers and Rigg is subject to a process of reconstruction as a result of the involvement of WADC and the losses incurred, and yet the public record which should have been available for public scrutiny is not available for the year ended 30 June 1987, any more than the public record for the year ended 30 June 1988 is available. I hope that when the Minister gets to his feet in response to this section of the debate, some answers to these questions will be given and they will not, as usual, be ignored. I suspect that will be the attitude of the Government, as even the Minister representing the Treasurer was not last night, and is not today, in the House to deal with this section of the Budget Estimates.

Mr LEWIS: There are two areas I wish to address regarding corporate affairs. The first concerns the administration of the Business Names Act. This relates to a complaint that I received in December 1987 concerning a small company situated in Parliament Place called It's a Small World. In July 1981 the proprietor of that company registered the business name Dolls' House of Fine Furniture. There were two separate words - "Dolls' House". In March 1986 the company registered a name for a business concerning an exhibition of miniature figures which fit a dolls' house environment. The name registered was Dolls' House Hobby Studio. Since that time the company has been operating Dolls' House Hobby Studio and selling and exhibiting its wares within that business.

In November 1987 the company received inquiries from the Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare - the Shops and Factories Inspectorate, and the Business Names Division of Corporate Affairs - to the effect that it was using someone else's business name. The company was obviously a little taken aback and could not understand this, because its name had been registered and it had been trading under that name for 18 months. Indeed, the name was similar to the original name registered back in 1981.

The activities of the Business Names Division continued until the company received a letter from Corporate Affairs to the effect that its business name would be expunged or removed. The company objected quite strongly to that because it believed it had done everything according to the Statutes and had not in any way transgressed. The matter progressed until formal notification was received of the removal from the register of the business name within 28 days, during which time the company had the right to appeal. In the interim period the people running that business wrote to the Attorney General asking him what was going on, on the basis that they had been dealing under a registered name for 18 months.

It transpires that another name is registered, but as one word - Dollshouse Hobby Studio. This name was registered between the first registration by the company in Parliament Place in 1981 and its second registration in 1986. The people who had registered the name Dollshouse Hobby Studio had been complaining. It appears that these people may have a certain amount of political clout within the Labor Government because it is quite extraordinary that corporate affairs, under Mr McDonald, should arbitrarily write and say, "You have got 28 days, and after that, unless you have a reasonable story, we will expunge your business name from the register."

Mr Pearce: Who was the person who made the complaint?

Mr LEWIS: That is quite interesting as well, because on inquiry to the Shops and Factories Inspectorate the complainant's name was never revealed.

Mr Pearce: What is the basis on which you make the allegation that it is somebody who has got clout with the Labor Government?

Mr LEWIS: The question I am asking is: Why, all of a sudden, should these people start to get hassled? Why is it, when the company starts asking questions, no-one will tell it who is complaining? Why is it that, all of a sudden, the company gets a 28 day notice saying, "Your business name will be removed"?

Mr Pearce: Have you asked questions about this in Parliament?

Mr MacKinnon: What do you think the Committee stage of this debate is about?

Mr Pearce: The Committee stage of this debate is not for a member to pop up and raise constituent matters.

Mr LEWIS: I have written three letters to the Commissioner of Corporate Affairs and the Leader of the House can see, if he wants to, how thick this file is.

Mr Pearce: This is disgraceful.

Mr LEWIS: It is not at all. It is drawing to your attention things that are going on which should not be going on.

Mr Pearce: You made an allegation that the person who made the complaint has clout with the Labor Party.

Mr LEWIS: I did not. I suggested there may be political influence being brought to bear. That is the allegation I made.

Mr Pearce: What is the evidence you have for that allegation?

Mr LEWIS: Why remove this company's business name, and not the other one?

[Quorum formed.]

Mr LEWIS: Before I was rudely interrupted by the Leader of the House -

Mr Hodge: By the Whip.

Mr LEWIS: By the Leader of the House - I was asking why these people were being hassled and put on notification of the removal of their business name. It is interesting that the complainant who has the registered name Dollshouse does not even appear in the telephone book, but the people against whom the complaint is made have appeared in the telephone book for two years.

The question is: Why does the commissioner arbitrarily write and say this company cannot have its business name registered any more? It is interesting to note, from a letter written to the Attorney General and his reply, that the registry of business of names is only done so that a list is kept. From a statutory point of view it would seem there is no requirement to the effect that a company cannot have a similar name. The register is kept so that the proprietors or so-called owners of such names can be contacted if there is any breach under consumer affairs or corporate affairs legislation.

There is no legally compelling provision against the department's allowing businesses to use names that are similar. However, the Commissioner of Corporate Affairs carried out his threat and deregistered the business name, Dolls House Hobby Studio. The proprietors of the business, of course, were concerned about their costs. The commissioner told the proprietors that he would register the new name at no cost and that the department may consider a claim for compensation. The proprietors of Dolls House Hobby Studio made a claim for \$8 000. The Commissioner of Corporate Affairs told the proprietors that the department would not pay the \$8 000 until they had submitted their reasons for making the claim. After all, these people had only been trading for 18 months, and had advertised their name in the telephone book and Press for that time! The proprietors replied that obviously it would cost them money to put together the books of accounts and a submission to the commissioner indicating that they had suffered from the removal of their business name. They asked for costs for that to be done. The curt reply that they received was that the department would not pay until it was told how much the proprietors had been disadvantaged by the department's removing the business name. Again, they were advised that if they made a submission, compensation may be considered. The bottom line was that these people would have to spend more money - it was estimated at \$2 500 - to put together a submission for damages because of an arbitrary decision of the Corporate Affairs Department. At this stage, the saga is continuing; there has been no solution to the problem. These people have lost the ability to trade under their business name. They have been offered compensation provided the commissioner deems their claim reasonable, but they are expected to pay out more money to demonstrate that they have suffered financially. I have asked the officers of the Corporate Affairs Department to tell me why that business name was deregistered. I suggested that perhaps they should have deregistered the complainant's business name. They could not give me a reason for taking the action they took. I have raised this matter so that the Government will know that these sorts of things are happening under its Administration.

Mr Hodge: You suggested that we organised it.

Mr LEWIS: I suggest there is a very strong smell about it and that the complainant may be linked with the Government.

Mr Hodge: You have not produced a shred of evidence to substantiate that.

Mr Clarko: You would want to be careful if you did because that would be the end of it.

Mr LEWIS: That is right.

The Corporate Affairs Department is now being used by this Government as another vehicle for raising taxes. The vote for the Corporate Affairs Department totals \$7 351 000. It is interesting to note that, on the other side of the ledger, the budgeted revenue for this year will total \$21 735 000, three times the total costs. It is obvious, therefore, that it is being used as a vehicle to tax the business community. It is another of those hidden taxation measures which are growing day by day under this Government. The income from the business names section totalled \$2 424 211 in 1986-87 and \$2 541 000 in 1987-88, an increase of \$116 789 or about five per cent in the costs of registering a business name. That is probably reasonable and is a bit below consumer price index increases. However, this year it is estimated that receipts from that section will total \$3 111 000. Receipts last year totalled \$2 606 743, indicating an additional \$504 257 was raised or a 19.3 per cent increase for this year. Is the Government projecting such a huge upturn in business activity in this State that it will produce an increase of 19.3 per cent when the projected inflation rate by the Federal Treasurer is only 4.5 per cent? Of course, the Budget papers do not give us any reason for that huge increase. One can only assume that the costs of registering business names will be increased, another surreptitious way of increasing taxation of the small business community. The Government should explain why a department which takes over \$14 million from the business community has to squeeze that community even more by increasing the cost of registering business names by 19.3 per cent.

Mr PEARCE: First, I will refer to the comments made by the member for East Melville. His contribution to this debate is disgraceful and it is a misuse of the processes of this place.

Mr Lightfoot: That is most uncharitable.

Mr Lewis: Are you saying that I do not have the right to raise this matter?

Mr PEARCE: I think it is unusually uncharitable. I am not seeking to stop members from raising matters in the Budget debate which is one of the most wide ranging debates in the Parliament. However, it is not an opportunity for members to catch up with the electorate work they should have already done. The member for East Melville has popped up with this story about the Dolls House people. I am not making any judgment about the rights or wrongs of their case. I will refer the matter to the Attorney General. The member for East Melville said that he had written a few letters to the commissioner. He has not raised the matter in the Parliament and he has not raised the matter with the Attorney General. He cannot expect the Minister representing the Attorney General to be able to -

Mr Lewis: You don't know what I have done. Your mouth is running away as usual.

Mr PEARCE: The member said that he had written three letters to the commissioner. He has not taken the matter up with the Attorney General by way of letter or by way of question in this Chamber. Has the member done that?

Mr Lewis: Why don't you go away and do your homework?

Mr PEARCE: I ask the member to table the letters he has written to the Attorney General. He does not have them and he has not asked a question in this place about it. It has come to him as an afterthought and he has brought it up in the Budget debate. Worse than that, he has drawn the matter to the attention of the Attorney General in the Budget debate and then made the allegation that the reason his constituent has not been preferred over another member's constituent is because that member's constituent has clout with the Labor Party which is in Government.

Mr Lewis: I believe he comes from Gosnells.

Mr PEARCE: The member does not even know who it is. He made a claim about the propriety of the actions of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs on exactly this basis.

Mr Lewis: You are corrupt and you cannot accept a legitimate complaint.

*Withdrawal of Remark*

Mr PEARCE: Mr Deputy Chairman, I seek the withdrawal of the word "corrupt".

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Thomas): I ask the member to withdraw the use of the word "corrupt".

Mr LEWIS: I withdraw.

*Committee Resumed*

Mr PEARCE: The member for East Melville comes into this place and in his normal mud throwing way, which many of his colleagues use, said that his constituent had a problem with the name of his or her business - there is a conflict with the name of someone else's business. He said that this matter had been referred to the Corporate Affairs Department which had made a decision in terms of the complaint about which business name will have priority. The department has to do that all the time. I am not saying that the decision made by the department is right or is not subject to review. Since the member has not referred the matter to the Attorney General - I will do his electorate work for him - I am quite happy to do that and the Attorney General will respond in writing to the member.

Not being content with using this debate to do his electorate work, the member has alleged in his normal mud throwing way that there is something corrupt about the way in which the matter has been handled. The member intends, I guess, for that to be part of the mud throwing exercise which he and his colleagues indulge in. However, what he is doing is alleging corruption on behalf of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs. The one person involved in terms of decision making is that gentleman and he is held in the highest regard by the Government and by most people around this city and he is a person of integrity.

Mr MacKinnon: Who are you talking about?

Mr PEARCE: The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs. His integrity is beyond reproach. The suggestion made by the member for East Melville is that the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs made a wrong decision and he acted, in making that wrong decision, because the person making the complaint was someone with clout in the Government. That claim is not only totally untrue, but also it is totally unsupported by even a skerrick of evidence produced by the member for East Melville.

If members opposite continue to make wild accusations and to undertake their electoral work in this Budget debate it will be incumbent on the Government to take action to protect the process of this place, public servants and other people from totally unjustified smears of that kind.

Mr Mensaros: But you could not deny the fact that the Corporate Affairs Commissioner was a blatant political appointment.

Mr PEARCE: The member for Floreat is a person with a bit of integrity and I am sure he would not be supportive of the claim made by the member for East Melville.

Mr Mensaros: You mentioned the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs and that he is someone who has the highest respect of the Government. I say he is the most conspicuous political appointment this Government has made. He had no experience in corporate affairs whatsoever.

Mr Taylor: He is an expert lawyer and an expert in accounting matters. That is a disgraceful comment.

Mr PEARCE: I would not mind betting that when this Government appointed the Chief Justice the member for Floreat said that he had not been on the bench before. That certainly is the truth because he had not been on the bench, but he is widely respected for his capacity as a lawyer and he has been appointed to a position which should be occupied by a lawyer. That circumstance is no different from the appointment of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs.

Mr Clarko: If you are right once you can be wrong once.

Mr PEARCE: Even a stopped watch is right twice a day and that gives it a batting average of about 200 per cent better than that of the member for Karrinyup.

Mr Hassell: When you went on the ABC yesterday you blew up the equipment. When the announcer tried to put on a record to fill in time while he sorted out the equipment, it did not work. That is the impact you had on it.



Mr PEARCE: If the member for Cottesloe really wants to know about the technical matters I advise him that the interview was prerecorded. What stopped my 20 minutes discussion about the planning merits of the City of Perth were the same technical faults which prevented some group singing "Green Green" and which led to an unfortunate 30 seconds silence on the ABC. If I had been there at that time I would have sung to fill in the embarrassing gap caused by the breakdown of the equipment.

Mr COURT: How come you are the only Minister in this Chamber who speaks? You handle everything.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! It is becoming difficult for Hansard.

Mr PEARCE: I am rendered speechless by this ineffable praise. In response to the kind comments by the member for Cottesloe I advise him that I am prepared to refer to the Attorney General his comments about his incapacity to obtain up to date information from the Corporate Affairs Department in regard to returns filed by a particular company. He raised the matter in a particular context which suited his political purpose. All members would be concerned if they were unable to obtain up to date information from the various registers because the companies are not providing that information or because the bureaucratic process does not allow the office to keep up with the speed of returns. It is a matter which I will take up with the Attorney General because I can say quite sincerely that the Government has, as one of its aims, the provision of information in the most accessible way. If a member has a problem with a company I am happy to raise the problem with the Attorney General in order to solve it. I am happy to raise with the Attorney General the general issue of obtaining that information as speedily as possible.

Mr COURT: Technically, I should have raised the point I am now making during the general debate, but I was unable to get into the Chamber. I would like the Minister to pass on to the Attorney General the problem that I mentioned during debate yesterday when discussing WA Inc. It concerns the company General Equity Ltd, the majority shareholding of which is owned by the WADC. A minority shareholder, of its subsidiary, International Broadcasting Group, a Mr Michael Richards, owns some 20 per cent of that company. He was very upset about the fact that he has been unable to get the annual report and accounts of the company, even though he is a 20 per cent shareholder. He lodged a complaint to that effect with the Corporate Affairs Department a couple of days ago. I understand that even if a person owns only one share in a company, it is compulsory that they receive a copy of the accounts. It seems rather strange that this person has to read about what is happening with General Equity Ltd in the WADC report, and he is having great difficulty in dealing with the company itself.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should have raised this matter during general debate. I ask him to bring his remarks to a rapid conclusion.

Mr COURT: I will, Mr Deputy Chairman. In the House yesterday I read out the letter that Mr Richards sent to the Government. I will read it again. It states -

I wish to place before you my concern at the involvement of the WADC, and particularly their treasurer Mr. Stewart Gregory, in the take-over of International Broadcasting Group Pty Ltd. (IBG).

In April this year the company was acquired by General Equity Ltd, an unlisted public company whose majority shareholder is now WADC.

This acquisition has severely disadvantaged the original minority shareholders in IBG and till now the company's new owners persist in using their corporate strength in their attempts to delay repayments of loans of more than \$18,000 which my wife and I have made to the company.

The whole saga has left a very bitter taste for me, and on the basis of this experience I would ask you to strongly question the role that the WADC plays in industry. I do not have the financial resources to pursue long and expensive legal solutions to my complaints and feel that my only practical recourse is to request your office to undertake an investigation.

That investigation has not taken place. The person concerned has now raised these problems

with the Corporate Affairs Department. I ask the Minister whether he would be good enough to pass on this concern to the Attorney General to see whether that matter can be resolved.

Mr PEARCE: I am happy to do that, but I point out that the only reason I did not take a point of order was that the member indicated that he would be brief. I am not seeking to override your prerogative, Mr Deputy Chairman, but the Government will take points of order if members seek under item 1, Salaries, another general debate following the general debate on a Division.

Mr Court: I apologise for not having been here during the general debate.

Mr PEARCE: I accept that.

Mr Clarko: There has been a bit of an argument about it at other times.

Mr PEARCE: There have been rulings on that in the past.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: When we have the argument, we will make the ruling.

Mr PEARCE: I will refer the matter raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to the Minister involved.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: I ask the Minister representing the Attorney General whether it is still true or whether it has been true that the Western Australian Commissioner for Corporate Affairs is a registered shareholder in the newly revamped Western Australian company, Western Australian Government Holdings, which I believe was the shell of Northern Mining Corporation NL- its five per cent assets, of course, were floated off under Western Australian Diamond Trust. If the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs was a shareholder - or if he is currently a shareholder, which is worse - and he -

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! We are getting into the same problem again.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: The matter is related to the item, "Salaries".

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How does it relate to salaries?

Mr MacKinnon: There is an estimate of the salary for the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am speaking to the member for Murchison-Eyre. How does it relate to salaries?

Mr LIGHTFOOT: The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs may be receiving some remuneration or stipend as a Director of Western Australian Government Holdings. That is what I am relating my comments to.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Again, this matter should have been raised in the general debate. The question before the committee at this stage is the salary level of the various officers under this item. The question of whether they might be receiving some other remuneration or whether it is proper or whatever should have been raised during the general debate. The member for Murchison-Eyre was present during the debate, unlike the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: I do not want to go against your ruling, Mr Deputy Chairman.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You will not go against my ruling.

#### *Points of Order*

Mr MacKINNON: I dispute that ruling. Under item 1 we are talking about the salaries of all the employees in the office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs. The Commissioner is the prime person. The point being raised by the member is that he may well be receiving remuneration in addition to the total salary which has been allocated to him under item 1. I think it is the most appropriate time to raise the matter. It is a specific matter relating to a specific item. The member is justified in raising it here.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. I do not accept the point of order. The question before the committee under this item is the salary levels. The question of whether the people whose salary levels fall under this item are receiving other remuneration and the propriety of that might be able to be raised elsewhere, but that is not the question before us and it is not relevant.

Mr MacKINNON: Mr Deputy Chairman, I seek your ruling because the point I raise is very important. Under item 1 a member can raise a broad number of issues - as I have done consistently over the years - such as the number of people in a department, their roles, their jobs, who they are, what they are doing, what comes under other payments and the like. Certainly that can be covered during general debate, but we are talking about item 1. With almost every department, item 1 is the key item on which members wish to speak about specific rather than general matters. I come back again to the point that the matter raised by the member for Murchison-Eyre is a specific matter about a specific employee of the Corporate Affairs Department, the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs himself, and other income related thereto. When we come to discuss the estimates of the Department of the Premier and the areas for which he is responsible, I want to raise several matters under item 1. I had planned to raise those matters under that item. Perhaps I could raise it during general debate, but it seems to me that the appropriate time to do so is during consideration of item 1. That would be the much better and more orderly way to handle consideration of this section. I have been here for almost 12 years, and as I understand it that is exactly what we have done in previous years.

Mr CLARKO: On the same point of order, I put it to you, Mr Deputy Chairman, that people who have sat in that seat before you have made different rulings. I think you sit in that seat very well in the sense of the good judgments you make, but as I said by way of interjection to the Leader of the House there has been disagreement in the past about how widely we should range. Traditionally, this item has always given some latitude to members. If a matter can be related in any way to a person who is in the employ of a department - the Corporate Affairs Department in this particular case - with respect to salaries, wages and allowances, for example, it should be able to be discussed. If, for example, a man got a salary of \$1, but received \$69 000 in some other sort of payment, it would be appropriate to talk about it under item 1. In this particular case, the numbers of people are listed. Traditionally under this item we have always argued about staff levels. For example, if 15 staff are employed in the administrative section of the Corporate Affairs Department, we would be allowed to argue about whether the number should be 10 or 20 and things of that sort.

Any matter which considers an item, whether by considering the amount expended or the activities occurring, which ultimately relate to the funds, is appropriate. Your predecessors, Mr Deputy Chairman, have found this question difficult, but I think you will find that although we have dispensed with the Division debate which is very broad, there is a great deal of scope for people to speak broadly on this matter although, of course, it is necessary to be more specific in other areas. As this matter relates to all the work carried out in that department, it relates to the people employed there. For example, if one wanted to query the policy of the section, that could relate to the amount of work carried out, which in turn relates to the number of people employed and the costs of running that section. Previous Chairmen of Committee have accepted that argument, while ensuring that the debate did not stray from the purport of the item.

Mr PEARCE: We are deciding an important point and that is why I seek to make a brief input to the decision you, Mr Deputy Chairman, are about to make. If the argument put by the member for Karrinyup were taken to its extreme - which he did not when he was Chairman of Committees - it could be said that the disgraceful matter raised by the member for East Melville could be raised under item 1; we are discussing the salary of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs, he made the decision referred to, and, therefore, members can canvass whether he is earning his salary by making wrong decisions. In that way item 1 could become a repeat of the general debate on the Division. Some years ago an effort was made to regularise the whole approach to the Budget debate - I believe that was when Mr O'Connor was Premier - and it has certainly been followed through by this Government. That was an attempt to have a scaling of debates; at the beginning of each Minister's section a long debate was held, and on each Division there was a medium length general debate. The idea was that members would not use the mechanism of twisting the argument about any item to edge in a general debate whenever they wanted to. That mechanism was designed to avoid what is happening now. I do not have any idea of the shareholdings of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs and I am sure that no member would expect me to have that information. My response to the member's question would be that I do not know. However, if he wants to allege impropriety on the part of the

commissioner, he should do so in some area other than item 1 which relates to the salary the man is receiving.

*Deputy Chairman's Ruling*

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Thomas): My ruling is that it is only permissible under item 1 for a member to discuss the votes and the appropriateness of them. It is not permissible to debate the propriety of a person receiving some other form of remuneration or engaging in some other activities. Therefore it is not permissible to raise the sorts of matters raised by the member for Murchison-Eyre.

*Committee Resumed*

Mr LIGHTFOOT: With respect, I think that the information I have asked the Leader of the House to obtain from the appropriate Minister comes within the ruling you, Mr Deputy Chairman, have made; that is, does the salary of the Western Australian Commissioner for Corporate Affairs include the work he is alleged to do as a shareholder of WA Government Holdings? If that is included in his salary, there is clearly a conflict because the Corporate Affairs Department may have to inquire into the activities of WA Government Holdings.

Mr PEARCE: The salary paid to the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs is a salary for doing his job as commissioner. I do not have any knowledge of work the commissioner may be doing for WA Government Holdings, but if he is doing such work, no payment for that work is included in the salary he is paid under item 1. That salary relates only to his work in the Corporate Affairs Department and nothing else. I am not aware of any other payments made to the commissioner for being part of some other Government agency. However, in general terms it is Government policy - although there are some exceptions - that Government officers who sit on boards do not receive the daily sitting rates which are paid to people from outside Government. In general terms public servants are not paid for doing additional Government work in other areas. A vast range of senior public servants sit on a number of boards, some during normal working hours and some in their own time. They make their expertise available to the Government in many different ways. In most cases it is provided free and gratis from their own good will, from a sense of commitment to the community or because they are asked to. Sometimes that work is squeezed into their normal working day, and I guess they then do their normal work at night, because they are very hardworking people. That is the general principle. I am happy to take up this matter with the Minister, but it seems to me that we are getting a touch out of the ambit of this item.

Mr COURT: Will the Minister indicate when the current Commissioner for Corporate Affairs will finish his present term, and when the Government expects to appoint a new commissioner? The appointment of a new commissioner is one of the most critical and important decisions in the financial community and it is important that such a person not be involved in other corporate activities. The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs becomes involved in sensitive areas, and he often has to adjudicate very difficult cases. Therefore, only a very special type of person can take on that role. I understand that the current commissioner has held that office for only a short time; can the Minister confirm whether he has held that position for less than two years?

Mr Pearce: Yes, that is the case.

Mr COURT: Can the Minister give an indication as to how the Government intends to make the changeover? I repeat the point made by the previous speakers that it is important that the person not be involved in corporate activities, particularly in WA Government Holdings, which is actively involved in dealing.

Mr PEARCE: I appreciate the advice of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition about how to handle the changeover of the position. Obviously, the Government recognises the sensitivity of this important office. I will relay the comments to the Attorney General so that he can be aware of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's sentiments when making a new appointment, if and when a new appointment is to be made.

Division 19 put and passed.

Postponed Division 4 now taken, on motion by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House).

Division 4: Premier and Cabinet, \$12 702 000 -

Mr MacKINNON: I ask the Premier to outline a couple of matters in this Division. Firstly, in relation to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, I note from looking at last year's accounts that the number of administrative support staff has increased from 51 to 60, a significant increase of 20 per cent. I would be interested to know the reason for that increase, and also what this section of the department does.

Secondly, there are 54 employees, so called, in the policy area. Will the Premier indicate what that section of Government does because it seems to me that policy development - certainly in the Liberal Party and while we were in Government - is a function of the political party and not the Government of the day and should not be funded by taxpayers. What does that section do? Who heads that section of Government?

Thirdly, a staffing level of 24 is shown under the heading "Minister's Office". That figure was previously 17. There is again no indication of what that really applies to. What is this number? Whose people are they? Why the significant increase?

Fourthly, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet shows a staffing level of 22 people and an allocation of \$200 000 for the Government Media Office. I read in a newspaper recently that the Government of Western Australia employs 72 journalists and is now the second biggest employer of journalists registered with the AJA in this State. Interestingly, the Government funds only one such person for the Opposition with whom we do very well.

Mr Hodge: We did well out of the one we had when you were in office.

Mr MacKINNON: We did not have anywhere near 72 journalists at that time. I am interested to know where all the other media people are stationed if there are only 22 in that section, how many of those 22 people are journalists and who makes up the balance of that section. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet's expenditure has exploded in recent years, so I would appreciate explanations of the four points I have raised.

MR PETER DOWDING: I do not have exact figures with me, but I saw the newspaper article to which the Leader of the Opposition referred and which was incorrect. A whole range of Government departments and agencies have historically employed journalists to perform a variety of functions.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Thomas): Is the Premier aware that if he speaks now he closes the debate on this Division.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Yes, but no other member sought to speak, and there now being no objection raised I will continue.

The number of Ministers has been increased from 15 to 17, but there has not been an increase in the number of journalists working in that area.

Mr MacKinnon: How many journalists are there in Government if the figure of 72 is not correct?

Mr PETER DOWDING: They are scattered right throughout the agencies.

Mr MacKinnon: The Premier said that it was not true; if it is not true, how many are there?

Mr PETER DOWDING: I am saying that those 72 journalists are not working as ministerial Press officers.

Mr MacKinnon: I do not think that anybody said they were.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Journalists work at a variety of tasks throughout the Government. As I understand, the number of ministerial Press officers is the same as when members opposite were in Government.

Mr MacKinnon: Is 72 the correct figure?

Mr PETER DOWDING: I am not confirming that number. I will need to have it checked across Government. I am not confirming that newspaper article.

Mr MacKinnon: It came out of the AJA magazine.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Leader of the Opposition seeks to trivialise the discussion.

Mr MacKinnon: The Premier is the one doing that.

Mr PETER DOWDING: It is just not a statistic that one keeps in Government. If there are,

for instance, people in the Ministry of Education writing publications who are also journalists, why would we keep a dossier on them? That is the point I am making. The AJA may say this person or that person has a union card, but that does not mean they are operating as Press secretaries. I am saying that the proportion of Press secretaries to Ministers has not changed. In fact, most Ministers share a Press secretary, and that has been the situation right through. I do not think the Leader of the Opposition is correct in what he is suggesting, that somehow there has been an explosive growth in the number of Press operatives. However, I am happy to find out what information we have on that matter and will inform him of my findings by way of letter or later during the debate.

The second comment made by the Leader of the Opposition related to the increase in the size of the staff of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The work done by that department includes servicing the various elements of the Opposition's activities and the Premier's office, the ceremonial and hospitality areas, administration functions of the Premier and Cabinet, and so on. In fact, the 1988-89 staffing level represents an increase of 14 to the actual staffing level for 1987-88 which increased the total figure to 229 people. That is the increased allocation for wages. Remember that that includes the staff in the offices of the Leaders of the Opposition and the National Party, the Government motor car services and the Women's Information and Referral Exchange, which is incorporated into the Department of the Premier and Cabinet as part of its staff allocation. The suggestion that there has been a massive blowout in one aspect of the department's function is just not correct. The Leader of the Opposition asked about the role of policy.

Mr MacKinnon: I also asked what the administrative support staff do because that is the area that has blown out. I did not refer to the department in general but to that section in particular. What do they do, and why the increase?

Mr PETER DOWDING: They were performing all the functions of the department. That is a large department performing a whole range of functions from looking after visiting dignitaries to servicing the office of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr MacKinnon: Visiting dignitaries are covered under "Ceremonial and Hospitality", which involves 13 people. I am talking of the 60 administrative support staff.

Mr PETER DOWDING: They service the whole department.

Mr MacKinnon: So they do the same work as people listed under "Ceremonial and Hospitality"?

Mr PETER DOWDING: No, they service the department. The Leader of the Opposition should understand that it is a large department performing a whole range of duties. I will give an example. There are 18 FTEs on the Women's Information and Referral Exchange. There are 13 FTEs involved with "Ceremonial and Hospitality"; and 27 FTEs in the Government motor car service. There are 12 FTEs allocated to the Opposition parties, 22 to the Government Media Office, five parliamentary secretaries of the Cabinet, 24 people in the Premier's office and 54 people ascribed to policy and the administrative and support staff for the whole department. They service all of those elements that in turn service ceremonial, hospitality, Government motor car services, and so on. Those subsections of that department are operated as part of the department, and servicing those elements within the department are the administrative support staff. The Leader of the Opposition should acknowledge that the tradition of having accountability by way of parliamentary questions demands the retention of a large number of staff simply to record what is happening. That is what the administrative support staff do, in part. The role of policy staff is to coordinate Government activities across the board, to advise in respect of ministerial and Cabinet minutes, to advise in respect of ministerial proposals and to ensure that all Government departments have some coordination between them.

The Leader of the Opposition has always found it very difficult to acknowledge the massive changes we have made to the public sector in order to achieve good management. I think most independent observers would acknowledge that the work we have done to improve public sector management has been quite outstanding; and a policy coordinating role has been fundamental to our success in improving efficiency across the board.

Mr MacKinnon: Who heads up that section?

Mr PETER DOWDING: The current officer in charge is a senior public servant, who

occupies the position of acting head. There has not yet been an appointment for the position of head of that section, and I think it is appropriate that person remains in the position of acting head. I say also to the Leader of the Opposition that while there is a role for that coordination in policy, Governments have to create the economic and social agenda outside the political forums. The Leader of the Opposition would agree that he has, for instance, the luxury of using taxpayer-funded services to push the Liberal Party banner.

Mr MacKinnon: We are funded for staff to help us do our job.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The service provided to the Opposition to help it put out its Press releases is funded by the taxpayers.

Mr MacKinnon: That is the job of the Opposition.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Yes, but those Press releases are not being put out by the Opposition in its role as the Opposition; they are being put out with Liberal Party banners and slogans all over them, so the taxpayers are in fact paying for the Liberal Party's political activities.

Mr MacKinnon: They are paying for the Opposition to do its job.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The job of the Opposition is to be Her Majesty's loyal Opposition, but the Leader of the Opposition is trying to draw a clear distinction between the political aspects of public life and the role of an Opposition. All I am saying is that members opposite are doing something in Opposition which they would not have tolerated for one second when they were in Government. Members opposite, when in Government, would not allow us a telex machine at our own expense, and they certainly would not have allowed us to issue Press releases, through any publicly funded operation, with Labor Party slogans all over them and with Labor Party letterheads.

Mr Cash: I would not get too harsh with the Opposition because you will be there shortly. Do not cut everything off. You can have a telex machine this time, and if you are very good you can have a facsimile machine.

Mr PETER DOWDING: No one can take the member for Mt Lawley too seriously because he is one of the few members in this House not prepared to contest the next election, so I do not know where his credibility lies.

I do not think any Government has provided an Opposition with more resources than this Government, and I want that to be on public record. To return to the question about policy raised by the Leader of the Opposition, the coordination of Government activities across the board is a public sector management tool of great importance, and the importance of having that type of policy advice to the Premier and the Cabinet has been demonstrated over the last few years. The second function of policy is to provide advice on setting broad objectives for a Government, which we have demonstrated in our economic, social and community development policies, and ensuring that those policies set out in a very far sighted way the future for Western Australia. The third function of policy is to service the coordinating committees of Cabinet that I have established - the Financial and Economic Development Committee, and the Community and Social Development Committee - which are trying to tackle important issues in a cross-Government way. It is quite clear that in the past we have been dependent on a sort of departmental adversary system, which has not worked effectively. I think that if members opposite were ever to win Government, they would find that to be a very useful function, and I am sure that the Opposition, having observed that Mr Greiner is in many respects following the decisions we in Western Australia have taken in a structural sense, will do so in 1993 when its turn to win Government would seem to be more likely.

#### Item 1: Salaries, Wages and Allowances -

Mr MacKINNON: The number of staff in the Treasurer's office has increased from 17 to 24, and I would be interested to hear an explanation for that increase. I noticed when I went through these figures that the Government - and I acknowledge that the Government has been more generous with the Opposition than its predecessors, as will be the Opposition when in Government - has increased our staff allocation from 11 to 12. We have yet to receive that additional person, or an acknowledgement that we are to do so. I would be interested to know when we will be entitled to employ that extra person. My staff are

dedicated people. They work long and arduous hours, and under extreme pressure, and an extra person will make their job a little easier.

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** I make the point to the Leader of the Opposition that these are FTEs and not people or bodies. There is a difference between FTEs and bodies. I am not being pedantic about this but I remind the House of that difference and that it has resulted in an adjustment of numbers since its introduction. The reason for the increase is the level of work that the staff in my office have to perform. A great deal more of the typing and other work is being done within my own office rather than having to shuffle pieces of paper between floors. There has also been a considerable increase in the level of correspondence, and there has been a need for the Premier's Office to have some liaison in respect of country areas because we have been receiving an increased number of requests for Premier's visits to country areas. I place a great store on the opportunity given to me of getting out into the country and giving people in country areas the opportunity of interacting with senior members of Government. The Leader of the National Party will know that is my philosophy, and I have tried to fulfil that in the last few months. I think my visits have been very well received.

**Mr House:** You could come up to Lake King and the Cascades.

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** I am not aware of an invitation to do that, but if the Deputy Leader of the National Party would like to make that suggestion, I would be happy to do so. I have not been to that area, although I remember that as the Minister for Energy I did do something very nice for the Cascades power supply.

**Mr House:** So you would come up and open the Lake King-Cascades Road if you were invited?

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** I do not think so because I would have thought there would be some national parks problems with that sort of opening, and I am not sure that I would want to offend the conservation lobby.

**Mr House:** Your sense of humour has returned.

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** It took a while; it has been a late night. I say to the Leader of the Opposition that I am not sure what request he has made in respect of the timing of that extra person, but I will have a look at the matter now that he has raised it.

## **Item 2: Administration Expenses -**

**Mr MacKINNON:** I would appreciate a breakdown of the \$2 582 000.

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** There are some significant items here: Central administration costs, workers' compensation, staff travel, fringe benefits tax, communications, consumable supplies, telephones and postage, the acquisition of equipment and motor vehicles, and the maintenance costs of equipment and motor vehicles.

**Mr MacKinnon:** Could you detail the amounts?

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** I do not think I have that breakdown. I have a breakdown of some of the increases, if the Leader of the Opposition wants those. Does he want them now?

**Mr MacKinnon:** Yes.

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** The largest items are the increase in the purchase of motor vehicle equipment; replacement programs for motor vehicles has cost \$117 000 extra. Workers' compensation premiums have increased by \$146 000, and travel, fringe benefits tax and others, by an extra \$96 000 or thereabouts.

## **Item 9: Ministerial Travel and Incidentals -**

**Mr MacKINNON:** I would appreciate an explanation of what travel is involved. Is it just the Premier's travel, or other ministerial travel? I would appreciate a some sort of breakdown of that.

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** It applies to travel costs incurred by members of Parliament nominated by the Premier to represent him at specific official functions. That has been an item in this bicentennial year which has required some increased costs. The costs of home telephones, official postage, entertainment, parliamentary secretaries of Cabinet travel arrangements, air fares and travel, official visits for me, and on rare occasions for my wife



within Australia, and air fares and travel allowances for me for travel within Australia and overseas. There is an increase of \$58 000 in that item.

**Division 4 put and passed.**

**Division 5: Governor's Establishment, \$1 164 000 -**

**Mr MacKINNON:** Firstly, as I have done several times publicly, I indicate the Opposition's commendation of the Governor and his wife for the tremendous work they do on behalf of the people of Western Australia. I am the first to be critical of the Government when I think it has made a mistake. Likewise I am the first to commend it when I think it has made a good decision. In this instance I believe the former Premier made one of his best ever decisions in appointing Professor Reid to that position. He has carried off the job with great style and dignity. His wife is also a great credit to him and to the position.

I understand the Governor's term of office is to conclude soon, and I have said publicly - and I place it on record in the Parliament - that should the Premier decide to invite His Excellency and Mrs Reid to continue in that position he would have our total and unqualified support. Should the Premier decide to take that course of action and invite the Governor and Mrs Reid to continue, it would be an appropriate move. It is a Government decision, and if the Premier chooses to take that course of action the Opposition would unreservedly and without hesitation support it.

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** I endorse those remarks about the Governor and Mrs Reid. I think everyone feels confident with the way in which they have performed their job with dignity. I thank the Opposition for making its position clear on that issue so close to the election. Obviously that is the sort of appointment that would normally be a very sensitive one at this time.

**Division 5 put and passed.**

**Division 6: Executive Council, \$10 - put and passed.**

**Division 7: Tokyo Agency, \$869 990 -**

**Mr MacKINNON:** I want to indicate the Opposition's thanks. Several of our members have been to Tokyo in the last 12 months and met Tony Virilli, who is our official representative in Japan. Tony is a first rate representative for Western Australia. He speaks Japanese fluently, and he was of great assistance to me, and I know to my colleague the member for Cottesloe, as well as to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition who has been to Japan. I place on record our thanks to Tony Virilli for the fine manner in which he has assisted us and for the manner in which he represents Western Australia in a very important market place for us.

**Division 7 put and passed.**

**Division 8: London Agency, \$1 974 000 -**

**Mr MacKINNON:** In deference to your ruling, Mr Deputy Chairman, I do not want to raise anything under item 1, but I shall do so under the general debate. Could the Premier indicate, under Contingencies, the item W.A. House and Official Residence, the reason for the allocation of \$633 000? It was \$351 000 last year. I thought we had spent some money on an official residence there once the Agent General had moved from Wimbledon to live on the premises. I would be interested to know what was spent last year and on what we anticipate spending \$633 000 this year. It is a fair amount of money and I think we are entitled to know on what it is to be spent.

**Mr MENSAROS:** I place on record my appreciation of the Agent General, who does a good job. When I had occasion to correspond with him I appreciated his immediate reply. Perhaps I am a little fussy about replying to constituents or anyone else quickly. I have reason to profit from this habit of mine, because when my constituents compare the time taken to get a reply from me or from a Minister, I come up by far on top. I think Mr Davies and his staff behave in a way which almost denies that they are public servants.

There are rumours circulating among the employees that the Government has some design or plan to shrink this office. I personally do not think that would be a good move. Not only does Western Australia House traditionally have a fairly important role, but also it serves the citizens of Western Australia in many ways and even if sometimes it is alleged that it is representing Western Australia on ceremonial occasions, that is part of the role of Western

Australia House and every Western Australian citizen appreciates that the Agent General is there.

Quite apart from that, there are many occasions when the Agent General's office is utilised for various commercial activities, representing private business and Western Australian interests not only in London but also on the Continent. The Agents General of the other States do it and it is only a matter of how much liaison the Agent General has with the appropriate departments.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Thomas): Order! There is too much background noise and the Hansard reporter is finding it difficult to hear the member.

Mr MENSAROS: It used to be that, generally speaking, the Department of Industrial Development and perhaps the Department of Resources Development had the most contact with British and European firms, and the Agent General could be of great assistance to them. Of course, he can be of assistance to small businesses as well, which perhaps do not have the means to have their own representation or someone commissioned to represent them. For that reason, if there are really plans to curtail the activities of the Agent General's office to save money, as the rumour indicates, it would not be proper. It is a very advantageous situation that Western Australia House does not pay any rent, or at least pays only a peppercorn rent to the Queen's Estate; that is another incentive to utilise it.

Mr PETER DOWDING: As to the item for \$360 000, I have a note here which advises that it is for increased rent following a review.

Mr MacKinnon: The one I talked about was W.A. House and Official Residence under Contingencies.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The non recurring renovations and restorations were \$76 000, increased rent following a review by the chartered surveyors' agent of the rental increase under the terms of the contract were plus \$360 000, and other minor decreases including promotions and publicity were minus \$5 000. So the rent has increased by \$360 000, following a review.

Division 8 put and passed.

Division 9: Public Service Commission, \$9 885 000 -

Item 4: Information Services -

Mr MacKINNON: This item has a budget allocation of \$3.255 million, which is quite an increase on last year's figure. I would be interested to know what Information Services are, and the reason for the significant increase.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The increase is about \$700 000 and is primarily related to the Personnel Information Management Services. I have insisted that PIMS be accepted across Government and that we do not end up with fragmented personnel information management services. That has required additional data processing and additional consultancies to assist in modification, and those two items between them amount to \$437 000.

The other significant item is the instruction I have given to integrate PIMS and GPS. I am sure the Opposition will be very pleased with the work we have done in this area of information services. It has given us a management tool which has never existed in the public sector before. It is absolutely essential for adequate management and the only way in which we are really going to break through the opportunities for individual departments to live in their own environments and bypass the requests and requirements of the central agency is if we can make it attractive. My view is that the only way to make it attractive is to ensure that it has an absolutely necessary use, which is to pay everybody. So the link between GPS and PIMS, which will be \$250 000, is the significant enhancement of that service.

Division 9 put and passed.

Division 10: Executive Personnel, \$3 075 000 - put and passed.

Division 11: Treasury, \$15 490 000 -

Item 3: Management Services -

Mr MacKINNON: The budget for this item has increased quite significantly from an

expenditure of roughly \$800 000 last year to over \$2.5 million this year. I would appreciate an explanation of what those services are and why the increase is necessary.

**Mr PETER DOWDING:** Some substantial elements of this have to do with the improvement in information processes in Treasury. As the Leader of the Opposition would know, Treasury is one of those departments which is required to exercise the general financial constraints facing the rest of the public sector, and it seeks to do that in part by its own frugality. Unfortunately this frugality, while commendable, in recent years has led to its neglecting some of those areas where the future management potentials of Government can only be recognised with automation. Accordingly Treasury has found itself a little isolated from the mainstream of the technological requirements of Government. For instance, Centre 4 is the only place for processing cheques. Members can imagine the frustration that causes Treasury, which has to produce cheques but can only produce them at a distance from itself. Now, as part of this information management plan, it is proposed to put on a front end processing capacity within Treasury, including the printing facilities that it will require, to enable it to access the Government Accounting System and other aspects of Government computing.

Also, after detailed discussions with me, Treasury has agreed to provide enhancement of GAS operations by help desk and other assistance to Government agencies; it has consultancy fees for its own offices automation strategy; and there are other increases. But the substantial one, which represents \$1.2 million of the total of \$1.7 million-odd, is for that computing hardware which is absolutely essential for Treasury's adequate functioning.

**Division 11 put and passed.**

**Divisions 12 to 14: Western Australian Treasury Corporation, \$659 000; Office of the Auditor General, \$6 015 000; Computing and Information Technology, \$13 814 000 - put and passed.**

**Divisions 15 to 17 postponed, on motion by Mr Peter Dowding (Treasurer).**

**Division 20: Public Trust Office, \$4 800 000 -**

**Mr MENSAROS:** I join with the views of the member for Cottesloe, who said that it was fairly strange to have the Budget debated, which is one of the most important subjects Parliament has to deal with, in the absence of the Minister responsible. Quite mildly expressed, this is a contempt of Parliament and of our constituents because the original English Parliament was established with the main aim of appropriating moneys for the King. One cannot get away from the fact that this was Parliament's most important function. If I compare previous usages with the present one and how this Government treats this institution, those who were here when we were in Government would easily agree that if any Ministers in Sir Charles Court's Government dared not to be here during the Budget debate on their own portfolios, they would not have been Ministers the next day.

However, in respect of the Public Trust Office the question is whether the Government has considered the future role of that office in view of the liberalisation of the longstanding and legislatively affirmed custom in Western Australia, which was that only two private trustee companies were supported by the Government's company, the Public Trustee. That has been entirely liberalised, like the Commonwealth has liberalised banking. I have no criticism of that at all in principle because I think it is the right way to go. However, sometimes to implement principles in practice is difficult because different environments and circumstances are involved. Our perennial handicap in Western Australia is a very small population, which reflects the activities of financial institutions and trustee companies. However, it remains to be seen whether these trustee companies - which after all have Western Australian deceased estates in their care and must also look after, if not a hundred per cent, a large number of Western Australian beneficiaries - will, after the freeing up of the market and the expected proliferation of their number, serve the Western Australian public in the way they served it in the past. Most definitely from this point of view the public does not look for speculative ventures; it looks for safe investments which, in connection with deceased estates, has to be the case. As I said, I wonder whether the Government has contemplated the role of the Public Trustee in this new environment, which has not been probed or experienced yet.

The Public Trustee has a role to play, albeit there is no doubt that we receive complaints

about the Public Trustee in respect of its efficiency and quickness in its work. There are many people who expect to have properties transferred from deceased estates to their own more expeditiously. Almost every member of Parliament would have received some complaints from constituents that the process of doing this is very slow. To some extent the reason for that might be the court procedures but not in all aspects. I think that also has to be looked at. The Public Trust Office should become again an efficient organisation.

Mr PEARCE: I appreciate the member's concern about the Minister not being present in the House, but in this particular case the Minister is representing another Minister. Although I concede that in the days of Sir Charles Court, Ministers did sit along the front bench like parrots on a branch - and they always had their coats and ties on even when the rules were changed because everyone knew that if they took their coats off Sir Charles would come around and tap them on the shoulder - but times have changed a bit. However, one thing is different: Although the Ministers were there, one never got any answers out of them when it came to the Budget debate. That was for two reasons - firstly, many of the questions we asked were embarrassing and they would not tell us the answers, and secondly, in the case of at least 50 per cent of the Ministers - I will exempt the member for Floreat - they simply did not know the answers. One of the things that one noticed in the time of Sir Charles Court was that the placement of advisers was an almost daily occurrence. In fact I used to suggest that we could short circuit the whole process of the Budget debate by letting the advisers do the talking and not the Ministers. All that is by way of saying that I am not in a position to respond directly to the questions and comments raised by the member on this particular issue. I will refer that to the Minister in another place. He will respond to the member in writing.

**Division 20 put and passed.**

**Division 21: Registrar General's Office, \$2 111 000 - put and passed.**

**Division 22: Law Reform Commission, \$817 000 -**

Mr MENSAROS: I would like to place on record the appreciation of the Opposition for the work of the Law Reform Commission. At times the question is asked whether the existence of the commission is necessary; fortunately this question was resolved in the affirmative. The work of the commission is very commendable and professional. If one needs information and approaches the commission it is very accommodating and helpful. It is a pity that sometimes its endeavours are misjudged, as in the recent case where the media made allegations against the Law Reform Commission when it brought down a discussion paper. The paper included factual statements in connection with the needs of under aged females from the point of view of medical advice. Opinions were not given or suggestions made in the paper; the public was asked to comment. However, almost a vendetta took place against the commission because the document had not been read sufficiently; a few words were seized on and found convenient to use. There is a very important role for the Law Reform Commission in this State and I commend its work and activities.

Mr PEARCE: I appreciate the member's comments. I will ensure that the commission is informed of the praise which he has given to it. I support the member's view. The Law Reform Commission has been a quiet achiever in this State over recent years. It has gone through a vast amount of legislation and made a plethora of sensible suggestions about the way in which the law might be reformed. Some members of the commission would be gnashing their teeth at incidents such as the so called age of consent which, of course, was never recommended by the commission which does a very good job in this State. The commission lives with those blows, as many other people do, and continues to do a good job. The commission's recommendations have been put into legal effect and many more are in the process of being approved by Cabinet. In the course of the next parliamentary year we will see many of the Law Reform Commission's references finding their way into the law.

**Division 22 put and passed.**

**Division 23: Legal Aid Commission, \$3 528 000 -**

Mr MENSAROS: The Legal Aid Commission has a very accommodating and helpful attitude. This commission is in a very different position because it is an agency which receives hybrid funding. This is an unhealthy situation. We had a lengthy debate yesterday during consideration of a matter of public importance and the Government agreed that

Commonwealth funding for tertiary institutions - at a time when the power to legislate lies with the State - is absolutely unhealthy. All State Governments should be persuaded to remedy this situation. It was not the intention of our founding fathers - for want of a better word - who were instrumental in the drafting of the Commonwealth Constitution that special grants should be used as the norm for financing State Government services. One does not need necessarily to go back to the source of the problem; that is, the transfer of collection of income tax from the States by the Commonwealth, but income taxes collected from the States should be returned to the States by way of general grants, not special grants.

The problem is that the Legal Aid Commission is mainly financed by the Commonwealth but its operations are carried out in the States and for the residents of States. This leads to conflict and criticism which in many cases is not deserved. I emphasise that the Legal Aid Commission does not necessarily represent only the citizens of this State. Recently people have argued against representation of Indonesian fishermen by the Legal Aid Commission. I can understand the criticism. I can understand why people ask how can aid be given to people who enter Australian waters, steal our fish and shells, and become parasites. People do not understand the situation. As long as the accepted criminal law principle prevails around the world, criminal charges will be laid against a person in the country where an offence is committed. That is the general rule, and this applies in every country. If an offence is committed in America, the Western Australian Courts do not hear the charge. Sometimes extraditions take place, but the basic rules of jurisdiction remain as I have outlined. Amnesty International would have problems if we were to deny legal aid to a person who has committed a crime here, and is being prosecuted here, because that person is not a citizen of Australia - in other words, that person is not being dealt with in the same way as an Australian citizen. This should be understood before anyone makes an emotional criticism, although that criticism may have public support.

The important matter to be considered with respect to legal aid is the enormous proliferation of costs of litigation and legal advice generally. I am not saying anything original; many people have touched on this point. Before his retirement, the former Chief Justice did so. An attempt should be made to solve the problem of institutionalisation of every activity; that is, the big companies and big unions can only afford litigation. Nothing is left for the middle man. Only those people in the big league can afford to pay legal practitioners. Thirty to 35 years ago a person could go down to the best legal offices in Perth to consult someone like Jack Durack KC, the father of Senator Peter Durack.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.15 pm*

Mr MENSAROS: Before the luncheon suspension I was commenting on the high cost of litigation and legal services generally, and saying that one of the reasons for that is the self-inflicted high overheads which legal officers face.

I recall, 30 or 35 years ago, when one was called to see the principal of a large legal office - people like Quinton Stowe and Jack Durack KC - they would be sitting in a humble, well-appointed little room, lined with books. I do not think they had any less legal knowledge, indeed, they were all round lawyers instead of specialists in a small, detailed field, as people are today who occupy three or four floors in high skyscrapers, with piped music, computers on every desk, and internal staircases. It is no wonder people have to pay for such things.

The point I really wish to make is that it is high time that thought was given to legal insurance. Legal aid is, of course, a necessary and accepted institution, but it only caters for the lower end of society, from the financial point of view of earnings and assets. It is the middle Australian who is left out; who often chooses not to litigate, even if in the right, because of the prohibitive cost of doing so.

Legal insurance is not entirely impossible - just as one has medical insurance, one ought to have some sort of legal insurance. The Liberal Party has such a plank in its policy and will endeavour, even if slowly and gradually, to introduce such a system. I realise that such a system would not be all embracing, particularly because of the handicap which we have with our small population. Every insurance is based on the largest possible number of insured people: The larger that number, the more the risk is spread, and the lower and more acceptable the premiums are.

During several trips overseas I studied existing legal insurance systems, particularly in the United Kingdom and West Germany. Those systems are not all embracing like our Hospital Benefit Fund and, more recently, Medicare, but are connected with certain activities. In West Germany almost every car salesman - whether of new or second-hand cars - offers, in the sale price of a car, an insurance policy which covers potential legal requirements for advice, litigation and defence connected with the use of that motor car. That is a step forward. We all know that occasionally one, almost unwittingly, may become involved in legal procedures as a result of the use of a motor car. Accidents do happen, and claims for damages arise from such accidents which could involve litigation and legal advice. The same situation exists in Britain, but perhaps on a wider scale.

I know the Law Society has given some consideration to this matter but it should be the Government - as we will when we are in Government - which examines the situation and supports such a measure to help it get off the ground. I am not suggesting it should be a Government insurance, but the Government should encourage private industry and give it the incentive to go ahead. If we want to remain a democratic society where people have equal opportunities, those equal opportunities ought to be spread over various fields of life and not confined to obvious areas of discrimination. We often spend a lot of money, effort and committee work on comparatively less important things which cost enormous amounts of money.

There is another matter I want to raise in connection with Legal Aid. It is an important matter concerning the proliferation of WA Inc and the various agencies and the new tendencies which have not been experienced at all before. Everybody involved in these agencies, that is, the Government, the departments and even the Ministers, is trigger happy when it comes to issuing writs against Opposition members on every occasion they possibly can; this is done irrespective of whether the writ has any chance of succeeding; irrespective of what the case is; and irrespective of the consideration which previously prevailed if one is in public life. In particular, a member of Parliament or a local councillor ought to participate in public debate which could easily lead to circumstances in which defamation could be allowed. That has been properly judged in the past, but today people appear to be very sensitive about doing this. One cannot distance oneself from the suspicion that this is being done deliberately in order to harass the Opposition. I am not saying that because I am involved, nor can I disregard it; I am not a rich man at all, but I will fight to the end to prove that I am right, and have been sued without proper ground.

I am also talking about the many other cases which undoubtedly will cause concern in time and expense. Therefore, it is a deliberate attempt to lessen the energy of members of the Opposition who are trying to do their job. It is an impossible situation and a ridiculous situation in which Mr so-and-so, who is on a \$290 000 salary, does not pay the expenses. In the litigation against the Opposition, whether it is brought by a Minister or the chairman of a Government agency, the expenses on the plaintiff's side are paid by the taxpayer.

**The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Dr Gallop):** Order! The level of background noise is rising too much to enable the Hansard reporter to listen to the speaker on his feet. Please keep it down.

**Mr MENSAROS:** This matter ought to be placed on the record because if the Government had some dignity and behaved in a way that the Government ought to behave, it would not be striving to have the Government and its agencies in a one party situation in Western Australia where all criticism of the Government and its agencies should be eliminated. Surely, the Government should get away from this practice which is, in itself, a very childish one which everybody in a real democracy would condemn. Unfortunately, in many cases it is nearing its purpose, which is to intimidate the Opposition members who are involved. If the Government were to say that a member of an agency or board must litigate at their own expense, that would be something different; but, as I said earlier, these people do not use their own money; they use the taxpayers' money which includes the money of the defendant against whom they issued the writ.

This is something that the Government ought to be thoroughly ashamed of because it has introduced this system, and it has shown how sensitive it is to criticism. If the Government had nothing to hide and if its instrumentalities were whistle clean it would not be as jumpy in initiating litigation.

**Mr PEARCE:** The question of Legal Aid is always a vexed one and the State is putting in a

big contribution to it. The Government is a bit alarmed about the way the Commonwealth has sought to withdraw from the field to some extent, but the new cooperative arrangements which were set in place a couple of years ago are likely to be useful. I appreciate the issues raised by the member for Floreat, although some were peripheral to the matter of State funding of Legal Aid. I will take the member's comments, such as the funding of the Indonesian fishermen and the other issues that were raised, and draw them to the attention of the Minister.

**Division 23 put and passed.**

**Division 24: Miscellaneous Services, \$196 283 000 -**

**Mr LIGHTFOOT:** I wish to refer to the allocations in this Budget made to our veterans of the Second World War, the more recent Vietnam War, to a lesser extent, and the Korean War - in fact, any of those conflicts in which our Australian servicemen and women have been involved. Approximately 60 000 Australians died in the First World War and approximately 40 000 Australians died in the Second World War. There is an apparent abrogation of the clear duty of this State Government and the Federal Government to those fighting men and women who gave so much of themselves and, indeed, gave their lives in defence of this country. I notice under Division 24 there is, in most instances, a reduction in the item, and I would have thought they would have a greater priority than they have been given. I mention in particular the Anzac Day Trust, which in 1987-88 had an expenditure vote of \$230 000. The expenditure was, in fact, \$188 000 and the estimated expenditure for this financial year is \$180 000.

I am quite sure that that should never have happened. I believe the men and women who are involved in the various returned services leagues, clubs, and trusts will be more than disappointed to find that the amount allocated for them not to commemorate the wars, injuries and killings, but to remember the tens of thousands of young Australians who died for this country, has been decreased in dollar terms and substantially decreased in real terms. In fact, no allocation has been made to the Vietnam Veterans Association when \$10 000 was allocated in 1987-88. That may have been a one off allocation for the belated welcome home to those brave young warriors in Sydney. I see no reason why a singular amount has not been allocated to the Vietnam veterans to help them maintain their association.

Likewise, the Totally and Permanently Disabled Soldiers Association received a meagre allocation in 1987-88 of \$1 500. The allocation this year is the same. I find that amount is less than charitable for these men and women who received war injuries, either directly or indirectly, from their association with the armed services.

I find it doubly confusing when I see, for the first time under this Division, an allocation of \$200 000 to the Fremantle Sailing Club which, by coincidence, happens to be in the Deputy Premier's electorate. One could be forgiven, without showing too much cynicism, for saying that that is a blatant form of pork-barrelling. I cannot come to grips with that sort of allocation when such meagre amounts have been set aside for those who fought and were maimed physically and mentally in the wars of this century.

The community sporting facilities contribution to the Trust Fund Account has increased from \$2.8 million which was allocated in the last Budget - slightly more than that was actually expended - to \$3.3 million. It is distressing that a greater priority is being placed on organisations that will benefit from the re-election of this Government rather than on the returned servicemen and their families who gave so much for their country.

This Division contains many items. I believe that I should be able to speak about our Aboriginal Australians under items 66 and 67. These remarks are a prologue to the general remarks I will make on our Aboriginal Australians. I am very distressed at the conditions under which our Aboriginal Australians live. I think their plight is disgraceful. I do not blame just this Government. The Governments which have preceded this Government and those which have preceded the Federal Government share the blame for the disgraceful condition of our Australian Aborigines today. We are celebrating 200 years of white Australian occupation of this country. That is insignificant when one considers that our black Australians may have been here for 60 000 years or longer and certainly for 50 000 years.

**The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Order! Would the member for Murchison-Eyre resume his

seat. The member is dealing generally with the Division relating to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. It would be more appropriate to discuss these matters under that Division. Will the member explain why he is discussing these matters now when we are dealing with Miscellaneous Services allocations.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: I am referring particularly to items 66 and 67. I said that the remarks were by way of a prologue to my more general comments.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! I would appreciate it if the member would address himself to items 66 and 67.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: Mr Deputy Chairman, do I take it that you are restricting me in speaking generally on Aboriginal Australians?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! The member will resume his seat. Aboriginal affairs are adequately provided for in this Budget under the heading of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and that is when the general debate will take place. The Miscellaneous Services aspect of the Budget deals with special purpose grants made from day to day to specific organisations. If we generalised the debate under the heading of Miscellaneous Services we could speak about every item in the Budget. If we did that we would not make any progress at all. I ask the member for Murchison-Eyre to restrict his comments to the Miscellaneous Services Division.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: I do not agree with your interpretation, Mr Deputy Chairman. I believe that this Division allows for a wide ranging debate. However, in taking cognisance of your advice, I am prepared to speak on Aboriginal affairs and not limit myself as I intended to do when we debate the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

In referring to the Vietnam veterans, I did not refer to one item. We do not pay enough attention to those men and women who form the vanguard in protecting this nation. I did not include the Returned Merchant Services Association in my earlier remarks. It is not broadly covered here but could be dealt with under the Anzac Day Trust. I believe the Government should look at this matter. I know the Government has received an application for funds from that association. I believe the Government has underestimated the contribution that those merchant seamen made to the war effort during the dark years between 1939 and 1945. I cannot understand why massive allocations have been made to community sporting facilities and to such things as Japanese study scholarships, which has been allocated \$70 000.

I would like the Minister to explain the reason for the \$200 000 grant to the Fremantle Sailing Club. An allocation has also been made to Law Asia (WA) and I ask the Minister to explain the reason for that grant. I notice that a grant of \$2.4 million has been allocated to Western Australian Development Corporation - LandCorp, and \$4.1 million has been allocated under item 56, Dependant Children's Rebate - Reimbursement to State Energy Commission. An allocation of \$7 million has been granted to pensioners' travel concessions in the metropolitan area. This allocation has increased from \$5.6 million, yet meagre grants have been made to those sections about which I have spoken. I ask the Minister representing the Attorney General to explain the reason for the disparity and why the emphasis has been placed on some of the things that I do not consider to have a significant priority compared with those organisations which encompass our returned services organisations.

Mr DONOVAN: I take this opportunity, as a returned serviceman, to respond to some of the comments made by the member for Murchison-Eyre.

Mr Cash: You are the member for Morley-Swan.

Mr DONOVAN: I think I said, "the member for Murchison-Eyre."

Mr Cash: After you were about to say the member for Morley-Swan.

Mr DONOVAN: No, I said "more". Members opposite can refer to me as the member for "more" because they will hear a lot from me for at least another four years.

The Anzac Day Trust is, as I understand it, an annual allocation which is based on the submissions made to the Attorney General from that trust. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services has helped me out further with this item. He has advised me this item provides for the transfer to the trust of betting taxes from racing, trotting and greyhound



racine meetings held on Anzac Day, and for a grant of \$500 800 for liquor licences equivalent to occasional licences granted under the Act. It is as simple as that. Funds available to the trust in the 1988-89 financial year are expected to be below the 1987-88 financial year levels due to a reduction in the rate of off course Totalisator Agency Board betting taxes from 7 per cent to 6 per cent from 1 August.

Mr Lightfoot interjected.

Mr Taylor: You do not understand what you are talking about.

Mr DONOVAN: The member for Murchison-Eyre misunderstood the purpose of the trust, the process by which the funds are allocated and the purpose for which those funds are allocated.

I had a first hand involvement in item 7 - Australian Vietnam Veterans - because I was one of those who made a submission for the 1987-88 financial year allocation. As the member for Murchison-Eyre rightly pointed out, it was specifically for assistance to the most important 3-4 October welcome home march and reunion. The reason that there is not an estimated amount shown for the 1988-89 financial year is because there is no welcome home and reunion march this year for which the Western Australian branch of the Australian Vietnam Veterans' Association has applied for assistance.

With reference to item 36 - Totally and Permanently Disabled Soldiers' Association - the association is primarily dealt with at a Federal level under veteran affairs allocations and this State Government's allocation handles the very occasional needs which are applied for from time to time. While it may appear that the 1988-89 financial year allocation is the same as the 1987-88 financial year allocation, I point out that it is no different from the 1986-87 and 1985-86 financial year allocations. It is a minuscule amount that is occasionally drawn on. Were there a need for a greater degree of State contribution to the fund I am sure it would be forthcoming.

Mr Lightfoot: Are you saying that there is no need to increase that sum?

Mr DONOVAN: An increase has not been sought because presumably there has not been the need to seek an increase. I point out for the benefit of the member for Murchison-Eyre that additional TPI concessions are covered by the Division which comes under the community services portfolio and it relates to conditions such as the Seniors Card and other services available to disabled people. It would do the member well to consult that Division and refer to the funds that are allocated.

I turn now to item 42. I understand from the Minister for Budget Management that the increase is to provide community and sporting facilities. One of the most persistent and consistent demands in my electorate - I know it is the same in other electorates - is for the provision of community and sporting facilities. This applies particularly to the newly established areas that are characterised by young families. There is a demand for positive sporting and recreational activities which are part and parcel of the very successful strategy of the Government to deal with the question of law and order on a broad front. That cannot be done without providing the sorts of activities people need in the sporting and recreation field.

It is unfortunate that the member for Murchison-Eyre has attempted to appeal to the sensitivities of members in this place in relation to the issues about service overseas in order to simply score a point by saying that somehow or other this Government is not providing services for the people who have served this country so well to the benefit of some other interest group. That is not the case. In fact, in my experience this State Government is the first on record in this State to pay any recognition in budgetary or policy terms to the role servicemen have played overseas and to their needs in peacetime.

Mr MacKINNON: I take this opportunity to speak on those items in this Division which do not have a number but which have a vote from last year. There are several of them which fall into this category.

First, I make a general statement about this place. I was not here yesterday, but today I have witnessed the way in which the Government is treating this Budget debate. It is a disgrace. I have been in the Parliament for 12 years and never have I witnessed such a cavalier and disinterested approach as that which this Government is taking. We have gone from Minister

to Minister and the Treasurer has been in this Chamber for a brief moment and that was to handle his section of the debate. We appear to be switching, in the same Division, from one Minister to another and none of the Ministers knows what he is talking about. The Government does not appear to have an interest in what is going on. The only member on the other side of the Chamber who has shown any interest is the member for Morley-Swan. He made a contribution that outshone the contribution made by any Minister who has been in this place today.

In defence of the member for Murchison-Eyre, I say that he has a longstanding concern for the interests of ex-servicemen and women in this State. He did not make a statement for any reason other than that he has a sincere interest in paying proper tribute to servicemen and women of this country who have made such a great contribution to Australia.

Mr Cash: It is almost a case of passing the answer book around to whoever is in the Chamber.

Mr MacKINNON: Exactly.

I would like to get some decent response to the points I am about to raise. I refer first to the allocation to the Restaurant and Caterers' Advisory Committee. The committee was established in a great blaze of glory by the former Premier, Brian Burke. There was seen to be a need - and there is - for the Government to take an interest in the restaurant and catering industries of this State, a vitally important part of our service and tourism industries. I have recently spoken to people in the industry. They feel very badly let down by the way in which the Government has treated them and the way in which the committee was set up. It would seem that it was set up merely for public relations purposes and that it has now dropped into oblivion. Very little, if anything, has been achieved. The Government has not made a sincere commitment to the industry in that regard. First, what was the expenditure last year for? Second, why is there no vote this year? It seems that the committee is not to continue. Third, what are the Government's plans to give this very important sector of our business community the support that it deserves?

The second area to which I direct my comments is the Western Australian Olympic Council (Inc). I merely take the opportunity to pay a great tribute to the Olympic athletes from Western Australia who represented Australia at the Seoul Olympics. The hockey girls single-handedly doubled the number of gold medallists from Western Australia. They are to be commended on the tremendous result that they achieved. However, equal credit must go to every one of our Olympic representatives, whether competitors or people involved in a management sense. I cannot recall an Olympic Games where we had such good representation right across the board. Those who represented Western Australia can be justifiably proud of the quality of their representation.

The third matter I raise concerns the payment of \$4.9 million to the Totalisator Agency Board. The fact that the Treasurer is not present when I raise such an important matter highlights the paucity of the Government's response to consideration of the Budget papers. The amount relates to the purchase of radio station 6PR; I have no quarrel with the purchase itself. However, I have a very grave concern when that purchase is coupled with the purchase by the Government of a significant proportion of West Australian Newspapers Ltd. After the purchase, the Treasurer came into the Parliament and said, "We are going to dispose of our share as soon as possible." Mr Rees, from the State Government Insurance Commission, also said that. However, the Government still owns a share of West Australian Newspapers and has taken no steps towards disposing of its equity. The Government should never have allowed itself to be in a position of having such a share and should have moved immediately to dispose of it. I place on the record my continuing concern that the Government continues to own a significant share of our daily newspaper, *The West Australian*. There is no role for the Government to own a section of *The West Australian* and it should have disposed of its equity a long time ago. I would like an indication from the Government as to when that day will be.

The next item to which I refer relates to the America's Cup. In 1987-88 there was an expenditure of \$838 725. I would appreciate a detailed breakdown of exactly what that expenditure entailed. I would also appreciate some advice - as I am sure all other Western Australians would - as to exactly what amount has been paid to Dennis Conner over the last two years and, more particularly, over the last 12 months.

Mr Hassell: I asked a question about Dennis Conner, but the Government refused to answer it. It said his contract had expired but recently when he was in Australia it said that the contract had been renewed.

Mr MacKINNON: That is the point I wanted to make. What contract has been renewed? What are we now paying Dennis Conner for and how much are we paying him?

Mrs Beggs interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: I do not believe that the Minister can say that the information is commercially confidential. I repeat that Mr Connor is getting our money. I understand that he is a very wealthy man in his own right. What are we getting for our dollar, and how many dollars are we giving him? I cannot see any great benefit of late. His latest project of endeavouring to get a 12-metre yacht race here has some merit, but why can we not know the details with respect to payments to him.

The next item I raise is that of natural disaster payments and other relief measures. An amount of \$3.2 million was spent last year. I would appreciate a detailed breakdown of that amount from whichever Minister is handling this matter.

Mr BRADSHAW: I wish to speak on an item which previously appeared under the National Safety Council. That item has now been removed as no funding was given to it. However, that is another matter. I think it was discussed last year during consideration of the Budget. I refer to the Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia which to some extent has taken up the work that previously fell under the umbrella of the National Safety Council. The organisation operates from Subiaco. It has an injuries surveillance section which works in with the Princess Margaret Hospital. It also works on the prevention of injuries to children. It is worthwhile from a humane point of view to prevent injuries to children; it is also beneficial economically if we can save the costs involved with having children hospitalised. It is a worthwhile foundation and the Government should provide it with some funds. I have been unable to find out for sure whether the State Government has given it funds in the past.

Mr Hodge: I gave them money when I was Minister for Health.

Mr BRADSHAW: I have a feeling that the foundation is under threat financially at present. As I said, it has taken over to some extent from the National Safety Council which was disbanded by the Government. I would certainly like to see the Government give due consideration to the foundation. I know that the Federal Government has given it some funding, but it has also indicated that it will not continue to fund the organisation.

Mr HOUSE: I take this opportunity to raise the matter of the subsidy with regard to swimming pools. I am sure that members of Parliament will remember that about two years ago the Government proposed to eliminate the subsidies currently given to country shire councils for the running of swimming pools within their areas. After extensive negotiations, the Minister for Budget Management agreed that there was a very good case for the retention of the subsidies and he saw fit to put them back in the Budget. I am sure I speak on behalf of all country residents who use the pools when I say that we are very grateful that he did so. I bring this point forward today because a swimming pool in my electorate, in the town of Newdegate in the shire of Lake Grace, has been denied the subsidy. To the best of my knowledge it is one of the very few swimming pools which has been denied a subsidy. The swimming pool was completed as a joint effort of the Shire of Lake Grace, the local P & C association of Newdegate and the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation, as it was then named. When the Shire of Lake Grace applied to have the subsidy made available for that pool, it was refused on the grounds that it was built on P & C land, not on land controlled by the shire council.

Although it is evident that the swimming pool has been built on P & C association land, it was done so for a very good reason; that is, to maximise the use that could be made of the swimming pool. I believe it is located in the most suitable part of the town. It is part of the whole community and plays an important role in the sporting and social activities in the summer. It is equally beneficial to the children of that school. The shire council was largely responsible for the development of the swimming pool; it raised the loan for the construction of the pool, had charge of the funds and let the contract, and a local committee was involved in building the pool. From discussions with the shire clerk I understand that in other towns

in Western Australia swimming pools built on land which is not controlled by the shire are receiving subsidies. That swimming pool was constructed for the use of the people in that town; the minor technical point that it was built on land controlled by the local P & C association should not prevent the subsidy from being paid to the Lake Grace Shire Council for the running of the pool. I am sure that most members in this Chamber will be aware that Newdegate is in the central wheatbelt, and that the summers are very hot; the swimming pool has been a great asset to the town and many people worked hard to put it there. It is unfair that that pool should not receive the \$300 000 subsidy for operating costs in the total expenditure of the Budget. I ask the Minister to re-examine the position of the Lake Grace Shire Council with regard to this swimming pool and that the subsidy be paid to the shire.

Mr CASH: I refer to the item relating to the Fremantle Sailing Club and the allocation of \$200 000. In that connection I wish to talk about a very important round the world race, the participants in which will visit Western Australia.

Mr Taylor: That is exactly what the allocation is about.

Mr CASH: I thank the Minister for indicating that the \$200 000 relates to that event and, I assume it will be applied for the dredging required at the Parnell pens which are part of the Fremantle Sailing Club. In late 1989 the Whitbread round the world race will include Fremantle as part of its voyage beginning from and ending at Portsmouth. There will be a number of legs to the race: The first from Portsmouth to Punta del Este, a voyage of 6 281 nautical miles; leg two will be from Punta del Este to Fremantle - 7 650 nautical miles; leg three will be from Fremantle to Auckland - 3 434 nautical miles; leg four from Auckland to Punta del Este - 6 255 nautical miles; leg five Punta del Este to Fort Lauderdale - more than 5 000 nautical miles; and the final leg from Fort Lauderdale to Portsmouth - 3 800 nautical miles. In all the race will cover about 32 000 nautical miles. It will be the first time that the Whitbread round the world race has called at Fremantle, and I am pleased that the Government will set aside funds to make sure that the Fremantle Sailing Club is dredged to a sufficient depth and that the facilities at the club will be adequate to receive those yachts. I know it has the support of the Leader of the Opposition who, with me and the shadow Minister for Tourism, has met with the flag officers of the Fremantle Sailing Club to discuss this proposal. It will be a very special occasion for Western Australia. The last time a major international yacht race was held in Western Australia was the America's Cup which did wonders not only for the port and city of Fremantle, but also for the State of Western Australia.

The reason I wanted to speak in the general debate rather than wait for the item, is that this afternoon I am meeting the president and members of the taxi owners' association. Those men and women who service the taxi industry in this State benefited a great deal from the America's Cup and I believe they will also benefit very significantly from the Whitbread round the world race in 1989. It is estimated that the race will bring approximately \$10 million in revenue to this State and that is certainly not an insignificant amount. If we are able to demonstrate that Western Australia can provide appropriate facilities for this sort of event, Fremantle may become a permanent fixture on this important international race and those yachts will call at the Fremantle Sailing club in due course.

It is interesting to note that South Australia was very keen to provide facilities to enable Adelaide to become one of the ports of call for that race, and at one stage there was a possibility of Fremantle's missing out. To the credit of this Government, and to the credit of the Leader of the Opposition, the Government has addressed the situation. The Leader of the Opposition, Mr MacKinnon, will be Premier of this State in 1989 and I look forward to his welcoming those yachts and seeing them off in early 1990 as they make their way on the next leg of that voyage to Auckland in New Zealand.

Mr LEWIS: I refer to the activities of LandCorp and particularly to its use as a vehicle to artificially generate profits to the Western Australian Development Corporation. Most people in the Committee, and indeed most people in business, are aware of the activities of companies which have a stable of companies where by virtue of underselling or overselling they can shift sideways profits or losses in order to balance the books and perhaps create - that is the appropriate word - the impression of profitability in one year and loss in the following year if it suits them. Unfortunately the Government is involved in this deception with the activities of WADC and it is using LandCorp as the vehicle. The specific grant to

LandCorp in the Budget papers last year was \$1.953 million, and I understand that WADC was the managing vehicle of LandCorp for only six months of that year. The allocation this year is \$2.422 million. With regard to the profit of WADC, and bearing in mind that \$1.953 million was a specific grant to LandCorp, that fundamentally was a grant to profit in a technical sense.

The Government is taking that \$1.953 million from last year, giving it to LandCorp and then WADC is saying, "We have done very well. We have made \$10.6 million this year." However, they forget to tell people that 18 per cent of that amount was a straight grant from Consolidated Revenue to LandCorp which jacked up the profit accordingly. That is a simple example of what I have been talking about. I think the chairman of WADC has made the point that that is a management fee. However, my understanding of the real estate industry is that when one collects rents, manages properties, or whatever, the fee is taken out and the balance is sent forward. I do not know what happens here because no-one can get into the accounts of LandCorp - not now, anyway. No-one can get into the accounts of WADC and no-one has any idea or understanding of what LandCorp has paid for various parcels of land that it has appropriated from the Rural and Industries Bank, or from Government agencies, at the direction of Cabinet.

Mrs Buchanan: The Deputy Leader was trying to tell us quite a bit about LandCorp yesterday. In fact, he was complaining about it making profits on properties in Karratha.

Mr LEWIS: That is what I am talking about, how false, deceptive and dishonest those dealings are.

Mrs Buchanan: They have made a profit.

Mr LEWIS: If the member for Pilbara really wants to know about that deal -

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Dr Gallop): Order! I do not know about that deal, but I do know about the Miscellaneous Services item in the Budget to which I ask the member to please address himself. My ruling on this matter is that the member was diverted by interjection and he should return to his speech.

Mr LEWIS: I will continue to talk about LandCorp and in so doing would like to explain to the House what happened at Karratha. LandCorp, through a particular real estate agent, one R.J. Ockerby -

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Dr Gallop): Will the member please resume his seat. I pointed out specifically to him that he was diverted by interjection to material external to the topic that he was discussing under the heading "Miscellaneous Services". I suggest that he returns to the debate at hand.

Mr LEWIS: I am trying to explain to the Committee about that grant to LandCorp, which is part of this Division and, as far as I understand, as it is mentioned in this Division I can discuss its activities in the general debate. If that is accepted I think it is right and proper that I explain to the Committee what happened in regard to the dealings of LandCorp. With your indulgence, Sir, I will explain what happened at Karratha where an agent, one R.J. Ockerby - who I understand was owned by Rothwells or maybe by L.R. Connell - sold a block of units to LandCorp. LandCorp then gave R.J. Ockerby a brief to sell those units to Homeswest. Talk about generating false profits and creating false commissions! If ever there was a scandal, that was it.

Mr Court: Who owns Ockerbys?

Mr LEWIS: A Mr L.R. Connell, I believe. The fact is that they are the perceptions being perpetuated by LandCorp via the WADC in its frustrated attempts to try to create profits where they do not exist. The whole manipulation of LandCorp is just for that reason, and that reason alone, because the direction to LandCorp was not to create subdivisions for the requirements of Western Australians; it was to go out and maximise its profits for the benefit of Treasury and the WADC - that is the bottom line, and members of the Government know it.

I turn now to LandCorp's land selling activities. There is presently a restriction on land sold by LandCorp that the purchaser must build on that land within 18 months of purchase. I referred to this matter briefly in the Parliament last week. LandCorp has taken over the activities of the Rural and Industries Bank and other agencies and has said that purchasers

must build on their blocks within 18 months. It is interesting that with regard to all previous sales by the R & I Bank there was a covenant or caveat to the effect that the purchaser had to develop the block purchased within four years. That was a perfectly reasonable approach. What one must realise is that if a person pays \$25 000 for a block of land - and this was considered to be starter land at the bottom end of the market - it is reasonable to assume that that person does not have the cash to buy the land but has the ability to put down a deposit of \$5 000 or \$6 000 and pay it off over the next two or three years to gain equity so that they may move on and build their own home.

LandCorp is now squeezing these people saying that they have to find that \$25 000 or \$28 000 - whatever the price - within 18 months otherwise they forfeit the block that they have purchased. It is important that LandCorp returns to the previous approach and gives people a longer period of time in which to pay for their land. One cannot expect a young couple aged 25 years to save \$20 000 a year as that is an impossibility. One cannot expect them to save that amount in two years, but perhaps they can save it in four years. I say that the Government should reappraise its caveat on the sale of those blocks because it is fair and reasonable that people should have four years in which to pay for their land and in which to gain some equity in that land so that they can then build a house which, by the way, is getting further from their reach every day.

I turn now to the very glossy publication that came out in the southern supplement the other day titled "Partners in the great Australian dream" which was a leader by LandCorp. It was a five or six page coloured supplement, the third in a row in a series. I will point out how fallacious this publication is. It reminds me of what happened in the dying days of the O'Connor Government. I can well recall the release of employment figures, Job Bank, Job Scheme, and all those sorts of things. Maybe the Government was panicking at that time, but it acted in exactly the same manner as this Government is now acting. Not a day has gone by in recent weeks when we have not seen a photograph of the Minister for The Arts promoting something that does not matter, or a photograph of the Minister for Employment and Training promoting something or other that does not matter. I can remember Ministers in the O'Connor Government doing the same thing. Members opposite have fallen into the same trap - they are panicking; they are trying to buy votes by showing they are doing something. However, it is too late.

I want to return to the "partnership to achieve the great Australian dream" and explain to the Committee how fallacious that is. The subdivision of Leda was on the books eight years ago. The planning, the original concepts, the subdivision proposals and a lot of the headworks were put in place under the Court Government by the former Minister for Housing, Cyril Rushton. I would like to read some of the fallacious statements made in this glossy publication, which went into all the southern - and some of the northern - newspapers as an insert.

Mrs Beggs: Do you not want people to know when that land will be available?

Mr LEWIS: I do not like the blatant lies that are being told in this publication.

Mr MacKinnon: They will not save the Government.

Mr LEWIS: No, they will not. The publication says -

At no stage during the long era of urban growth in Western Australia, has there been such pressure on families who wish to realise the dream of building a home of their own.

That is a true statement. The pressure has been created by this Government. The publication goes on to say that because of negative gearing -

Mr MacKinnon: Whose fault was the introduction of negative gearing?

Mr LEWIS: We all know. The publication says -

... softer interest rates and the impact of the October 87 stock market crash ... has led to an unprecedented and unpredictable demand for land ...

So the Government does at least recognise that it has a problem in respect of the supply of land. I heard the Minister for Housing say on the radio a few days ago that there is no shortage; it has all been hyped up by certain members of the Opposition. However, the

Minister is saying a few days later - it might even have been on the same day - in this publication that there is an unprecedented and unpredictable demand for land that has hit families hard.

Mr MacKinnon: Does the publication say it is the Opposition's fault?

Mr LEWIS: No, it does not.

Mr Clarko: How can it be unpredictable? The Minister for Planning has said the Government made 10 000 lots available, yet 12 years earlier our Government made 14 000 lots available.

Mr LEWIS: That is right. The real reason is that it was not unpredictable. The Government was not monitoring the supply of land. The situation has worsened, and the Government has panicked and has produced this false advertising to try to create a feeling in the community that everything is going well on the home front and the problems - which have been caused by Opposition members - will disappear. The publication says -

Clearly, the carefully laid long-term plans of LandCorp, to release a steady supply of properly developed land . . .

LandCorp has only had this land since January. The Government does not realise that Cyril Rushton, under a previous Liberal Administration, put in place all these plans. The Government is telling untruths when it says it has put together its plan in a remarkably short space of time. The publication says -

At no stage of this massive and rapid development, however, has there been a sense of panic.

Well, I am glad about that.

Mr MacKinnon: The Minister was obviously not at Winthrop, and spending the night there, along with all the other people.

Mr LEWIS: The fact is that LandCorp has been party to this fallacious propaganda that this Government has been churning out to the public. The public can see through these untruths and know that it is too late and that a glossy magazine will not fix up the problems. I understand that in order to get some land onto the market quickly at Leda, the Government telephoned one of the major developers in this town and said, "If you can do the deal quickly, you can have the deal." The Government did not call for tenders but rather telephoned people and said they could have the deal for a price.

Mr MacKinnon: "Quick, help!"

Mr LEWIS: Yes, and those people asked, "Why do you want it so quickly?" The Government said, "We need the money." The other point I want to make is that there was a caveat on the deal, which was that the developers could have the deal provided they could produce 100 lots at a price of less than \$20 000, because the Government had to honour the ridiculous statements made by the Minister for Planning around the town during the last 12 months. The fact is that within all the deals going on in Homeswest and LandCorp in the private sector, in the Government's endeavour to crank up enough blocks to service the dire needs of the community, there was the caveat I have mentioned. There is no land available within the inner metropolitan region, or even within the reasonable outer metropolitan region, other than at Leda or Parmelia, which comes anywhere near being under \$20 000. These facts about the fraudulent mouthing off by a Government in its last days should be known by the people of Western Australia, because we are seeing here the last gasps of a Government that is doomed.

Mr FRED TUBBY: I see in item 34 that last year, Parliament allocated to the Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal a vote of \$13 500, yet that organisation did not receive anything. The Spina Bifida Association was allocated a vote of \$5 000, yet did not receive anything. Is it the case that worthwhile organisations such as these must miss out, yet the Government is willing to spend \$60 000 on a Smash Hit Musical Production?

Mr Taylor: Do you not like that idea?

Mr FRED TUBBY: I think the Salvation Army and the Spina Bifida Association are more deserving of the funds.

Mr Donovan: Do you know what audience that organisation reached?

Mr FRED TUBBY: Is the member denying that those two organisations received nothing?

Mr Donovan: That organisation has reached the prime age group in accident prevention, and they are receiving it well.

Mr FRED TUBBY: How can a group like that receive \$60 000 when a worthwhile organisation such as the Salvation Army, which has been given a vote of the paltry amount of \$13 500, received absolutely nothing?

Mr Donovan: Are you saying that group is not worthwhile?

Mr FRED TUBBY: I am going by what the Government is saying in its Budget papers. If the member is saying that the Budget papers are wrong -

Mr Taylor: No; you are wrong. The fact is that the first \$13 500 relates to the appeal that started in June 1988, and was actually paid in this financial year. The second amount of \$13 500 will also be paid in this financial year. Both figures come into this financial year's expenditure.

Mr Clarko: So they will get seven per cent less this year in real terms than last year because of inflation.

Mr FRED TUBBY: What I am reading here is for 1987-88; it goes, I presume, from 1 July 1987 to 30 June 1988.

Mr Taylor: I asked for the cheque in this financial year, and that is when they will get it. Their second cheque for next year's appeal they will have this financial year. That \$13 500 is shown in last year's figures, and it will be paid this year, as will also an additional amount to be paid this year.

Mr FRED TUBBY: I accept the Minister's explanation. That answers my question very nicely.

Under item 50, \$35 million went to the R & I Bank. Is this the \$35 million which went to the bank two or three weeks earlier and was reported in *The West Australian* half way through the big fanfare over the \$32 million profit which the R & I Bank handed over to the Government?

The WA Teachers Financial Society - is that the Teachers Credit Society by another name?

Mr Taylor: Yes.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I want to rectify some of the misleading rhetoric used by the member for East Melville and to comment on the land release at Leda.

Mr Court: Good to hear your voice for a change.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: Unlike the member for East Melville, some of us choose the time to speak, and hopefully in doing that we take the opportunity to speak the truth and to speak accurately about the events that surround the issues. The member for East Melville takes the opportunity to open his mouth and say anything that comes into his mind at the time, and he brings the argument down to the lowest common denominator, which is usually the gutter level.

The situation with Leda is quite clear. The Leda plan has been in vogue for over four years. The first part of that release took place some 12 months ago, and is known as Homestead Ridge. Those blocks of land went onto the market some 12 months ago. The total development will eventually house some 15 000 people. It has the potential to double the size of Kwinana. All that has happened is that the second phase of the total development has taken place. The member for East Melville was not being truthful in indicating that there were no discussions at all in the marketplace to determine whether developers were interested in the Leda development. In fact the opposite has happened. Discussions have been taking place for a number of months with a number of developers to determine their willingness to participate in the Leda development.

What this Government is committed to seeing in Leda, unlike previous Governments, is a mix of housing in developments of this size. We are no longer interested in building large estates of Homeswest dwellings, which has historically been the case in Western Australia.



We are interested in seeing a mixed development, because that is in the best interests of everybody involved in such a development, not least the people who will live there.

The developers involved have indicated their willingness because they see the rapid growth which is taking place in the Kwinana region. They see the Leda development as an exciting development, possibly the most exciting urban development to take place in the metropolitan area in the last few years. In 1988 the market demand is there and it is time for them to become involved in the Kwinana region. Unfortunately what occurs with people like the member for East Melville, with his rantings and ravings - as occurs with some radio announcers such as Howard Sattler - is that in their uninformed comments on Kwinana they continue to downgrade the people of Kwinana. They continue to paint a picture of Kwinana that it does not deserve.

Mr Lewis: I did not say anything about Kwinana.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I listened very carefully to the emphasis of what the member was saying.

Mr Lewis: What did I say?

Mr MARLBOROUGH: The member quite clearly indicated that Kwinana gets treated very differently from other parts of the metropolitan area as shown by the way in which LandCorp has been involved in this development. If the member would look at the facts surrounding this development and talk about them, he could paint a totally different picture.

Mr Lewis: I was involved there some years ago when I was in consultancy.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: We know the member's ability to remember things eight hours after the event. We all listened to the escapades of his car the day after it happened. Being involved eight years before the event and relying on that sort of memory and his ability to tell the truth leaves a lot to be desired in terms of whether we should take much notice of what the member has to say.

#### *Withdrawal of Remark*

Mr LEWIS: I would like the member for Cockburn to withdraw the statement that I did not tell the truth. The facts are that I never made any statement at all to do with my motor vehicle. Statements about that vehicle were not made by me at any time.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Dr Alexander): I am not entirely clear what the member for East Melville asks the member for Cockburn to withdraw. However, in the interests of this debate proceeding I suggest that he withdraw any inference that the member for East Melville was not telling the truth in relation to the point he raised.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I withdraw those statements that the member for East Melville may have been concerned about.

#### *Committee Resumed*

Mr MARLBOROUGH: What -

#### *Point of Order*

Mr LIGHTFOOT: Mr Deputy Chairman, on other occasions you have been very quick to point out to a speaker who has strayed from the subject matter that he should not do so. It is my belief that this speaker has on several occasions already strayed too far from the subject matter. I can find no relationship to this particular section of the Budget and what he is speaking about.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The difficulty is that if anybody is guilty of straying from the subject matter, although I was not in the Chair at the time, I suggest the general nature of this debate has got well away from part 4. I make the point to all speakers that we are debating part 4 of the Budget, and they should confine their remarks as far as possible to that part. That will speed up the whole process of this debate.

#### *Committee Resumed*

Mr MARLBOROUGH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Chairman. I will conclude by saying that the Leda development is a development which is supported by the residents of Kwinana, and it should be supported by all the major political parties in this State. It has not been badly

planned and put on the market in five minutes; it has been in existence for four years.

The member made a statement in respect of a \$20 000 price tag for blocks in Leda. The subdivision of Parmelia, which is located close to the Leda development, is presently selling for approximately \$16 500 per block. It is similar land, and it would appear to me to be outside the market guidelines for any developer, whether LandCorp or any other, to develop similar land to that which already exists in the municipality and expect to sell that land for something far higher than the market trend within the area. As the local member, I am more than happy that land in the Kwinana region is selling at \$16 500. It is that end of the market we are all concerned about. The Opposition has been going on about first home buyers for a number of weeks, and we should support this development. It has been well planned; it has gone through all the processes; there have been no shonkie deals with developers, demanding that they keep prices down; there has been no going through back doors and asking them to participate when others have not been approached. It is a good development and should be supported by us all. It shows the Government is on the right track in supplying this sort of land, especially for the first home buyer.

Mr SCHELL: I intend to keep directly to Part 4, and I have two queries. In item 55 - Western Australian Meat Marketing Corporation - I note that for the first time an amount of \$200 000 has been allocated. I ask the Minister to tell me the areas this amount covers. Secondly, in item 57 - Grain Freight Subsidy - Reimbursement to Westrail - I note the amount of the subsidy has dropped. Last year the figure was \$2 476 888, and this year it is down to \$350 000. I take it that this figure has been affected purely by drought declarations and more areas of deregulation of rail freight throughout the State, but I query whether any other factors have contributed to this drop in subsidy. This is one example of the fact that when we have a good season in Western Australia it not only affects farmers but also all people throughout the State; it points up how dependent we are on rainfall and the primary industries of this State.

Mr TAYLOR: It is fairly difficult to reply to general points when there were not very many of them but rather comments on the items themselves. However, I will endeavour to address the matters raised.

The member for Murchison-Eyre made some play of coming out in favour of matters associated with returned soldiers, and the member for Morley-Swan gave a very adequate answer indeed to those matters. Rather than repeat that answer I will just say that what the member for Morley-Swan had to say was absolutely accurate, and that in each of the cases raised in relation to the Anzac Day Trust, Vietnam Veterans and TPIs the Government has allocated the amounts necessary when they have been necessary and, in relation to the Anzac Day Trust, it is clear that it is a matter of funding the amounts that are raised in relation to the proceeds from betting at race meetings and also liquor taxes from occasional licences on Anzac Day itself. That is an appropriate way to do it. The reason for the decrease is that there was a change in taxation arrangements which saw a decrease in off-course totalisator tax from seven per cent to six per cent from 1 August this year.

The member for Murchison-Eyre also said the allocation to the Fremantle Sailing Club was in the nature of pork barrelling for the Deputy Premier's electorate. It is far from being that. As was pointed out very clearly by the member for Mt Lawley, it is very much associated with the Whitbread round the world yacht race which will be of immense benefit to Western Australians. In fact, that amount of money will not be paid directly to the Fremantle Sailing Club but will be used by the Department of Marine and Harbours to undertake the necessary dredging.

The Leader of the Opposition raised a number of points that were more in the nature of general debate than some of the others raised. One of them related to why the allocation for the Restaurant and Caterers Advisory Committee has disappeared. That committee was set up to investigate the restaurant and catering industry and was allocated a certain amount of money over a period of two years to do its work. During the course of that work the accounting firm Ernst & Whinney completed a report on the industry on its behalf, and that report made recommendations that would improve the lot of the industry in Western Australia. They completed their work and as a result the committee was disbanded, so of course there was no need to allocate funds in this year's Budget. I have discussed this matter with the Minister for Tourism, who met recently with people associated with that committee.

It may be her intention to bring the committee back to work on some of the issues involved and if that be the case it will undoubtedly have the Minister's support and the complete support of the State Government in that regard.

The Leader of the Opposition also raised the matter of the allocation for the Olympic Games. I cannot but agree with him as to the outstanding performance of Western Australians who were part of the Olympic team that went to Seoul. There was no allocation for the Olympics this year as there was no need for one because we made an allocation at the time it was needed and that money was very wisely spent. I believe this Government has been a great supporter of sport and recreation in Western Australia since its election in 1983. We have seen some outstanding developments in sport, especially capital developments, which I believe have been of great benefit to all Western Australians but particularly to some of the elite sportsmen and women in Western Australia. Those developments have played a major role in the actual strength of numbers of Western Australians who were part of the Olympic team which went to Seoul. The same applies to the Western Australians who are now taking part in the Disabled Olympics in Seoul, some of whom also have had very good use of the facilities developed over the past few years. Apart from these facilities there has also been a great deal of emphasis on coaching, and rightly so. The Minister for Sport and Recreation has emphasised that he sees his role, especially from now on, as encouraging higher levels and standards of coaching in Western Australia so that young Western Australians taking part in sport receive the sort of coaching they should receive rather than being coached on most occasions by people who, while they may be very enthusiastic in going about their tasks, may not have all the skills necessary to coach especially junior teams. In general, we have done an outstanding job in Western Australia in boosting sport and recreation, but particularly the sporting side. While I am not one who favours an elitist approach in most matters, elitism in sport sets an example for others to follow. That has happened to a large degree in Western Australia and we are now seeing the fruits of that campaign by the Burke Government and now the Dowding Government.

The Leader of the Opposition also mentioned the Totalisator Agency Board. My understanding was that he was opposed to the TAB's purchasing the Western Australian Trotting Association's share of the TAB.

Mr MacKinnon: I am not opposed to it, as long as the Government does not own also a share in West Australian Newspapers Ltd. If it retains the share in *The West Australian*, I oppose it.

Mr TAYLOR: It was my understanding the Leader of the Opposition was opposed to it; I am pleased to hear he is not opposed to it except on that particular ground. As to the share in West Australian Newspapers Ltd, that is tied up with other matters involving share purchases. As a member of the Government who has helped make decisions in these sorts of areas, in my view we had every right to be involved in some of those transactions and to ensure that ordinary Western Australians were able to participate in the profits to be made from them; they have, in almost every degree, been very profitable ventures and very important indeed. I should also say that the Treasurer has made it well known on a number of occasions that at no time whatsoever has he had, nor will he have, any involvement in the editorial policies or management of WA Newspapers Ltd. That should be the case; it should never change from that.

Mr MacKinnon: I did not mention that; I said the ownership.

Mr TAYLOR: I know that, but I am making it clear that we have not had, and will not have, any involvement whatsoever in that sort of matter. That is the way it should be, and that is the way it will remain.

Mr Lewis: Are you indicating that the Treasurer will not ring the newspaper?

Mr TAYLOR: I imagine that the member for East Melville rings the newspapers every day. I will not undertake that the Treasurer will not ring the newspapers just as I ring the newspapers to discuss matters with them and give them my views. I think that is the right of every Western Australian; it is certainly not a right I would deny myself or the Treasurer.

Mr MacKinnon: When do you think he will dispose of the shares?

Mr TAYLOR: That is a matter for those involved in the ownership of those shares. Undoubtedly when they are sold Western Australians, as a result of the profits that emanate

from those sales, will be the principal beneficiaries because I have no doubt that a substantial profit will be made.

The Leader of the Opposition also mentioned natural disasters. There has been a change in the funding for natural disasters. That shows a decrease of \$3.2 million in natural disaster funding and the reason for this is related to the difficulty in budgeting for natural disaster payments and other relief measures. Members would understand how difficult it is to budget for natural disasters because they occur when we least expect them. The accounting arrangements for this item were changed in 1986-87. Annual funding for natural disasters now takes place through the Treasurer's Advance Account, which is recouped from a budgetary allocation in the following year. That is why it is shown as it is shown in this document. The Leader of the Opposition also asked about the breakdown of that \$3.2 million. I do not have the breakdown for the last financial year, but if the Leader of the Opposition wants it, as I am sure he does, I will get hold of it for him.

The member for Murray-Wellington mentioned the Child Accident Prevention Foundation. As a former Minister for Health I had quite a bit to do with that foundation and I am aware of the good work it undertakes. It does that work principally through Princess Margaret Hospital, and it is given support through that hospital by the Government. That is important support for the foundation, and it will undoubtedly continue. A very important development is now taking place to improve accident prevention throughout Australia - the Federal Government has a policy called "Health for All". The Federal Government has made it clear, through that policy, that it is prepared to cost share accident prevention in Australia with State Governments and the Territory Government over the next three years. It is a policy which is designed to try to bring about a reduction in accidents suffered both by children and by people in the work force. The Federal Government is prepared to put \$40 million aside over the next four years for this purpose. I am sure Western Australia will enter into an agreement with the Federal Government in respect of this issue. I am certain also that, given the important and positive role of the Child Accident Prevention Foundation in this State, the Minister for Health will be more than willing to ensure its involvement in those sorts of activities. The foundation is not the sort of organisation one would leave out of involvement in this area. I have all the time in the world for the foundation, as I know both the former Minister for Health, the member for Melville, and the present Minister for Health have. I think the foundation can count on the sort of support it now receives continuing.

The member for Katanning-Roe mentioned swimming pool subsidies. As country members of Parliament, I, the member for Esperance-Dundas and the member for Geraldton, actually had some small role to play in turning around the Government's decision on swimming pool subsidies so they were able to continue. Those subsidies are continuing. The member has quite rightly raised the issue of the pool at Lake Grace, which was denied a subsidy because it was on P & C association land. I find that extraordinary and I will ensure that this matter is taken up with the Treasury to see whether we can rectify that situation. I do not know whether it has been examined over the years or whether it is a recent occurrence, but we will have another look at it to see what can be done.

I was pleased that the member for Mt Lawley indicated his support for the Whitbread race. The Government has decided to support that race through an allocation of \$200 000 for dredging around Parmelia Harbour. That money will not be paid directly to the Fremantle Sailing Club. It will be made available to the Department of Marine and Harbours, which will be involved in undertaking the dredging work. That race will be a big plus for this State. I recall many years ago being at Plymouth when the Transatlantic single handed race was run; I think that was sponsored by the *Daily Express*. Many thousands of people took an interest in that race, and I have no doubt that many thousands of Western Australians will also take a real interest in the Whitbread race when the competitors arrive at Fremantle in 1989. Unlike the member for Mt Lawley, I have no doubt that the competitors will be greeted by Premier Dowding and will be waved goodbye by him and not by anyone else.

The member for East Melville, as one would have expected, launched into LandCorp.

Mr COURT: Just on that Whitbread race, it would not be bad going in it.

Mr TAYLOR: I do not know; I do not think I would be game enough to go in it, to be quite honest.

Mr Court: They make a film of every race; it is quite dangerous and absolutely spectacular.

Mr TAYLOR: Is it not a single handed race?

Mr Court: No.

Mr TAYLOR: It is the maxi yachts.

Mr Court: Yes. When they go around Cape Horn, for example, they are sailing among icebergs. It is really spectacular.

Mr TAYLOR: The member for Nedlands is a yachtsman of some note, so I suppose he would be attracted to that, but being the member for Kalgoorlie I am not a yachtsman of any note whatsoever.

Mr Court: Most of the big yachts are owned by people from Kalgoorlie.

Mr TAYLOR: I gather that is the case. Having read of some of the experiences of people who recently sailed around Australia in the Bicentennial Race, and the sorts of seas they encountered sailing across the Southern Ocean with waves which some of them described as being eight stories high, I do not think I would look forward to that at all.

Mr Court: It is actually more dangerous sailing close to the coast than it is doing an around the world trip.

Mr TAYLOR: Yes. Turning from the niceties of life to the difficulties of life and the member for East Melville, that member had a bit to say about LandCorp and its operations. I do not have any doubt that LandCorp is playing a very important role in ensuring an adequate supply of land for Western Australians, particularly young Western Australians, who live in the Perth metropolitan area, or wish to live here -

Mr Court: You have priced them right out of the market.

Mr TAYLOR: I do not think we have. If one looks at the sort of developments which were spoken of very eloquently by the member for Cockburn, the fact is that something like 15 000 lots will come onto the market in 1988-89. Since we have been in Government, something like 39 000 lots, both public and private, have come onto the market. If one looks at the figure of 15 000 in 1988-89, that is 53 per cent of the entire production of lots that came onto the market in the metropolitan area in the last five years of the Liberal Government. It is not a bad effort and the fact is there is no doubt -

Mr Clarko: Why choose the last five years because we built it up earlier than that?

Mr TAYLOR: Why not? The fact is that the Liberal Government did not do a very good job at all and if member for Karrinyup wants to compare the number of lots we have put on the market with the Liberal Government's paltry record, he will fail on every occasion.

Mr Clarko: Around 1976, we put 14 000 blocks on the market.

Mr TAYLOR: The sorts of comments made by the member for East Melville are made in an attempt to scare young people; he implies there is not enough land. They are exactly the sorts of comments which will force up land prices. In my view, the comments are irresponsible. I am surprised that the member for East Melville would seek to go down that track, and it is astounding that he should suggest that this Government has not put its shoulder to the wheel. The LandCorp people put their shoulders to the wheel, not five days but seven days a week - and probably for 60 or 70 hours a week.

Mr Lewis: We know more than you.

Mr TAYLOR: I do not know that the member does know more than I do. When I listen to the member speak I doubt that that could be the case.

Mr Thomas: That is the conclusion I reach.

Mr TAYLOR: I think that most people who listen to the comments made by the member for East Melville, and my response on land matters - if they looked at them in a fair way - would come to the same conclusion. I was also surprised to hear the member for East Melville say that Government Ministers who had their photos in the newspapers were promoting things that "did not matter".

Mr Lewis: Look at today's *Daily News*!

Mr TAYLOR: That is exactly what I want to talk about.

Mr Court interjected.

Mr TAYLOR: Does the Deputy Leader of the Opposition agree with the member for East Melville that what is being promoted in that newspaper does not matter?

Mr Court: I wouldn't promote Gordon Hill.

Mr TAYLOR: Does the member agree that it does not matter? The member will not say that, will he? The reason he will not say that is because employment and training - particularly the training side - do matter. They matter very much to young Western Australians. One area which this Government has taken a special interest in - both the Premier in his former portfolio, and the present Minister for Employment and Training - is the training of young Western Australians. That represents our future as a State and as a nation. Yesterday at the decision makers' lunch, the Secretary of the ACTU, Bill Kelty, made the point that the question of training and education is at the top of the ACTU agenda. That is very appropriate; it is appropriate also that the Government of Western Australia is prepared to make it one of the most important issues as far as the future of the State is concerned.

The member for Dale mentioned the Red Shield Appeal allocation, which I have explained. He also mentioned the Spina Bifida Association of WA. I know a little about this area due to my time spent as Minister for Health. He also touched on the Smash Hit Musical Production. This production was in every way a smash hit and was aimed at young Western Australians in an effort to encourage them not to mix alcohol and driving and to be responsible in those areas. Having seen the production, I can say that it hits the nail on the head. Talking to young people after the show - not only those who went along to see it but also those who were involved in it - I realised their concern and that they wanted to make sure that a responsible attitude was taken. They welcomed that production.

The Spina Bifida Association allocation has been reduced. This association assists the families of affected children to counter the day to day problems associated with the disease. Until December 1982, the State provided an annual grant towards the rental cost of the association's premises in Subiaco. However, when the association moved into rent free accommodation in Wembley, the Government agreed to provide a grant as a contribution towards the salary cost of the coordinator's position. As the association now qualifies for Commonwealth assistance, it has advised that the State grant is no longer required. That is all to the credit of the association - having applied for and received a Commonwealth grant it has informed the State Government that as it is receiving funds from another source for the accommodation, it is happy to forgo the State allocation. All the people associated with this group work very hard indeed.

The member for Mt Marshall mentioned the question of meat marketing. The WA Meat Marketing Corporation was formed in 1986-87 by the amalgamation of the Lamb Marketing Board and the marketing division of the WA Meat Commission. In recognition of the costs involved in the establishment of the WA Meat Marketing Corporation, the Government agreed to meet the net establishment costs of that corporation, in this case \$200 000.

The matter of grain freights was raised. The decreased allocation represents the phasing out of the grain freight subsidy - reimbursement to Westrail - which is discontinued from 1 November 1988. Cabinet approved a package including the total deregulation of wool transport from 1 January 1986, and the bringing forward by two years of the introduction of competitive rate schedules for grain, including grain receiver bins located 250 kilometres from port. The schedule was a package of grain freight rates competitive with road transport charges that Westrail was contracted to progressively introduce over a four year period. This item provided for the payment to Westrail of an amount to offset the revenue shortfall resulting from the implementation of the scheme. That is the reason for the change.

I am pleased to see, as far as this Division is concerned, that we are also showing at the latter part of the Division the votes and expenditures which have been adjusted for grants and subsidies transferred to other Divisions. Many years ago when parts of the Miscellaneous Services Division were transferred to other Divisions, often what had happened to an allocation was not obvious. Today we are showing what has been transferred and into what area. This system is easier for members to follow. As the Leader of the Opposition said

members would also find it easier if a way were found to continue to number all items. This would make my job and the Chairman's job much easier. I will take that point up with Treasury.

#### **Item 4: Association for The Blind of WA -**

**Mr COURT:** The Minister has some knowledge of the operations of both the Association and the Institute of the Blind. There has been a lot of publicity recently about the problems experienced in this area. I realise that the association has a large job to do as it provides not only a wide range of services but also runs a large nursing home. Could the Minister give some assurances, in view of the upheavals faced by these two bodies over the last year, that the situation will be brought under control. Does the Government have plans to streamline the operations of those two bodies to ensure that the services provided do not tend to have so much of a welfare type flavour, and that the quality of the service is upgraded? If the Minister has an understanding of the situation, could he comment?

**Mr TAYLOR:** I know a little about this matter, having been Minister for Health in the past. I should add that the person in charge of the operations of the association in Victoria Park used to be a member of my staff. I understand that she was asked by the association to manage its activities due to the difficulties faced in that area. We keep in touch on an irregular basis, but I hope that a lot of the problems the association is currently facing, as a result of the incident that occurred some time ago and the Coroner's inquest, are being overcome. I do not know the details but, knowing the qualities of the director of the association, I have no doubt that they will be overcome, if they have not been overcome already.

As a matter of interest, the member for Victoria Park is on the board of the association and makes a very valuable contribution. It is only this year that the member for Victoria Park has become involved with the association, at its invitation, it being a very important part of his electorate. I well recall visiting that nursing home some time ago, during the by election for Victoria Park, and meeting an old fellow who was over 100 years of age - a very interesting and fanatical Labor supporter he was too who, unfortunately, has since died.

Dr Gallop interjected.

**Mr TAYLOR:** Yes. I believe that given the qualities of the people involved, the sort of difficulties being faced by the association as a result of the very unfortunate incident will be overcome.

#### **Item 14: Emergency Water Rescue Services -**

**Mr COURT:** Does this concern the sea rescue groups?

**Mr Taylor:** Yes, the Sea Search and Rescue Association.

**Mr COURT:** These people, for many years, had a great deal of difficulty in getting support for their operations, which are run on a voluntary basis, and provide a very effective organisation in many parts of the State. Everyone in this House should give credit to these people for the fact that a lot of them are prepared to use their own time and money to provide this much needed service. There is a tendency with such rescue service organisations for full time, paid people to eventually become involved - perhaps through a Government body like the Navy or Marine and Harbours - but these people recognise the need for their services in the first place, and they should always be encouraged.

Not only are such people directly involved in rescue operations, but they provide a good deal of safety education amongst the many people who go to sea. A lot of people do not treat the sea with proper respect; they think that a trip to Rottnest, for example, is a simple exercise, but there may be many hazards on such a trip. A lot of people doing that run, and others out fishing, have been able to take advantage of these emergency services 24 hours a day.

The problems we hear about in the north of the State with Coastwatch and illegal immigrants and fishermen highlight the difficulties we have on our coast. We have a large coastline, which is very difficult to patrol, and a group of volunteers has provided a tremendous service in built up areas. Queensland probably led the way in the establishment of these volunteer rescue organisations because that State has a lot of ports up and down its coast, and a lot of keen fishermen and women - I will not say fishing persons. These people have not received a lot of funds from the Government, yet in return they have certainly provided a tremendous

service, which has saved the lives and embarrassment of the many people who go to sea.

Mr TAYLOR: As the Minister currently responsible for this area I agree entirely with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. If my memory serves me correctly, his father is a patron of the Sea Search and Rescue Organisation. That organisation provides a very valuable service indeed. The services it provides are in keeping with a wide range of volunteer services provided in an emergency or rescue capacity in Western Australia - whether through the State Emergency Service, the Bush Fires Board or the Volunteer Fire Brigade - all of which provide services while giving of their own free time. We have now, throughout the length and breadth of our coast in Western Australia, from as far south as Esperance to as far north as Karratha, this Sea Search and Rescue Organisation. The organisation plays a vital part in search and rescue as far as the police and Marine and Harbours are concerned.

I am pleased we are able to give this organisation increased funding at this time. In 1985-86, when there were some changes to funding arrangements, those arrangements were based on 18 groups; levels of funding this year are based on an expected 25 groups, as far as search and rescue is concerned, and that is an important component in the sort of increase at which we are looking. There is also a specific allocation of \$10 000 for the association itself, and \$4 000 for the insurance of group members' boats and equipment. This is a very important group - one that I am pleased to be associated with - and I will try to maintain the sort of support that we have seen from the point of view of the police and Marine and Harbours.

**Item 22: Missions to Seamen -**

Mr COURT: Last Sunday the member for Welshpool and I were guests at a seafarer service at Fremantle in St John's church, which was followed by a very enjoyable lunch with a number of the people who were at that service. It was interesting talking to some of the people involved in providing services to seamen and women.

Mr Thomas: Sea people.

Mr COURT: No. The men and women who go to sea.

Mrs Buchanan: Seafarers.

The CHAIRMAN: Please address your remarks to the Chair.

Mr COURT: Seafarers. There is a growing need for the services provided by these groups because of the ports up and down the coast of this State, and the new ports which are being developed.

When one is at a church service and there is a prayer said for those at sea - people who are going through storms and the like - a lot of people who do not go to sea perhaps might say such prayers a little glibly. What really brought the problem home to me was the sailors visiting from the Royal Navy who were due to go into Melbourne and, because of the Seamen's Union's activities, were not allowed to berth and had to stay at sea. Those sailors had been at sea for a long time. I would have thought that the Seamen's Union would have realised that the sailors have feelings and, in many cases, families who had flown out from England to see them when they visited that port. It was a despicable act which occurred on that occasion. As those people were officially invited to our shores as part of our bicentennial celebrations it was an act that almost amounted to treason. It is a crazy situation that a union can dictate which warships will visit our ports. I make this point because those sailors were left at sea in terrible conditions. Those of us who saw the incident on television would have seen that there was a storm in Melbourne, and Port Phillip Bay is no place to be when it is rough.

My other point, and the member for Pilbara might be interested in this, is that there is a growing demand for the services provided in the Missions for Seamen at the ports in the north. It is sad, in a way, that we have difficulty in funding locally the services those missions provide. Some of the services provided in the Pilbara, in the north of the State, are funded from England.

Mrs Buchanan: Which ones are you talking about?

Mr COURT: The Missions for Seamen in Karratha and Hedland.

Mr Taylor: It is Dampier and Port Hedland.



Mr COURT: They get funding from England, do they?

Mr Taylor: No.

Mr Watt: It is the International Seamens Union which brings in a bit of money.

Mr COURT: It was explained to me that the church in England provides funding for some of those missions because we cannot provide enough funds locally. That is not meant to be a criticism of the Government. It is a criticism of the church people who are trying to provide that service. I would like to think that the church with which I am involved, for example, realises that there is a big demand for that type of service in those areas. As these ports grow, the number of ship movements increase. The \$10 000 provided by the Government is a small contribution to the services these missions provide. I hope that the Government listens to requests from these groups for grants for special projects and gives them a sympathetic hearing. We very much depend on shipping and upon the men and women involved in the shipping industry. It is important, therefore, that their welfare is not ignored and that they are not taken for granted. The turnaround times are extremely quick but they have many needs while on shore leave and the missions do a lot of good work in fulfilling those requirements.

Mr TAYLOR: The \$10 000 allocation is made up of annual grants of \$1 250 to missions at Albany, Bunbury, Dampier, Esperance, Fremantle, Geraldton, Port Hedland and Point Walcott. I have no doubt these missions do an excellent job. I recall that my wife's grandmother used to go to Fremantle to help in the mission there because her son was involved in the Navy during the war. There is no doubt they did an excellent job and Governments will always support these organisations.

As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, church groups have a responsibility to become involved in the missions and ensure that they receive the necessary level of financial and other assistance.

#### Item 30: Royal Life Saving Society -

Mr CLARKO: I am not being critical of the Government but have noted the \$12 500 allocation to the Royal Life Saving Society. That is the same amount that was allocated and expended last year. The Minister, with his knowledge of economics, will quickly appreciate that that is equivalent to about a seven per cent cut in real terms. I have looked through the long list of Miscellaneous Services items - it is not as long as in previous years - and have noted a number of groups of this type which are receiving exactly the same amounts of money that they received last year. Many of these groups are so humble that they will take anything they are given ignoring the fact that inflation is eating into their funds.

The Royal Life Saving Society is a marvellous society. It is the cornerstone for the certification of swimming teachers in this State. I believe the training of young people for future instruction in life saving techniques would cease if these organisations ceased operating. Will the Minister indicate why the WA Surf Life Saving Association has not been included in this list as it used to be. I remember that, in the first speech I gave in 1974, I was able to convince Sir Charles Court, who was not easy to persuade to part with the State's money as he looked on it as his own, to increase the amount available to that association by \$5 000. An amount has been allocated to various organisations under the Department of Sport and Recreation and I wonder whether the allocation to the State body is hidden in there.

Mr Taylor: I think it receives assistance through that Division. However, I cannot be sure. I believe the Health Department has an ongoing arrangement with the Surf Life Saving Association to provide it with much of its medical gear, such as bandages. I think money is also provided through the Department of Sport and Recreation, but I am not sure.

Mr CLARKO: This State has a marvellous record in this area. In the 1930s, interested citizens decided that this would be the first place in the world to try to teach every person in the State to swim. They began summer programs in the city and in Geraldton and other places teaching children to swim. Programs were also put into place in schools. We led the world. The Royal Life Saving Society played an integral part in preparing the instructors to teach these children. With the tremendous increase in the number of home pools, there is an increasing need for parents and neighbours to be able to resuscitate young children. I think nine children drowned last summer in various pool accidents, with three children drowning

on the same day. Children who drown are usually visitors to the houses. I know that the Sorrento and Trigg Surf Life Saving Clubs arrange resuscitation lectures at local halls and encourage parents to attend these lectures. Many children in Western Australia have been resuscitated because someone has done that course.

I am sure the Minister will indicate his Government's continuing support for that program by providing funds to the Royal Life Saving Society and the WA Surf Life Saving Association. There is no reason that we should not have the same ambitions as our forefathers to teach everyone in this State to swim and resuscitation techniques.

Mr TAYLOR: I endorse the member's remarks. I mentioned, by way of interjection, what I think is the case as far as Surf Life Saving Clubs are concerned. I know they also receive assistance from the helicopter belonging to the State Government Insurance Office.

Mr Clarko: Westpac is also a supporter.

Mr TAYLOR: Yes. The learn to swim campaign and the teaching of resuscitation techniques is very important to Western Australians, particularly because of their way of life. The people who introduced those programs 50 years ago were wise indeed. One can imagine the horrific numbers that would have drowned if those programs had not been put in place. My three children have gone through those programs. They are extremely up to date programs and the instructors are very hard when marking the certificates. They ensure that the children are capable of doing what the instructors say they can do on the backs of each certificate. They also make it very clear to parents that just because a child has learnt to swim in a pool does not necessarily mean that he can go to a beach such as Scarborough and swim without supervision. One must know the differences in the dangers that exist between swimming in a pool and swimming at the beach.

On the question of young children who die from swimming pool accidents: As Minister for Consumer Affairs last year I initiated a committee to look into swimming pool safety. I think the committee is in the process of reporting to the current Minister for Consumer Affairs. It is an area which has always been of great concern to me and I hold firmly the view that all backyard swimming pools should be fenced. That holds for swimming pools which supposedly have a dividing wall between the front and back of the house. Heavy fines should be imposed on those people who do not fence their swimming pool. I have a modest above ground pool at my home in Kalgoorlie.

Mr Court: I heard it was lavish.

Mr TAYLOR: It is very modest and one can only swim two strokes from one end to the other. One of the firm rules that I have for my children is that if they leave the gate to the swimming pool open after they have finished swimming they are automatically banned from swimming for a couple of days. As a result, they do not leave the gate open.

Mr Williams: Is there a spring on the gate?

Mr TAYLOR: There is a spring on the gate, but the gate does not spring back hard enough for it to close properly. We have to make certain the gate is shut properly and a lot of gates are like that. When we are not using the pool we chain and padlock the gate to make sure that no-one can get into the pool area. I am sure that it frightens everyone who has a swimming pool to think that a child they may not know could drown in their pool. Many parents are not aware that, as far as children are concerned, drowning is not associated with splashing and screaming; it is a silent event and no-one realises that it is happening.

Many members in this House would know people who have been involved in those traumatic circumstances or who have been involved in rescuing children from swimming pools. Organisations like the Royal Life Saving Association, scouts and guides associations, Surf Life Saving Association and the St John Ambulance Association do an excellent job in running programs to teach people the basics about resuscitation, and all Western Australians should know how to properly resuscitate people.

#### Item 35: Telethon Appeal -

Mr BRADSHAW: It is not my intention to knock Telethon and, in fact, I think it does a great deal of good in relation to the trusts it has set up. In *The West Australian* on Monday 17 October an article headed, "Growing up fast in an escort agency" took my attention because I have often wondered what actually happens to the money which is collected by young children. The article states -

We used to get Telethon boxes and collect some money for a while and then go out and spend it, stuff like that.

I recall being at a restaurant in Northbridge a couple of years ago when someone put a collection tin under my nose. I was not very impressed because I do not believe people should be subjected to that sort of thing at a restaurant. I know of a woman who, for several years, has been visiting towns in the south west collecting for Telethon.

Mr Taylor: She is an old lady who goes around the State with a tin.

Mr BRADSHAW: She got a raspberry this time because someone rang the radio station and asked what authority she had to collect money and she has had a bad reception after that. She has been collecting money for Telethon for years, just like those children who go from door to door. Something should be done to ensure that the money that is collected eventually reaches Telethon rather than going into someone's pocket.

As I said earlier, I am not knocking Telethon which is on the weekend after next. It not only provides money for trusts which have been set up, but also provides entertainment over a full weekend.

Mr TAYLOR: The member for Murray-Wellington has raised a valid point. I do know that the people involved with Telethon go to a great deal of trouble to ensure that collectors are given some form of identity. One presumes that when a person goes around collecting money from door to door that it is not a con. Many people want to collect money for Telethon and Appealathon and it is difficult to keep a check on every single one of them.

The member for Murray-Wellington referred to an article in which this subject was raised. Many points in the article concerned me and I have referred it to the police for advice.

#### **Item 48: Minerals and Energy Research Institute of Western Australia -**

Mr COURT: Last week the Liberal Party released its resources policy, part of which covered the area of alternative energy sources. We have become very concerned that since this Government came to power it has not encouraged, as actively as it should have, the alternative forms of energy in this State. We are of the opinion that the Government has neglected the area of solar energy research. Western Australia was once referred to as a leader in the field of solar energy, but in the last five years we have slipped behind many countries.

I do a great deal of reading about the developments that are taking place in this field. A trade conference was held recently in Singapore and some people who attended it said they were amazed at the tremendous developments that have been made in solar energy and at the practical applications which are now becoming commonplace. They said, for example, that countries like Thailand were turning to solar power as a power source in remote country villages. It was said at that conference that a wide range of products coming on to the market were powered by solar energy. The reports show that with the use of solar cells it is now possible to produce electricity at far cheaper prices than three years ago - in some instances the cost is cut by half.

On a number of occasions I have inspected some of the research work undertaken at the university in this field, but unfortunately because of the restrictions that are placed on research grants the research cannot go as far as the people involved would like it to go. Of course, once a certain amount of research is undertaken in this area there will be a spin-off with certain products being developed which can eventually have a commercial application.

I note that scientists in the United States of America have succeeded in converting more than 28 per cent of the sunlight hitting a solar cell into electricity. This compares with only 6 per cent efficiency in earlier silicon cells. The many applications of solar energy were known to Western Australia when hot water systems came into vogue. As far as power generation is concerned many farmers are beginning to use solar cells as the power source for water pumps. John Sanders relied heavily on solar power on his two voyages around the world. It is interesting that a relatively small series of cells can provide power for radio and that sort of communication. Telecom uses solar power extensively throughout remote areas. The State Government is in a very good position to use solar energy because it is responsible for providing many of the services and infrastructure to remote communities.

The State Government is in a prime position to encourage the development of alternatives

when it lets contracts and does the groundwork for the type of equipment to be used in many of these remote areas, initially because of the high costs involved with oil, gas and other forms of energy. It is very hot in the Pilbara and the Kimberley most of the year. One thing such areas are not short of is sunlight and heat. I would have thought that if enough research were done and enough incentive were given, we could come up with ways, for example, to air condition houses using solar systems. I know that people in this State are working on trying to develop a system whereby a house can be cooled during the day and the evening using solar power alone. In Kalgoorlie, people tend to use evaporative air conditioning a lot, while in the north they use refrigerated air conditioning. The sun beats down, but we use oil or gas to create electricity to cool the place down. We should be able to cool the place down using the source of energy that is heating it up in the first place. I am not an engineer, but I have been told that the basic principles of refrigeration can be applied using solar energy to provide the heat source. The first refrigerators used kerosene as the heat source; now we use electricity. If we drive around the mining communities, we can see all those air conditioners using electricity. It would be great if we could come up with the breakthroughs that would make it possible to cool the houses using solar power.

Mr Thomas: Half of it occurs when you intercept the heat on the roof in the first place. Fifty per cent of the effect of cooling the house is just simply intercepting the heat with the solar collectors, apart from using -

Mr COURT: That does not help the poor person under the roof.

Mr Thomas: If the solar collector is working, it does not pick up what is below the roof.

Mr COURT: I know there were problems with the Solar Energy Research Institute of Western Australia. I am not saying that the way solar research was undertaken five or six years ago was the way to do it, but a mechanism should be put in place by which the Government and the private sector can be encouraged to spend more money on research. One of the best ways to do it is to dangle the carrot of a reward to anyone prepared to solve some of the problems we have with respect to cutting down our energy costs.

Mrs Buchanan: They are actually trying a solar refrigerator at the moment. It is being done through Hedland College.

Mr Bridge: They are operating those in some places.

Mr COURT: We have visited people here who have dummy laboratory systems set up. The trouble is that everybody is doing it on a shoestring budget. The State, which has now fallen behind in this area, should again raise it to prominence. If we come up with the breakthroughs, many countries throughout the world would be interested in buying our product. Think of the market there would be in Africa, for example, where there is a desire to provide the basic services that we take for granted. I would not have believed that solar hot water systems would become as popular as they have in a country like Japan, for example, which has a cool climate. Solar hot water systems have been adopted in many cool climates.

Mr Taylor: There is only one problem with solar hot water systems. The water is at its hottest when you least need it.

Mr COURT: We have to develop a storage system for the evenings. We need to cool the house in the evenings with energy which has been stored during the day. I mentioned having visited some people involved in research. They convinced me that the breakthroughs are not too far away. Our aim can only be achieved with more research.

Yesterday the Minister for Mines made an announcement of some grants to be awarded for this sort of research. It was reported in today's edition of *The West Australian*. The article states -

Murdoch University was the big winner when State Government grants for alternative energy research were announced yesterday.

The university received four out of five grants totalling \$413,000, which were approved by the Minerals and Energy Research Institute of WA.

When considering what we are trying to achieve, that really is a petty cash item. If we could come up with breakthroughs in the solar field and with some of the products that would have

practical applications in other countries, it would be worth our while to put a bit of money into research.

Mr Carr: That is not the total allocation. That is the first of a group of allocations. There are further applications before MERIWA and further funds will be available.

Mr COURT: The people at Murdoch have been complaining that research activity over the last few years has been absolutely pathetic.

Mr Taylor: Where we miss out, not only in Western Australia, but also throughout Australia, is in the lack of private contributions to that sort of research. If there are great breakthroughs to be made in this area, there are also enormous profits to be made. Some of our more entrepreneurial enterprises should be in there funding these grants.

Mr COURT: Because the Government provides many of the services in country areas, it can provide the carrot in front of the private sector. It is not enough to provide money grants. The Government must put before the private sector the problems to be solved and the sorts of breakthroughs needed and promise some assistance initially. The incentive for companies would be that if they were successful they would win contracts.

I have concentrated on solar energy because it is the most visible form of alternative energy. In many areas of solar energy, we were leading the world.

Mr Carr: That is a bit of an overstatement.

Mr COURT: With respect to solar hot water systems, our companies broke into international markets. They were able to break into the United States market and many of the Asian markets. The Minister will recall the great successes of Solahart. Admittedly the Shell people got involved with Solahart to help that company break into the markets. I think Shell ended up owning the company. To its credit, it had the initiative to do that. In more recent times the big breakthroughs have been in the way we convert solar power to electricity. As I said, solar cells are being made more and more efficient. More efficient storage systems are being developed to overcome the problems at night which we were talking about. Unfortunately, our universities have not been in a position to keep abreast of those changes, let alone work in the field of trying to come up with the breakthroughs.

Mr TAYLOR: I thank the member for his contribution. He has raised an important issue for Western Australia. The Government has allocated \$250 000 specifically to solar energy research projects. The Minister for Mines mentioned some of the allocations which have already been made to some of our universities. Western Australia can do well in this area of research, but I repeat that if enormous breakthroughs are to be made, enormous profits are also to be made. With those enormous profits I would expect private enterprise to take part in encouraging research and development in those areas; that is absolutely vital. I understand what the member has said as far as providing the carrot is concerned; the Government does that in part but, as with most things, it is question of what it can afford to do. I believe the decision to change the nature of the Solar Energy Research Institute and its involvement in this area is an important change. It has enabled a focus to be put on the whole question of minerals and energy research. The Government is not disregarding the energy side of research, it is allocating an amount for solar energy research and that aspect will not be ignored in Western Australia. All members of the Government, and I think members of the Opposition, are determined that that will not be the case. A number of intelligent people are working away at the sorts of projects referred to by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and I have seen some of them myself. Most are at the laboratory level and have not been tested in the field but, from the interjections made by the member for Kimberley and the member for Pilbara, it is obvious that work is taking place in the hotter areas to try to prove up some of those projects. I have no doubt that some of them will be very worthwhile indeed and will be great revenue earners for those involved.

#### **Item 50: Rottnest Island Authority -**

Mr CLARKO: Last year the Rottnest Island Authority was allocated \$689 000 but only \$355 000 was expended - roughly 50 per cent. Can the Minister give reasons for this significant difference? In 1988-89 the allocation will be roughly the same as for 1987-88; that is, \$662 000. I ask the Minister to give the breakdown of this amount. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services was previously responsible for this area and, although it has now been handed to the Minister for Tourism, he may be able to provide some answers.

What is the attitude of the Government with regard to budgeting for Rottnest Island? Does the Government accept \$600 000 as a fairly modest sum to be absorbed or is that amount allocated as part of a steady building program? I understand that there has been a gradual increase in the number of accommodation units on Rottnest Island and I query whether the \$600 000 is principally for capital funding for that building program. Alternatively, is there a separate loan budget which is not provided for in these papers? I have spoken to the administrators on this matter in past years but have not done so recently. Has Rottnest reached the ultimate in terms of the number of accommodation units to be provided on the island? I have read comments in the past about the desirability of retaining the traditional atmosphere of Rottnest Island. I have been going to the island for 50 years and I keep going back. Not one year goes by when I do not spend time on Rottnest Island, because I think it is a marvellous place in terms of its atmosphere and lack of pressure. Does the Government plan to create new settlements such as Longreach? Has the Government set a limit on the number of holidaymakers who stay on the island for a week or two? I am aware of the huge increase in the number of people who visit the island on day trips. The only people who complain about Rottnest Island are those who visit it on one day trips; some seem to find it rushed and crowded and because they spend their time in the main tourist area often do not appreciate the quieter parts of the island. The whole beauty of Rottnest is to cycle to a place such as Salmon Bay, and snorkel, swim and sun bake. Some people obviously have different ideas about how much clothing they should wear and they will obviously appreciate those parts of the island which resemble the beaches described in *Robinson Crusoe*.

I wish to briefly comment on the Government's policy of nationalising businesses. I have always been envious of the money that the bike hire business receives; I recall that one fellow paid \$500 000 for that business some time ago and his profit was sufficient to make that outlay worthwhile. That business was taken over by the authority a year or two ago, and I wonder whether the substantial profits from this business will make it easier for the authority to run its affairs. I was disappointed to learn that the man and wife running the business hiring household items to holidaymakers would be leaving and that the business had been taken over. He was a marvellous person to deal with and was always friendly; a person could ring him before arriving on the island and all the items to be hired were provided in the unit. I never had any difficulty dealing with that small business. Has the change in the running of that business been made for financial reasons? Does the Government intend to take over all businesses on the island? If it does, that will be a pity because the people who ran those commercial activities have done so very well. The service is better now than it used to be; I do not remember the first time I went there because I was only five years old, but I can remember going there in my 20s when the range of goods in the grocery store, which is now the supermarket, was very limited. However that has changed and it now sells a wide range of goods. Some of the clothing sold in the sportswear shop is as good as the clothing one would find anywhere in Australia. I would appreciate the Minister's comments on whether the Government plans to continue taking over the businesses previously run by private enterprise.

I do not have a boat, but I am aware of the arguments that have been going on for some time with regard to moorings at Rottnest. I ask the Minister, if he can, to comment on whether that argument has faded away. It has not been mentioned recently but over the last couple of years there has been controversy about the moorings and talk of their being taken away from their owners. It is a very sensitive matter and I hope the Government will make sure that those people who have traditionally moored their boats at Rottnest are given some preference over others. It is not a matter in which I am involved, but certain groups of people have supported Rottnest for many years; others say that they have hogged the island and they do not want anyone to share this lovely piece of paradise. One cannot support that position. The previous policy was to give recognition to those who supported Rottnest over many years, including during the off season. I read in the newspaper a few weeks ago that a large number of applications had been made for accommodation in the summer holidays. I understand that the ratio of unsuccessful to successful applicants is 3:1, and it must be very difficult for the authority to make the allocations, recognising the traditional supporters of the island and at the same time being fair to those wishing to visit the island for the first time, who may eventually become supporters.

A big change has taken place in the type of people who visit Rottnest Island. Although I rarely drink alcohol, occasionally I go to the Quokka Arms on Rottnest, and in the old days I

would always bump into friends I had known for many years. However, that is no longer the case. I suspect that those people are now spending their holidays in Phuket or other parts of Asia as a result of the rising affluence in our society. I do not expect the Minister to answer that, because it is not a question, it is a passing observation. There is a very good atmosphere on Rottnest Island. The people who are there supplying services recognise people properly. I do not say that they fawn over people, but they give good service and meet the needs of those people. They are never rude, as one sometimes finds in other places. Their pricing is reasonable for a spot like that, although many people are finding the price of accommodation on Rottnest is getting up a bit and that they can go to Asia for the same price that they can go there. It may be that that may take the pressure off it, which would be a good thing. I do not know at what stage is the Lombardo development as I have not been to Rottnest since late last year. I do not know, either, what effect it will have. They are rebuilding the main part of the commercial centre with a restaurant where the trampolines were. That whole area is being redeveloped.

I know that this is part of a deliberate plan and that the board has put much time into working out which way to go. With Rottnest it is a question of whether one does nothing or a lot because a whole lot of people rise and criticise anything that is done. Some people would like to leave Rottnest as it was, but I do not think that is possible and there is a place for new facilities.

Mr Thomas: Remember the ice man?

Mr CLARKO: Yes. I was there the day that fellow, I think his name was -

Mr Thomas: A big man.

Mr CLARKO: Yes, 30 or 40 stones. He made Russ Hinze look like someone from Dachau.

Mr Taylor: And Jim Clarko.

Mr CLARKO: Even I would look like slim Jim. I was at Rottnest the day he set out to drink an eight ounce schooner of beer for every day of his life. He was about 50 years of age. He drank the 50 schooners - if that is the right figure - having started early in the morning, and then left, riding off on his bike. He would not have got past a RBT test, but he rode back to where he lived next to the ice place. I think they called him Tiny, for some surprising reason. That was at about three o'clock or four o'clock in the afternoon. I do not know how I happened to be at the hotel later, it must have been a passing chance, but blow me down - and they closed in those days at nine o'clock - he rode back at about half past eight to get a couple of bottles to take home. His name was Tiny Ward and he was dedicated to the art of the amber fluid. He was one of the characters of the past.

If the member for Welshpool remembers, there was a journalist who had been in the China wars who lived in the camping area. He was an amazing character, storyteller and writer. Many interesting people spent their time at Rottnest. I am one of the uninteresting ones. Perhaps the Minister would care to comment on these matters.

Mr TAYLOR: I have two things to say. First, during the time I have been a member of this place I do not know of any member who has enjoyed the Miscellaneous Services vote of the Budget debate more than the member for Karrinyup. He gets most enthusiastic about it. Secondly, in relation to Rottnest Island, I do not know of another place that I would rather visit for holidays; I think Rottnest is an absolutely marvellous place.

The member asked a number of questions, most of which I can answer. The first related to under expenditure in 1987-88, which was due to delays in the commencement and completion of some initiatives under the Rottnest Island Management Plan. In addition the State's contribution towards the restoration of the Olivers Hill battery, under the State Bicentennial program, had to be carried over into 1988-89. The actual amount set aside for 1988-89 of \$662 000 is made up as follows: The Government agreed to meet repayments on borrowings of \$220 000 repayable over 20 years from 1976-77; to provide sewerage and water supplies to the settlements of Geordie Bay and Longreach; and to meet debt servicing charges on further borrowings of \$90 000 to develop underground potable water supplies. The annual repayments totalled \$39 200 for all of those areas.

The State will also provide a grant of \$15 800 to meet 75 per cent of the cost of servicing a loan raised by the board to finance the installation of a sewage treatment plant for the Thomson Bay area. Under the State Bicentennial program the Government agreed to provide

the authority with \$50 000 to fund the restoration of the Olivers Hill battery which commenced in May 1988. I must say in relation to the battery that they are doing a very good job. On 2 February 1987 Cabinet approved the provision of \$3 million over a five year period for the implementation of the Rottnest Island Management Plan with a 1987-88 Budget allocation of up to \$600 000 which is shown in the Budget for 1987-88. In addition, approval was given to draft legislation for the establishment of the authority which has now been done and which I understand has gone through this Parliament.

Following consideration of the authority's 1988-89 proposals, provision has been made for a grant in addition to that I have just talked about so far as assistance with funding for loans and borrowings and the like is concerned. A grant of \$557 000 was made to the authority to be used as follows: For the salary of the executive officer; rental of offices; the ranger's salary; the environmental manager's salary; environmental materials; and general provision for a detailed environmental management plan which has been endorsed by the department of Conservation and Land Management and which has been approved. That is the make up of that \$662 000.

So far as the nationalisation - if people want to call it that - of the bike hire and laundry - TV type service at Rottnest is concerned, I think that the bike hire place has shown a dramatic improvement indeed in the actual nature of the operation and the standard and quality of the bikes now being hired to visitors to Rottnest; they are very good bikes indeed, unlike many of the old bikes, which were badly mistreated and in many cases were badly maintained. In fact, I well recall a friend of mine riding across the Causeway and his bike breaking in two and his taking it back to the bike hire place in two pieces because it was completely rusted through.

So far as the laundry and TV service are concerned, I think that has also been nationalised - again, if that is the word to use - in an endeavour to improve that service. I am well aware of the nature of that service and the people involved did it well. I am not aware of all the circumstances relating to the change that took place there, but whatever was done was done in an endeavour to improve the way in which Rottnest is run for all the people using it. There has undoubtedly been an enormous amount of pressure placed on Rottnest by the day trippers to whom the member referred and who have been flooding there in their tens if not in their hundreds of thousands. I find it a little difficult to understand how a person can enjoy Rottnest in a day, but obviously people do. I believe it is a place to be enjoyed over 10 days or two weeks, but people obviously enjoy going there for a day. However, that puts enormous pressure on all sorts of resources such as the bike hire, and on the natural resources of Rottnest. That is something that the management plan people are trying to come to grips with.

The issue of moorings is a sensitive one and I have no doubt that the new authority will continue to handle that issue in a sensitive way and to take into account the needs of not only those people who want to go to Rottnest in their boats and use those moorings but also the many other people who would also like to have access to Rottnest. That is one of the things that, in my view, Rottnest is coming up against. As the member for Karrinyup rightly pointed out, many thousands of people apply for accommodation, especially during school holiday periods, and many thousands, unfortunately, miss out. That will continue to be the case, in my view. One of the things I would like to see the new authority come to grips with is the need for relatively low cost accommodation at Rottnest. A former member of the board, Don Taylor -

Mr Clarko: A good bloke.

Mr TAYLOR: Yes, a top bloke. He tried to establish low cost accommodation there and the member for Karrinyup may recall pine lodges on the hill towards Bathurst Lighthouse, which was Don's first major endeavour to establish low cost accommodation at Rottnest. Unfortunately they were not popular. Nevertheless, there is a need to develop a reasonable form of low cost accommodation. Undoubtedly, to go to Rottnest for a reasonable holiday now, having to pay ferry fares, bike hire, living costs and accommodation costs, make it a very expensive exercise and that sort of holiday in those sorts of surroundings is out of reach of many people on ordinary incomes. I have no doubt that if one wanted to go there and live at Tentland and places like that one could still enjoy a holiday at a much lower cost than could the member for Karrinyup or I, who stay in a villa or one of the bigger places at Rottnest.



The other point that needs to be mentioned is the outstanding success of the Kingston Barracks program, which involves young people in the study of the Rottnest environment. That facility is used throughout the year, not only by young people but also by adults. It was a great plus in the history of Rottnest when the Federal Government decided - albeit reluctantly - to hand over that land to the State Government and the Rottnest Island Authority so they could manage and develop it.

Mr Clarko: When I was the Minister for Education I was approached by Ian Laurance on the question of providing an environmental-type person on the Rottnest Island Authority and determining a salary for that position. I agreed that could come out of the education vote. However, we did not do very well in February 1983, and there was a change of Government. Members will remember that Brian Burke became the first Chairman of the Rottnest Island Board. He was asked by the people of Rottnest whether he would support the decision made by our Cabinet, and he said that if the previous Government had agreed with it, he would also. I commend him for that.

Mr TAYLOR: That is something which is now being taken very seriously. I say in conclusion that the member is quite right. When I first became Minister for Lands, I was responsible for Rottnest and the Perth zoo. They were the only two things in my entire portfolio which in any way impressed my children; and unfortunately I lost responsibility for them in the first week or two, so I do not know what they think about it now.

#### **Item 54: Western Australian Development Corporation - LandCorp -**

Mr MacKINNON: How was the expenditure figure of \$1 953 072 for 1987-88 arrived at, and how was the estimate for 1988-89 arrived at? Secondly, it seems strange, to say the least, that the WADC is trumpeting - with the Treasurer doing most of that on its behalf - a profit of in excess of \$10 million for this year. When we look at the Budget papers we find a large amount of that profit came from the Government in the form of compensation and payments, and land deals such as the deal that we explained to the media this morning. That deal involved a property which was acquired by the WADC for \$185 000, was sold on, and at the time the title transfer was registered the property was valued for \$455 000, which action is not what I would call exercising an entrepreneurial skill. How do we arrive at the figure paid to LandCorp from the Consolidated Revenue Fund?

Mr TAYLOR: I cannot give the Leader of the Opposition the details about the make-up of those figures, but I will get those for him. The role of LandCorp is to address the issues of suburban land infill, asset sales management, asset assessment and management, special projects involving land and property, and also the administration of Crown projects. The role of WADC and LandCorp in these areas has been an important one. They have been able, because of their knowledge and expertise, to squeeze more profits out of sales and asset management in a whole range of projects than we would have been able to do through the normal asset management programs of Government. One of the big pluses of this Government over recent years has been its determination to show that the enormous assets of Government are being managed effectively, and that if they are sold off or put to some other use, that will be done in a more profit orientated way than has ever been the case before. Over the last few years as a result of that policy we have seen a \$56 million profit made by WADC. An enormous part of that profit has been ploughed back into the revenue of this Government, and all Western Australians have been better off as a result of that. Without that sort of contribution we would have found ourselves in the situation of having to increase taxes and charges for ordinary Western Australians in this financial year, and would not have been able to give the commitment that, when we get back into Government, next financial year those taxes and charges will not increase by any more than the rate of inflation, and will undoubtedly increase by an amount which is less than the rate of inflation.

Mr MacKINNON: I thank the Minister for his commitment to obtain the details for me. I hope we will receive an indication of how the management fee is arrived at. While what the Minister says sounds all very well and good, the Government bought a property in Subiaco for \$185 000. This property was transferred to the WADC. It was then auctioned. I do not believe that requires any great entrepreneurial skill. The property was sold for \$455 000, resulting in a profit of \$270 000. Only half of that profit will go back to the taxpayers, whereas the whole amount of the profit would have gone back to them had the WADC not intervened. We do not think that is very good business. The taxpayers of this State are being

sold down the drain in that regard. We cannot be convinced that the WADC is demonstrating any great entrepreneurial skill in terms of better asset management when examples such as this keep coming forward. The Minister indicated this was a better form of asset management, but it is in fact wasteful asset management because much of the profit is being siphoned off into the WADC to pay for the specific overheads of that corporation.

**Item 59: Pensioners' Rates Concessions - Reimbursement to Local Authorities -**

Mr BRADSHAW: I read recently in the Government's publication "Putting Families First" that the number of aged people has risen substantially, both numerically and as a proportion of the population. The aged now constitute just under 10 per cent of our community, and this number is expected to double in the next 20 years. I wonder for how long we can continue to give these sorts of subsidies when we consider that we have to subsidise not only their rates but also nursing homes, hostels, hospitals, and all the other bits and pieces that go along with it. I am not saying we should not do this, but we must start to look at ways of reducing these costs, as has been done with the home and community care program, which is aimed at reducing the costs of keeping people in nursing homes and hostels.

Dr Gallop: Is it the Liberal Party's policy to end those subsidies?

Mr BRADSHAW: I did not say it was.

Dr Gallop: Are you thinking about it?

Mr BRADSHAW: No; I am not thinking about it. I was just saying this will have to be looked at in the future, as I am sure future Governments will do. It is unfortunate that we have the situation where the ageing population will play a major part in our future, because within 20 years, nearly 20 per cent of our population will be within that age group. If we look around this House today, I am sure most of us will be in that 20 per cent in 20 years. As I said, I am not saying they should not get subsidies in the years to come; they will be looked after because of the circumstances in which we will find ourselves as a country.

**Item 65: State Energy Commission of Western Australia - North West Shelf Gas - State Assistance -**

Mr COURT: Could the Minister explain how the figure of \$8 600 000 is made up? Why does the figure vary as it does from year to year?

Mr TAYLOR: Provision has been made for further financial assistance at this time to the SEC in relation to this gas purchase commitment. The Deputy Premier has made it clear that going into the petrochemical project, as the State has decided to do, will make things quite different as far as this sort of contribution is concerned, because we hope to be in a position not to have to pay this sort of assistance to the SEC. The assessment of assistance is based on estimates of the State's share of the industrial royalties to be collected from the domestic phase of the gas project and the amount of the Commonwealth domestic gas royalties to be transferred to Western Australia. The collections from the three per cent levy on SECWA sales of north west shelf gas are taken together, and the details are that the State's domestic gas royalty in this financial year will be \$2.2 million. The three per cent levy on SECWA gas sales will be \$5.38 million, the Commonwealth royalty \$1 million, making a total figure of \$8.6 million.

**Item 67: Acquisition of Aboriginal Art Collection -**

Mr MacKINNON: I would appreciate a breakdown, if the Minister could give it, of the expenditure on the Aboriginal art collection. I understand that is the Arnhem Land art collection to be installed in the restored old brewery site which I for one am not pleased to see - not the acquisition of the art, but the reconstruction of those premises. Secondly, what is the \$100 000 estimate for this year?

Mr TAYLOR: The Louis Allen collection, which is the collection the Leader of the Opposition is talking about, was purchased in the last financial year. The details are: Acquisition costs, just over \$2 million; associated costs of air freight, travelling, packaging, insurance and storage - a Budget provision of \$100 000 this year which relates to what has been described as contingency costs in relation to the purchase of the collection. It is proposed that the collection, which I am led to believe is a very fine one, will be displayed in the new Aboriginal Art Gallery to be established at the old Swan Brewery site, something which Western Australians will see in time to come as a very far sighted decision by this Government.

**Item 68: Acquisition of Land and Property -**

Mr MacKINNON: Again I would appreciate details of the property acquired for the expenditure of \$552 322 in 1987-88. What is the estimate of \$200 000 in 1989 to cover?

Mr TAYLOR: Details of the expenditure in 1988-89 are made up first of all of estimates of the Leschenault Peninsula. The information on what has been purchased there is confidential until a settlement price is reached, but a few hundred thousand dollars has been set aside for the purchase of that area. In addition there is information on other purchases in that area, and some public buildings in East Perth when the Government resumed land in East Perth from the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority. There is the construction of public buildings and an advance payment of \$740 000 made to that authority with the final valuation of the resumed property to be determined at a later date. There are also some items of miscellaneous expenditure incurred during 1987-88 relating to the final adjustment of rates and taxes for that item.

**Item 69: Act of Grace Payments -**

Mr MacKINNON: I would appreciate details of the expenditure for 1987-88 totalling approximately \$2.9 million. What is the anticipated expenditure of approximately \$2 million to cover?

Mr TAYLOR: The act of grace payments include provision to meet anticipated claims in 1988-89. During 1987-88 act of grace payments totalling \$2.9 million were paid. The most significant were a payment to Mrs P. Wise of \$973 dollars. She was a widow of a former Premier. I will not go through the details of payments to individuals; I do not think that would be appropriate. Payments were made to a range of widows, in most cases widows of various retired judges. There is also the payment of some \$18 000 to the Police Union. That is an act of grace payment in relation to the expense of charges, and payments made in 1987-88 relate to costs associated with the Muirhead Royal Commission.

Mr MacKinnon: What was the cost in relation to the Muirhead Royal Commission?

Mr TAYLOR: In 1987-88 the amount was \$18 005.30. There are other payments to families such as the Annetts family, where a contribution was made to enable them to have legal representation. That was the case of the two young boys who died in the north west on that pastoral property.

Mr MacKinnon: That totalled how much?

Mr TAYLOR: It totalled just over \$900 000. There are other payments which make up a large part of that amount. They were made to various mining companies including Whim Creek, Croesus Mining, Austwhim Resources, and Goldrim Resources, a total of something like \$2.8 million. There were act of grace payments representing the refunds of stamp duty associated with the transfer of shares in various gold mines. On 19 January 1987, the Government announced its intention to counter a tax minimisation scheme involving the selling of shares in companies whose principal assets were land, thereby taking advantage of lower stamp duty rates. Following the enactment of the legislation the State Government decided that for various reasons put forward by applicants at the time there were good reasons why an ex gratia payment should be made representing the difference between the duty under the new provisions and the duty which would have been payable under the previous provisions after disregarding any deliberate minimisation arrangements which should be paid. That made up the greater part of the amounts included in this program. There were various payments to individuals, local authorities and so on, but I do not know whether the Leader of the Opposition wants those details. If he does he can let me know and I will give them to him privately.

**Item 75: EventsCorp -**

Mr COURT: There is a sum here of \$1.699 million. Could the Minister explain why EventsCorp gets money? I thought it was one of these WADC operations which, using its so called innovative skill, would attract sporting events, so it should make money and not cost money. Perhaps the Minister could outline what events are being sponsored with that money.

Mr TAYLOR: There is a range of events, but the main ones we are talking about in the last financial year and in this financial year concern the Government's involvement in the Expo project, and more particularly in the rally to take place in the next month or so. EventsCorp

is a wholly owned subsidiary of WADC, and it has been established with funding for projects. We want EventsCorp to get funding for projects principally from the commercial return on events staged. EventsCorp is trying to make a profit where it can.

Also, of course, it is trying to attract sponsorship in the private sector. Undoubtedly, like many other organisations - and particularly sporting and recreation organisations throughout the nation over the last six months or so - it has found commercial sponsorship hard to come by due to the difficulties those normal sponsors have faced and the readjustment of the thinking of some of the major sponsors; but EventsCorp has been reasonably successful. I think the member will realise that when the rally and the World Swimming Championships are held. As well, EventsCorp is involved in management participation in these events and we are involved in making some fee payment to it for that. Basically it has a duty to try to do its best to involve this State in a range of high profile world events and its success is one of the better parts of the very good work the WADC is doing.

#### *Progress*

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr Taylor (Minister for Police and Emergency Services).

### **JUSTICES AMENDMENT BILL**

#### *Council's Message*

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had disagreed to the amendment made by the Assembly.

### **STATEMENT - BY THE SPEAKER**

#### *Anniversary - New Constitution*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Barnett): Tomorrow this State will be just two years away from a very significant anniversary. I refer to the centenary of the grant of Responsible Government and the creation of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia.

On 21 October 1890 a proclamation was publicly read by the Chief Justice announcing that this State's new Constitution had been agreed to by both Houses of the British Parliament and had received Royal Assent on 15 August 1890.

The first sitting of this Assembly took place on 30 December 1890.

I am sure that the members of this House would not wish to see such an important anniversary pass without recognising and marking it in an appropriate manner.

To this end I am seeking advice from a wide range of members of this community on matters concerning this anniversary.

Suggestions received to date include such matters as the timing of specific events, the type of celebrations, ideas for essay, play-writing and art competitions, involvement of educational institutions and other public bodies and so on.

For convenience I am requesting the members of the Parliamentary History Advisory Committee to coordinate the suggestions. This committee comprises historians, political scientists, and present and former members and officers of Parliament under the chairmanship of Associate Professor David Black.

I envisage the likelihood of the appointment, at a later stage, of a working committee to guide and implement the plans for the various events.

Any suggestions members may have toward making the recognition of this anniversary as successful and significant as possible will be appreciated. At the moment these could be conveyed either to me or to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Bruce Okely, or to any other member of the Parliamentary History Advisory Committee.

[Questions taken.]

*House adjourned at 6.00 pm*

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## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

## HOTELS - KALGOORLIE

*State Finance - Government Agencies*

1164. Mr LIGHTFOOT to the Treasurer:

- (1) Does he intend to fulfil the promise of his predecessor and finance the building of a hotel in Kalgoorlie "through" the WADC or other Government department?
- (2) If yes, what is the start-up date?
- (3) What is the cost?
- (4) What are the name(s) of other shareholders, if any?
- (5) Is the fact that an endorsed Labor candidate for the Pastoral/Mining region has stated that the Government's position with respect to the proposed hotel is a *fait accompli*?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1)-(4) The project has yet to be confirmed.
- (5) I am not aware of such a comment.

## CRIME - STATISTICS

*30 June 1988*

1447. Mr CASH to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

How many of the following offences were reported for the year ended 30 June 1988, and what was the percentage increase over the previous year -

- (a) motor vehicle theft;
- (b) robbery;
- (c) arson;
- (d) break and enter;
- (e) stealing;
- (f) fraud; and
- (g) drugs?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

Rather than a percentage increase, the member will see from the following figures that for all but one of the categories there has in fact been a decrease in offences.

	Reported	Change
(a) Motor vehicle theft	13 247	+ 1.81%
(b) Robbery	379	- 17.43%
(c) Arson	102	- 4.67%
(d) Break and enter	34 386	- 1.30%
(e) Stealing	52 852	- 4.88%
(f) Fraud	10 343	- 9.43%
(g) Drugs	7 524	- 0%

## DEFENCE - PATROL BOATS

*Base - North West*

1550. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the State Government recommended any sites to the Commonwealth for a patrol boat base in the north west of Western Australia?
- (2) If not, is it the State Government's intention to do so?

- (3) Has the State Government been advised which north west towns are under consideration for the base?
- (4) When is the final decision expected to be made public?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) No, although the Department of Marine and Harbours has had preliminary discussions with the Commonwealth on a number of possible sites in the north west for a forward patrol boat base.
- (2) Yes, once all of the factors associated with the base have been considered.
- (3) The possible sites under consideration include Koolan Island, Broome, Port Hedland, Dampier, Derby and Exmouth.
- (4) It is expected that a decision will not be made before the end of 1988.

**GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS - "SOUTH WEST STRATEGY"**

*June 1988*

1558. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for The South West:

- (1) Who printed the document entitled "South West Strategy" dated June 1988?
- (2) What was the cost of its printing?
- (3) To whom was the document distributed?
- (4) How many copies were printed?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1)-(2)

The "South West Strategy" was designed as a broad reference for Government departments, agencies and local government authorities when deciding on future development. It involved the widest ranging public consultation ever undertaken in Western Australia. The needs and aspirations of the community were set down in the document, printed by the State Printing Division at a cost of \$61 265.

(3)-(4)

The 6 250 copies printed have been distributed to local government, libraries, Government departments, community groups, the general public and all contributors as part of the ongoing process of gathering the viewpoints of all sectors of the community in future development of the south west. The document has also been used for investment purposes both in the south west and overseas.

**DEFENCE - NAVY**

*North West Harbour - Patrol Boat-Naval Base Development*

1572. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Australian Navy investigating the possibility of a north west harbour for the development of a patrol boat or naval base?
- (2) If so, what sites are being considered?
- (3) When is it likely that a final decision on a site will be made?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes, in conjunction with the Government of Western Australia.
- (2) A number of sites are being considered but the Navy has not committed itself to any one particular site.
- (3) A decision is not expected before the end of 1988.

**ABATTOIRS - LAMBS**

*Lamb Marketing Board - Killing Offence Prosecutions*

1573. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many abattoirs or meat processors have been prosecuted by the Western

Australian Lamb Marketing Board for killing lambs contrary to the provisions of the relevant Act?

- (2) How many of the above have been convicted of an offence under the same Act?
- (3) How many inspectors are there in the employ of the Western Australian Meat Marketing Corporation who police the Act?
- (4) Is the corporation giving consideration to any further prosecutions for recent alleged offences related to the processing of lambs?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1)-(2)

The Western Australia Lamb Marketing Board ceased to operate as from 30 June 1986. From 1 July 1986 the Western Australian Meat Marketing Corporation (WAMMC) assumed responsibility for the Acts Amendment (Meat Industry) Act 1985, incorporating the Marketing of Lamb Act. The Marketing of Lamb Act was proclaimed in December 1971, and from that time many abattoirs have been prosecuted successfully. For the period January 1985 to October 1988 there were 33 successful prosecutions. It would be a major undertaking to ascertain the number of prosecutions prior to 1985.

- (3) The WAMMC has one part time employee whose sole function is abattoir liaison/inspection. An additional 13 employees of the WAMMC are accredited to act as inspectors, although such activities are secondary to the employees' main employment responsibility.
- (4) Yes.

#### LIVESTOCK - RABBITS *Commercial Farm - Federal Grant*

1574. Mr LIGHTFOOT to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Could he confirm that there is only one commercial rabbit harvesting and breeding farm in Western Australia?
- (2) Is he aware that the Federal Government has recently granted a non repayment sum into rabbit breeding to a non commercial breeder?
- (3) What was the amount of the grant?
- (4) Is the recipient an Australian citizen?
- (5) Why was the recipient, a non commercial producer, chosen for the grant?
- (6) How many commercial rabbit producers licences have been issued in Western Australia?
- (7) Is he aware that Murdoch University has done or is currently doing research into artificial insemination of rabbits?
- (8) If yes, could he explain why the Federal grant was specifically for the study of the insemination of rabbits?
- (9) Can he confirm that the grant would have been more appropriate and beneficial had it been given to Murdoch or Rabbit World, the largest rabbit farm in Western Australia?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Nine permits for commercial rabbit farming have been issued in Western Australia. Seven of the permit holders currently farm rabbits.
- (2) I understand that a large commercial rabbit breeder applied to Austrade for a grant from its "Innovative Agricultural Marketing Program". I am advised by Austrade that the application was approved.
- (3) \$22 000.

- (4) No. He is a British subject with an application for Australian citizenship pending.
- (5) The recipient of the grant is a commercial producer. Austrade has not disclosed its assessment and selection procedures.
- (6) Nine permits and 17 provisional permits have been issued for commercial rabbit production in Western Australia.
- (7) Yes.
- (8)-(9) No. These questions should be directed to the Austrade funding committee.

**ROADS - MULLEWA-MT MAGNET**  
*Road Trains - Traffic Increase*

1575. Mr LIGHTFOOT to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware that the Mullewa-Mt Magnet Road is single strip/single lane bitumen?
- (2) Is he aware that road trains - multiple trailer - use the road?
- (3) Is he aware that traffic is increasing, and has in fact increased dramatically?
- (4) Is he aware that massive amounts of highly toxic sodium cyanide are transported on the road?
- (5) Is he aware that up to 20 road trains a day, servicing in part the Golden Grove project, use the road?
- (6) Is he aware that motor cars often find it impossible to pass road trains because of the nature and condition of this road?
- (7) Would he not be held responsible for any deaths that will inevitably occur as a result of fatal accidents occurring on this road?
- (8) Is the widening and resurfacing of the road included in the Main Roads Department's five year plan?
- (9) Is he aware that statistics show that traffic, particularly heavy traffic, will increase on the road?
- (10) Will he undertake to undertake an urgent emergency review of the road because of its present condition?
- (11) Would he confirm that because of the current condition of the road -
  - (a) tourism is inhibited;
  - (b) capital costs of mining infrastructure are increased;
  - (c) vehicular maintenance of residents using the roads for ingress and egress is increased;
  - (d) that damage both personal and vehicular is increased; and
  - (e) deaths due to the inadequacy of the road are inevitable?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1)-(11)

Approximately 102 kilometres is single lane bitumen seal over several sections, however the formation allows two lane operation. The remaining 137 kilometres is two lane seal.

I am aware of increased traffic on the road mainly due to increased mining activity in the area, which I hope the member supports.

The Government recognised that it would be desirable to widen the narrow sections, particularly a 10 kilometre section just east of Mullewa. There is a limited amount of funding for roadworks and there are many worthwhile projects throughout the State competing for the funds available. Careful consideration will be given to the possibility of allocating funds for the widening of the road when future roadworks programs are being prepared.



**ABATTOIRS - LAMBS**  
*Meat and Livestock Corporation - Killing Offence Prosecutions*

1577. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many abattoirs have been prosecuted by the Meat and Livestock Corporation for breaches of lamb killing regulations during the last 12 months?
- (2) What are the details of those prosecutions?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) The Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation is a national statutory authority principally involved in meat and livestock promotional activities. I presume the Leader of the Opposition is referring to the Western Australian Meat Marketing Corporation (WAMMC) which is responsible for lamb marketing in this State.

From July 1987 until the present time the WAMMC has successfully prosecuted four abattoirs for breaches of the Act or its regulations. Prosecutions are currently pending against three other abattoirs.

- (2) Abattoir A - two prosecutions -

Charged with failure to ensure that daily killing returns and weekly summaries were completed - 18 charges. Fined \$20 on each charge with \$84.20 costs on each charge. Total fines and costs \$1 875.

Charged with failure to ensure that daily killing returns and weekly summaries were completed - seven charges - and one charge of failing to ensure that tags, weights and grades were attached to the carcasses. Fined \$100 on each charge with \$67.20 costs on each charge. Total fines and costs \$1 337.60

Abattoir B -

Charged with failure to ensure that daily killing returns and weekly summaries were completed - six charges - and charged with obstructing an inspector. Fined \$20 on each charge, \$79.20 costs on first charge and \$74.20 on remaining five charges. Fined \$100 plus \$74.20 costs for obstruction. Total fines and costs \$744.40.

Abattoir C -

Charged with failing to declare lambs slaughtered - two charges, four lambs. Fined mandatory \$200 on each charge. Total fines and costs \$1 600.

Abattoir D -

Charged with failure to mouth - that is, identify a lamb. Fined \$250 plus costs of \$260.70. Total of \$510.70.

**MOSMAN PARK TEAROOMS - FUNCTIONS AFTER 8.00 PM**  
*Ministerial Authority*

1590. Mr HASSELL to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is there a requirement for ministerial authority for the use of the Mosman Park tearooms for functions after 8.00 pm?
- (2) If so, has authority been sought?
- (3) On how many occasions in the last three months?
- (4) Has it been granted or refused and, if so, how often in each case?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Until recently, yes; however I have now delegated my authority to the Executive Director of the Department of Marine and Harbours.
- (2) Yes.

- (3) Six.
- (4) Six granted, none refused.

**POLICE - HOUSING**

*Attached to Stations - Local Government Rates Exemption*

1600. Mr CASH to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Will the Government ensure that police residences attached to police stations are no longer exempted from paying local government rates?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The Local Government Act provides that these premises are exempt from such rates.

**POLICE - FIREARMS ACT**

*Amendments - Implementation*

1601. Mr CASH to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Why has the Government not introduced those 45 amendments referred to in its Government Press release PB4/373 of 1984, notwithstanding the amendments to the Firearms Act in September 1987 which dealt mainly with increased penalty provisions?
- (2) Is the Government waiting until after the next State election before it implements changes to the Firearms Act?
- (3) Has the Government's lack of enthusiasm to carry out its previously published amendment to the Firearms Act been tempered by the actions of the "joint task force" which comprised members of the Firearms Advisory Council and the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(3)

The Government is of the view, as is the Police Force, that we have the best and strongest firearm laws in Australia and we have a sound relationship with the various organisations representing firearm owners in Western Australia. There is therefore no need for changes to the laws either before or after the State election.

**WATER RESOURCES - POTABLE**

*Government Sponsored Water Drilling Programs - Reintroduction*

1602. Mr CASH to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is the Government considering reintroducing the Government sponsored water drilling programs which were successful in the Halls Creek area some years ago in identifying potable water resources on extensive pastoral leases?
- (2) If not why not?
- (3) Will he provide details of the success or otherwise of earlier similar schemes and details on any current proposals?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Not at this stage.
- (2) Because the Government has decided to extend the water supply loan scheme to the pastoral areas and provision of water supplies should be part of normal management practice. Under that arrangement, geological surveys advice can be made available to pastoralists at a small charge.
- (3) The subsidised drought relief drilling program in this area in 1985 led to the drilling of 28 bores, of which 10 were successful. Any future proposals would not be as a reaction to drought and there are no current proposals.

## TRANSPORT - TAXIS

*Stamp Act Section 112K - Monthly Returns Concern*

1604. Mr CASH to the Minister representing the Minister for Budget Management:

- (1) Is he aware of the concern expressed by some members of the taxi industry who are currently required to submit returns under section 112K of the Stamp Act of the amount of time on a monthly basis required to be spent completing rental statements?
- (2) Will he consider a biannual return and, if not, why not?
- (3) What items of a taxi's expenses is able to be recognised as portion of the service cost deduction referred to in section 112K of the Stamp Act?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The Stamp Act already provides that a rental business may elect to submit annual rather than monthly returns where its annual income, after the deduction of service costs, does not exceed \$50 000. I am advised that a substantial proportion of the taxi businesses which are registered for stamp duty have made this election.
- (3) The Commissioner of State Taxation advises that, in accordance with the provisions of the Stamp Act, his department allows expenditure incurred for the purposes of keeping taxi vehicles in a serviceable condition. This would include such items as tyres, batteries, repairs and routine maintenance.

## TRANSPORT - TAXIS

*Stamp Act Section 112K - Enforcement*

1605. Mr CASH to the Minister representing the Minister for Budget Management:

- (1) Is there any basis for a claim that the Government has sought to selectively enforce the provisions of section 112K of the Stamp Act within the taxi industry?
- (2) Will he or his senior officers meet with a deputation from the taxi industry to discuss the enforcement of section 112K of the Stamp Act?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) No. The Commissioner of State Taxation is responsible for the administration of stamp duty matters and advises that his department has not been selective in its approach to enforcement.
- (2) The Commissioner of State Taxation is agreeable to a meeting with industry representatives.

## BURSWOOD CASINO - GOLF COURSE

*Management Changes*

1607. Mr HASSELL to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) Have further representations been made to her for the transfer of the control of the Burswood Island golf course to Burswood Management Limited or some other group associated with the Burswood Hotel?
- (2) When were those representations made?
- (3) Has she given consideration to them?
- (4) If so, with what result?
- (5) Will she unequivocally confirm her prior undertaking that before any change is made to the management of the golf course on Burswood Island the approval of Parliament will be sought?
- (6) When is action going to be taken as required under the parliamentary agreement for the public areas to be developed on Burswood Island?
- (7) Has the agreement been complied with?

- (8) Has she approved any variation to the agreement?
- (9) Have the required expenditure commitments been met?
- (10) How much is it costing to maintain the 18 hole golf course?
- (11) Are all 18 holes playable?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) No.
- (2)-(4) Not applicable.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) Development of the public areas is proceeding in accordance with the agreement scheduled to the Casino (Burswood Island) Agreement Act 1985.
- (7) Yes.
- (8) Yes. A variation to the agreement to facilitate the sale of the Burswood Hotel was agreed to and ratified by Parliament.
- (9) Yes.
- (10) Approximately \$52 500 per month.
- (11) Nine holes are playable and it is anticipated the other nine holes will be playable in February 1989.

ROADS - MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT  
*Servetus Street - Profile Plan*

1609. Mr HASSELL to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What profile plan has been prepared by the Main Roads Department for Servetus Street?
- (2) Can this plan be made public to local residents?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The Main Roads Department has prepared a very preliminary plan for Servetus Street that has been made available to the City of Nedlands and the Town of Claremont for their consideration.
- (2) There is no reason why Nedlands and Claremont should not make these plans available to local residents.

EDUCATION - DEPARTMENT  
*Employees' Pay - Financial Institution Accounts*

1610. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Why is it mandatory for employees of her department to open an account with a financial institution to receive their salaries?
- (2) Does the implementation of this decision not infringe equal opportunities policy and does it not discriminate against those who do not have, nor wish to have, an account with a financial institution?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1) As a consequence of the various four per cent productivity agreements throughout the public sector, all employees - except in exceptional circumstances - are now paid via direct deposit to financial institutions rather than by way of cheques.
- (2) These provisions apply to all employees. There is, therefore, no discrimination.

**PLANNING - STATE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
*Radio Controlled Model Aircraft Centre - Whiteman Park Area*

1613. Mr CASH to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Is the State Planning Commission considering an application for a centre for radio controlled model aircraft next to or in the near vicinity of Whiteman Park and, if so, will he provide details?
- (2) Is an area to be set aside in the near vicinity of Whiteman Park for use by "noise pursuit" activities such as off road cycle areas and driver training facilities and, if so, will he provide details of any such proposals?
- (3) Does he consider this area as an acceptable site for a speedway complex to be constructed to meet environmentally acceptable limits and, if not, why not?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes, subject to detailed design work and acceptability in relation to noise limits.
- (2) No. A police driver training facility has been agreed in principle on land acquired for public purposes nearby. Details of this proposal can be obtained from the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.
- (3) No. The land was acquired for public purposes and is not available for such a commercial venture.

**LAND - NATIONAL PARKS**  
*Nature Reserves - Proclamation*

1614. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) What national parks and nature reserves have actually been proclaimed since 1 July 1983?
- (2) Would he please indicate the date on which each of these national parks or reserves was in fact proclaimed?
- (3) Would he also indicate the date on which each of these national parks or nature reserves was actually gazetted?

Mr HODGE replied:

(1)-(3)

I am not willing at this time to divert staff resources in the Department of Conservation and Land Management from work of a higher priority to answer the member's unnecessarily broad question. Details of the changes in the area managed by CALM and significant new reserves created are included in the department's annual reports. If the member has any inquiries regarding specific national parks or nature reserves, I will endeavour to obtain the information.

**ENVIRONMENT - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY**  
*Knightsbridge Development - Rejection*

1616. Mr CASH to the Minister for Environment:

- (1) Is he aware of an ABC radio news report broadcast at 7.45 am Thursday, 13 October 1988 in which it was suggested that the Environmental Protection Authority had again rejected the Knightsbridge development adjoining Bold Park and that he had upheld the recommendation and claimed there would be no compensation for the property?
- (2) Was this news report correct, given that the developers' modified plans have not been submitted as yet to the Environmental Protection Authority?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes, I am aware of the news report.
- (2) No, and the ABC was contacted and asked to correct the report.

**R & I BANK - LA ROSA, MR FRANK**  
*Business Dealings - Police, Commissioner for Corporate Affairs*

1617. Mr HOUSE to the Premier:

- (1) Has the R & I Bank referred any matter related to its business dealings with Mr Frank La Rosa of Albany to either the police or the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs?
- (2) If yes, have any charges been laid?
- (3) If no, why not?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(3)

I do not intend to go into the details of the bank's actions in this matter. However, I am assured that the bank has already recovered a substantial amount of the debt and is in the process of seeking to recover more from a variety of individuals. I am also assured that the bank will take any action open to it, both in terms of financial recovery and legal recourse, either itself or through the appropriate authorities.

**R & I BANK - LA ROSA, MR FRANK**  
*Financial Loss - Employee Dismissal*

1618. Mr HOUSE to the Premier:

Has the R & I Bank dismissed, suspended or demoted any staff member as a result of the loss it incurred over its dealings with Mr La Rosa?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

See answer to question 1617.

**R & I BANK - LA ROSA, MR FRANK**  
*Business Dealings - Total Net Loss*

1619. Mr HOUSE to the Premier:

- (1) What was the total net loss incurred by the R & I Bank as a result of its dealings with Mr La Rosa?
- (2) How much of that has been recovered so far?
- (3) Has the bank written off any part of the amount outstanding?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

See answer to question 1617.

**R & I BANK - LA ROSA, MR FRANK**  
*Gillbanks, Ms - Claim Recovery*

1620. Mr HOUSE to the Premier:

With respect to its dealings with Mr La Rosa, has the R & I Bank succeeded in recovering all or any of the money it was claiming from Ms Gillbanks?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

See answer to question 1617.

**R & I BANK - LA ROSA, MR FRANK**  
*Business Associates - Investigations*

1621. Mr HOUSE to the Premier:

- (1) Has the R & I Bank investigated the business associates of Mr La Rosa in order to find out where the money went?
- (2) If yes, has the bank referred any related matter to the police or the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs?
- (3) If yes to (2), have any charges been laid?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

See answer to question 1617.

**R & I BANK - LA ROSA, MR FRANK**  
*Payments System Misuse - Computer Program Cover*

1622. Mr HOUSE to the Premier:

With respect to the alleged misuse of the R & I Bank's payments system that resulted in Mr La Rosa being able to overdraw his account to such a large extent, is there any evidence of any computer program being "patched" to provide a cover for the misuse of the bank's payments system and to minimise the chances of its detection?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

See answer to question 1617.

**ENVIRONMENT - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY**  
*Heptachlor - Report, Public*

1623. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Environment:

- (1) Further to question 1442 of 1988 relating to the EPA report on the use of heptachlor, can he assure the House that the report will be made public?
- (2) If yes, when?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1)-(2)  
The report is being considered by Cabinet.

**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT - PETROCHEMICAL PROJECT**  
*EDC, VCM Production - Environmental Hazards*

1624. Mr STEPHENS to the Minister for Environment:

With respect to the proposed petrochemical plant -

- (a) Will he outline the environmental hazards and consequences of the production of EDC or VCM rather than taking the processing right through to the PVC stage;
- (b) what steps will be taken to deal with these environmental hazards and consequences;
- (c) will there be additional checks on the seaworthiness of ships carrying these hazardous products to prevent a repetition of the *Singa Sea* type disaster; and
- (d) at what stage will he become involved in environmental decisions associated with the siting of the petrochemical plant?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (a) The ERMP and the EPA's report provide a risk and hazard analysis of the petrochemical proposal. Both documents are publicly available.
- (b) I have set environmental conditions for the proposal and the conditions deal with these matters.
- (c) The safety of shipping is a matter for the Commonwealth and State Ministers for Transport.
- (d) This has been covered in (b).

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT - PETROCHEMICAL PROJECT

*Bond Corporation Annual General Meeting - Connell, Dempster's Financing*

277. Mr MacKINNON to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Premier aware that at the annual general meeting of Bond Corporation yesterday Mr Bond said that Messrs Connell and Dempster had arranged finance for the petrochemical project?
- (2) As this totally conflicts with the statements of the Minister for Economic Development and Trade and himself, will he say what he believes to be the truth of the matter?
- (3) Does this mean that in truth the Government sought out the petrochemical deal to allow it to manipulate finances to escape the Rothwells guarantee?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(3)

I am informed that the proponents of the petrochemical industry would not have been successful over a longer period in being able to ensure that the project was financed. I do not want by that to reflect necessarily on their capacity, I certainly do not want to reflect on the project, but the advice I have had is that this project was too big and required too many areas of expertise which they did not possess in order to move from the very important point to which they had taken it to the point of actual implementation.

Mr MacKinnon: Mr Bond was wrong?

Mr PETER DOWDING: Well, that is a view he has expressed. I can only tell the House what advice I have had. Perhaps the answer is that the Opposition will get conflicting advice about it but I think the advice I have had puts a point of view that is very persuasive.

Mr MacKinnon: You have indicated it was because there was no finance; he has indicated it was because of the contracts and the finance was in place.

Mr PETER DOWDING: My advice is that that is not correct. I have not seen the details of what Mr Bond said yesterday but I understand the finance was not in place. There was certainly an offer to put finance in place but it was only an offer and certainly my advice is that there would have been grave difficulties in front of them in achieving that. The important point is, though, not to try to speculate and be 100 per cent right about whether they would or would not; the most important point is that the timing of this project is critical and the elements of -

Mr Hassell: It was certainly critical to you, wasn't it?

Mr MacKinnon: It is important when you come in here and say that \$400 million of taxpayers' money was expended because they couldn't get it. If they could not get the finance, why did we pay \$400 million?

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Leader of the Opposition has asked the question. If he wants to ask another one he should do so; if he wants to debate it he should do so. I am just suggesting that, whatever the veracity of the predictions for the future, what we need to see in this State is that project start now, not in a year's time or two years' time, and that in order to achieve that I think the necessary steps have been taken.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA - REPUTATION

*Newspaper Articles - Deputy Leader of the Opposition's Remarks*

278. Mr RIPPER to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's remarks last evening when he referred to an article in the *London Financial Times*?



- (2) If so, is the Premier aware that the article quoted was one of a series on Western Australia, and if so, what impact the articles may have had on the reputation of Western Australia?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(2)

To say that the Opposition is misleading the community on a regular basis is a harsh criticism of a political party which in these circumstances is absolutely justified. Not 20 minutes ago the Leader of the Opposition got up in this House and made an assertion which by now he ought to know is absolutely and utterly fallacious.

Mr MacKinnon: About LandCorp? What we said was exactly right.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Yes, about LandCorp. The Opposition said that LandCorp was given a block of land in respect of which it did nothing and earned a huge fee.

Mr MacKinnon: You bet they did!

Mr PETER DOWDING: That is absolutely false.

Mr MacKinnon: Half the profit stays with the WADC.

Mr PETER DOWDING: It does not stay with the WADC. For a start, it is used by the WADC to make more profit for the community. Since the Leader of the Opposition, by way of interjection, has raised this issue, I will respond to it in this way: This morning at a news conference the Leader of the Opposition deliberately misled the community and this afternoon in this House he compounded that. The truth of the situation, now that it has been inquired into, is this: In February this year the Western Australian Development Corporation identified an area of land in respect of which it thought there could be a substantial development return to the Government. It asked the Department of Land Administration -

Mr Hassell: So it got a bigger development for the WADC.

Mr PETER DOWDING: It asked the Department of Land Administration to get a price from the Valuer General, which is the basis upon which the Opposition, when in Government, sold land; the Liberal Government used the Valuer General's price. The Valuer General's price for the land was \$185 000. The WADC thereafter set about managing the marketing of this property -

Mr Hassell: It has been gutted since it was sold; it is being reconstructed. That is how much improvement they did.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PETER DOWDING: If the member for Cottesloe could contain himself for a minute so that he could undertake the unlikely activity - in which he has become very inexperienced - of receiving some facts, perhaps he would be able to make a judgment. In February this year the land was valued at \$185 000 and LandCorp believed it could do a lot better. In May this year LandCorp was advised that adjoining property owners were interested in an auction, and in June this year, after LandCorp participated in that auction, it was sold for a total price of \$455 000.

Mr Hassell: So they claim the difference as profit for WADC!

Mr PETER DOWDING: Under the Liberals they would not even have been able to get rid of it. It would have languished in Government ownership because when we came into Government the Liberals did not even know what assets the Government owned.

Mr MacKinnon: Rubbish.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Leader of the Opposition cannot call that rubbish. When we came into office in 1983 the Liberal Government had allowed the asset management of this State to deteriorate to the extent that we could not

even get a list, or find out from any one source or even easily from a series of sources, what assets there were. First, the Liberal Government would not even have known it was there; and, secondly, the practice of the Liberal Government was to sell on the Valuer General's price to people who would then pick it up and make further profits out of it. There are examples of that a yard long. In this case LandCorp identified the property and the opportunity; LandCorp identified a way of commercially disposing of the land; and LandCorp joined with the private sector in maximising the Government's return and has now earned a profit for the people of Western Australia.

Having said all that, I have to say that the Opposition's interjections actually deflected me from my original purpose -

Mr Court: Don't give a speech; just give the answers and sit down.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and other members of the Opposition have been touting around as hard as they can what they regard as politically damaging expressions and concerns, not only in the domestic community but also interstate and overseas. We have even seen an example of that in a matter referred to in a motion which is still before this House dealing with the way in which comments got into *The South China Post*. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition quoted selectively from a series of articles which appeared in the London *Financial Times* about Western Australia. What he selectively ignored were the following quotations, one of which reads as follows -

On the positive side, the government has undoubtedly promoted the state's economic development, facilitating a multitude of ventures and deals, sometimes investing in them directly and then withdrawing once they are up and running.

That was in the same article, but let us look at an article which appeared on 8 September headed, "Uprating Australia's giant quarry" and which opens with these words -

The SPEAKER: Order! I have a little difficulty. I understand why the answer to this question has gone on for a lengthy period, although I feel that the Premier is drawing it to a conclusion. Before I ask the Premier to carry on with it, I want to come to an arrangement with members if I can. I understand the dilemma members have of wanting to ask a certain number of questions in a certain period. If members will cooperate with me in respect of interjections and keep them to an absolute minimum, I will cooperate with them and ensure that Ministers and anybody else in this House answering questions do so in as short a way as possible. I cannot be fairer than that.

Mr PETER DOWDING: I apologise for the length of my answer, Mr Speaker, but I was distracted earlier on. The article opens with the following paragraph -

The popular image of Western Australia as a giant quarry yielding raw riches of iron ore, bauxite, natural gas, nickel, gold and diamonds, is in need of significant modification.

Thanks to the efforts of the State Government and Australian and international resources companies, a formidable downstream processing industry is being established, embracing both traditional minerals and new materials.

It goes on to detail - but I will not burden the House with that - the projects and the role this Government has played in promoting aspects of the State's development. In closing it says -

The downstream processing facilities now in place and under consideration nevertheless represent a notable change. Companies and government view it in the same way - as an important business opportunity for the state and for the country.

That is what the world's leading financial newspaper has to say about this Government's success.

## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT - PETROCHEMICAL PROJECT

*Initiators*

279. Mr HASSELL to the Premier:

- (1) Who first approached whom about the petrochemical deal?
- (2) Did the Government approach Bond, or did the Government approach Connell or Dempster, or did Bond approach the Government, or did Connell or Dempster approach the Government?
- (3) Who initiated what led to the Government taking part in the petrochemical deal and paying out \$175 million of our money for blue sky?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(3)

What a trivial question. Firstly, I absolutely reject the comment contained at the end: The State Government is not paying \$400 million -

Mr Hassell: I did not say \$400 million.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The State Government is paying value for a project and one of the world's leading banks has confirmed that the Government is paying value. Secondly, it is an excellent project. It is absolutely essential for the future of this State that this project is brought to Western Australia. It is one of the industries of the future. Just as the Liberal Government huffed and puffed about jumbo steel mills, sponge iron plants, downstream processing of gas, and all the wonderful things it announced and reannounced - and never brought to this State - just as it left us with a potential risk indebtedness of \$7 000 million, almost twice the State's Budget, this Government has worked assiduously to bring projects to Western Australia. Who said what and to whom at any one stage in history is about as relevant as a Liberal Party shadow Cabinet meeting. We have made a commitment because we think it is the right thing to do for Western Australia. When the Opposition stops knocking this project, trying to sabotage it, trying to denigrate it, when it recognises that 4 000 or 5 000 Western Australians will have jobs during the construction period, that \$10 million a year from payroll and other taxes will flow in even during the construction period, and when the future of this State in terms of production of petrochemical industries is complete, then the Opposition can start criticising us.

*Point of Order*

Mr COWAN: Mr Speaker, I have sat and listened and I have not heard the question answered. I happen to be the fourth cab off the rank when it comes to questions without notice. This is the third question. The situation is somewhat ridiculous when we hear a person speak for three or four minutes and not answer the question, albeit that the person is the Premier.

A Government member: That is a point of view.

The SPEAKER: The member and I must have been around for a long time because he has taken the words out of my mouth. It is a point of view but it is a perfectly appropriate point of view.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

## TRANSPORT - AIR

*Qantas - Crayfish Freight Space Allocation*

280. Mr MARLBOROUGH to the Premier:

Given the concern expressed about the availability of freight space on Qantas flights for the movement of rock lobster, can he report on any progress on this matter?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

At the risk of interfering with the Leader of the National Party's question, I am pleased that as a result of work by the Minister for Fisheries and the

meeting I have had with Mr Menadue today, we have at least had the allocation of pallets to Tokyo increased substantially. For the 1988-89 season a total of 14 pallets a week direct, plus via Sydney, will now be available to WA rock lobster exporters - a significant increase over last season's allocation and what the industry has been seeking. The Chief Executive of Qantas has given a commitment to give further attention to this matter. As a result of that we can expect, if the industry requires more space, careful and sympathetic consideration of that request. A lot more is to be done in the area of air freight out of Western Australia, as well as in the area of air passenger services. This Government is working very hard to achieve those benefits for the State.

**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT - PETROCHEMICAL PROJECT**  
*Non-Recourse Finance - Completion Guarantees*

281. Mr COURT to the Premier:

- (1) Is the non recourse finance for the petrochemical project, as recently outlined by the Premier, dependent on completion guarantees of the project?
- (2) If yes, is the Government at risk with the borrowings until the project is completed and operating correctly?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(2)

I thought a statement had already been made by the Minister for Economic Development and Trade to the House about the risk during the construction period. My impression, from the Minister for Economic Development and Trade's words, was that it is quite clear that the risk now lies on shoulders other than the Government's. But in view of the commercial nature of the question, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's desire for accuracy, I suggest he either put this matter on notice or I will make sure that when the -

Mr Mensaros: I have had a question on notice for three days.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Does the member want question time to finish?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PETER DOWDING: I will make sure that the Minister for Economic Development and Trade advises the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on his return.

**POLICE - TRUANCY PATROL**  
*Balga - Future Concern*

282. Mr CUNNINGHAM to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Is the Minister aware of the concerns expressed by more than 5 000 petitioners as to the future of the truancy patrol operating in the Balga area, and can the Minister advise as to the status of that patrol?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

I am prepared to look at that matter. The Commissioner of Police has looked at the matter. I must congratulate the member for Balga on the way he has gone about his duties in this area. Undoubtedly he is one of the hardest working members of Parliament in this State. He is already recognised in his electorate as a person dedicated to do the best for his electorate. Through his hard work and the contact he has with his electorate, a very successful truancy patrol was established in that area. I am advised by the Commissioner of Police that the truancy patrol, which is run out of the Warwick police division, will be a permanent feature of the Balga area. It is the sort of feature seen throughout Western Australia at present. Comments have been made recently in the *Kalgoortie Miner* by the Principal of the Eastern Goldfields High School. He applauded the truancy patrol's work in the area, as has the principal of John Paul College. I noticed also in the latest edition of the

*Eastern Suburbs Reporter* a headline "Crime fall linked to new initiatives". The fall in crime is linked to the truancy patrol. The truancy patrol will continue in the Balga area. The Opposition would do well to recognise that if they are prepared to interject, we are prepared to answer their interjections.

#### ROADS - MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT

##### *Farmers' Overwidth Permits - Directive*

283. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Transport:

Has he had time to give consideration to issuing a directive to the Main Roads Department's overwidth/overload permit section for the grant of a permit to farmers who have had their crops affected by frost to transport crops to Perth as an overwidth load?

Mr PEARCE replied:

The Leader of the National Party took up this matter with me verbally yesterday and I sought a report from the Main Roads Department about the circumstances under which it had declined to give a permit for loading under those circumstances. As the Leader of the National Party would know, the question of transport regulation around the State is a vexed one. Although the rules may sometimes seem to be overzealously applied, once exceptions are made we do not know when they will stop. If a fairy tale applies to the Minister for Transport's delving into those kinds of regulations, Pandora's box would come as close to it as anything. On the verbal advice I received from the Main Roads Department today, I would not be prepared to issue the directive which the Leader of the National Party seeks, and overrule the decision made by the department so far. The department has checked with the Department of Agriculture about the circumstances with regard to the crops. On that advice the Main Roads Department does not see why a permit ought to be issued in this form. However, I have asked for a full report from the Main Roads Department which I will have on my desk tomorrow morning. On the basis of that full report, I will make a final decision.

#### TRANSPORT - BUSES

##### *Schools - Boarding and Leaving Safety*

284. Mr THOMAS to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Can the Minister please outline what steps are being taken to protect students boarding and leaving school buses?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. Today I have announced that flashing amber warning lights are to be fitted to school buses throughout the State. Legislation will be introduced during this session of Parliament to bring that about. The flashing lights will be an important extra warning sign for motorists to slow down when approaching school buses, when people are either boarding or alighting. In the past decade at least 11 school children have been killed while boarding or leaving school buses. The added warning sign will help to prevent any further tragedies. The Western Australian legislation will be modelled on Queensland legislation - the only other State to use flashing lights on such buses. Since the introduction of the system in Queensland no reports have been made of deaths or injuries to children near school bus stops. Under the Western Australian regulations, buses will be fitted with flashing amber lights in elevated positions on the four corners of the buses. The lights will be used when a bus is about to stop, and when a bus is stationary or moving off. I hope this action will be successful in saving children's lives and preventing injury.

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