

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 4th August, 1976

The SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (64): ON NOTICE

1. MEMBER FOR FREMANTLE *Christening of Fisheries Patrol Vessel*

Mr FLETCHER, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

(1) Is he aware that—

(a) the Member for Fremantle has been questioned by fishermen, constituents and others, as to why he was not present at the launching and christening of the patrol vessel, *Abel Tasman*, and the opening of the department's Fleet Maintenance Centre in Fremantle, on 29th July, 1976; and

(b) the Member was unable to give a satisfactory reply, other than to say he had not been invited?

(2) Why was the Member representing the area not invited?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

(1) and (2) The christening of the *Abel Tasman* and opening of the fisheries branch Fleet Maintenance Centre was essentially a departmental function with some industry representation consisting of the following groups—

Rock Lobster Industry Advisory Committee;

General Fisheries Advisory Committee;

Australian Fishing Industry Council (W.A. Branch);

Rock Lobster and Prawning Association.

However, I have arranged for the member to be invited to inspect the new vessel and facilities at his convenience.

2. RECREATION

Sports Grounds at Kalgoorlie: Funds

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Recreation:

(1) Has an application been received by the Community Recreation Council from the Shire of Boulder for financial assistance for providing water to and the development of a grassed area to serve schools in the Adeline area of Kalgoorlie?

(2) If so, when and what action has been taken with regard thereto?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) On 2nd April, 1976, and the application was acknowledged on 8th April, 1976.

This application will be considered along with all applications for financial assistance when details of State and Federal Budgets are known.

3.

EDUCATION

Sports Grounds at Kalgoorlie: Development

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

(1) Would the Minister please advise the present position re the combined Adeline schools effluent project at Kalgoorlie, particularly as to what known steps have been taken by the Shire of Boulder, what action has been taken by the Education Department, and what self help has been demonstrated by the schools concerned, Government and non-Government?

(2) What financial commitment can be expected from the Government, and when?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

(1) The Shire of Boulder has made the following moves—

(a) applied for a grant through the Community Recreation Council;

(b) sought a loan allocation of \$80 000 in its loan application programme to the Treasury for the 1976-77 financial year;

(c) applied for Government assistance through the Under-Secretary for Works;

(d) applied for Governor's approval to raise loan funds to commence the programme. It is planned to raise \$30 000 in this manner but if Government assistance is not forthcoming, a further loan of \$30 000 would be raised.

The Education Department has allocated \$14 000 for reticulation in the stage 3 additions at Eastern Goldfields Senior High School. The Catholic schools have indicated that their contribution will be in the vicinity of \$1 000.

(2) The application for Government assistance will be considered with the national sewerage backlog programme.

4. PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES

Future Role

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Was the Minister correctly quoted in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of 31st July last by the following statements as printed—
 - (a) "If you don't wish to become incorporated, I am perfectly happy about that", and
 - (b) "Mr MacKinnon said that every primary school would eventually have a pre-primary centre on its grounds"?
- (2) If "Yes", assuming his above prediction is achieved, what role does he see subsequent to that achievement having been made for—
 - (a) centres (previously pre-school) which have become incorporated; and
 - (b) those pre-school centres still outside the jurisdiction of the Education Department?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) Yes.
- (2) (a) and (b) For the education, care and welfare of younger aged groups of children.

5. PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES

Number and Fees.

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many pre-school centres remain under the jurisdiction of the Pre-School Board within the State?
- (2) What is the average weekly charge (including the levy) which is imposed per child at pre-school centres?
- (3) Does the Government intend the abolition of such charges to equate attendance at pre-school centres with attendance at a pre-primary centre during the balance of this term in office?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) 321.
- (2) The levy would average about \$1 per week depending on the length of the attendance, and the average running cost of a centre would be above \$2 per week. The actual charges vary between centres in accordance with policy regarding fund raising.
- (3) No determination can be made on this matter until the future of Commonwealth funding for pre-school education has been resolved.

6. MINE WORKERS' RELIEF ACT

Benefits

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Mines:

With reference to his answer to part (1) of question 47 of 6th April, 1976—

- (a) Would he please indicate what are the other factors which have influenced the increase in funds under the Mine Workers Relief Act;
- (b) how many beneficiaries were there under this Act as at 30th June, 1976;
- (c) how many (worker) contributors were registered under the Act as at 30th June, 1976;
- (d) how many (new or renewed) applications for benefit pursuant to the Act were successful during 1975-76?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (a) (i) Reduction in the total number of beneficiaries;
- (ii) higher interest rates;
- (iii) increase in the number of contributors;
- (b) 705;
- (c) 10 659;
- (d) 14 in the financial year 1/7/75 to 30/6/76.

7. FIG SWILL DISPOSAL

Environmental Impact

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) In view of the fact that as from 1st September, 1976 pig swill as such will not be permitted to be fed to pigs, has he considered the environmental impact of such action?
- (2) What efforts have been made to ensure the adequate disposal of such swill that will not aggravate the already existing pollution that takes place from the land fill type of waste disposal?
- (3) Will he outline any efforts that have been made by his Government to provide a central treatment plant to treat such swill so that it will not remain as a possible source of infection for animals?
- (4) Is he aware of any progress being made with regard to a proposed treatment plant that is going to turn this type of pig swill into animal food?
- (5) If so, who is the firm concerned and how far advanced is the project?

- (6) Would he investigate the possibility that such pig swill could be a source of infection to animals by virtue of stray animals being able to gain access to tips where such swill is disposed of?
- (7) Would he investigate the possibility of ensuring that none of the swill could find its way into our water courses and thus becoming a form of virulent pollution that could transmit diseases to animals further downstream from the disposal area?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Department of Public Health and local health authority supervision.
- (3) From the public health point of view, swill is not indentified as being separate from other community wastes, and is being effectively disposed of at existing land fill sites.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) Environmetric systems: Process approved in principle only. There is no knowledge when the process may become operational.
- (6) A Department of Agriculture responsibility, which it is understood has already been investigated and found to be satisfactory.
- (7) Currently being done (see (2)).

| | Cattle | Calves | Sheep | Lambs | Goats | Pigs |
|---------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| January | 15 526 | 475 | 127 565 | 25 548 | 13 654 | 10 380 |
| February | 17 036 | 601 | 95 663 | 26 834 | 15 169 | 9 919 |
| March | 20 509 | 825 | 133 767 | 47 226 | 16 844 | 13 538 |
| April | 13 872 | 653 | 101 520 | 34 529 | 6 811 | 10 275 |
| May | 13 944 | 1 089 | 76 031 | 40 914 | 2 654 | 11 234 |
| June | 15 051 | 1 485 | 47 129 | 48 464 | 3 768 | 12 447 |
| July | 14 453 | 1 943 | 78 010 | 78 152 | 2 491 | 12 459 |

- (2) The installation of additional aerators during June has overcome the odour problem emanating from this area. It is planned to install in the near future odour control equipment in the by-products area to overcome the problem of odours from that source, as publicised in my Press release issued 30th July, 1976.
- (3) (a) An Alfa Laval washer/scrubber air treatment system with heat exchanger and after burner;
- (b) No.
- (4) The proposed odour control equipment will improve the efficiency of the after burner.

8. MIDLAND JUNCTION ABATTOIR

Obnoxious Odour

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Would he inform me of the number of animals that have been killed at the Midland abattoir on a monthly basis since January of this year?
- (2) What action or plan has been taken to overcome the obnoxious smells that emanate from the abattoir?
- (3) If this plan involves the purchase of new plant in the offal treatment section then—
- (a) what type of plant does the abattoir propose to install;
- (b) is it a duplication of the existing plant?
- (4) As the existing after burner is obviously faulty, is the board intending to change or alter the after burner to make it efficient, or does it intend to install a new and more efficient after burner?
- (5) (a) Is the effluent system now working satisfactorily;
- (b) are the levels of purification of the effluent now reaching the required standards of both the Shire and Health Department;
- (c) if not, why not?

Mr OLD replied:

(1)

- (5) (a) Yes;
- (b) and (c) the B.O.D. and suspended solids levels have been reduced considerably by the new system and are close to acceptable standards.

9. BUS FARE INCREASE

Effect on School Children

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In view of the financial hardship that is being experienced by families with three or more children, where these children must use the Metropolitan Transport Trust buses to travel to and from schools, would he review

the excessive increase in bus fares for school children with a view to alleviating this considerable burden on the family funds?

- (2) Would he consider that as some 23 million passengers are carried per year by the trust the required increase in revenue could be obtained by increasing the fares of those passengers instead of being derived from the children of large families?
- (3) Could he advise—
 - (a) the number of child passenger trips per day;
 - (b) the amount of revenue that becomes available through such trips to the trust; and
 - (c) the amount that the public fare would have to be increased to cover such income?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No. Scholars' fares, even on the new scale cover less than 25 per cent of cost. Scholars' fares had not altered during the last seven years.
- (2) No. This could throw the scholars' fares further out of balance.
- (3) (a) 64 000;
(b) \$1.2 million;
(c) adult 5c in 30 kilometre zone.

10. HOUSING

Midvale: Redevelopment Programme

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Housing:

In view of the promises made to me by the State Housing Commission that a redevelopment programme would be undertaken in the Midvale area and such redevelopment to commence by June, 1976, will he now advise—

- (1) As no redevelopment has taken place in the area concerned, would he inform me as to whether those promises are going to be broken promises?
- (2) If the redevelopment is to take place, when is it now scheduled for commencement?
- (3) Will he undertake to place the existing homes scheduled for demolition into a reasonable condition, or otherwise in the future, when such unsuitable accommodation falls vacant, that it is not reallocated for rental?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) I am not aware of any promises made to the member by the State Housing Commission

that the redevelopment programme to be undertaken in the Midland locality and involving the construction of new units at Midvale would commence by June, 1976.

The commission has, however, completed its survey of tenants in the Hamersley area and a full report in this respect and further technical information will be presented to the next commission meeting for decision on the plan to be presented to the local authority for implementation.

Although in answer to your question of the 30th October, 1975, you were advised of the commission's intention to commence construction of new units early in 1976, I am advised that you have also had subsequent information made available to you at the commission to the effect that such construction is planned to commence in the summer of 1976-77.

- (3) Whilst the units scheduled for demolition are occupied the commission will maintain them in a habitable condition.

11. TRADE UNIONS

Ballots: Legislation

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

Is it his intention to introduce during this session of Parliament a Bill to provide for the control of union ballots by the Western Australian Industrial Commission or other agency?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

It is expected that a Bill will be introduced to amend the Industrial Arbitration Act to provide for postal ballots for the election of union officers.

12. OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Control: Legislation

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Transport:

Is it the Government's intention to introduce legislation for the purpose of controlling and/or regulating the riding of off-road vehicles, e.g., mini bikes, trail bikes and unlicensed vehicles during this session of Parliament?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

No.

13. **RAILWAYS***Retired Employees: Concession Passes*

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How many retired Westrail employees have been issued with the necessary passes to allow them to receive concessions for rail travel?
- (2) In view of the fact that ex-Members of Parliament who have served for a period of 12 years or more are granted life passes, would he consider granting the same privilege to ex-workers of Westrail who have given 12 years or more of service?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Approximately 640 permit cards are on issue to Westrail employees and their dependants as entitlement to concession rail travel.
- (2) No.
- (3) Privileges granted to members of Parliament and ex-members of Parliament have been determined by Governments from time to time and do not necessarily set a standard for the community. Westrail ex-employees not receiving pensioner travel concessions and who meet certain conditions are granted intrastate rail travel as an *ex gratia* privilege and interstate and overseas rail travel concessions by agreement with other rail systems. The concessions are considered reasonable and compare favourably with travel concessions granted by the Government to pensioners.

14. **MIDLAND JUNCTION
ABATTOIR BOARD***Skin Sheds*

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Was an application made by him to the Swan Shire Council for the purpose of rezoning land under control of the abattoir board that would permit further skin sheds being erected on the said land?
- (2) If "Yes" then—
 - (a) when was the application made to the shire;
 - (b) when did the shire deal with the matter; and
 - (c) what are the results of the shire's deliberations?
- (3) What size is the area involved in the rezoning application?
- (4) Are the proposed skin sheds to be erected by the abattoir board?
- (5) If not, why not?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Yes. My letter supported a previous application by the board—and drew attention to the circumstances of a previous rezoning in 1974, in the absence of consultation with the board, which altered the "noxious trade" classification of the total paddock area to "rural" classification thereby preventing the erection of additional skin sheds.
- (2) (a) 12th July, 1976.
(b) and (c) No reply has as yet been received.
- (3) 7.5 hectares.
- (4) No.
- (5) The provision of facilities to handle skins is considered to be one for companies directly involved in the trade.

15. **POULTRY FARMING**
Funds for Research

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Out of an amount of \$226 639 that has been funded for the purpose of research into the poultry industry in 1976-77 can he advise—

- (a) as to the amount that has been allocated to Western Australia for research; and
- (b) what type of research is to be undertaken for the industry in this State?

Mr OLD replied:

Poultry research is funded from two industry sources:

Council of Egg Marketing Authorities of Australia (CEMAA) Research Fund.

Chicken Meat Research Fund.

No allocation has been made to Western Australia from the CEMAA Fund for 1976-77, but funds have been allocated from the CMR fund to investigate causes of leg weakness in chickens and aspects of infectious laryngotracheitis.

16. **PIGS***Assistance to Producers*

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Are figures kept that would indicate the number of pig farmers who are licensed to run on their properties 400 or less pigs; if so—
 - (a) how many such farmers are there; and
 - (b) what is the average number of pigs kept by the farmers?

- (2) In view of the proposed discontinuation of pig swill as from 1st September, 1976, has he considered the possibility that many of the people in the category as outlined in (1) will be forced to leave the industry?
- (3) Is the Department of Agriculture aware of any outbreak of any exotic diseases arising from the use of pig swill in the last 20 years; if so—
- what type of outbreak took place; and
 - what was the disease in question?
- (4) From what source is it considered that the greatest danger of the introduction of exotic diseases could emanate and in what way has the Department of Agriculture endeavoured to control such sources of infection?
- (5) Would he consider financially assisting the pig farmer who may be forced out of the production of pigs in the same manner as other primary producers are assisted when circumstances of Government force them to leave a primary producing industry?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) No such licensing records are maintained by my department except in relation to licences issued to piggeries where swill is fed.

Piggeries in specifically gazetted areas are however required to be registered by local authorities under the provisions of the Health Act.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics at 31st March, 1975, records 3 179 holdings in Western Australia of which 3 135 had less than 500 pigs.

- (2) Alternative feeds are available and it seems unlikely that specialist commercial pig owners now feeding swill will be forced to leave the industry.
- (3) Yes.
- and (b) Swine vesicular disease in the United Kingdom.
- (4) Animals and products derived from animals entering Australia in contravention of the Quarantine Act. The Chief Veterinary Surgeon of the Department of Agriculture administers animal quarantine under the Quarantine Act on behalf of the Commonwealth and all veterinary officers and stock inspectors stationed in coastal districts and seaports are gazetted quarantine inspectors

under this Act. All these officers are active in enforcing the provisions of the Quarantine Act.

- (5) No. The Government deferred the implementation of the ban for 18 months in order to give the owners of swill piggeries an opportunity to adjust to alternative feeding methods.

17.

POWER STATIONS

Unit Cost of Production

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Since the East Perth and South Fremantle power stations were converted to coal burning stations, will he please advise the average cost of producing a unit of power on a monthly basis at the following power stations—

East Perth;
South Fremantle;
Kwinana;
Bunbury;
Muja?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

The average monthly cost of production at each station is as follows. Costs are on the basis of average fuel cost per unit generated.

| Station | C/kWh |
|-----------------|-------|
| East Perth | 1.33 |
| South Fremantle | 1.21 |
| Bunbury | 0.90 |
| Muja | 0.58 |
| Kwinana | 1.57 |

18. POLICE AND ROAD TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

Overtime Payments

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Police:

Since the Road Traffic Authority was established, will he please advise the amounts paid, on a monthly basis, for overtime in both the Police Force and within the RTA?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

| Month 1975 | Police Force | RTA Road Patrol | RTA Public Service |
|------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| June | 91 669.86 | 32 830.30 | 381.00 |
| July | 74 568.00 | 60 739.55 | 2 225.00 |
| August | 55 293.11 | 59 152.08 | 456.00 |
| September | 64 846.98 | 70 287.67 | 961.00 |
| October | 72 088.51 | 90 651.86 | 928.00 |
| November | 48 992.62 | 49 914.55 | 2 242.00 |
| December | 30 944.37 | 31 171.28 | 50.00 |
| Month 1976 | | | |
| January | 62 842.58 | 81 707.37 | 477.00 |
| February | 41 046.18 | 54 990.57 | 285.00 |
| March | 62 803.46 | 65 009.02 | 66.00 |
| April | 65 677.27 | 70 622.32 | 755.00 |
| May | 52 474.78 | 52 398.09 | 1 226.00 |
| June | 60 422.64 | 49 817.46 | 968.00 |
| July | 59 867.93 | 51 679.06 | 2 215.00 |
| | 843 538.29 | 820 971.18 | 13 235.00 |

19.

POLICE**Recruits**

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Police:

What were the number of recruits taken into the police force for years—

1971;
1972;
1973;
1974;
1975;
1976?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

The number of recruits taken into the Police Force, including RTA, for the years listed is as follows—

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----|--------------|
| 1970-71—163 | including | 93 | replacements |
| 1971-72—117 | " | 47 | " |
| 1972-73—172 | " | 10 | " |
| 1973-74—252 | " | 102 | " |
| 1974-75—234 | " | 61 | " |
| 1975-76—154 | " | 84 | " |

20.

HOUSING**Aborigines at Collie**

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Housing:

On 5th March, 1976, he advised me that six houses for Aboriginal families would be constructed in Collie and it was anticipated they would be available for occupation towards the latter part of the year. If the houses are under construction, when is it anticipated they will be available to Aboriginal families in the town?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

As agreed on 5th March, 1976, I agreed to the provision of housing for Aborigines in Collie. A contract was signed on the 3rd May, 1976 for the construction of six houses to accommodate Aboriginal families. Work has commenced and the dwellings are due for completion by the end of November, 1976.

21.

ABORIGINES AT COLLIE**Tent Accommodation**

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

Following discussions held at Collie late last year, between the Minister, Minister for Housing, Members of Parliament and other interested parties, where it was agreed that tents would be provided to accommodate Aborigines on a temporary basis at Collie, when does the Government intend to initiate its promises and remove the tents from Collie which are at present occupied by elderly, invalid Aboriginal pensioners?

Mr RIDGE replied:

Following the meeting to which the member refers, my department provided temporary accommodation by way of tents and toilets.

Information was gathered and supplied by officers of my department to the State Housing Commission in order that the commission could further consider its responsibility for accommodation. I understand that the State Housing Commission is in the process of drawing up plans and designing models of the proposed housing scheme.

The tents provided by my department will remain until such time as the State Housing Commission provides permanent accommodation.

22.

MOTOR VEHICLES**Defective Headlights**

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Traffic:

- (1) Does he have information in support of the news item of 2nd June, 1976 that 80% of all new cars have defective headlights?
- (2) How long has this been so?
- (3) What action has the Government taken and when to correct this gross inefficiency of and danger being caused by the private enterprise sector?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The reference was to 467 vehicles which were checked; 80 per cent of headlights were found to require adjustment but, in many cases this would result from vibration, settling of springs, loading, etc. during normal road usage.
- (2) Records indicate that there were similar problems as far back as 1965.
- (3) Subject to availability of staff, headlight testing will be carried out periodically. The next headlight testing service will be on Friday night, 6th August, 1976.

23.

POLICE**Thefts of Money: Minister's Comments**

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Have the thieves who stole money from the Bank of New South Wales, Osborne Park, and a liquor store in Leederville in May last, been arrested?
- (2) Was he correctly reported on television on Saturday, 29th May, 1976, as having expressed the hope that the court would satisfactorily punish these persons?

- (3) If "Yes" why did he find it necessary to express and publish this hope even before the offenders had been arrested?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) In respect to the Bank of New South Wales robbery a man has been arrested. No arrests have yet been made in the liquor store robbery but inquiries are continuing.
- (2) The view I expressed was that I found it difficult to find a penalty severe enough for a person who shot an innocent victim.
- (3) The view I expressed is one I still hold and I would hope the member would express concern for innocent victims rather than for callous offenders.

25. COMPUTER PRODUCED NUMERALS

Difficulty in Reading

Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of the continuing nuisance being endured by people who experience difficulty in reading computer produced numerals?
- (2) If "Yes" what has he done about correcting this position since the essence of communication is that the receiver may understand the information purported to be conveyed?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) I am not aware of any difficulty in reading computer produced numerals which are little different from those produced by many typewriters.

For the member's information, I will make available a sample sheet of numerals produced by the Treasury computer which he will see lack nothing in clarity.

- (2) Answered by (1) with the added comment that, if the member has examples of difficulties being experienced, it would be appreciated if he would make these known to me, and I shall have them examined.

I have here examples of both the numerals and the letters produced on the Treasury computer. I ask permission to table this document. In case anyone thinks this is the sort of information that normally comes out, I want it to be clearly understood that it is deliberately in an indecipherable form so far as the wording is concerned.

It is deliberately done in that form so that there can be no suggestion that confidential information is released unintentionally. The document gives examples of both numerals and letters.

The document was tabled (see paper No. 320).

26. PRIVATE ENTERPRISE *Improvement of Efficiency*

Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

What action has the Government taken so far to improve the general standard of efficiency and service in the private sector or what is also sometimes known as the fourth tier of government?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

There is constant liaison and discussion between the Government and Government instrumentalities and the private sector.

24. PROSTITUTION

Royal Commission: Cost

Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

- (1) How much has the Royal Commission on Prostitution cost the people of Western Australia so far?
- (2) What will the total cost be?
- (3) Why did he deny the Royal Commissioner the right to bring in recommendations concerning the future of or lack of future for prostitution in Western Australia?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Expenditure to date has been \$63 800.
- (2) No significant additional costs are expected.
- (3) Certain rather vague allegations of impropriety in the administration of the law were made by various persons. These were reported upon in an opinion of counsel which the Government commissioned for the purpose of ascertaining whether a Royal Commission was justified.

Counsel recommended against such a Royal Commission.

As a result of further representations being made that the full facts concerning the allegations would only be supplied were the witnesses given the protection of a Royal Commission, the Government decided to allow such persons the opportunity to justify their allegations and appointed the Hon. J. G. Norris as a Royal Commissioner for this purpose.

For these reasons the terms of reference were both adequate and appropriate, as demonstrated by the Royal Commissioner's report.

Some of the continuing services given by departments—and I emphasise this is not an exhaustive list but covers only examples of services given—are—

- (1) **Publicity:**
Promotional campaigns are conducted using conventional media for coverage—press, radio, television, trade fairs, films, displays and exhibitions—to increase public awareness of locally produced goods and services.
- (2) **Export Promotion:**
Regular visits overseas, selling missions and trade missions are organised to foster overseas and interstate exports of manufactured goods. Markets are examined, contacts provided and assistance given with export costing.
- (3) **Sales Promotion:**
Advice is given to firms on problems relating to packaging advertising and marketing of goods.
- (4) **Small Business:**
A small Business Advisory Service has been set up to give advice on managerial, production and financial matters in both metropolitan and country areas.
- (5) **Industrial Design:**
Financial and other assistance is given in fostering improvements in design of a wide range of products.
- (6) **Decentralisation Officers:**
A number of officers are engaged in constant liaison with local authorities and the business community in country areas.
- (7) **Research:**
Research on matters affecting establishment of new businesses or expansion and diversification of existing industries.
- (8) **Apprenticeship:**
The promotion, supervision, and examination of future skilled workers for industry.
- (9) **Consumer Protection:**
Benefitting both the consumer and commerce.
- (10) **Small Claims Tribunal:**
Also benefitting the consumer and commerce.
- (11) **Safety, Health and Welfare Services:**
Protecting workers and the public.

- (12) **Motor Vehicle Dealers:**
Surveillance of the industry.
- (13) **Hire Purchase Tribunal:**
To benefit both the individual and the industry.
- (14) **Promoting the Metrication Programme:**
For the benefit of both industry and the public.

27.

FEDERAL AFFAIRS *Aspects Pursued*

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Minister for Federal Affairs:

What aspects of Federal affairs—

- (a) is the Minister working upon;
- (b) does the Minister intend to pursue at an early date?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (a) The Minister for Federal Affairs is concerned with constitutional legal and administrative aspects of Federal affairs.
- (b) He intends to continue to pursue these aspects.

28.

AUSTRALIAN POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION *Mr Dracup: Amends*

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

What action and when has the Government taken to assist or provide amends to Busselton school teacher, Mr Dracup, for the inconvenience and monetary loss suffered by him in consequence of his refusal to join a responsible union which action it will be recalled caused the people of Busselton great inconvenience and almost placed the whole State in a crisis and necessitated certain liaison action by him and/or his department?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

The action concerning Mr Dracup arose as a result of the inflexible attitude of the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union. Under section 47 of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act, the Commonwealth commission may insert a provision providing for preference to unionists upon application by an organisation or person bound by the award.

However, when such a preference provision is inserted an automatic concurrent provision is also inserted, which provides that a person may apply for exemption from union membership on the grounds of conscientious beliefs.

As the preference clause was not inserted into the Award covering Mr Dracup's employment it follows that he was unable to seek exemption as a result of his conscientious beliefs.

In these circumstances the APTU continued to press for Mr Dracup to join the union and gave him no opportunity whatsoever to exercise his freedom of choice.

Mr Dracup did not lose any wages throughout the course of the dispute and resigned by his own hand on Monday, 10th May, 1976.

31.

RETIREMENTS

Legislation

Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact that he intends to introduce legislation directed to preclude from premature retirement all those persons who now at the age of 55 years and younger and in good health retire, thereby effectively withdrawing their services from their employers and the community 10 and more years before they would ordinarily retire?
- (2) If "Yes" does he intend to take this initiative this year?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) I am at a loss to determine the purpose and the import of the questions.

If the member could clarify the grounds for, and the import of, his questions, I shall endeavour to answer them.

32.

MEDIBANK SCHEME

Delay in Acceptance

Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

What was the actual loss sustained by this State in consequence of his delay in accepting certain Medibank arrangements during 1975?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

There was some delay in reaching final agreement with the Commonwealth Government because its terms were not acceptable to Western Australia.

However, following detailed discussions at officer level in Perth on 11th and 12th June, 1975, the State advised the Commonwealth Government on 13th June, 1975 that it was prepared to sign an agreement and implement it from 1st July, 1975.

Verbal agreement was reached between the Western Australian Minister for Health (Hon. N. E. Baxter) and Mr Hayden on 25th June, 1975. Again Western Australia indicated its ability to implement the Hospitals Agreement from 1st July, 1975, but Mr Hayden stated the Commonwealth Government could not be ready until 1st August, 1975.

The delay on the part of the Commonwealth cost the State \$3 929 926.

29.

RAILWAYS

Reduced Deficit

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has it recently been announced that the Westrail deficit for the last year has been reduced?
- (2) If "Yes" will he state each and every major variation in the Westrail accounts which have brought about the reduction referred to?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes. In a Press release on July 12, I announced that Westrail's loss for 1975-76 is expected to be significantly lower than the 1974-75 figure of \$11.676 million.
- (2) Quantification of variations in precise financial terms is not yet available. However, the significant factors contributing to the improved results are—
 - (a) total income increased by \$24.2 million to \$132.5 million as the result of a record goods haulage of 17.5 million tonnes—I might interpolate to say that it is very unlikely this will occur in the coming season—but it was an increase of 1.5 million on 1974-75—and an increase of 17.5 per cent in gazetted charges as from 1st July, 1975.
 - (b) Total costs increased by only \$15.5 million to \$135.5 million.

30. WATER SUPPLIES

Rates Notices: Service on Landlords

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

Is it usual for assessments for water rates and charges to be forwarded to landlords as well as to tenants of property?

Mr Ridge (for Mr O'NEIL) replied:
No.

33. STATE FINANCE

*Offers of Assistance by
Whitlam Government*

Mr BERTRAM to the Premier:

- (1) Will he state each offer of financial assistance offered to this State by the Whitlam Government which was refused by him and/or his Government?
- (2) In respect of each item will he state the amount or estimated amount of the money loss sustained by this State in consequence of these refusals?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) No offer of financial assistance from the Whitlam Government was refused by this State, but we rightly opposed conditions attached to some proposals which were designed to take away from the State the right to determine our own priorities and administrative procedures and vest control of our affairs in Federal Ministers or public servants.

June each year. Separate records on unrepresented cheques relating to the Consolidated Revenue Fund are not maintained but the total of unrepresented cheques against the Government of Western Australia Account at 30th June each year was as follows—

| 30th June | Unrepresented Cheques \$ |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 1971 | 5 116 |
| 1972 | 4 035 |
| 1973 | 7 608 |
| 1974 | 7 396 |
| 1975 | 9 337 |
| 1976 | 9 330 |

(N.B.: I am not aware of what the member means by his reference to "and/or other unrepresented payment" and therefore the answer refers only to unrepresented cheques against the Government.)

34. STATE FINANCE

Consolidated Revenue Fund

Mr BERTRAM, to the Treasurer:

Relevant to the Consolidated Revenue Fund for each of the last six years, will he state—

- (1) The total receipts and payments respectively?
- (2) The deficit or surplus on 30th June in each of those years?
- (3) The value of the unrepresented cheques and/or other unrepresented payments as at 30th June of each of those years?
- (4) The total amount of payments made in June and July respectively in each of those years and in 1976?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (4) Most of the information sought by the member is readily available to him from reports of the Auditor-General and from the monthly statement of cash transactions on the Consolidated Revenue Fund printed by the Government Printer and supplied to the Leader of the Opposition and the Parliamentary Library.

I am not prepared to divert Treasury officers from preparation of the Budget to extract already published information for the member. The only item requested which is not available in published form is the total of unrepresented cheques at 30th

35.

EDUCATION

The Law: Tuition

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

What steps has he taken so far whether in collaboration with the Minister for Education or otherwise to provide a better education for children in respect to the law?

Mr RIDGE replied:

Upon the Minister's return from the Fifth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Treatment of Offenders held in Geneva last year, the matter of educating children in respect to the law was taken up with the Minister for Education.

As a result, I am informed that a student workbook for lower secondary students entitled "Law", written by officers of the Curriculum Branch of the Education Department, is now part of a social studies topic "Man—Today and Tomorrow". The aim of the book is to give an understanding of the system of law as it operates in Australia, and of the fundamental importance of law to individuals within our society. Other workbooks are being revised by officers of the Curriculum Branch to include material, or change emphasis to focus on the individual's relationship to the law and Government, and to acceptable means of making and changing laws.

36. NICKELFIELDS OF AUSTRALIA N.L.

Investigation

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Is a company named Nickelfields of Australia N.L. operating in Western Australia?
- (2) Has a company of that or similar name been investigated by the Western Australian Commissioner for Corporate Affairs?
- (3) If "Yes" why, and when, and with what result?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) No. The company was incorporated in Western Australia on 30th January, 1970 and is now in liquidation.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Inquiries were made because of a number of complaints by persons having an interest in the conduct of the company.

Inquiries began in October, 1971 and were finalised in May, 1973. In the result, the investigation failed to produce evidence sufficient to warrant the institution of criminal proceedings, whether under the Companies Act or otherwise.

37. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES AND GAS *Increased Charges*

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) In connection with increases in electricity and gas charges since April 1971, will he indicate the applicable dates and percentage increases insofar as the average consumer is concerned?
- (2) What was the cost of electricity and gas to the average consumer on 1st April, 1974?
- (3) What is the cost of electricity and gas to the average consumer as at 1st August, 1976?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

The figures apply to domestic customers only and the "average" customer usage has been taken to be 1 000 units/quarter for each fuel.

| Point (1) | Date 1/11/71 | Electricity 21% | Gas 8% (with the introduction of natural gas) |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|--|
| | 1/8/74 | 17% | 10% |
| | 13/1/75 | 25% | 20% |
| | 1/7/75 | 12.5% | No change |
| (2) | 1/4/74 | \$24.20 | \$12.40 |
| (3) | 1/8/76 | \$40.34 | \$16.44 |

38. MUJA POWER STATION *Upgrading Timetable*

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has there been any departure in the timetable for the upgrading of the Muja power house having regard for the Government's previously announced one year deferment?
- (2) If so, will he detail any further deferment?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.

39. RAILWAYS

Gross Load per Rail Truck

Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

What is the gross load per rail truck over the following sections of railway line—

Leonora to Kalgoorlie;
Leonora to Esperance;
Kewdale to Kalgoorlie;
Mt. Magnet to Geraldton?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

The gross loads per bogie vehicle in the sections listed are—

Leonora to Kalgoorlie—64
tonne

Kalgoorlie to Esperance—84
tonne

Kewdale to Kalgoorlie—90
tonne

Mt. Margaret to Geraldton

Mt. Magnet to Mullewa—40
tonne

Mullewa to Narngulu—64
tonne

Narngulu to Geraldton—78
tonne

40. RAILWAYS

Windarra Project: Concentrates Tonnage

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Transport:

What tonnage of concentrates was hauled by rail from the Windarra project during the year ended 30th June, 1976?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:
116 633 tonnes.

41. *This question was postponed.*

42. NORTH-WEST SHELF GAS *Discussions on Purchase*

Mr MAY, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the State Government been associated with any discussions between Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd and Burmah Oil Co. Ltd.

regarding the possible purchase by BHP of Burmah Oil Ltd.'s share in the north-west shelf gasfields?

- (2) Is the State Government aware of any such move?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) No. It is not the Government's policy to be associated with any discussions between companies in domestic matters.
- (2) Yes. The Government is being kept informed on a confidential basis.

Point of Order

POLICE

Thefts of Money: Minister's Comments

Mr BERTRAM: I asked question 23 of the Minister for Police, and the answer to part (c) contains words which are offensive to me as they are inaccurate. I did not raise this point of order earlier because I was not able to hear at the time what was said; but I now have the question and answer in front of me and this is the first opportunity I have had to get the full text. I raise the question now because the information in that part of the answer happens to be utterly false.

The SPEAKER: Strictly speaking, the member for Mt. Hawthorn cannot raise a point of order after the passage to which he objects has passed.

I suggest that he might raise the matter with the Minister at another time.

I only heard the member out because I wanted to know the full strength of what he desired to say.

Questions (on notice) Resumed

43. HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CARE

State-Commonwealth Planning

Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

What—

(a) formal; and

(b) informal,

machinery exists between the State and Australian Governments for hospital development and health care delivery planning?

Mr RIDGE replied:

(a) Formal

Health Care Delivery Planning

1. Federal/State Health Ministers' Conference.
2. National Health and Medical Research Council.

3. Joint Commonwealth /State Committee on Community Health.
4. Australian School Dental Service Advisory Committee.
5. Aboriginal Affairs Co-ordinating Committee
6. Federal/State Conference on Aboriginal Health.
7. Children's Commission.
8. Australian Foundation on Alcohol and Drug Dependence.
9. Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare.
10. National Tuberculosis Advisory Council.

Hospital Development

1. Health Ministers' Conference.
2. Joint Hospital Works Advisory Council.
3. Hospitals and Health Services Advisory Council.

(b) Informal
Liaison with Federal Authorities is constant at officer level.

44. LAMB MARKETING BOARD

Lamb Production and Sales

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many lambs did the W.A. Lamb Marketing Board handle in each of the years in which it has operated?
- (2) What was the total State production of lambs in each of those years?
- (3) What was the average price per lamb paid to producers by the W.A. Lamb Marketing Board in each of the years in which it has operated?
- (4) How many lambs is it estimated will be produced in Western Australia in the 1976-77 year?
- (5) Has the W.A. Lamb Marketing Board established contracts for lamb sales in 1976-77, and if so, with whom and what quantities?
- (6) Does the W.A. Lamb Marketing Board consider that it could handle sheep meats of all kinds and live sheep on behalf of Western Australian producers if it was empowered to do so?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Lambs handled by the Board—
Dec 1972—June 1973—487 564
Year ended June 1974—1 161 209
Year ended June 1975—1 319 257
Year ended June 1976—1 700 642
- (2) Total State Production of lambs—
(Source—Australian Bureau of Statistics)
Year ended June 1973—1 318 626
Year ended June 1974—1 185 385
Year ended June 1975—1 329 437
Year ended June 1976—1 712 442
(Preliminary figures only)
- (3) Average price paid to producers:

| | Cents Kilo | Carcass \$ | Skin \$ | Total \$ |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| Dec 72—June 1973 | 45.57 | 6.24 | 1.49 | 7.73 |
| Year ended June 1974 | 58.07 | 8.59 | 2.31 | 10.90 |
| Year ended June 1975 | 46.12 | 6.70 | 0.92 | 7.62 |
| Year ended June 1976 | 43.28 | 6.07 | 0.92 | 6.99 |

- (4) It is estimated that the lamb production in the year 1976-77 will be between 1.8 and 2 million.
- (5) Yes.
9900 tonnes to Iran. C. Clausen
650 tonnes to Kuwait (direct)
Kuwait Livestock & Transport Co.
150 tonnes to Canada. Gardner Smith.
- (6) I refer you to the press release issued by the W.A. Lamb Marketing Board on 24th March 1976, which reads as follows:

"Because of the nature of W.A.'s mutton production it could be placed in an invidious position if forced to accept mutton of any quality that might be offered to it by producers.

The industry was such that if the board became involved in mutton in the manner that had been suggested, it could achieve few of the objectives relating to the orderly marketing concepts now prevailing in the lamb industry.

To diversify now would require restructure of the board's operations, and the board would not favour any interference to its commitment in the efficiency of the marketing of lamb. The days of obtaining good prices for aged mutton, which made up a considerable percentage of the State's mutton output, had long since disappeared. There was nothing the board could do to improve this situation markedly, if at all. Producers were unaware of the extremes in costs involved between the farm and the end user.

This factor alone precluded any substantial producer returns for aged sheep other than those suitable for the live sheep and carcass trade at any time when the meat market generally was depressed.

The only time when producers might receive improved prices for mutton under present marketing methods was when meat prices as a whole increased, but even then the measure of increase would always be at a lower level than that applying to other higher quality meats."

45.

PINE PLANTATIONS Acreage

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) How many hectares of land have been planted with pine trees by the Forests Department in each of the following shire council areas—
(a) Nannup;
(b) Manjimup;
(c) Bridgetown-Greenbushes;
(d) Busselton;
(e) Margaret River-Augusta?
- (2) How many hectares of land, actual or estimated, have been planted with pine trees by private individuals or companies in each of the shires listed in (1)?
- (3) What private companies are engaged in pine plantations in Western Australia?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) As at 31st March, 1976 the Forests Department has planted the following actual areas with pine trees in the Shires listed below.
(a) Nannup, 3 350 ha;
(b) Manjimup, 450 ha;
(c) Bridgetown-Greenbushes, nil;
(d) Busselton, 970 ha;
(e) Margaret River-Augusta, 558 ha.
- (2) As at 31st March, 1976, the estimated areas planted by private individuals or companies in the Shires listed were:
(a) Nannup, 440 ha;
(b) Manjimup, 30 ha;
(c) Bridgetown-Greenbushes, 2 880 ha;
(d) Busselton, nil;
(e) Margaret River-Augusta, 20 ha.

- (3) The member is referred to the answer to his question on notice No. 61(1) of 26th May, 1976. In addition to which the only other private concerns known by the Forests Department to be employed in pine plantations in Western Australia are:

Bunning Bros. Pty. Ltd;
Westralian Plywoods Hearn Industries Ltd.

46.

APPLES*Production and Exports*

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What was the total area of apple orchards in Western Australia in each of the past five years?

Mr OLD replied:

| | 1970/71 | 1971/72 | 1972/73 | 1973/74 | 1974/75 | 1975/76 (estimated) |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| (1) | 5 806 | 5 482 | 5 093 | 4 610 | 4 477 ha | |
| (2) | 3 155 624 | 2 750 076 | 2 959 741 | 2 764 948 | 2 730 724 bu. | |
| (3) (a) | 1 228 743 | 855 194 | 1 149 123 | 753 637 | 870 782 | 724 717 bu |
| (b) | 372 271 | 331 002 | 321 799 | 274 971 | 317 180 | 306 329 bu |
| (c) | 68 476 | 30 292 | 12 733 | 92 864 | 122 495 | 126 950 bu |
| (d) | 145 001 | 105 529 | 3 619 | 5 180 | 3 108 | bu |
| | | | | 48 555* | 6 878* | bu |
| | * Eastern States. | | bu.—bushels. | ha.—hectares. | | |
| (4) | 1970/71 | 1971/72 | 1972/73 | 1973/74 | 1974/75 | |
| | 1 279 056 | 1 428 058 | 1 472 457 | 1 589 541 | 1 410 281 bushels | |

No official statistics are available for local sales. These figures represent the difference between total production and recorded exports.

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics and Australian Department of Primary Industry.

47.

UNLICENSED MOTOR VEHICLES*Private and Public Roads Intersections*

Mr H. D. EVANS to the Minister for Traffic:

- (1) Can unlicensed vehicles using a private road cross a public road where an intersection occurs?
- (2) In the event of two vehicles meeting where a private road crosses a highway, which vehicle has right of way?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) This would depend upon the particular vehicle and the particular private road but, generally, a vehicle which requires to be licensed may not lawfully use or cross a public road unless it is licensed.
- (2) Where the private road is not open to or used by the public, the vehicle proceeding along the highway.

48.

RAILWAYS*Bridgetown Barracks: Use for Tourism*

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he quoted correctly in *The West Australian* newspaper of 23rd July, 1976, where it is stated that the Government will allow Westrail's single men's barracks at Bridgetown to be used for tourist purposes on terms favourable to the shire?
- (2) If "Yes"—
- (a) what is the anticipated cost in renovating, restoring and altering these barracks to render them suitable and functional for tourist purposes;
- (b) will the W.A. Government or the Bridgetown Shire Council be responsible for the cost of renovating and altering the Westrail barracks at Bridgetown?
- (3) Will the W.A. Government or the Bridgetown Shire Council be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the Westrail barracks after upgrading is completed?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) and (3) The Government's consideration of this matter and its decision to allow the barracks to be used for tourist purposes, was in response to a request from the township which I received prior to the closure decision.

The specific manner in which the accommodation will be used will be the subject of detailed discussions.

The Government has expressed its willingness to consider any reasonable proposition and to make the barracks available on favourable terms for appropriate uses, which will be of benefit to the town and district.

49.

APPLES

Exports: Commonwealth Financial Assistance

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has the W.A. Government approached the Federal Government seeking support for the export apple industry in 1977?
- (2) If "Yes"—
 - (a) what level of support for the export apple industry was sought by this Government;
 - (b) if no answer to the approaches of the W.A. Government has been received, when is an answer expected;
 - (c) was the Federal Government made aware of the urgent need of orchardists to know what support will be available in 1977 so that they can take management decisions and make financial commitments which are necessary at the present time?
- (3) Does the W.A. State Government intend to give price support to apples exported to the United Kingdom and European markets in 1977, and if so, how much and in what quantity?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) The State Government supported the apple and pear growing industry's 5-point programme.
- (b) At Monday's meeting of Australian Agricultural Council the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry gave an undertaking to obtain an early decision on the Commonwealth's attitude to the IAC report and the industry submission.

(c) Yes. This point has been reiterated at every opportunity.

- (3) This is a question which can only be considered when the Commonwealth Government's decision is known.

50.

MILK

Additional Quotas

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many dairy farmers in Western Australia were recommended for a market milk quota but have not received one?
- (2) In what districts are these farmers located, and how many in each district?
- (3) Is it proposed that further market milk quotas will be allocated in Western Australia, and if so, how many and when is allocation proposed?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) 51.
- (2) North of Bunbury, 1; Bunbury, Busselton, Margaret River, 35; Nannup, Bridgetown, 6; Manjimup, Northcliffe, 4; South Coast, 5.
- (3) There is no firm proposal to issue further market milk quotas at this time but the Dairy Industry Authority will keep the situation under review.

51.

RAILWAYS

Bridgetown Depot: Transfer

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Transport:

What amount of money does Westrail expect to save annually by moving the Bridgetown railway depot to Manjimup?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Based on 1974 costs when the last evaluation was done, the equivalent annual benefit—over a 20-year period—was calculated at \$108 000.

On present day costs the figure would be significantly in excess of that amount.

52.

DROUGHT

Finance and Relief Measures

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What amount of finance will be made available for drought relief by—
 - (a) the W.A. State Government;

(b) the Commonwealth Government?

- (2) Is there any formula or agreement on which the level of Commonwealth funds to be made available depends and if so, what are the details of the arrangement?
- (3) What drought relief measures are there available currently to eligible applicants from drought affected areas?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) and (2) Under existing arrangements for natural disaster relief the cost of approved relief measures is shared between the States and the Commonwealth Governments. These arrangements require the State to meet an annual base amount, which in the case of Western Australia is currently \$1 500 000. An expenditure in excess of that sum is met by the Commonwealth. As the drought in this State has been accepted by the Commonwealth as a natural disaster the cost of relief measures will be shared in accordance with these arrangements.
- (3) A statement containing the details of drought relief measures is now tabled.

The statement was tabled (see paper No. 321).

53. EDUCATION

Free Milk Scheme

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Does the Government propose to reintroduce free milk for school children in Western Australia?

Mr OLD replied:

The Government is not presently considering the reintroduction of free milk for school children in Western Australia.

54. BUTTERFAT

Price

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What price per lb. was paid to dairy farmers for butterfat in—
- 1960;
 - 1973;
 - 1974;
 - 1975?
- (2) At what level per lb. has the price of butterfat to the dairyman been set for 1976, and is it expected that this price will change, and if so, to what level?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Prices per pound paid to dairy farmers for butterfat in cream have been as follows—

| 1959-60 | 1960-61 | 1972-73 | 1973-74 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 45.21c | 43.54c | 40.8c | 41.75c |
| | 1974-75 | 1975-76 | |
| | 46.1c* | 40.0c* | |

* These prices represent amounts paid to date only. Final figures will not be known until the final disbursements of funds, by the Dairy Equalisation Committee, are completed.

- (2) An interim price of 39.1 cents per pound fat to the dairyman has been set for July to September (inclusive) 1976. The extent to which this price might change cannot be determined at this time.

55.

PLANT NURSERIES

Registration

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Does the Government propose to introduce legislation in connection with the registration of plant nurseries during the present session of Parliament?

Mr OLD replied:

No legislation is in the course of preparation but the need for statutory provisions for the nursery industry is still being examined.

56.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Australian Assistance Plan

Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) What has the Government decided the future of the Australian Assistance Plan will be so far as this State is concerned?
- (2) What is the current status of the AAP as it affects this State?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) No decision has been arrived at by the Government to date.
- (2) The Commonwealth Government has advised it will continue to fund costs for existing regional councils for a maximum period of 12 months until 30th June, 1977.

57.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Kwinana Area

Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

What figures does his department have with respect to unemployment in the Kwinana area—

- trade by trade;
- by age group; and
- by sex?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Statistics from Kwinana employment office area (which include the areas of Medina, Orelia, Rockingham, Safety Bay and Mandurah).

| (a) and (b) | Unemployed Applicants | | Unfilled Vacancies | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| | Adults | Young People | Adults | Young People |
| Skilled building and construction workers | 53 | 6 | 7 | |
| Skilled metal trades | 55 | 13 | 15 | 1 |
| Other skilled trades | 5 | 7 | 1 | |
| Total | 113 | 26 | 23 | 1 |

| c) | Unemployed Applicants All Ages | | Unfilled Vacancies All Ages | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------|
| | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| Totals of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers by sex | 438 | 407 | 77 | 11 |

The source of this information was the Monthly Review of the Employment Statistics compiled by the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Industrial Relations.

58. TECHNICAL SCHOOL Kwinana

Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education: With respect to the establishment of a technical school at Kwinana—

- (1) Now that a technical school has been announced for Geraldton, is Kwinana the next centre to have such a centre?
- (2) In what financial year does the Minister plan to commence construction of the Kwinana centre?
- (3) How many students residing in the Rockingham-Kwinana area presently attend the Fremantle Technical College?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) The Education Department is investigating the need for technical and further education in the area south of Fremantle but no firm decision has yet been made.

(3) 730.

59. DROUGHT

Road Maintenance Tax: Waiving

Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In view of the seriousness of the present drought in certain areas of the State and the added costs involved in stock management,

would he waive the road maintenance tax incurred whilst transporting water, fodder and stock to other agistment areas?

- (2) If so, can this apply in areas declared drought affected and not affecting concessions already applying?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act provides an exemption from the payment of road maintenance charges when a vehicle is being used solely for the carriage of livestock.

However, there is no power under the Act to grant other exemptions from the payment of charges.

60.

SWAN RIVER

Maylands Foreshore: Restoration

Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Works:

In view of the fact that a small dredge is sited near the Bath Street Reserve in Maylands, will he authorise additional work to restore the river bank upstream and thus reduce further erosion of properties?

Mr Ridge (for Mr O'NEIL) replied:

No further work beyond that being undertaken at present by the small dredge will be authorised for the time being. However, the Public Works Department is aware of the erosion occurring upstream of the Bath Street reserve. A study of the erosion is to be undertaken prior to the 1977 winter to determine the most satisfactory and economical solution to this problem. The matter is complicated by the fact that erosion in the area is mainly on private properties abutting the Swan River, and it is likely that some realignment of the river foreshore may be desirable.

61.

RAILWAYS

"N"-class Diesel Locomotives

Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is causing the delay in the fulfilment of the order to purchase "N"-class diesel locomotives?
- (2) When is it now anticipated they will go into service and what area will they service?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The contractor's inability to meet the agreed delivery date which for the first unit was 3rd August, 1976.

- (2) From early December 1976 to July 1977. At this stage it is anticipated they will be utilised on woodchip services Manjimup to Bunbury; bauxite services Jarrahdale to Kwinana; mineral sands services Eneabba to Geraldton; alumina services Pinjarra to Bunbury and Kwinana; coal services Collie to metropolitan area.

62. PREMIERS' CONFERENCE

Finance Allocation

Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

- (1) Did he attend a Premier's Conference on 10th June, 1976?
- (2) Were all State Premiers and Prime Minister Fraser present?
- (3) What moneys and under what headings did he ask for?
- (4) What moneys and under what headings was he told that he would get?
- (5) Did the Prime Minister in pursuit of the new Federalism make unilateral decisions at the conference in total disregard for the submissions of the Premiers of all of the States?
- (6) If so—
- (a) Is it not a fact that this has been described as centralism at its ultimate worst;
- (b) what has he done about this;
- (c) what does he intend to do about this and when?
- (7) Is it not a fact that Mr Dunstan and others say that the new Federalism is in tatters?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.
- (3) and (4) As is customary, Parliament will be informed of representations made by this State at the Premiers' Conference, and of their outcome, in the Budget speech which I will be delivering later this session.
- (5) and (6) Not that I am aware.
- (7) Mr Dunstan's opinions are his own and are not a matter of concern to this Government.

63. DAIRY HERD IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Costs and Personnel

Mrs CRAIG, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) (a) What was the cost to the Government for the Dairy Herd Improvement Scheme in the financial years 1974-75 and 1975-76;
- (b) what amount was contributed to this scheme by producers in the financial years 1974-75 and 1975-76?

- (2) What are the projected costs of the proposed new schemes?
- (3) How many persons have been employed as herd recorders in the years 1974-75 and 1975-76?
- (4) How many persons is it proposed to employ within the new schemes that are currently under discussion?
- (5) Does the Department of Agriculture consider that a bi-monthly test, with the farmer collecting the samples, will enable maximum production efficiency to be maintained?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) (a) 1974-75—\$96 772 (Included cost of computer programming).
1975-76—\$76 063
- (b) 1974-75—\$34 124
1975-76—\$45 690*

* Fees increased from beginning of recording year (1st March, 1975).

- (2) Proposal A. Approximately \$82 000—based on central testing of samples collected bi-monthly by farmers. Cost to be shared equally with producers.

Proposal B. Approximately \$139 000—continuation of present system. Cost to be shared with the Government contributing a similar subsidy input as in proposal A.

These proposals relate to the 1977-78 recording year (1st March to 28th February).

- (3) 1974-75—16.
1975-76—14 and 1 person on a contract basis.
- (4) Proposal A. 2 collectors and 3 laboratory staff.
Proposal B. 11 recorders and 1 contract recorder.
- (5) Farmers appear to use the information from herd recording mainly to cull low producers. A bi-monthly test would be adequate to achieve this purpose although of less value than monthly recording as a management aid to decide when to dry off cows or to check milk composition or to provide feed according to production.

64. NICKEL MINING

Agnew Group Development

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Has agreement been reached with the Agnew group concerning the development of their mineral deposit north of Leonora?
- (2) What are the arrangements relative to the processing of the nickel production?

- (3) What are the transport arrangements for such production?
- (4) Can he provide an assurance that Westrail can satisfactorily cater for the planned output and its associated input?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) The State has reached basic understanding with the company for the development to proceed in a modified form. A decision will depend on availability of finance.
- (2) to (4) Details of the modified project will be embodied in an amendment to the existing agreement which will be brought before Parliament.

QUESTIONS (7): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. HEALTH

*Profoundly Retarded Children:
Accommodation*

Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Referring to part (4) of question 11 of the 3rd August, how many nonurgent requests for accommodation does the department have?

Mr RIDGE replied:

The exact figure is not known and would require examination of case records of all profoundly handicapped persons, which would take approximately one week. Does the honourable member still require the information?

Mr Davies: I do not think so.

2. HOUSING

Midvale: Redevelopment Programme

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Housing:

In part (3) of question 10 on today's notice paper I asked—

- (3) Will he undertake to place the existing homes scheduled for demolition into a reasonable condition, or otherwise in the future, when such unsuitable accommodation falls vacant, that it is not reallocated for rental?

The Minister failed to answer that part of the question.

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The answer is: "Yes".

3. EDUCATION

Camp at Point Walter

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will the Minister confirm that the State Government has made a decision to hand the education camp at Point Walter over to the Melville City Council?

- (2) If so, will the Minister—

- (a) explain the reasons for such a decision;
 - (b) indicate how much land is involved;
 - (c) indicate whether or not the Government has attached any conditions in respect of future use of the land; and
 - (d) inform the House of the amount of Commonwealth and State Government money that has been spent on the camp since the 30th June, 1970?
- (3) Does the State Government have plans to replace the education camp facility at Point Walter within the metropolitan area; if so, will he provide details?
 - (4) Does the State Government believe that Western Australia has a surplus of educational/recreational facilities such as that which currently exists at Point Walter?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) (a) It is understood that the land in question was excised from the local authority about 1941 by the Commonwealth Government to enable the establishment of a temporary base as part of Australia's military preparations.

The State Government subsequently took over the established camp site for use as an immigration hostel.

Since then successive Governments have intimated a wish to return the land to the local authority and it is understood the member for Melville was particularly keen for this to happen whilst he was Premier.

As a matter of interest, the then Minister for Education, (the Hon. J. Dolan) replied to the General Secretary of the Australian Labor Party (W.A. Branch) on this very matter on the 27th March, 1974, and indicated that the then Premier had "received deputations from the City of Melville concerning Point Walter Reserve and has explained that the Teacher Education Authority fully recognises that it only enjoys a temporary occupancy of that site".

- (b) 11,637.2 hectares or 28 acres 3 roods 1 perch.

(c) Yes. The Government has decided that the land should revert to the local authority by 1980, on terms and conditions yet to be agreed. It is understood the Melville City Council wishes to convert it to the second nine holes of a public golf course.

(d) Approximately \$150 000 has been spent on the camp site since 1973.

(3) The Government has decided that a study should be made to determine a programme for the progressive establishment of a replacement camp in the metropolitan region.

(4) No.

4. STATE FINANCE

Commonwealth Grants and Loans

Sir CHARLES COURT (Premier): Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition sought some information regarding a number of detailed items which I was not then able to supply but which I undertook to make available as soon as practicable. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I will do so now. The answers are as follows—

(1) to (3) The greater part of the information sought by the Leader of the Opposition is contained in my reply to question 25 on notice yesterday. Items not included in that reply are—

| Recurrent grants—1975-76 | Amount \$ |
|---|--------------|
| Agriculture extension services | 957 670 |
| Apple export industry | 259 283 |
| Australian research grants committee | 320 334 |
| Australian Wool Board | 104 529 |
| Assistance to deserted wives | 1 458 674 |
| Bovine brucellosis and TB eradication | 710 328 |
| Childhood services programme | 4 389 612 |
| Colleges of advanced education | 36 387 748 |
| Darwin cyclone evacuees | 161 488 |
| Family Law Courts | 769 890 |
| Health services planning and research programme | 137 000 |
| Hospitals (Medibank) Agreement | 79 006 889 |
| Housing grant—Interest subsidy | 770 750 |
| Legal aid scheme | 124 045 |
| Local authorities (Grants Commission) | 7 524 000 |
| Regional organisations assistance | 32 000 |
| Sinking Fund (Financial Agreement) | 2 800 000 |
| Technical and further education | 2 189 006 |
| Transport planning and research programme | 939 772 |
| Tuberculosis control | 647 036 |
| Universities | 33 447 150 |

| Capital grants—1975-76 | Amount \$ |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Air quality monitoring | 33 333 |
| Childhood services programme | 1 440 612 |
| Colleges of advanced education | 7 175 951 |
| Dairy adjustment programme | 490 900 |
| Dwellings for aged pensioners | 614 380 |
| Hospitals development programme | 11 900 000 |
| Nature conservation | 35 000 |
| Port Hedland cyclone relief | 4 347 466 |
| Roads | 61 285 000 |
| Rural Reconstruction Scheme | 1 137 500 |
| Soil conservation | 73 977 |
| Technical and further education | 2 324 752 |
| Tourist facilities | 270 830 |
| Universities | 5 075 224 |
| Urban public transport programme | 750 000 |
| Water resources measurement | 1 981 000 |

| Loans—1975-76 | Amount \$ |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Beef finance scheme | 479 180 |
| Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement | 33 440 000 |
| Dairy adjustment programme | 1 777 400 |
| Ord River—irrigation | 111 000 |
| Rural Reconstruction Scheme | 3 412 500 |
| Softwood forestry agreement | 863 595 |

(4) to (6) In most cases funds to be provided by the Federal Government will be announced when the Commonwealth Budget for 1976-77 is presented to Parliament in the near future. However, I have been advised of allocations for the following programmes—

| | Amount \$ |
|---|--------------|
| (a) Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement—loans | 35 440 000 |
| (b) Community health programme—recurrent and capital grants | 5 300 000 |
| (c) Hospitals development programme—capital grants | 12 000 000 |
| (d) National sewerage programme—loans and grants | 7 000 000 |
| (e) Roads | 55 100 000 |

5. "POLICY AND PERFORMANCE" PUBLICATION

National Country Party Achievements

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

My question is directed to the Minister as the Leader of the National Country Party and relates to the document known as "Policy and Performance", which

is subtitled "1974-1977 Policy on which the Court Government was elected—Performance 1976".

- (1) Did the Premier consult with his coalition partners prior to compilation of this document with a view to including in it the achievements of the National Country Party?
- (2) Or are we to conclude that the National Country Party will produce a minority report on its achievements, or are we to assume that the policy presented to the people by the National Country Party in 1974 has been buried completely?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. We do not produce minority reports. Our policy has not been buried and in the main it has been implemented.

6. ALUMINA REFINERY *Worsley: Establishment*

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

Would he advise the House when it is anticipated an announcement will be made regarding the establishment of an alumina refinery at Worsley, via Collie?

Mr MENSAROS replied:
No.

7. DROUGHT ASSISTANCE *Private Grain Purchases*

Mr OLD (Minister for Agriculture): Yesterday, in my absence, the member for Kalamunda asked the following question—

- (1) Is he aware that farmers in the drought affected northern wheat-belt are declining drought assistance in the form of grain ex the Geraldton CBH facility because it is rumoured that such grain is infested with star thistle, skeleton weed, and other weed pests?
- (2) Will he take note that some farmers in the worst hit areas prefer to buy feed grain on the open market, in some cases involving an 800 kilometre round trip, rather than incur the expense of weed control in future seasons?
- (3) Will he provide a subsidy to those farmers who, in the interest of themselves and their districts, opt for the sound farming practice of minimising weed infestation, and in so doing, place themselves outside the Government's drought assistance scheme?

An undertaking was given to provide an answer today and it is as follows—

- (1) to (3) Yes. I have asked the Drought Consultative Committee to examine this question and advise me on measures which should be taken.

In 1969 farmers who were taking delivery of grain from facilities known to contain primary noxious weeds were advised to feed this grain on restricted and identifiable areas which were subsequently inspected by officers of the Agriculture Protection Board.

Weed seeds are unfortunately widespread in bulk storages and one of the unfortunate aspects of drought is that it increases the risk of spread of noxious weeds.

GOLDMINING INDUSTRY

Abolition of Tax Exemption: Grievance

MR T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [5.21 p.m.]: I take this opportunity to express the great concern that has erupted following the announcement by the Federal Government that it plans to discontinue gold tax exemption on gold won and gold sales.

Apart from my very real concern for the welfare of the goldfields, and Kalgoorlie in particular, the survival of the industry, and naturally, a very fond hope that a miracle will occur and the price of gold will rise sufficiently to inject new life into the industry, I have another reason for raising this matter in State Parliament. As I proceed I will refer to the reported comments in today's Press of the present Federal member for Kalgoorlie, and also to answers given by the Premier in this Assembly yesterday to questions without notice posed to him by the member for Clontarf. I believe my secondary reason for raising this matter will become quite apparent.

Very briefly I would like to run through the facts. It was announced in the Whitlam Government Budget of 1973 that following the recommendation of a task force, the taxation concessions which had hitherto applied in the goldmining industry were to be removed. At that time all hell broke loose, and I have no hesitation in saying that I had some part in the hell that was let loose on that occasion, and so I am being consistent now.

At Caucus level the Federal Labor Government, by weight of numbers I suppose, convinced the Cabinet of the day that this was the wrong thing to do and the Government dropped the proposal. In fact, the matter of possible assistance to the goldmining industry was referred to the IAC. The commission's report took some

18 months to prepare and when it was released early in 1975 it was a shocker—it stated that no aid should be given to the goldmining industry.

I must point out that when the report became available, about April, 1975, the price of gold in Australia was in the vicinity of \$150 per fine ounce. It is that very report to which the present Federal Government is paying regard, and yet the price of gold, as announced yesterday, is far away from \$150 per fine ounce—it is below \$89 per fine ounce.

Prior to the last Federal election, several high ranking politicians came to Kalgoorlie to put up the case for the coalition parties. In the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of the 4th December, 1975, we see that Mr Lynch said a coalition Government would see what assistance it could give to the goldmining industry. The Press report continues—

Mr. Lynch said that the coalition parties recognised the peculiar difficulties being experienced in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder region.

One of his colleagues, the then spokesman in the Senate on mining, Senator Durack, was reported in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of the 20th November, 1975. This is what Mr Durack had to say—

If a Liberal-National Country Party government is elected on December 13, it can be fully expected that they will give assistance to the Kalgoorlie gold industry . . .

So much for what has happened in the past. We know it was announced that there would be no assistance at all to Kalgoorlie from the present Federal Government. That was a death blow to Kalgoorlie and showed that the Federal Government had broken its promise of assistance.

The Federal Government was acting on a report which was old hat—a report released about April, 1975. The price of gold has since dropped from \$150 to under \$89 per fine ounce. I do not know whether the Federal Government has callous disregard for the plight of the goldmining industry or whether it is so out of touch that it believes it is doing the right thing. Perhaps the Governor-General should be asked to repeat his November action!

Mr Sibson: But you did not agree with that.

Mr T. D. EVANS: I thought Liberal Party members might ask the Governor-General to take the same action, although I do not agree with what he did.

I will come to the point of the shock that has been experienced in Kalgoorlie. I have here today's edition of the *Kalgoorlie Miner* and I point out that this is the only Western Australian daily newspaper produced outside the metropolitan area. The editorial is headed, "Yet another body blow", and the leader article is headed, "Horror over tax on gold". We then see

the heading, "Some may turn to smuggling", and the implication is that some people will endeavour to dodge paying tax to the Federal Government.

On the back page we see the comments of Mayor Finlayson who carried the banner for the Liberal Party at the last State election. However, he does not seem to think much of that party now. We also see the comments of the member for Clontarf, the State shadow Minister for Mines. Even the Amalgamated Prospectors' and Leaseholders' Association had its say. So the entire back page of the *Kalgoorlie Miner* reports the shock and horror which has been experienced over the sad and dismal failure of the Liberal Party to fulfil its promise.

Mr May: No comment from the member for Murchison-Eyre?

Mr T. D. EVANS: There is no comment from the member for Murchison-Eyre in the *Kalgoorlie Miner*. In today's edition of *The West Australian* we see the heading, "Liberal MHR hits at Government action". The article commences—

The Liberal MHR for Kalgoorlie, Mr J. F. Cotter, yesterday accused the Federal Government of violating its own policy of encouraging investment in the Australian mining industry.

Mr Bertram: Nothing new about that.

Mr T. D. EVANS: This is the point I wish to make: the article continues—

Mr Cotter said that the decision to withdraw tax exemption from the goldmining industry would remove all incentive to invest and placed a question mark on the Government's total mining policy.

This is the policy our Minister for Mines embraced lovingly a few months ago. Now the Federal member for Kalgoorlie says that there is a big question mark over the entire Liberal Party policy.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has two minutes.

Mr T. D. EVANS: Yesterday I sent a telegram to the Mayor of Kalgoorlie asking him to be consistent with action taken in 1973 when a public meeting was held to protest at the action of the then Labor Government. Unwittingly I asked him to renew his efforts to have the Acting Prime Minister come to Kalgoorlie to see at first hand the inevitable idiocy of the contemplated action. However, today in *The West Australian*, alongside the article already referred to where the Federal Liberal MHR hits at Government action, we see the headline, "Anthony to go abroad on Friday". This seems to be a perfect example of hit and run! The Acting Prime Minister has hit Kalgoorlie in the guts and now he is running away to Europe.

I make a final point to justify again raising this matter in the State Parliament. When the Whitlam Labor Govern-

ment occupied the Treasury bench, the present Premier was always preaching to us about the cardinal sin of centralism. He referred also to a lack of liaison between the State and Federal Governments when the Tonkin Government was in power. The Premier was always quick to capitalise on anything which he could blame on lack of co-operation, co-ordination, or communication between the State and Federal Governments. Yesterday the member for Clontarf asked him whether he had had any prior communication from the Federal coalition Government about this matter and the Premier replied that he had had no communication from that Government and that he had learnt of this matter in the Press. I believe the Federal Government's action is the ultimate in centralism and I would like to hear the Premier preach again against centralism and on this occasion lay the blame at the feet of the Federal Liberal-Country Party Government.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [5.30 p.m.]: In replying to the grievance of the member for Kalgoorlie, I wish to remind him that the present State Government and its front bench members when in Opposition were never backward in supporting the cause of the goldmines of Kalgoorlie. In fact, we went further: we supported the total goldmining industry and not only Kalgoorlie. The honourable member has made no mention at all of that tonight; he has talked only about Kalgoorlie, whereas I am concerned about the total goldmining industry, including the people who have shown enterprise and have opened up Blue Spec, and those who are attempting to establish a new mine in Telfer in spite of the idiosyncrasies of goldmining and gold prices.

I can understand the honourable gentleman, as the member for Kalgoorlie, being outspoken. We would expect that of him, and I do not decry that at all. However, I remind him that the State Government has been just as firm and just as precise—in fact, more precise—in its condemnation of the way the matter was handled and the fact that the decision was made at all.

I also remind the member for Kalgoorlie that the real genesis of the present situation goes back to 1974 when the Whitlam Government referred the matter to the IAC. Knowing what was going on and being said in Canberra at that time, one did not have to be very smart to assess what would be the finding; and that finding has now come out and been implemented. However, that does not make it any more acceptable to me or to the Government. I have made my protest to the Commonwealth Government in the most forthright terms, both in regard to the insensitivity of the decision and also its psychological impact. One has to admit that when an industry is not making

any money, not being subject to tax does not make any immediate economic difference to it. I have pointed out to the Prime Minister that although that argument may be validly used, the cold, hard fact is that the mining industry in particular is very sensitive to these psychological matters.

In fact, I have complained that the entire range of incentives removed from the whole mining industry by the Whitlam Government should be restored, perhaps in an even better form than before, if we are going to get people into this area of risk capital.

So I can only assure the member for Kalgoorlie that so far as the Government is concerned—and myself in particular—representations to the Commonwealth have been strong and will continue to be strong. I remind the member that it was the present State Government which had no qualms about backing its judgment in respect of both Kalgoorlie and Mt. Magnet mines, and it backed its judgment with real money. We were just as angry as everyone else when after the election no commitment was made by the new Commonwealth Government to carry on with the two proposals we placed before it—proposals which we regarded as being quite sensible and realistic, and a way in which the taxpayers' money could be committed. Admittedly the money would be committed at great risk, but at least that was the price we were prepared to pay to preserve an area which is a key area not only in the goldmining industry but in the mining industry generally of this State.

My last point is in connection with the member's reference to a death blow. Knowing the resilience of the area, it will take more than this to deal a death blow to Kalgoorlie. I agree it is a body blow and a bad blow, but it is certainly not a death blow.

HOUSING

Exmouth: Grievance

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [5.35 p.m.]: I used the grievance debate in this House almost 12 months ago to bring to the notice of members a number of problems affecting the future of Exmouth. Two specific points raised were to do with housing. The first of these related to the defence forces home loans at Exmouth. Eligible persons had been rejected because, in the words of the Federal Minister responsible at that time, "The purchase or construction of a dwelling in Exmouth is not an acceptable security for the purposes of the Act." I referred to this at the time as being a crazy situation.

Subsequent to my raising the matter in the House I am pleased to report that one such application has been approved. This

was a significant breakthrough in the Exmouth area. I think the principle has now been established that, contrary to the statement of the Federal Minister of the day, Exmouth is an acceptable security for the purposes of the Act.

Mr Jamieson: What is the occupation of the person concerned?

Mr LAURANCE: He is not a US Navy employee, if that is the point the Leader of the Opposition is trying to make. This is an important principle for the area. The Leader of the Opposition is coming to another point I wish to raise as the main point of my grievance this evening. However, I feel this is a significant breakthrough and I hope more of these defence forces home loans will be available at Exmouth. As the principle has been established, obviously more loans will follow.

The second point I raised in my previous contribution to the grievance debate was to do with the ownership of project homes at Exmouth. Members will appreciate that home ownership is at the core of every stable community, and Exmouth has no hope of becoming stable until such time as the home ownership problem is resolved.

When Exmouth was developed the original aim was to provide an integrated township; but one ignores reality if one does not appreciate that Exmouth can be only a defence establishment until such time as people can purchase the homes in which they presently live. Originally 156 project houses were constructed, and most of these were funded on a basis of 2:1 Commonwealth-State contributions. In recent times there has been increasing pressure from civilian employees at the Navy base to enable them to purchase the homes in which they are currently living.

Several of these people have reached a watershed in their careers. They have been at Exmouth for 10 years as employees, and they have to make a big decision. They must decide whether to leave Exmouth with their long service and annual leave accruals, and use that money to establish themselves somewhere else, or take their long service leave and return to Exmouth for another 10 years. If they complete a second 10-year term at Exmouth they will then have been paying rent on these properties for 20 years. Previous approaches for these employees to purchase the homes in which they live have drawn a blank.

My previous grievance and subsequent correspondence with the State Minister for Housing produced replies such as the one I am about to quote briefly. This is the latest reply from the Minister to me and it is dated the 10th March, 1976—

... the State Housing Commission was not directly involved in the provision of housing at this location.

The Minister then went on to say that the housing was funded on a joint Commonwealth-State basis. Then he said—

Due to the special nature of the housing the dwellings were earmarked for rental purposes only with a ban on Sales. . .

He finished by saying—

I appreciate the interest you have in this matter but I regret that, under the circumstances sales of these project dwellings cannot proceed.

Now, this situation has come about mainly as a result of administrative red tape. If we approach the Commonwealth Government it says the State Government is involved and that we should see it; and if we approach the State Government we are told that we should see the Commonwealth Government, and this has resulted in a deadlock. However, in just the last few days a most significant development has occurred. As a result of a public meeting called at Exmouth only a few weeks ago, the Department of Defence was contacted to ascertain the latest position in relation to these houses, and that position was given verbally at the time to the Civil Commissioner at Exmouth. He was told that the Commonwealth had no further interest in the homes.

When I heard of this I told the public meeting it was a tremendous point and that it was in fact saying the Commonwealth was relinquishing its ownership of these houses, and that the whole ball game had changed. I asked for confirmation in writing, and I have since obtained a copy of a letter from Mr M. Savage, Assistant Secretary, Service Personnel, Navy, to the Civil Commissioner at Exmouth, in which he says—

2. Treasury has advised that the Commonwealth has no interest in these houses—its contribution towards their erection having been in the nature of a grant and not a loan—and that ownership lies solely with the Western Australian State Housing Commission.

That means the matter now is solely with the State Minister and the Western Australian State Government; so, the ball game has changed.

I believe this now gives us the opportunity to be able to achieve what we have been seeking for a long time. There are not large numbers of people involved; not every employee wants to purchase his own home. However, the principle is a most significant one. These people want to be able to purchase their own homes if they are long-term residents.

This does not mean further houses will have to be built in order to replace the purchase homes because these people will continue to be employees at the base. The number of houses available for civilian employees will be the same.

We have an opportunity to breathe real life into Exmouth, and I urge the Minister to do everything in his power to bring about a situation where it is possible for civilian employees to purchase their own homes.

MR P. V. JONES (Narrogin—Minister for Housing) [5.41 p.m.] : I thank the member for Gascoyne for drawing attention to the question of home ownership in Exmouth, with particular reference to the project houses. As he has rightly indicated, home ownership is a very basic principle in any community and, certainly where the area of this State north of the 26th parallel is concerned, the Government is making considerable efforts to try to minimise the disadvantages which stand in the way of home ownership. I am referring, of course, to the tremendous costs associated with the construction of housing and the servicing of the land.

Tomorrow, by way of information, I will be announcing the allocation of funding to terminating building societies for distribution in that part of the State, as well as in other areas of Western Australia; in this way, we hope to assist home ownership. We have raised levels of permissible loans in the north-west by a much higher percentage than we have done for other parts of the State because we recognise the difficulties associated with achieving the objective of home ownership in the north. The Government does give due import to the need for home ownership.

The honourable member's grievance in regard to the situation at Exmouth is very timely, for this morning I had some discussion with the Civil Commissioner (Mr Walters) who raised with me and representatives of the State Housing Commission the question of project housing in Exmouth and its future. Mr Walters brought this matter to our notice on behalf of the local government authority in Exmouth.

As the member for Gascoyne quite rightly indicated, we have not been in a position to offer these houses for sale. I should like to advise him that, officially, we are still not in such a position because, to date, the Treasury has not seen fit to grant to the State Housing Commission a release from the ban on sales.

However, I have reason to believe that such a release may be forthcoming and, on the assumption that it is, we will offer houses for sale, whether it be to tenants in occupation or to persons wishing to purchase.

Such a policy must, however, have due recognition of certain factors. Firstly, we cannot jeopardise the pool of rental accommodation at Exmouth, which is required for the work force at the base. So, on the assumption that applications are received, we would be trying to ensure that that work force is not jeopardised.

The other factor, of course, is the funding which will be required. I am advised that in all probability there will be certain applicants who will qualify for defence forces home loans. More particularly, it is important to note that the income eligibility requirement will be such that it is unlikely any applicants will qualify for the 5 per cent Home Builder's Account money provided by the terminating building societies, and will in fact have to be directed towards the normal home loan finance sources.

If that is so, not only will it provide the home ownership we are trying to achieve, and which is very necessary at Exmouth, it will also provide us with funding which we would be prepared to recommit to the area. If in fact that is so, it will allow us to maintain both the work force in the area and the rental pool, because I can see no hindrance upon us in recommitting the capital funds in that way.

The final point I should like to make is that a considerable number of residents of Exmouth have enjoyed favourable rental arrangements for a very long time. They have entered into private arrangements regarding rental concessions and conditions which it would not be within the ambit of the State Housing Commission to offer. Therefore, on the assumption that complete ownership of these properties is made available to us, any sale or future rental arrangements would have to be on the normal commercial system under which we operate; in no way would we be able to take account of the most generous terms that tenants have been able to receive up to the present.

When it comes to establishing a value, we will be seeking to achieve a fair value of the property, having regard to its age and condition and what would be a fair demand, and also the funding which would be required to replace that dwelling.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND COURT CASES

Delay in Hearings: Grievance

MR HARTREY (Boulder-Dundas) [5.47 p.m.] : That memorable though often misunderstood constitutional instrument known as the Magna Carta—the great charter that was wrested by rebel barons from a royal rascal named King John—contains at least one fundamental principle which is basic to the administration of justice in most free communities; namely, that justice shall not be sold, denied, or delayed to any free man.

In Western Australia, of course, we are all free men, as long as we do what we are told; it is, I am sure, unthinkable that justice should be sold or denied in this community. However, unfortunately, it is all too often delayed, and sometimes inordinately so. Legal practitioners who are familiar with the procedures at the

East Perth Court of Petty Sessions are well aware that quite often, destitute or semi-destitute persons charged with serious offences which may be tried only by judge and jury are remanded in custody time and time again, and may spend several months in gaol before they are finally brought before their jury. They may then be acquitted, but by then they have served a lot of imprisonment for which they receive no compensation whatsoever. That is a rather serious situation.

Also, in the other metropolitan courts it is now the custom, even in the case of minor offences for the accused to be brought before the court, arraigned, and remanded for a week because the prosecution is not ready to proceed. At the end of the week, a date for the hearing of the charge is chosen, which may well be two or three months hence. I had that experience only last week in a metropolitan court.

However, serious as that situation may be, it is not the chief complaint which I wish to make the subject of my grievance. I allude to a civil court which is of the greatest importance to the working people of this State. I refer, of course, to the Workers' Compensation Board.

In making these remarks I wish it to be clearly understood that I cast no reflection of any kind on any member of that tribunal. The judge himself and his two assessors, the representative of the employers and the representative of the employees, are all very earnest, efficient and dedicated men. They devote all the time they can possibly find to the hearing of these claims under the Workers' Compensation Act.

Unfortunately at present there is a backlog of about 5½ to six months from the time a case is set down to be heard by the tribunal and the time it is actually reached. As it frequently happens that the other side, the employers' side—when the worker brings his case—does not file his answer until 24 minutes—not 24 hours—before the hearing commences, the case may then have to be adjourned; and if it is adjourned it will be adjourned possibly for another four months. I have had that experience too. That is no fault of the board but it certainly is a great disadvantage to the working people who are claimants before this tribunal.

It does not need much imagination to appreciate the embarrassment which a disabled worker and his family must suffer when they have to wait months and months before they can enforce a right which many times is palpably and manifestly just and has been staved off by legal manoeuvres on the part of insurance advocates. Sometimes this may happen not through the fault of anybody but merely by reason of the fact that there is such a backlog of claims that one cannot get a hearing.

Such people have to live on sickness benefit. If anybody has tried living for six months on sickness benefit one can well understand why he is sick. To start with, he would be undernourished and he would be very sick at heart in other ways.

Several members: Ha, ha!

Mr HARTREY: This is a serious matter. Although I can well understand that my rather facetious phraseology is justification for some merriment, it is not really a subject for merriment; it is a pretty serious business.

The question is: What can we do about it? It is no good saying that the tribunal can do anymore than it is doing, because I know that it cannot. It used to list one case per day for hearing. That is a reasonable allocation of time because sometimes these cases take quite a long time although sometimes they fall through and the respondent admits liability and begins to pay compensation. On the other hand, the board has now tried the experiment of listing two cases per day. That is really more than the tribunal could actually deal with if no cases ever fell through.

Even with that situation, which is the best the tribunal can possibly do, on the 13th July I set down a case for hearing and it will be heard on the 21st December. I have two unfinished cases that I was very anxious to have completed. I set them down a week ago and they will be finalised on the 11th and 12th of January, 1977.

This is really a very serious disability for the disabled worker and his family to have to put up with. I urgently request the Government to adopt one or other of two remedies, which are the only possible remedies that could meet the situation as I and others see it. I urge the Government either to appoint two new judges of district court rank and qualifications not only in Perth but also in other parts of the State, for the specific purpose of hearing workers' compensation claims relevant to those particular parts, or to appoint two new district court judges at large and to make a rule that any district court judge can be called upon to take a workers' compensation case in the district where he happens to be sitting.

I remind the House that when this legislation was introduced in England in 1897 and from then for the next 50 years until it was finally abolished, it was dealt with in the first instance by county court judges; and the county court judges were of course men of competence, just as our district court judges are, and they were reasonably expeditious. The reports show that rarely was a case delayed more than two or three months at the outside. Of course, there were also the Court of Appeal and the House of Lords above them to rectify any errors they might make in law.

The SPEAKER: The member has two minutes.

Mr HARTREY: In Western Australia, when workers' compensation was introduced in 1902, right up until 1948 when this present tribunal was created, every local court magistrate had jurisdiction to hear workers' compensation cases and one could get a case on in a month without any trouble at all. I am not suggesting that we should go back to that system, but I think it is quite competent for district court judges to handle these matters and something will have to be done to expedite the hearing of such litigation.

Very often large sums of money are involved and much hardship ensues for the disabled worker and his family or, in the event of a fatal accident, for his widow and children who are subsisting upon a widows' pension. I earnestly ask the Government to treat this as a matter of urgency and to do something about it on the lines I have suggested.

Mr GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [5.56 p.m.]: I have no doubt that the member for Boulder-Dundas has raised this matter in good faith but I must confess that I am rather at a loss to know the basis on which he has raised it.

Mr Hartrey: It is a grievance.

Mr GRAYDEN: I appreciate that, but this is the first occasion on which I have heard even a whisper that what he has suggested is so. There are 81 members in this State Parliament and at no stage has a single member made any representations. Neither the Trades and Labor Council nor the trade union movement in this State has ever said a single word about it. No employer organisation has mentioned it. I simply say that in those circumstances I am rather at a loss to know why someone somewhere along the line has not indicated that there is a delay, if a delay exists.

Mr Hartrey: It exists all right.

Mr GRAYDEN: No complaints have ever been made to me along these lines and I am in constant contact with the judge of the Workers' Compensation Board.

Mr Davies: What we want to know is what you are going to do.

Mr GRAYDEN: We will do quite a lot. I shall certainly investigate the matter which the member for Boulder-Dundas has raised and if the delays are beyond the ability of the present composition of the board to remedy, quite obviously we will do something about it. It is Government policy to keep time limits to a minimum in situations such as this. I understand that the member for Boulder-Dundas was talking also in terms of judicial courts. The same thing applies in that case. Those complaints also will be referred to the Attorney-General. I can assure the member for Boulder-Dundas that we will have an immediate look at the matter, but again

I express surprise that as far as I am concerned it has never been mentioned previously.

GOLDMINING INDUSTRY

Abolition of Tax Exemption: Grievance

Mr COYNE (Murchison-Eyre) [5.58 p.m.]: I should like to voice my protest also with the growing condemnation of the Federal Government's action in curtailing tax incentives as they apply to the goldmining industry. I can understand the Premier's frustration at the Federal Government's mining policies. I can also understand the complete bewilderment of the Federal member for Kalgoorlie, Mr Mick Cotter, and can appreciate the statements that have come from the State member for Kalgoorlie, Mr T. D. Evans. I can also appreciate the disbelief that will be generated amongst all mining communities in the whole of Western Australia. Although Kalgoorlie is the biggest area of goldmining production and always has been—

Mr Jamieson: What shaft do you think Brodie-Hall has fallen down? We have not heard his voice—

Mr COYNE: I think they probably picked the deepest one. There is a big area to which this State owes a lot—the area of Murchison-Eyre, which I represent. Most of the towns still in existence in that area which are still relatively important have been fostered by and built on the production of the goldmining industry.

It is regrettable that a situation like this one should develop, when the goldmining industry is on its knees because of certain economic factors which, undoubtedly, have caused the industry to go out of production completely.

I refer to the recent sale by the International Monetary Fund of 170 000 ounces of gold, which brought about a considerable downturn in the price of gold. That was a recent body blow. Another 25 million ounces of gold are to be auctioned. So, it becomes obvious to most people that the goldmining industry will suffer a very traumatic experience over the next few years. I cannot understand why the Federal Government should implement at this time the recommendations of the IAC to discontinue the taxation relief that has been extended to the goldmining industry in recent years.

What the average person in the street or, indeed, in provincial areas cannot understand is the aura or the lure of gold. People with this obsession find that it remains with them all their lives, and these are people experienced in the goldmining industry. To them hope springs eternal, and there is the fascination of the lure of the unknown. They live in the hope of finding a big gold strike, and this feeling never leaves them. I should

say that at the present time the ordinary prospectors who will be affected by the decision of the Federal Government will be very upset by this turn of events.

Hill 50 Gold is one of the few remaining goldmines outside Kalgoorlie that has maintained an output and a work force up to very recent times. It will be recalled that the cause of the downturn was the inflationary pressure. The price of gold has not been able to keep up with the increased costs, and it cannot compete with the external price that can be obtained for gold on the open market.

Despite all this, Hill 50 Gold has kept its plant intact in the hope that the price of gold will rise to the degree where it could resume operations. This company has a huge plant which would cost millions of dollars to replace today. It has maintained the plant and put the operations on ice, in the hope that something will eventuate to allow it to continue operations at some future date. I am sure that the action taken by the Federal Government will prove to be a grievous blow to Hill 50 Gold.

To the ordinary person in the street this action will place communities that are dependent on the prospectors and goldmining in a desperate situation. They live in the hope that there will be a resurgence in the goldmining industry, and that it will again be able to reassert itself and bring prosperity back to the people. The action of the Federal Government is one of the factors which has caused much pessimism in the towns I represent.

It is not correct to say that the nickel or uranium mining industries will replace the goldmining industry. I think that in the course of time the two former industries will gradually establish themselves in such a way that we will not notice the phasing out of the goldmining industry.

I certainly deplore the decision of the Federal Government to impose these limitations which will undoubtedly create a great deal of gloom in the goldmining industry. The State Batteries will be one of the first sectors of the goldmining industry to suffer. There are eight or 10 such batteries operating throughout the Murchison area at the present time, but no doubt these operations will taper off. This will bring about hardship to the people who are engaged in the goldmining industry, and who have little experience to enable them to take other occupations.

I am utterly bewildered to find that this measure was introduced by the Federal Government without any prior discussions with the industry or with the Premier of this State. Obviously the Federal member for Kalgoorlie was very hopeful of the future prospects of the goldmining industry when he was elected as a member of the House of Representatives on the 13th December last. He felt

sure the Federal Government would do something to help the goldmining industry and mining in general. Now he must feel chopped off at the knees, to find this sort of decision being made at this stage.

That is all I can offer in this context. I realise the matter has been fairly well voiced and covered by Press reports and by the member for Kalgoorlie. I hope that the protestations by the Premier to the Prime Minister will bear fruit, and that to some degree the situation will be restored.

Mr H. D. Evans: Is there a different party in the Federal Government!

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [6.06 p.m.]: I wish to reply briefly to the comments made by the member for Murchison-Eyre. I can appreciate his concern as well as that of the member for Kalgoorlie, because the member for Murchison-Eyre represents an electorate where strong emphasis is placed on the goldmining industry, and furthermore it has a long history of gold production. I am one of those people who has an unshakeable faith in gold; but I do not know whether I am one of a dying race.

It is said that people either believe in gold or they do not. Just at the moment we all know the reasons the price is going down and I think it might have to go down a little further before the market sorts itself out because for reasons of its own the USSR is marketing huge quantities itself. We knew this sort of thing would occur once there was a change in the marketing of gold, particularly in the USA. For years and years the price of gold was held in a state of unreality and this is when the trouble occurred. Gold was never allowed to find its own level at a time when it could have settled down as an important mineral in the world. It would have been in a much more stable position now had that artificial ceiling not applied. However it was applied for so long, before being relaxed, that it has affected market trends and even market demands.

I want to assure the honourable member that his views are noted and that I will make sure that not only his views, but also those of the member for Kalgoorlie and others who have been in touch with me on the subject, are correctly represented to the Commonwealth.

I come back to the point I made earlier; that is, that I am afraid if one gets down to cold hard dollars and cents it is very hard to visualise that this latest proposal will stop development or deter projects already in progress. However, I would be the first to admit that this particular industry—not only gold, but mining generally—is an emotive one and something like this can have a psychological impact which will be quite devastating and out of all proportion to the true economic situation.

The SPEAKER: Grievances have been noted.

SUPPLY BILL

Standing Orders Suspension

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [6.09 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable a Supply Bill to be introduced without notice and passed through all its stages in one day.

I discussed this matter with the Leader of the Opposition. It might have been better had we, on the last day of the first part of the session, given notice of our intention to move this motion when we resumed, and then we could have gone straight on with the debate. I felt it was better, however, to allow the motion to take its natural course and thus I gave notice of my intention yesterday and I am now dealing with the motion today. I hasten to add that it is not the Government's intention—and I have made this clear to the Leader of the Opposition—to proceed with this Bill today beyond getting leave for its introduction and then followed by the first reading because I do not want to interfere with private members' day.

The Supply Bill progress is unpredictable. In some ways the Bill is a formality and in other ways it can be an opportunity for members to express themselves on a wide range of subjects. I felt it would be unfair to members to restrict the debating time to between 2.15 and 6.15 p.m. tomorrow. The alternative was to have an arrangement with the Opposition whereby we could sit after dinner if requisite. However, a suggestion was forthcoming which I welcomed; that is, that we meet at 11.00 a.m. tomorrow to gain extra time, thus permitting country members to leave at 6.15 p.m. I make it clear that the 6.15 p.m. conclusion is based on the assumption that the Bill has been passed through this House, because once the Supply Bill is moved and set in motion, it is customary to pass it in the one sitting, hence the suspension of Standing Orders. I would like that clearly understood.

I welcomed the co-operation of the Leader of the Opposition and his suggestion about commencing at 11.00 a.m. tomorrow. I understand this proposal is generally accepted by members and is preferred to sitting after dinner tomorrow. Most members now understand that until we get the Supply Bill through we are acting on warrants and it is imperative that the Government of the day gets the Supply Bill introduced and passed as quickly as it can as a matter of good faith to the Governor of the day who signs warrants in the interim period.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool—Leader of the Opposition) [6.11 p.m.]: The Treasurer has indicated that we discussed this

matter even though but briefly. I think we must come to some understanding in the future so that at the end of the autumn part of the session we move some form of temporary supply to see us through because at that time we usually know when we will resume. This would overcome the present impasse the Treasurer has mentioned. He did indicate that he had some thoughts on this matter which he would discuss with me later on and then perhaps we can come to some arrangement for the future.

So far as we are able to tell the Supply Bill will have its usual run of a few speakers. We acknowledge that some country members want to get away and this would be most difficult if the debate continued after dinner tomorrow. Having due regard for that, the party Whips will probably finish up in the Swan River if the debate does continue past 6.15 p.m. and we will need to appoint new Whips. We will have to rely on their good efforts and those of members to ensure we get through.

Without issuing any threats or imposing any restrictions, I think we can be sensible enough to realise that this Bill has to go through and that we must pass it so as to avoid any possible embarrassment to the Governor.

All Governments are faced with this task whether they be Labor, Liberal, or of any other political flavour, and I suggest we are quite happy at this juncture to agree to the proposition.

Question put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 6.13 to 7.30 p.m.

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Sir Charles Court (Treasurer), and read a first time.

BILLS (4): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Country Towns Sewerage Act Amendment Bill.

2. Offenders Probation and Parole Act Amendment Bill.

Bills introduced, on motions by Mr Ridge (Minister for Lands), and read a first time.

3. Industrial and Commercial Employees' Housing Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr P. V. Jones (Minister for Housing), and read a first time.

4. Main Roads Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Minister for Transport), and read a first time.

TRESILLIAN HOSTEL*Retention of Use: Motion*

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park) [7.35 p.m.]: I move—

That as the moves made to provide permanent accommodation for profoundly retarded children since August 1975 have had no significant effect in reducing the waiting lists of those requiring accommodation on an urgent or otherwise basis, in the opinion of this House the Government should make every effort to ensure that Tresillian Hospital remains available to house these children until all requests for accommodation are satisfied.

This motion is very similar to a motion moved in this House last year, and for that I make no apology because the position has remained exactly the same—if not, it is even more acute than it was then.

I put the notice of this motion on the notice paper on the second last day of the autumn sitting in the hope that by the time we resumed some satisfactory settlement would have been arrived at. The answers I received to questions I asked led me to believe that the children from the Tresillian Hostel would probably be moved by about mid-August. I think one answer I received stated that the move would be no later than mid-August. The fact that attempts were made to move the children earlier can be accepted.

I did hope though, as I have said, that the position would have been reviewed in the interim period, and those responsible would have accepted one of the alternatives open to them in order to avoid the unfortunate confrontation which eventually occurred.

As I have said, the sentiments expressed in the motion we are now about to debate—which was put on the notice paper last May—are just as real now as they were then because the position has not altered in any way. We still have the same demand and the same need for additional beds.

Apart from drawing those facts to the attention of the House, I thought I might provide those responsible for the decisions which have been taken with an opportunity to answer three points: Firstly, to explain the reasons for their actions; secondly, to tell us something about the plan referred to on a number of occasions, but never clearly defined; and thirdly, to tell us what expert opinion they acted upon. Those were the three main factors which came out of the reams and reams of publications—perhaps that is not quite the best expression—or the factors which came out of the many thousands of words printed on this subject. If we can get answers to those three questions I will be satisfied to some extent.

The fact remains that as far as I am concerned, and as far as the Australian Labor Party is concerned, the children will remain in the Tresillian Hostel until all the demands for accommodation to house profoundly mentally retarded children are satisfied.

Mr Bertram: Hear, hear!

Mr DAVIES: The handling of the matter by the Government was sloppy, to say the least. Perhaps “sloppy” might not be a very good word to use when one has regard for the immovable position adopted by the main stars in the drama.

Mr Bertram: Would “inept” be a better word?

Mr DAVIES: Inept might be a better word. All I can say is that an amazing lack of sensitivity was displayed. There was, I believe, an aloofness and a complete unawareness of public feeling. If what I have said is not correct, I can only say there was a deliberate plot to ignore the feelings of the public, if in fact those who had to make the decisions were aware of what the public were feeling.

What happened as a result? People were threatened, pleaded with, and cajoled. At times the parties refused even to talk to the interested groups. At times the stars of the drama became petulant and tried, I suppose, to pretend the problem would go away if they did not face up to it. They were not facing up to it. They said, “This is the decision that has been made and it must stand.”

It is thanks to four member of Parliament who could accurately assess the feeling of the public that the stars of the drama were held to ransom and eventually had to change the stance they had taken. It was no credit to them. Had they adopted one of the options that were available to them earlier, the public would have said they were statesmen. Actually, the public now say they were stubborn; and they finished up in a worse position than they should have been in.

Let me repeat what I have said previously in this House: I make no apology for or secret of the fact that it was a decision of mine when I was Minister for Health that put those children into Tresillian. When the hospital became vacant several options were open to me, and the most pressing need was to find accommodation for these profoundly mentally retarded children. The hospital was said to be valued at something like \$250 000, and it would have been completely wrong of me to let it remain vacant or not to put it to the best possible use. The best possible and most needy use was for those children.

Objections were raised, as I imagined they would be. I will not canvass all those objections. They reflected an attitude which I find rather distasteful and which I regret does exist in the community.

I can understand the feeling of the Nedlands City Council. I gave it an undertaking that when the beds were no longer wanted the hospital would be used for some other purpose. The council put out feelers to buy it but quickly withdrew its feelers when it found the price would be \$250 000. As everyone knows, there was subsequently a dramatic reduction of that valuation and the hospital was put up for grabs at half that price—\$125 000.

In some respects we can understand the feelings of the people concerned. I cannot understand them completely but I can understand and make excuses for the people when they go to their member of Parliament. If I were the member for the district and doing my job, I would try to help them. I do not think they did anything wrong in going to the man who is their member of Parliament and the Premier of this State.

I said earlier that we moved a similar motion last year, and we hoped as a result of that motion the Government would take some notice of the feelings which were expressed; that it would take some action. The Minister for Health is not in this House; he is represented by another Minister, who only supplies to us the information which is made available to him. In response to our previous motion, the Minister in this House said on page 3695 of *Hansard* for 1975—

... the Government has not made a wrong or publicly unacceptable decision.

I ask: Was that a very profound statement when we look at what has occurred since then? He probably believed it was not a wrong or publicly unacceptable decision; yet, of course, it has proved to be completely wrong and unacceptable to the public.

That was one of the options which were available to the Premier or the Minister. If they felt the wrong decision had been made, they could have reviewed it. They could perhaps have said, "On the information available to us at the time we made a wrong decision, but on information which has come forward since then we believe the decision should be changed." Had they admitted there was room for error, I think such a statement would have been applauded by the whole community.

In replying to the motion, the Minister said on page 3696 of *Hansard* for the same year—

The Government considers it has no charge to answer.

For its sins, the Government has since had to answer, at the expense of a lot of clamour from the people at large. On page 3698 of *Hansard* the Minister said—

The Opposition has now had its fun and it should allow us to get on with the job; in a short time we would get these people into acceptable premises.

I considered then that it was an insult, and I now consider it an insult to be told we were moving the motion for fun. We were in no way doing it for fun. We had our finger on the pulse. We knew what the feelings of the people were. We knew how desperate was the position in regard to beds. We knew the patients could be left there without causing concern to any part of the community, except for one or two people, and that is what the Government could have done. I objected then to it being called fun, and I now object most strongly to the suggestion that we moved the motion for fun. It was a most unfortunate word.

However, I realised what our position would be, not having the numbers, and in replying to the debate I said, on page 3698 of *Hansard*, that our motion would not have the slightest effect on the policy of the Government. How true that turned out to be, because it was not anything we said as an Opposition or as a political party that had any effect on the Government. What did have an effect was the rising up in indignation and genuine wrath of a section of the community which was able to muster forces and eventually got on side sufficient members of the Government to force the Government to change its mind. It was not what we did that had that effect—it was not a political action by any means—but what was done by members of the Government's own party.

I think those members deserve the approbation of this House—the member for Scarborough, the member for Kalamunda, the member for Subiaco, and the member for Stirling. They deserve to be recorded in *Hansard* as people of real compassion.

It is a pity the Minister for Local Government seems to continue to think this is a huge joke.

Mr Rushton: You did not mention the right names.

Mr DAVIES: Had four members of the Government stood me up when I was a Cabinet Minister, I would not have been at all amused.

Mr Rushton: You should be accurate.

Mr Bertram: Their names will be recorded in the division.

Mr DAVIES: If the Minister would care to correct me, I will accept his correction; but he is becoming petulant as he is wont to do.

Apart from what the Minister for Lands said on behalf of the Minister for Health in regard to our last motion, we did not know what the feelings of the other members of the Government were because none of them spoke in the debate. On the night in question the Premier was away from the House and did not have the opportunity to speak. No doubt he was in the electorate on the business of the Government, so he did not tell us what the position was then.

Well, what is the present position? Is my statement true, that the position has not improved since we last debated this matter? I can go only on the information given to me in answer to questions, and I will refer to three of these. The first was question 44 of the 12th August, 1975; the second was question 15, asked on the 13th April of this year; and the third was question 11 asked yesterday in this House. The answers given to those questions relate the story and they show that what I say is true: there has been no improvement in the bed position for these people. In all three questions I asked—

How many profoundly retarded children—up to and including teenagers—are currently accommodated by the State?

The answer I was given to the first question included teenagers up to the age of 18 years and the answers to subsequent questions included teenagers up to the age of 19 years. Twelve months ago 97 persons were accommodated by the State. This figure then decreased to 82, and yesterday I was told that the number of persons so accommodated was 90. So in almost 12 months the number of persons accommodated by the State has dropped by seven. Of course, that variation could be explained by the different age groups to which I referred earlier. However, the fact remains that the variation in those figures over a period of 12 months is negligible.

The next part of the question I asked was as follows—

Where are these accommodated and what are the numbers at each place?

From the answers I was given I see that the situation has changed very little over the 12 months. Profoundly retarded people are accommodated at Scarborough Hostel, Dorset Hostel, Tresillian Hostel, Princess Margaret Hospital, and at Nulsen Haven which is State subsidised. The variation in these figures is no more than three or four either way.

As we are now talking about Tresillian Hostel, I think the figures are worth looking at. Twelve months ago, 12 people were accommodated at Tresillian. In April of this year 18 were accommodated, and in the reply given yesterday, I was told that 15 people are now accommodated. I understand that Tresillian Hostel has 30 beds so obviously more could be accommodated there.

Part (3) of the question I asked was as follows—

How many profoundly retarded children in the above category are known to be in the State?

In the answers I was given I was told that in August, 1975, 136 profoundly retarded persons under the age of 18 years were registered with the Mental Health Services and yesterday I was told that there were 173 such persons as at the 2nd April, 1976. So once again there has been no dramatic

change in the number of known cases in the State, and no alteration at all over the last few months. I then asked—

What unsatisfied requests for accommodation for these children do Mental Health Services have?

From the replies given we see that 12 months ago there were 15 profoundly retarded persons on the urgent waiting list. In April of this year there were still 15 urgent requests for accommodation, and yesterday I was told that there were 14 urgent requests. Once again the figures point out that in a period of 12 months there has been no improvement whatsoever in the capacity of Mental Health Services to handle these children. I know that Mental Health Services would be happy to accommodate these children if it had the beds. I know that the parents, and particularly in some cases, would be very relieved to obtain suitable accommodation for their children, even if only for short-stay periods. Unless a person had lived with such a child, he could not begin to understand the strain placed on all members of the family—the husband, the wife, and any other children.

I can speak from my experiences when I held the portfolio of Health, and if the Government is interested, the appropriate files could be perused. Letters were written to me by the parents of some of these profoundly retarded children and it was quite common to be told that unless some action were taken to assist with the care of these unfortunate children, many families would suffer a complete breakup. I was told of threatened suicides, desertions, and the like. Members must realise that to care for one of these children is a 24-hour-a-day job. They must be fed, toileted, washed, and amused. The best an attendant can hope for is perhaps a moderate smile of recognition from time to time. The care of such children is a constant strain on families and there is a responsibility on a Government to provide beds for each and every one of these children for whom such accommodation is so urgently required.

The figures given to me by the Government over a period of 12 months show that there has been no improvement whatsoever in the position. As well as the 15 children for whom urgent accommodation is required, the parents of another 60-odd children are requesting accommodation although they are willing to wait until accommodation can be found. However, these parents will become desperate as time goes on and no beds become available. The demands on the Government will become even more pressing.

One of the questions I pose to the Government member who replies to this motion is this: What is the Government's plan? Although we have heard about the Government's plan on a number of occasions, it has never been clearly defined. I am prepared to suggest a grace period of 12 or 18 months, but I would like to be

told that within that time sufficient beds will be made available to accommodate those in need. That is the objective towards which the Government should be working, and that is the only objective I will accept. It is only on the satisfactory accommodation of all other affected children in the State that I would agree to those presently accommodated in Tresillian Hostel being moved.

I will be delighted indeed if the Government can tell me about its plan. I asked some further questions yesterday and the reply indicated that, although hopeful, the position is still somewhat vague. We are told that the Government has the Ross Memorial Hospital, although I notice that the Presbyterian Church has objected to the continued use of that name. There are beds for 32 people at the Ross Memorial Hospital and I imagine that the Government will move children in there as soon as suitable staff can be trained. Certainly the beds are required urgently. Yokine Hostel will accommodate 32 and the Government tells us that one other hostel may take 32 persons in 1977-1978 according to availability. We were then told that in that same year Sussex Hostel would take 32 persons and that that hostel will be part financed by the Government during 1976-77. So from the replies given the plan is not clear. We are hopeful that sufficient beds will be available, but we would like the plan clearly defined.

It is all very well for the Government to say it will be providing these beds but I would also like the Government's representative who replies to this debate to tell me how this accommodation is to be financed—if the Government considers it is worth while telling me! Will the Commonwealth Government come to the party as it did with the Kareeba Nursing Home? By the way, this nursing home was heavily subsidised on about a four-to-one basis by the Australian Government but it still stands empty. If the Australian Government knows what happened in that case, of course it may not be too happy about further finance for other projected hostels. In any case, I believe it is doubtful that the Australian Government will be happy about any further finance. I can only hope that it will acknowledge the need and do something about it as we need these beds desperately. However, knowing the Commonwealth Government, and knowing how federalism is being applied, I am somewhat doubtful that we will get any help at all from that Government.

Many plans have been made in the past, and the current policy was adopted only several years ago. As long ago as 1968 we had the much publicised and, at that time, much applauded five-year plan for mental deficiency; and that was presented several Ministers ago. You will be delighted to know, Mr Speaker, that I do not intend to read out the whole plan. However, in respect of the profoundly mentally

retarded immobile group, the committee first of all suggested the group be divided into two sections, the first comprising those under 14 years of age and the other comprising those over 14 years.

With regard to immobile profoundly retarded children under 14 years, the committee considered there were 120 in the community and that Princess Margaret Hospital could make available 40 beds. Therefore 80 children would have had to remain in their own homes. The committee said this group was regarded as ineducable and untrainable, and with the likelihood of a severe mortality rate. It pointed out that the staff ratio would need to be one to 10 on duty at any one time, with an overall ratio of four staff to 10 patients.

The committee went on to say that supervision of this group should be exercised through the board of the Princess Margaret Hospital, and the Public Health Department through its representative on that board. Of course the present Minister for Health has taken the step of removing Public Health Department representatives from hospital boards, and so supervision could no longer be applied in that manner even if it were considered necessary.

The committee said that admission would be arranged through a panel consisting of medical officers, psychologists, and social workers from the children's hospital and the Mental Health Services. It considered that finance should be arranged between the State and Commonwealth Governments, but should not come from the children's hospital endowment fund. Parents do not pay for the hospital care of these children in hospitals administered by the Mental Health Services, and it was thought that the possibility of obtaining long-term Commonwealth fund benefits for this group should be explored.

I do not know whether that was explored, or what was the result if it was explored. However, that five-year plan which was applauded in 1968 proposed to keep 40 children in Princess Margaret Hospital and to keep the other 80 in their homes. Of course, we know now that part of the problem with which the mental deficiency unit of the Mental Health Services has been confronted is that there are 31 children at Princess Margaret Hospital who are not wanted at that hospital and who must be moved so that beds may be made available for other purposes. So the plan proposed in 1968 collapsed completely, and the direction was changed.

The committee then spoke about immobile profoundly retarded persons over 14 years of age, and it considered that they could be accommodated in regional and public hospitals throughout the State. The committee went on to say there were only about 50 of these persons because most of them die before they reach the age of 14. They do not require educational training and the staff ratios would be the

same as for the previous group; that is, an overall staff to patient ratio of four to 10.

All I can say is: Thank goodness that plan was never put into effect, because had it been we would be in a most serious position. I am absolutely amazed to think that only eight years ago we had people thinking along the lines of, "They will die anyway, so the best thing to do is to put them in public hospitals"—where bed costs are now up to about \$130 a day at Royal Perth. The committee was prepared to put these persons into public hospitals in the hope that they would die and then the problem would be removed.

However, as I said, that five-year plan for mental deficiency—or at least that part of it—was not put into effect, and a much more humane, compassionate, and realistic programme was embarked upon. That programme has proceeded, a little roughly at times, along a course which I hope is leading to a successful conclusion. These new moves have been endorsed by the experts.

I will not go through the mass of Press cuttings I have on the Tresillian issue; I believe to do so would cause acute embarrassment to the Government. I say that because, despite the fact that the Premier said he was not getting any publicity on it—and despite the fact that he ultimately received several full pages of publicity in the morning and evening papers—I think he received more than his fair share of publicity right throughout. Indeed, the only time I entered into the matter was on two occasions when I put out Press statements when I thought the Government was getting a bit over the odds, and on other occasions when the Press reporters contacted me, sometimes at seven o'clock in the morning, and at various times throughout the day, and said neither the Premier nor the Minister for Health would talk to them on the Tresillian issue and asked me to comment. I was only too happy to do so.

Therefore, I nearly fell off my chair when I saw that the Premier had charged the Press with biased and unfair reporting, and I was delighted to see that the persons concerned strongly refuted his allegations. Indeed, the Press showed quite clearly that the Premier had received as much, if not more, publicity than anybody else. Indeed, dates and instances were given. If the Premier did not receive as much publicity as he wanted, then it was because of his reluctance at times to talk to the Press, and I can only assume that his reluctance was caused by the fact that he had no good excuses to offer.

The new plan of which I have spoken and which I believe will bear excellent results in due course has been endorsed by a number of experts. I was pleased to see that it was endorsed by what *The West Australian* of the 14th July was pleased

to call six experts who attacked the Government over its proposal to move children from Tresillian. These experts are leading lights in the universities; people who know what is going on and who have some experience of the problem. All the Premier could say at that time was that he had asked people to reserve their judgment until such time as they had heard his side of the story.

In addition, another article appeared in *The Sunday Times* of the 13th June. Here was another expert, quoted as Mr D. Crawford, Superintendent, Minda Homes, Adelaide, and a consultant in residential care for the Australian Government. He applauded the retention of the Tresillian Hostel and the move which had been made to keep the children there. An open letter also was addressed to all members of Parliament on the question. This was signed by some further experts.

There were plenty of others who were saying this is what the position should be, and I even noticed that when eventually a compromise was reached the Director of Mental Health Services (Dr Ellis) had his tongue in his cheek somewhat when he said he was there to support the Government, and that the Government made the decisions. I felt that had Dr Ellis been a less loyal public servant he would have said, "I am very pleased indeed that the Government has at last changed its mind", because he was not one of the experts who the Premier said had tendered advice to remove the children from Tresillian.

Once again, I repeat the second part of my request: that the Premier tell us who are the experts who advised the Government on this issue.

Mr Skidmore: Sir Expert Charlie.

Mr DAVIES: I think we will wait and see what he has to say. There was some suggestion that the opposition to the Government was politically inspired. For a start, what in our public life is not political? Then, when the Government could not stir up very much publicity against the Opposition or the ALP for being interested in this matter, it said the unions were to blame.

The unions did not come into the scheme until they were asked. They did not volunteer their services; they came to protect their members and to ensure they were not penalised in any way. However, before that, they were asked by the bodies concerned, which were interested in the whole position, whether they would give some assistance by refusing to move the children and by refusing to maintain the supply of transport, which was the lifeline between the two hospitals.

The only volunteering done was by the Painters and Decorators' Union, which said, "If the Premier thinks Tresillian needs a coat of paint, let him give us the paint and our members will paint the

place free of charge." However, that offer was not taken up. The Government is quick to criticise unions but rarely praises them.

I want to know why the Government representative on the two-hour marathon "Leslie Anderson Show" was the Minister for Labour and Industry. What has he to do with health matters? Where was the Minister for Health?

Sir Charles Court: He was away on that day and the Minister for Labour and Industry was standing in for him. That was fair enough.

Mr DAVIES: Yes, that was fair enough. However, I am sure that Leslie Anderson and the public would much rather have waited a day or two until the Minister for Health was able to appear on the programme because he was the man who had to make all the decisions; he was the one who should have received any praise; he was the man from whom the public wanted to hear.

I have a few letters which relate to the Minister for Health and some other members of the Government. As a matter of fact, the one I have in my hand was given to me by the member for Clontarf and is a telephone message he received. I will not give the telephone number or the name of the person involved, but members opposite may see the paper if they desire.

Mr Nanovich: Why not?

Mr DAVIES: I have no desire to cause any embarrassment to the person involved. The message states as follows—

Re Tresillian affair. Quote "Mr Baxter will have to go. The Government has lost 3 votes from my home and as many others as I can canvass."

That was from a person who said he was a personal friend of Sir Charles Court.

Mr B. T. Burke: You have given the game away now, because he has only one friend.

Mr DAVIES: It was only one of many messages which were received by members of this Parliament. I have plenty of them in my file, if members opposite would like to go through it. People who said they were previously Liberal Party supporters no longer wished to be associated with that party. They were surprised the Liberals had adopted such an attitude, and blamed the Premier and the Minister for Health. Yet the people being blamed claimed they were not being given a fair go and that the Press was not being kind to them.

Apart from the two Press releases which I deliberately released when I felt the Government was getting a bit far over the odds and something needed to be said, I did not need to come into the issue politically, because there were plenty of "Friends of Tresillian" in their various

forms who were only too happy to take up the cudgels on behalf of the patients and the parents.

Members have only to look at the number of petitions which were being circulated, and which were tabled in this House to ascertain public feeling. I have a couple of petitions here. It is true that they each contain only about 20 signatures, but I think it reflects the feeling of people, in that individuals chose to get up a petition amongst their immediate circle of friends in order to express disgust at the Government for the way it was handling the issue. There were telephone calls galore. At times, I wished I could have my telephone disconnected!

Mr Nanovich: Why didn't you?

Mr DAVIES: I chose not to because I was interested in receiving the calls from the public. We get paid very handsomely to talk to the public, and I certainly did not mind receiving telephone calls which rubbished the Government, because that is what they were doing.

Members have only to look at the letters on my files, to note the kind of reaction they themselves received, to look at the newspaper cuttings, and listen to the talk-back radio programmes to know what was the extent of public feeling on this issue. Members opposite would soon have been able to get the hang of things and gauge what the public at large were feeling.

I know that at times these talk-back shows are used by political parties to put a certain point of view; but although occasionally, someone who possibly was representing a political party appeared on such a programme and tried to defend the Government, such people were outnumbered by about 20 to one.

Everyone is entitled to express his own point of view. In fact, a lady telephoned me one morning to express her strong objection to the children remaining at Tresillian. I believe I gave her a courteous hearing and said that she was entitled to her views and I was entitled to mine. But, as I say, from the material being published the people opposing the Government's stand outnumbered Government supporters by about 20 to one.

Even then, the Government may have chosen to thumb its nose at the public at large and say, "We intend to go ahead with the decision." That was clearly the Government's intention, and no doubt the move would have taken place had it not been for Dr Harry Cohen.

It was only towards the end of the campaign that I ran into Dr Cohen and his wife. The meeting was quite by accident, at a place some distance from Perth. On one occasion after that meeting, I supplied him with an answer to a question which had been asked. So, I can view this man only from afar, but I have the greatest admiration for him.

When organisations such as Friends of Tresillian and Watchdog and a few others had been battling for something like 12 months and had started to accept the hopelessness of the situation, Dr Harry Cohen turned out to be the rallying point. It was this man and he alone who caused the position finally to be resolved in the way it was. However, it was not resolved to his satisfaction. I do not believe he thinks he has had a win, according to what I read in the newspapers; but Dr Cohen was the force which got behind these organisations and who fought so magnificently, and rallied the flagging opposition.

No-one could put a smear on him! No-one could say he was a "communist" or a fascist; he could not be termed as bad or undesirable in any direction.

Mr Bertram: He could have been called a fifth columnist.

Mr DAVIES: Yes, I suppose he could have been described in certain quarters as being a fifth columnist.

Mr Bryce: Or a subversive.

Mr DAVIES: Yes, or a subversive which apparently is one who is opposed to the present Government; apparently there are many such people in our community today. But the fact is that Dr Cohen was a cleanskin; no-one could get anything on him. He fought for what he felt and for what he really knew was right and I say, "Congratulations to Dr Harry Cohen in what he accomplished".

Then we had the ultimatum delivered by members of Parliament from the Government side, who took some action to stand the Premier up. I say they stood the Premier up because, from what I read in the newspapers, only half an hour before the ultimatum was delivered, the Minister for Health was reported as saying, "There will be no change. The patients will be shifted from Tresillian." But the Premier then said that was all wrong because he had made up his mind to let them stay at Tresillian.

Mr Bertram: But he did not tell the member for Scarborough.

Mr DAVIES: I am not saying anything; I will try not even to imply anything. But the fact remains that the Minister for Health said, "They will go." Certain things then took place. Certain notices were tendered to the Premier and then there was talk and a long discussion and it was only then that the Government said, "The children may stay for the time being." But at that time, apparently, no call had gone out to the representatives of Friends of Tresillian. None of them had been contacted until this notice came forth.

Mr Skidmore: Even the Minister for Health was not contacted.

Mr DAVIES: The Minister for Health apparently was as shocked and surprised as everyone else to discover what had gone on. We have another very important motion on the notice paper tonight, and although I could continue at some considerable length—

Mr Skidmore: I think you should continue, and show the duplicity of the Government.

Mr DAVIES: —I do not think I will at this time. I can only say that the Government's standing in the community has been given a severe buffeting. Certain members of the Government have come out of it far worse than others. Some have come out with a great deal of approbation for what they have done, and at least we can understand that a semblance of democracy remains.

The fact remains that the children will will be there until no later than, I think, December, 1977. I am not quite certain why that date was chosen but I am afeared by the words "no later than" because they could mean next week or that the whole sorry business could start again at any time. This is why I want to know what the plan is.

These are the three questions I want answered: What is the plan? What were the reasons for the Government's action? Who were the experts who were advising the Government? These matters are not clear in any of the Press material that I have read and even on television or radio I have not heard any satisfactory explanations.

I do not congratulate the Government on the final stand that it took. I believe it was forced into a corner where it had no alternative. It had to face a crisis which it should have seen coming head on. Perhaps the Premier or the Cabinet thought that no-one would dare stand them up in the way they did. I am thankful that there were persons in the community and in Parliament who read the score card far better than the Government did.

I hope I have shown that in the past 12 months the position has improved in no way, that there is still a desperate need for beds for profoundly mentally retarded patients, that the beds at Tresillian are admirable and meet the purpose, that there is no immediate hope of sufficient additional beds being acquired and that, if there is, there are people who are urgently waiting to fill them. Because the position has not improved and because we still require the beds, I am sure the House will agree with my motion.

Mr BERTRAM: I second the motion.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [8.23 p.m.]: If one sat back without any knowledge of the subject and heard the member for Victoria Park

dilate on this matter one would assume he was so full of virtue that his halo must be hurting.

Mr Davies: That is your typical approach, is it not?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Just a minute.

Mr Davies: You are snide and try to deride.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Mr Speaker, I remind the House that we allowed the member for Victoria Park, with all his innuendos, to make his speech because I regard this as a matter which cannot be treated as a political football in this place.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Sir CHARLES COURT: As much as some people have tried to make capital out of it, I hope that those days are over and that we can consider this matter in its proper perspective.

Mr B. T. Burke: Wait until you try to shift them again.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Is that a threat?

Mr Skidmore: Of course it's a threat. It's a threat to do everything possible to prevent your doing so.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I think we are getting a fair reflection of the political attitude of certain people. Could we consider for a few minutes some very sad cases of profoundly retarded children and their parents?

Mr Skidmore: Do not talk to me about them because I have one in my family.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to come back to the basics as far as this programme is concerned. The member who spoke for the Opposition on this motion was a Minister for Health and when we went into office he would have known about the programme that was put forward in 1968 and was incorporated in what, I think, is generally known as the "little red book". Since then techniques have changed. The hopes of some of these people have changed. Because of world experience and a lot of dedication by the departmental officers in our State, it was decided that there would be a variation in the form of treatment from that which was recommended in 1968.

I do not decry in any way what went forward in 1968 because it is to the credit of the Minister for Health just before that time, who happens to be our Speaker at present, that the greatest breakthrough in mental health in Australia was generated. It was a complete change of attitude towards mental health. The stigma was removed from it.

As a matter of basic policy and philosophy, and largely because of the representations of the Minister at that time, the Government grasped the nettle and rewrote the whole of the mental health laws of this State. As a result there was

a completely changed attitude by the community and by Governments to this very difficult question, and a tremendous amount of progress has been made.

I believe that what was incorporated in that little book in 1968 represented a tremendous breakthrough in the approach to treatment and in the approach to parents as well as patients. Since then there has been a change in techniques. There has been more experience with this subject and the method of approach has been changed for the better. I embrace this new approach to the programme. No doubt better ones will be perfected with the passage of time.

I wish to state here and now—and I deny anyone the ability to correct me or to prove me wrong—that when I heard of the plight of these people from several sources, including a deputation from the Friends of Tresillian at the time and deputations from other people involved with mentally handicapped children as well as children with other handicaps, I gave instructions that a programme was to be formulated whereby the Government would be committed to providing residential accommodation of the type that is now advocated by the experts. It was to be a definite programme and was to embrace all the known profoundly retarded children who needed accommodation and for whom accommodation was requested.

Members will know that some parents will not request and do not desire accommodation for their children because, for their own private reasons, they want to have the children in their homes. That is their decision and must always be their decision and I believe we will have to make available ever-increasing facilities in the home for those families, if that is their decision, so that some of the burden can be taken off them.

As members will realise as I proceed with my remarks, we have built into this programme, which was sneered at by the member for Victoria Park, facilities to take care of people who want temporary accommodation as distinct from those who want permanent accommodation.

Mr Jamieson: That went back a long way before your time.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member for Victoria Park, who was the Minister—

Mr B. T. Burke: That was in 1961.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Do Opposition members wish to hear this?

Mr Jamieson: We do, but we want you to be correct.

Sir CHARLES COURT: When the member for Victoria Park was the Minister he had no plan of a specific nature to house the known profoundly retarded. When I received representations from several groups representing people with varying degrees of mental retardation, the

Minister was unable to supply any programme from the previous Government whereby the known profoundly retarded children could be accommodated. I am referring to cases which needed accommodation, and where accommodation was requested.

Mr Davies: That was when we were buying hospitals. What are you talking about?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member for Victoria Park made it very clear to me as he made it clear to the council that the accommodation at Tresillian was intended to be of a temporary nature only. That was why there was no great kerfuffle about the use of Tresillian at the time.

Mr Davies: At the time when we were buying them all over the place.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I go back to the point—and the honourable member cannot get away from it—that he made it clear Tresillian was not a suitable place, and the accommodation was to be temporary until appropriate alternative accommodation could be obtained. The member for Victoria Park who was then the Minister for Health said that; it was not I who said it.

Out of this inquiry by me came a total programme. Members of the House are no doubt aware of the frustrations of the Minister for Health when he acquired Kareeba. The only reason that Kareeba was not used for profoundly retarded children was that the local authority pleaded a town planning requirement which forbade this place being used as an institution. Previously it was used as a hospital, but it could not be used as an institution.

It so happens that exactly the same town planning technicality—and I term it a technicality—existed in respect of Tresillian. The Nedlands City Council, being more tolerant, allowed the premises to be used as an institution. There was no great upheaval.

Mr B. T. Burke: That is not true. They protested before one child was shifted to Tresillian. That is shown in the minutes of the council.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The fact is that the children went into Tresillian, and the council took no action, as it could have done, to have the use terminated. In the case of Kareeba the Belmont Shire Council just forbade the Government the use of the premises for that purpose. This Government, being one that has more regard for local authorities than the Labor Government, acknowledged the objection raised by the Belmont Shire Council and accepted the fact that technically it was right. Those premises will not be used now to accommodate profoundly retarded children unless the council changes its mind. Negotiations are taking place for Kareeba to be used for another purpose, and there is considerable interest in these discussions. In fairness to the council,

the Minister has put a proposal to it and naturally it will have the first opportunity to discuss the matter with him. However, there is other interest in the use of the place.

Mr Bryce: In fairness to the Belmont Shire Council I should point out it is prepared to accept these children in its district, provided you are able to find a suitable place to accommodate them. You know Kareeba is not suitable.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is ideally suitable.

Mr Bryce: It is not.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Why was it then selected by a man who is known to be the adviser and friend of the parents of patients at Tresillian?

Mr Bryce: It was not. Some people stood up at the meeting at Belmont and said it was not suitable.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Just as the Belmont Shire Council said it was prepared to have these children accommodated in its district, the Nedland City Council also said it was prepared to accommodate them in a suitable place. No-one in his right mind would say that Tresillian is suitable on a permanent basis.

Mr Bryce: A dozen experts have said that Tresillian is very suitable.

Mr Skidmore: The Premier would not know.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The then Minister for Health, and now the member for Victoria Park, made it very clear that the Tresillian accommodation was intended to be temporary until alternative appropriate accommodation was available.

We moved on to fulfil our programme. Kareeba being denied to the Minister, he then had to find alternatives, because he was given a directive to endeavour to resolve the problem by 1978, and this is not an easy task to perform. Eventually the Minister came up with a programme which I was prepared to endorse, and in endorsing it we had to ensure that funds would be available. The proceeds from the sale of Kareeba could be transferred into the stream of this programme, and other funds would have to be provided, but whether they be from the State or the Commonwealth has yet to be determined.

I believe we owe it to the parents to make it clear to them that there will be relief for their children as well as the parents themselves.

Mr Skidmore: The way you went about this you would have fooled me!

Sir CHARLES COURT: As a result of this programme it was planned to shift the children—18 or thereabouts in number—from Tresillian to Ross Memorial Hospital together with 14 private emergency cases. With the transfer of the Tresillian staff it would have been very

easy to build up quickly the required additional staff. All the 14 emergency cases could have been absorbed, and the children would have been there by now. Under the new programme that has to be delayed until a completely new staff and a new organisation can be developed at Ross Memorial to absorb these people.

The member for Victoria Park has asked that the programme be stated clearly, and I would like the opportunity to have the programme recorded in *Hansard*. So as to remove any doubt at all in the minds of the people, on the 20th July with the full knowledge of the Minister concerned I addressed a letter to Dr Ellis. There was a special reason why it was addressed to him; it was because he had been privy to all the discussions and negotiations taking place, and he was present on the whole of the day when the discussions were going on in respect of the method of handling the children who were resident at Tresillian. So, this letter was sent to him.

It is desirable to have the document recorded in *Hansard*, because it is a commitment from this Government in respect of the programme. It is a case of recording a programme that had been worked out and agreed to long before this.

Mr Skidmore: Was it a good programme?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The letter is as follows—

I confirm our discussion today when I outlined to you and to Dr. Guy Hamilton the details of the programme which the State Government has accepted for residential accommodation for profoundly retarded persons.

The programme we had proposed and on which the planned movement from Tresillian to Ross Memorial was based, was as follows:—

- (1) (a) 18 patients from Tresillian to be moved to Ross Memorial immediately.
- (b) 14 emergency cases from private homes to be moved to Ross Memorial as soon as the necessary staff could be recruited and trained to supplement the staff to move from Tresillian.

Mr Skidmore: Would it not have been better to move other children to Ross Memorial and leave the ones at Tresillian alone?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I shall explain that. To continue with the letter—

- (2) Children at Princess Margaret Hospital to be moved to Yokine by mid-December, 1976, but possibly a little earlier.
- (3) Patients from Scarborough (18) and Swanbourne (15) to be moved to Sussex by December, 1977, and possibly earlier.

The letter setting out the programme states further—

I was assured by Dr. Hamilton—

He has a special role in this matter. He is very dedicated to this type of child, and is very much accepted and looked on as a special adviser by the parents of these unfortunate children. To continue with the letter—

—that this would not only take care of all known profoundly retarded persons not already covered by existing accommodation, but it would also provide sufficient beds to cope with short-term patients who require residential accommodation from time to time.

Furthermore, the Mental Health Services are to negotiate for the acquisition of an additional residential Hostel at the appropriate time so as to be available for the logical flow-on expected after we have coped with the known existing cases.

On the current estimate, it is expected that there could be 12-15 additional cases coming up for accommodation about that time, and the acquisition of an additional residential Hostel would coincide with this need.

I remind members that the programme takes care not only of all known profoundly retarded children in need of and requesting accommodation, but also the short-term patients and the build-up which is expected. The experts tell us that this could be at the rate of approximately one per month; that is, allowing for births and deaths, the net intake will be about one per month. This is why there is provision for the acquisition of an additional hostel to coincide with this final transfer to Sussex, because we believe that by that time there will be 12 to 15 additional cases, and the programme does take care of those. It is not just looking after those waiting today. Continuing—

In view of the fact that there has been considerable controversy about the priority of movement to the different residential Hostels, it is now proposed that the order of movement be changed to the following:—

Provided there is an unqualified assurance from both Mental Health Services and from the parents of children at Tresillian that, when Tresillian's turn occurs, the movement will be allowed to take place without interference or objection by the parents, and that they would join with the Government in ensuring that the change-over takes place on an orderly and peaceful basis—

1. Ross Memorial:

Swanbourne patients (15) and emergency cases in private homes (14) would be transferred as quickly as a staff

could be recruited and trained. It is expected this could be by about mid-October, 1976.

This is where the breakdown occurs, because instead of those emergency cases being dealt with quickly and almost immediately, they must wait until about mid-October. I have questioned the need for this, but I am assured by Dr Ellis that it will take quite a few weeks to train the necessary staff so that Ross Memorial can be self-contained, and supporting from the grass roots up and have a staff to absorb the Swanbourne patients and those individual emergency cases. To continue—

- (2) Princess Margaret (31) would be transferred to Yokine by no later than mid-December, 1976, as set out earlier in this letter.

In other words, their transfer is the same, and I understand there is a reason for their wanting to transfer those 31 as a complete unit to Yokine. To continue—

- (3) Tresillian and Scarborough patients would be transferred to Sussex not later than December, 1977.

The reason the word "later" was incorporated was that it was understood the building could be finished within 12 months. Tenders have been accepted and allowing for the delays which occur with the supply of materials and maybe some industrial troubles on the way, it was deemed desirable to put in December, 1977, instead of September, 1977. To continue—

The same conditions in respect of the provision of the necessary additional residential Hostel to take up accumulating numbers, would prevail.

It is to be understood that when the residential accommodation requirements are overtaken by this programme, the Mental Health Services might want to re-locate patients in different residential accommodation to enable them to be more conveniently placed in relation to parents' residential accommodation. This would be possible only when there is adequate overall accommodation and any rearrangement would be the subject of negotiations with the parents of the children concerned, and in the interests of achieving the greatest convenience for such parents.

I want to make the point here that Dr Hamilton explained to me that until he had enough accommodation for the total known numbers he had no flexibility in relocating patients so as to have them in the location most convenient to their parents. While there are *ad hoc* arrangements like those applying at Tresillian with some here and some somewhere else, there could not be a complete plan

to take the burden of travel off the parents. For instance, none of the parents of the children at Tresillian live in Nedlands. Some travel tremendous distances, even from the country.

Mr Jamieson: That is not correct, you know. You have made that statement a number of times.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am going only on the records given by the Mental Health Services.

Mr Jamieson: They are not correct then, or you should study the records.

Sir CHARLES COURT: In that case I will pass on the comments of the Leader of the Opposition to the department concerned, because it was from that source I obtained the information.

Mr Jamieson: The first one introduced to me when I went there—and I have not made a fuss about going there—was one from your own electorate.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am telling the Leader of the Opposition that I will pass on his comments to the director because the director assured me that there were none from Nedlands in that place.

Mr Jamieson: Be careful.

Mr O'Connor: I was there when he gave that assurance.

Mr Jamieson: I do not care what assurance he gave.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the Leader of the Opposition doubts the word of the director, that is another matter. I am telling the Leader of the Opposition what the Government was told. To continue—

You will appreciate the Government cannot agree to this revised priority of location unless there is an unqualified assurance that it will be accepted and the Mental Health Services will be able to implement it without opposition from parents and any organisations acting on their behalf.

It will be necessary for me to confer with the Nedlands City Council about a deferment of the date by which the Tresillian premises will be available to them, but I have already had a preliminary talk to the Deputy Mayor and I would be surprised if the Nedlands Council is not prepared to co-operate, provided we have obtained the unqualified assurance now sought, as part of this total programme to resolve the residential accommodation needs of all profoundly retarded persons.

The letter concluded by saying—

I require advice urgently from you and from the parents as to whether this is accepted so that I can give the necessary instructions.

Dr Ellis replied—

Mr Jamieson: Would you table that letter when you have finished?

Sr CHARLES COURT: I would be only too pleased to do so. Copies have been made available to all parents and the Press. In fact, I understand copies were freely available to all who requested them. Dr Ellis replied as follows—

I have received your letter of even date and confirm that the change in priority of movement to the different residential Hostels, as outlined, is acceptable to the Mental Health Services.

It is also understood that when the present accommodation requirements have been fulfilled by this revised programme the Mental Health Services, after consultation with the respective parents, may re-locate residents in more convenient areas.

The proposed scheme is quite acceptable to the Mental Health Services, and can be implemented as indicated in your time-table.

The parents who were present, representing the body of parents—five parents from four families—have said—

With reference to your letter dated 20th July, 1976, addressed to Dr. A. S. Ellis, Director of Mental Health Services, copy of which is attached, we confirm that we accept the proposal set out in your letter and, so far as we are able, we also accept it on behalf of the other parents of children resident at Tresillian Hostel.

We shall now take the earliest opportunity to present the details to all the parents, and will use our best endeavours to obtain their individual concurrence which we believe can be anticipated, but you will appreciate we cannot sign individually for them.

Those five parents each signed the document.

Without wanting to delay the matter unduly, I wish to refer to the events of the 20th July which have been, of course, very conveniently distorted in many respects and it was perhaps unfortunate that the four Liberal members concerned did not personally talk to me on the day about what was going on.

I want to say that Dr Ellis was present all day, as he was on so many other occasions, including the public inspection of Ross Memorial, and at other times.

Mr Skidmore: Does this make it all right?

Sr CHARLES COURT: He would be privy to everything discussed by me not only with him, but also with the Ministers, and he would know also that this alternative suggestion had been very clearly established. In fact, while some of my

colleagues were at a Cabinet luncheon, he and I worked out the whole of the details as to how it would operate.

I remind members, in case they overlooked this—and the member for Boulder-Dundas will realise its significance—that at just about that time I was contacted to say that the solicitor acting for the father of one of the children—in fact he subsequently was a signatory to the letter I just read—was seeking an injunction, and his solicitor wanted to go before Justice Wallace that afternoon.

There was nothing secret about this; it became public knowledge when the injunction was sought. In fact, they wanted to know from me where to contact Dr Ellis. I told them they could not miss him because I would keep him with me until they arrived in order to facilitate matters for the parents. They duly arrived and went through the necessary legal formalities of serving notice on Dr Ellis as the Director of Mental Health Services, and from that moment onwards the matter became purely a legal process. I would not be precise as to what time it went before Justice Wallace, but it would have been fairly late in the afternoon.

It will be appreciated by members that it would have been quite wrong and quite improper had we talked to the parents, one of whom was seeking the injunction, until the matter was heard by Justice Wallace. We had been told by the solicitor representing the man who sought to take out the injunction that the matter would be dealt with quickly that afternoon.

In the light of that, we refrained from any contact with the parents until we got an answer late that afternoon. I would not be precise as to the exact time, but it was fairly late when we were told that the injunction had been refused. Therefore, no longer was there any legal impediment to discussions taking place.

I want to conclude by referring to the meeting which took place and this was arranged by Dr Hamilton at the request of Dr Ellis. The five parents representing four families said they had the authority to speak on behalf of all parents. I told them what had been worked out as an alternative basis and they expressed great satisfaction.

I have been accused of applying pressure, which is quite wrong. I am sick and tired of it being quoted that I applied pressure. I told those present that I intended to leave the room with Dr Ellis so that the parents, along with their adviser, Dr Guy Hamilton—for whom they have great affection and great respect—could discuss the position privately. I told them it did not matter what they had said to me: I wanted them to talk the matter over with Dr Hamilton, and that they did. Only then did we get down to preparing the documents I have read tonight.

I emphasise, again, we then prepared together the document they signed. I do not want anyone to suggest that we had a piece of paper which we shoved under the noses of those people saying, "Sign here". It was not done like that, as the parents will verify, as Dr Ellis will verify, and as Dr Hamilton will verify.

In view of the comments made by the member for Victoria Park about Dr Ellis, I would like to quote from *The West Australian* of Thursday, the 22nd July, 1976. The article was published while I was in the country. It is not very often that a public servant takes this type of action but I thought it was very generous of Dr Ellis to try to put the matter into its proper perspective. The following is what he said, entirely on his own initiative. The article reads—

Dr A. S. Ellis, Director of Mental Health Services, said that it could be about three months before any patients were moved into the Ross Memorial Hospital, at Forrestfield.

It would take that time to engage and specially train the required staff of eight general trained nurses required and 30 nursing aides and assistants.

Members will know that the staff ratios are very high. It takes 44 staff to run the Tresillian Hostel for 18 patients. To continue the article—

The Premier, Sir Charles Court, had been frequently misrepresented to some extent over the Tresillian issue, Dr Ellis said.

Sir Charles had got a grasp of the situation rapidly and clearly.

"I think he has been very good," Dr Ellis said.

"And I also think parents of Tresillian patients would agree after spending time with the Premier on Tuesday.

"He has shown a lot of compassion in this issue."

The article continues with details of the staff. I think those comments put the matter into its proper perspective because the fact is that this Government is the first Government to commit itself to a specific programme—a specific programme of residential accommodation as recommended by the experts. The programme has not been trumped up by a Minister or a Premier, or some administrative departmental officer, but by the experts. I believe when one looks at this—and I hope members will study the letters I have quoted, both in *Hansard* and from the Table of the House—it will be realised that for the first time we have a programme which will eventually take care of all known cases.

I believe our programme is an extension of a very wonderful programme started in connection with Mental Health Services by the then Minister for Health some years

ago, who is now our Speaker. I imagine he would regard this as one of his greatest works as a Minister.

So, I propose to move an amendment.

Amendment to Motion

I move an amendment—

Delete all words after the word "that" in line one with a view to substituting the following words—

in the opinion of this House, the programme announced by the Government to provide residential type accommodation for all known profoundly retarded children is to be commended, especially as it is the first time a Government has committed itself to an overall specific programme to provide such accommodation where needed and requested.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr McIver.

The letters were placed on the Table of the House.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE ECONOMY

Want of Confidence in Government: Motion

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool—Leader of the Opposition) [8.58 p.m.]: I move—

In the opinion of this House, because:

- (a) the Premier has presided over the highest inflation in Australia, despite his election assurance that inflation could be beaten to a substantial degree State by State;
- (b) unemployment has increased by 180 per cent since the Premier came into office, despite his assurances that he could solve the problem;
- (c) the Government has actively approved and promoted a system of so-called new Federalism which will lead to major cut-backs in necessary public works and community services, with a consequent rise in unemployment, and the imposition of a second income tax on Western Australians;
- (d) there have been unprecedented increases in an unprecedented number of taxes and charges,

the Government no longer has the confidence of this House.

In taking this action I realise that a no confidence motion is the most serious step which can be taken against a Government. However, I believe this step is very necessary at the present time. The Opposition has not launched this matter lightly; it

has given considerable thought to it. We move this no confidence motion because the performance of the Court Government, both with regard to economics and finance, has been so bad it is clear the Government is no longer fit to hold office.

Mr Bryce: It has caused a first-class mess.

Mr JAMIESON: Every person in the State has been adversely affected by the Court Government's economic and financial policy. Every person in the State is worse off now than he or she was before the Court Government took office.

Under the present Government, prices in this State have risen faster than in any other State. Unemployment has skyrocketed. A crushing burden of increases in State taxes and charges has been imposed on the people. The State has willingly agreed to a new system of Federal-State financial relations which only the most daring confidence trickster would try to foist on a victim.

Early in 1974 two books were published. One of them was *Liberal Policy 1974-1977* by Sir Charles Court, and the other was *The Sting* by Robert Whittaker. Both books were similar in that they dealt with confidence tricks. One was very entertaining for the people of Western Australia and, no doubt, for millions of people throughout the world; but the other proved to be a tragedy for the people of Western Australia. A system which will lead to double taxation and more unemployment causes much concern to many people.

The Liberal Party promised to "put things right". Its performance has put things right up! That is the score.

Mr Clarko: And you are putting us right off.

Mr Bryce: We will put you right out next March.

Mr B. T. Burke: We will say, "Ta-ta", to the member for Karrinyup.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr JAMIESON: The Government's performance has fallen far short of what was desired by the ordinary people of Western Australia and we can no longer afford a Court Government.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Sir Charles Court: We have heard it all before.

Mr JAMIESON: There are many reasons why the Court Government is no longer fit to hold office but one of the most important is its lamentable record on inflation. In his policy speech before the last election the Premier said—

Inflation can be beaten to a substantial degree State by State. The answer to inflation on the home front is to get back to good government in Western Australia.

The Premier described his policy speech as an imaginative document. It was imaginative all right: it was a figment of his imagination. I think it was the product of a deranged imagination, if it was the product of anything, and in the light of the Government's performance it is quite clear the Premier only imagined he could beat inflation in Western Australia; that is for sure.

Mr Bryce: What a tragedy for the west-ern world!

Mr JAMIESON: What he called imaginary I would prefer to call illusory, because that is what it has proved to be. It has been proved that the Liberal Party, which set itself up as knowing something about economic management, did not have a clue about the subject. The Liberal Party was being convinced by its leader at the time that it could take certain actions to control inflation and unemployment, but it could not. The Premier has done nothing of the sort since he has been in Government.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Tell us about the expediter.

Mr Bertram: He is the chairman of the jobs for the boys committee.

Mr JAMIESON: When the Court Government took office in March, 1974, Western Australia had the lowest inflation rate in Australia; it now has the highest inflation rate.

Opposition members: Shame! Shame!

Sir Charles Court: It does not.

Mr JAMIESON: It is worth repeating.

Sir Charles Court: It does not. You have not got your figures right.

Mr JAMIESON: We will give the figures.

Mr Bryce: Not your "funny money" figures.

Mr JAMIESON: In the three years prior to March, 1974—the years of the Tonkin Government's administration—prices in Western Australia rose by 23.8 per cent as measured in the Consumer Price Index. In the same period the average increase in prices across Australia was 28.6 per cent. So during the Tonkin Government's administration prices in Western Australia rose by 4.8 per cent less than the national average. Let us have a look at the figures since March, 1974.

Mr Sodeman: What was the comparable Budget balance at the time?

Mr JAMIESON: What a nonsensical comment!

Mr Bryce: Send him back to the Pilbara.

Mr JAMIESON: Let us make a comparison. In the 2½ years between March, 1974, and June, 1976—the years of the Court Government's administration—prices in Western Australia rose by 41.2 per cent, and in the same period the average increase in prices across Australia was 36.7 per cent.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: What a record!

Mr JAMIESON: So during the Court Government's term prices in Western Australia have risen by 4.5 per cent more than the national average. The Court Government was going to put things right and turn the corner with all the wordly things the Premier promised. Yet despite this appalling turn in the State's fortunes since the Tonkin Government left office, the Premier could stand up in this House on the 30th March, only a few months ago, and say—

We have managed to achieve a state of economic prosperity better than any other State.

Sir Charles Court: That is right.

Mr JAMIESON: The Premier described as "absolute gall" a statement I made recently. It is sheer unadulterated gall to make a statement such as the one I have just quoted. In the same speech the Premier claimed—

This is the policy of the present Government to build up confidence and to make the State economically stable and prosperous. It is a policy that is succeeding.

It is a peculiar policy. When we examine the figures against the performance, we find it is a policy which is succeeding so well that we have the worst inflation in Australia. Our economy cannot be stable while we have the worst inflation in Australia.

Mr Sodeman: Established and fostered by the recent Federal Labor Government.

Mr JAMIESON: We are getting back to that, are we?

Mr Sodeman: We might as well. It is true.

Mr JAMIESON: It will still be true in a dozen years' time when the Liberal Party runs out of reasons for blaming Doug Anthony for its problems. Inflation is running at a higher rate than in any other State. Therefore there must be something wrong with the Government's administration.

Mr Clarko: We were subject to a Labor Government in Canberra.

Mr JAMIESON: All the other States were subject to the Labor Government.

Mr Clarko: You are saying it is bad management to have a high inflation rate here now, but it was not when Labor was in government in Canberra.

Mr JAMIESON: I am comparing inflation State by State. There are Labor and Liberal Governments in the various States and Western Australia is still running at the highest rate of inflation. It is of no use the member for Karrinyup making so much noise in regard to something he knows nothing about when he is not prepared to have a proper look at it.

The policy the Premier put forward is succeeding so well in building up confidence that the Perth Chamber of Commerce had a few words to say about it recently. It said the business outlook for the rest of the year is grim. This is subject to the chamber's assessment, and we will go further into that. The chamber's June survey of Western Australian figures gave a clear indication of the business outlook, and a report in *The West Australian* last Wednesday stated—

The optimistic outlook for a slow recovery, forecast in the March quarter survey, is not borne out by the latest quarter's results, the chamber said.

Lack of orders is the main constraint on business activity.

The report goes on to say—

In analysing the survey results, the chamber's economic affairs committee assesses the outlook for the remainder of the year as grim.

The Chamber of Commerce has made its own assessment. It does not need the Labor Party, the Liberal Party, or the National Country Party to tell it what the outlook is. The chamber has made a clear statement that on its analysis the State is not on a very good plane.

It is no wonder the outlook is grim. In the June quarter national inflation was falling but in Western Australia, under the Court Government, it was going up.

Mr Bryce: Quickening, in fact.

Mr Grayden: You are talking about catch-up inflation—it is still lower here than in the other States.

Mr JAMIESON: I am not sure what sort of "ketchup" the Minister uses, but it must be good!

Mr Grayden: We have all this inflation you are talking about and still we have lower prices.

Mr JAMIESON: Between the end of March and the end of June this year—

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr JAMIESON: I will start again.

Mr Clarko: Back to the top of page 3!

Mr JAMIESON: No, the honourable member is wrong.

Mr Clarko: Oh, page 4, is it?

Mr JAMIESON: I am giving figures and facts.

Mr Sodeman: Figures, but not facts.

Mr JAMIESON: If I give a month and a figure, that is a fact.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr JAMIESON: Between March and the end of June the national inflation rate, according to the Consumer Price Index,

dropped from 3 per cent to 2.5 per cent. However, in Western Australia it increased again from 3.3 per cent to 3.4 per cent. In the other States inflation has gone down but our inflation rate is going up. In other words, in the rest of Australia inflation is on the wane but in Western Australia it is becoming worse.

These figures indicate clearly what we have been saying for a long time—inflation cannot be cured State by State. However, a State Government at least should be able to level it out far better than has been done in this State. The Premier has not given an explanation for his failure to beat inflation State by State; and he has not given that explanation because he cannot. He should have realised in the first place that had he tried to solve inflation in this State while there was galloping inflation in the other States, then of course the forces of the other States would move in here and he would be trying to offset their problems as well.

Mr Clarko: You yourself said you should not do anything about inflation.

Mr JAMIESON: I did not. The member for Karrinyup should quote me correctly.

Mr Clarko: You said that.

Mr JAMIESON: No I did not. It was the honourable member's deputy leader who said that.

Mr Clarko: You said to let it run.

Mr JAMIESON: The Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party was "quoting" from a press article when he commented that I said, "Let it rip". I challenged him on this matter, and he was never able to show that I had used those words. What I said was that we had to go along with inflation and we had to take whatever action we could to minimise its effect. The honourable member should look through *Hansard*.

Mr Clarko: No, you said we had to let inflation run its course.

Mr JAMIESON: That is right—I said we had to run along with it. At no time did I say, "Let it rip." That is what the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party said.

Mr Clarko: You referred to Brazil with its inflation rate of 900 per cent and you quoted Chile and Argentina.

Mr JAMIESON: That is right. The honourable member has a marvellous memory—I hope he can remember how many votes he received at the last election.

Mr Clarko: I won't have to—it will be more next year.

Mr JAMIESON: The Premier has not given an explanation for all this. As I point out, he cannot give an explanation.

Mr Sibson: What is your explanation?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr JAMIESON: The Premier tried to blame all the ills of the State on the Whitlam Government.

Sir Charles Court: You will get an explanation.

Mr JAMIESON: On any occasion that he has not blamed the Whitlam Government, he has blamed the unions for their wage demands. Latterly, of course, Doug Anthony has been blamed for everything and he looks like being blamed for a long time. Inflation factors affect all parts of Australia equally and therefore there is no explanation as to why Western Australia should suffer more than any other State of Australia.

Mr Sodeman: How does Australia's hourly rate compare with other countries in the world?

Mr JAMIESON: It might surprise the honourable member to know that we have a very high rate of production.

Mr Sodeman: I am not talking about production; I am talking about the hourly rate earned by workers.

Mr Hartrey: It is not as high as in Uganda.

Mr JAMIESON: I do not have those figures at my disposal at the moment.

Mr Bryce: He is talking about the rate of profit.

Mr JAMIESON: I should imagine that a person who boasted around Hedland to being a millionaire by the time he is 35 would not be feeling too well now when he has gone beyond that stage and the last \$1 million lottery has been drawn.

Mr Sodeman: Why not talk about people we know about.

Mr JAMIESON: One of the reasons for the inflation rate in Western Australia is the savage increases in taxes and charges imposed by the Court Government.

Sir Charles Court: I hope you will list these.

Mr JAMIESON: There have been unprecedented increases in an unprecedented number of taxes and charges.

Mr Sibson: List them.

Mr JAMIESON: I will do this. These increases occurred despite a whole section headed "Curbing rates, taxes and charges" in the policy speech of the Liberal Party at the last election. Incidentally, when this new book was produced—

Mr Sibson: Do you have figures of the other States for comparison?

Mr JAMIESON: —at \$11 a copy—

Mr Clarko: We put page numbers on it.

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, page numbers were used.

Mr Clarko: Do you appreciate that?

Mr JAMIESON: That is the only advantage we found in it—we are able to refer to articles much more readily than hitherto.

Many of the increases were much greater than increases needed to keep up with the inflation rate. Therefore, the increases

themselves must have been inflationary. Let us remember that during the reign of the Court Government the inflation rate overall in Western Australia has been 41.2 per cent. We will now look at a few increases in State taxes imposed by this Government, bearing in mind the inflation rate, and members will see that that rate is not quite as high as these increases.

Metropolitan water rates have been increased three times, and the total increase has been 60.3 per cent. Excess water rates were increased three times for a total increase of 111.4 per cent.

Sir Charles Court: Still lower than the rates in Melbourne and Sydney.

Mr JAMIESON: Sewerage rates were increased three times for a total increase of 95.2 per cent. If anyone wondered about the Bill on the notice paper to amend the Country Towns Sewerage Act, one need wonder no longer. That Act provides for a maximum of 15c in the dollar at present, and I do not think that rate will apply for much longer.

Mr Clarko: Did not the Tonkin Government put up hospital charges 100 per cent overnight? Hospital charges were doubled.

Mr JAMIESON: I suppose the Tonkin Government put up hospital charges from \$2 to \$4 a day and I will deal with that in a moment. Electricity charges were increased three times for a total increase of 66.5 per cent.

Mr T. H. Jones: Plus the levy!

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, there is now a fixed charge of \$2.04 for each meter.

Mr T. H. Jones: That is a few million dollars!

Mr JAMIESON: Drivers' licence fees were increased by 66.6 per cent. Only one other State in the whole of Australia put up drivers' licence fees to this extent and that was when our Premier's friend in Queensland put them up 500 per cent. Queensland had no charge before and its Premier brought in a \$5 fee for drivers' licences.

Mr Young: Some of your increases were up to 300 per cent.

Mr JAMIESON: Ours were nowhere near as rugged as those imposed by the Court Government.

Mr O'Connor: South Australia had two increases.

Mr JAMIESON: That State may have had some increases, but nothing like the vicious increases we have seen here.

Motor vehicle registration fees were increased by 65 per cent, and then of course the Government added a recording fee.

Mr Bryce: And no concession for pensioners.

Mr JAMIESON: A recording fee of \$4 was imposed.

Mr Sodeman: Can you vouch for these figures?

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, I can vouch for them.

Mr Sodeman: Did you prepare them?

Mr JAMIESON: They were prepared for me. Surely the honourable member does not think I do all my work. I notice that he uses the services of the librarian and other people, as well as the typist probably employed in the office conveniently placed for the people of Port Hedland—opposite Parliament House.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr JAMIESON: Someone mentioned hospital fees and I would like to point out that since the Court Government came to power hospital fees have increased 100 per cent.

Mr Clarko: You put them up 100 per cent in one day—we took 2½ years. The inflation rate then was a quarter of what it is now.

Mr JAMIESON: We put them up once over the same period of time. If we put them up 100 per cent during our term of office, the effect of the increase was a lot less than a 100 per cent increase now.

Mr Clarko: We are talking about it in real terms.

Mr Bertram: Go back to sleep.

Mr Clarko: Hello! Grumpy has woken up again.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr JAMIESON: With figures like those, is it any wonder that we have the worst rate of inflation in Australia? Compared with the Court Government, Ned Kelly was slightly naughty, and the robber barons were merely sporting men. In Western Australia the "taxus rangers" ride again. We had this position once before in the days of the McLarty Government. I still recall seeing the cartoons of the "taxus rangers" riding, and they have been certainly riding again in this State and no-one is able to curb them.

The Premier has claimed—as he always does—that wage demands are responsible for increases, and that the increases have not kept up with wage increases. In particular, on the 25th July he said that as a matter of Government policy to minimise the burden on the public, the taxes and charges increases have not kept pace with constant and high wage demands. If that is the case, the Premier should inform his Ministers of that policy, because they have not been observing it.

Between March, 1974, and mid-July of this year, the weighted average minimum weekly wage for males in Western Australia increased by 62.1 per cent; and I have already quoted a number of cases in which taxes and charges have increased by more than that. To repeat but a few, excess water charges increased by 111.4 per cent, sewerage rates by 95.2 per cent, and hospital fees by 100 per cent.

We might well now look at some other features with which we are not happy. Despite the huge increases in State taxes and charges, the Court Government has not quite finished. It has yet another means of digging further into the taxpayer's pocket. It has willingly agreed to what is referred to as the new system of Federal-State financial arrangements which will, of course, inevitably lead to the imposition of a second income tax.

Mr Young: Rubbish!

Mr JAMIESON: The member for Scarborough should know about that because he mixes with it so often.

Mr Young: You people have learnt something since Wran pulled the wool over the eyes of the New South Wales electors.

Mr JAMIESON: No, we did not have to learn from him; we were saying this last year before Mr Wran presented his policy speech.

Mr Young: You can fool some of the people some of the time.

Mr JAMIESON: Mr Speaker, you can bet your life that when the new income tax can be charged in this State, Western Australians will have to pay it; and if the member for Scarborough would like to put his seat on the line in respect of this issue, I would like to see him do so, because as a result of the present policy as sure as I am standing here a tax will have to be charged in each State to provide the amenities that are not being provided from Commonwealth funding. If a State like New South Wales has to charge X per cent income tax, then a lesser State like Western Australia will have to charge X-plus per cent.

Mr Young: And you call that double taxation.

Mr JAMIESON: Of course it is double taxation; it is certainly not single taxation. This is a taxation which will be applied individually in each State, and it will vary from State to State.

Mr Clarko: Labor Governments clearly need more tax than Liberal Governments because they offer more.

Mr JAMIESON: Labor Governments have never been distinctly light taxers.

Mr Clarko: Their taxes are always heavier; that is the result of their system.

Mr JAMIESON: I am not arguing about that. I am arguing the matter of saying in a policy statement that one line of action will be taken, and then taking another line of action. The Premier was one of the architects of this so-called new federalism, and he has been very silent about it because he put himself in deeply when he hailed it as a wonderful new deal for the States, and in fact it is quite a crooked deal. It is not right that the Premier should be associated with a new deal which will do damage to this State.

On the 12th April, just after the Premiers' Conference in April, the Premier was quoted by *The West Australian* as having said that he was satisfied Western Australia could not become worse off under the new system. How very wrong he was. Under the new system Western Australia will get more responsibility, less money, and more unemployment.

Sir Charles Court: We get more Consolidated Revenue money.

Mr JAMIESON: Let us examine that. In 1975-76 Western Australia received \$363 million from the Commonwealth in financial assistance grants. To keep pace with the rate of inflation, we need to get an extra \$49 million in 1976-77. In fact, in 1976-77 we will receive about \$85 million extra, about \$36 million more than is necessary to keep pace with inflation. However—and there is always a "however" with these new systems—this will be swallowed up without trace by the huge cut-backs in Commonwealth loan funds and specific purpose grants. We do not know the full extent of these funds yet, and we will not know them until after the Federal Budget is introduced on the 17th of this month. Under the new federalism system, our increase in loan funds is a mere 5 per cent; but the general rate of inflation in this State is well over 13 per cent.

Sir Charles Court: I don't want to interrupt you, but loan funds have nothing to do with this tax sharing.

Mr JAMIESON: We are not talking about that; we are talking about the new federalism, and I am pointing out that our increase in loan funds for the financial year is a mere 5 per cent under the new federalism deal.

Sir Charles Court: No it isn't.

Mr JAMIESON: Of course it is because the overall amount of money that the Government is able to spend in all sorts of fields—whether it be by loan funding or other funding—is limited to the total capacity, and we are about to examine the total capacity.

Mr Watt: What is the percentage increase for general revenue; is it 20.8 per cent?

Mr JAMIESON: Yes.

Mr Watt: I do not think you can take it in isolated pieces; you have to take it all together.

Mr JAMIESON: We will. In terms of real money for vital public works such as schools and hospitals, Western Australia this year has had its amount reduced. Therefore, if the Court Government is to maintain the level of public works spending it must take funds from financial assistance grants; but if it does this public servants will have to be sacked and community services curtailed.

We will not really know until after the Federal Budget is introduced what the cuts under the new federalism deal will mean as far as specific purpose grants and loans are concerned, but we know there will be many cuts—that is for sure. The Fraser Government has promised this. We know that the Federal Government can produce only two Budgets because a Senate election is due before its third Budget would normally be presented. Therefore, one of those Budgets has to be a bad Budget and, as is the norm, the Budget before the election will be the better one.

The Premier has already admitted the severe impact of the cuts in loan allocations. On the 11th June, after the Premiers' Conference, the Premier is reported as having described the capital loan allocation as "a shocker", and he said: "It would lead to the most severe cuts in capital works since the depression." But we have all this muttering about it not affecting anything.

Sir Charles Court: It is not affecting anything.

Mr JAMIESON: The Premier talks about finance sharing, but he has to take into account the overall accounting. It is in this area that some of the back bench members opposite seem to have a greater appreciation of the problem than does the Premier. On the 12th June the Premier said—

More unemployment is inevitable in Western Australia because of Federal Government cuts in loan funds.

Sir Charles Court: They are the facts of life about loan funds.

Mr JAMIESON: The Premier is starting to admit to the disaster of this new federalism.

Sir Charles Court: No I do not.

Mr JAMIESON: If he does not now, he will before very long because he is going to get hit right between the eyes as soon as he finds out what it means.

Mr Rushton: Just because you cannot understand it!

Mr JAMIESON: Of course, the great "Messiah" understands it. The Premier apparently has no shame about the role he has played in drafting and promoting this system; from what he said tonight, it looks as though he still supports it.

Sir Charles Court: I will say I do, because we get more than we ever did under the old system.

Mr JAMIESON: The overall result of the new federalism and this wonderful new deal for the States—which I intend to examine in closer detail—is that they will receive this financial year an additional 9 per cent or 10 per cent of Federal funds at a time when inflation is running at

13 per cent or more. At the same time, due to this new deal, the Government has the responsibility to carry out more tasks than it did before.

The Court Government's enthusiasm for the acceptance of this new federalism means that Western Australians will have to pay a second income tax in addition to the income tax they are already paying to the Federal Government. The Federal Treasury knows and accepts this. The *Sydney Morning Herald* obtained a copy of a Treasury document given to the Federal Cabinet which related to new federalism, and the following statement was published in that newspaper on the 23rd April—

Treasury assessment is that the States will have to use their income tax surcharge option to simply maintain their existing revenue growth rates.

At least the *Sydney Morning Herald* has been reasonably honest in its assessment of the situation.

The increased unemployment, which will be the inevitable consequence of new federalism, will have a disastrous impact in Western Australia because the State already is suffering from a very high rate of unemployment—in fact, it is the highest in the State's history. When we were in office, we received a lot of flak about the high rate of unemployment, and what steps should be taken to rectify the situation. But there have never been more people unemployed in Western Australia than there are today.

Mr Clarko: There have never been more people in Western Australia, either.

Mr JAMIESON: Of course there have not; I will get down to percentages for the benefit of the member for Karrinyup.

Mr Clarko: On a month-by-month basis for the last year?

Mr JAMIESON: Let us have a look at the figures.

Mr Clarko: You will just choose the figures which suit your argument.

Mr JAMIESON: I will choose the figures which are appropriate to my argument. In June there were 21 103 Western Australians, representing 4.2 per cent of the State's work force, who wanted a job and did not have one.

This means that thousands of families throughout the State are going through serious economic difficulties which should not have been forced upon them. They should not be suffering the humiliation of unemployment and all the problems associated with it. This applies particularly to the group of young people between the 16 and 23-year age group. They are being put in an awkward situation of not knowing where to go because they have never

had a real job, and they will never get over the disadvantages of being unemployed for the rest of their working lives.

Mr Clarke: Thanks to Federal Labor.

Mr JAMIESON: We are always hearing about the Federal Labor Government. At least that Government tried to do something about the problem; it had some sort of a scheme going. This Government is not prepared to try anything.

Mr Grayden: Do you realise we have the best unemployment figures of all States?

Mr JAMIESON: I will say we have—the highest!

Mr Grayden: We have the lowest percentage.

Mr JAMIESON: No, we have not.

Mr Grayden: You just wait until you have been given the figures.

Mr JAMIESON: I have the figures here. When the Tonkin Government left office in March, 1974, 7 527 people, or 1.62 per cent of the then work force were registered as unemployed. The figure is now 4.02 per cent of the work force, which represents an increase in unemployed of 180 per cent since the Premier took office.

Mr Grayden: That is not so. Are you taking into account seasonal adjustment?

Mr JAMIESON: If the figures were seasonally adjusted it would make the position even worse.

Mr Grayden: That is absolutely false.

Mr JAMIESON: In the last 20 months, an average of 20 000 people have been unemployed in this State each month. That is nothing of which the Premier should be proud. This situation has occurred under a Premier who, as Leader of the Opposition on the 16th August, 1972, boasted in this House as follows—

If given the opportunity to perform, we will solve the problem.

When asked how long it would take, he replied—

Within six months of getting back into office . . .

Sir Charles Court: That was in August, 1972, was it not?

Mr JAMIESON: It does not matter when it was.

Sir Charles Court: Yes it does, because at that time there was a Government in Canberra which was prepared to be co-operative.

Mr JAMIESON: What sort of Government do we have in Canberra now?

Sir Charles Court: A Government that is trying to sort out three years of Labor mess.

Mr Sodeman: A Government which the Australian people prefer.

Mr JAMIESON: The Premier cannot dodge the responsibility he has for solving this problem. These quotes are worth making. In the same speech, the Premier said—

In my opinion it is the responsibility of a Government to provide opportunities for the work force. It is drafted to do that job when it is elected. This is a State responsibility.

The Premier did not say that McMahon or Whitlam or Fraser were doing wrong; he said that it was a State responsibility. The Premier should either live up to what he says or not make such statements in this place.

Mr Grayden: Western Australia had the lowest unemployment percentage for eight of the 12 months and the second lowest for the other four months. We have the best record of any State.

Mr JAMIESON: The number of people registered as unemployed in Western Australia when the now Premier made that speech was 12 846, or 2.99 per cent of the work force.

Mr Grayden: You cannot argue against the figures.

Mr JAMIESON: I am giving the figures to the Minister for Labour and Industry; it is no use his arguing against them merely because he cannot face up to the situation. The present number of unemployed in Western Australia represents 4.02 per cent of the work force. How the Minister for Labour and Industry can reconcile the two figures and say we are better off now than we were before, I do not know.

Obviously, the Minister went to some quaint school where they were able to make two and two equal five. However, I was not fortunate enough to be able to attend a school of that nature when I received my education.

Mr Bertram: The Minister should just keep quiet like he did during the Liquor Bill debate.

Mr JAMIESON: The Premier has never really been serious about living up to the proud boasts he made about solving unemployment. If he had been serious, I am sure he would have implemented some schemes to overcome the unemployment problem.

As a matter of fact, when the Whitlam Government introduced the Regional Employment Development scheme to help overcome unemployment, the Premier's response was to consider joining in a legal challenge to it.

Mr Clarke: It was a rotten scheme which falsified unemployment figures.

Mr JAMIESON: The Premier tried to sabotage the scheme. The scheme may have had its faults.

Mr Young: One could say that!

Mr JAMIESON: However, it was aimed at helping relieve the unemployment problem. It certainly achieved a great deal in that direction in my suburb and a number of other suburbs where, through the efforts of the scheme, the standard of living was improved immensely.

Mr Clarko: It falsified the unemployment figures by indicating 30 000 fewer unemployed than actually was the case.

Mr JAMIESON: When the RED Scheme was in operation it provided an average of 1 545 persons with employment each month in Western Australia. Yet the Premier was prepared to sabotage that.

Mr Sodeman: Half of them were shocked by the administration.

Mr JAMIESON: There will always be problems when emergency schemes are brought in. They have to be tailored and improved. It was not a perfect scheme—nobody is saying it was—but at least it was an attempt to get people working rather than having them on unemployment relief, which seems to be the effort of the present Premier and his cohorts in the Federal field.

In every area the Court Government has cost Western Australia a lot of money. It has been a very expensive Government for this State. Every Western Australian has less money in his pocket now than he had in March, 1974. The March 1974 dollar is now worth 58c in this State.

Sir Charles Court: What about the changed wages levels?

Mr JAMIESON: We can present all sorts of similarities. If we want to go back and argue features of finance we can wonder what happened to putting value back into the pound in Menzies' days.

The Premier promised that inflation could be beaten State by State. Yet in Western Australia the inflation rate is the highest in Australia. The Government has given no explanation as to why this has happened. There can be only one explanation, which is that the Court Government does not have a clue about how to run the State's economy. Its economic management record shows that it is the worst Government in Australia.

The Premier has failed to honour his election promises of security of employment for Western Australians. More Western Australian families than ever before in the State's history are suffering the financial hardship, the humiliation and the deprivation that unemployment brings, and there is nothing worse—

Mr Grayden: We still have the best record of any State.

Mr JAMIESON: We have not. The Minister has taken out the wrong book. The figures in this regard would be as bad as those used by the Hon. Neil McNeill in an article in the Press recently which figures were so old-fashioned that

they were in fact related to the electoral boundaries before the present ones were drawn up.

Our taxes and charges are hurting everybody's pocket because they have risen quickly and are very high. In many cases the rises have been far greater than necessary to keep up with inflation and are the main reason for rising prices.

The Court Government, in collusion with the Fraser Government, has saddled us with a new system of Federal-State relations. It will leave the State worse off and will lead Western Australians to added financial burdens in the ultimate. That ultimate is not very far off and will be in the form of double taxation. Members opposite might convince some people that it is not double taxation, but those members who represent farming districts want to try to convince farmers that it is not double taxation and see how they get on.

The Premier did not resist the changes despite their awful effect on this State. He walked meekly to the scaffold and willingly put the State's head in the noose, and it looks as though we will not be able to get out of it for a long time. The Premier and his Government have made a botch of the job and have been a proper disaster for this State. It is about time they did something about affairs of public interest in the financial field in this State. In the public interest the best they could probably do would be to admit that they have failed and to own up to something for a change instead of trying to skirt around and to prove all sorts of things with false support from documents that do not seem to bear up when they are fully examined.

Mr Clarko: Have you ever made a mistake?

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, and I have admitted mistakes in this House on more occasions than the honourable member opposite has done.

Mr Clarko: I have never made a mistake!

Mr JAMIESON: That would be the day. We have another saint in the making!

Mr Clarko: George Orwell would be proud of you.

Mr JAMIESON: If the Government will not resign as a result of our efforts in respect of this want of confidence motion I am sure that next year the people will toss it from office. Because of the people's experience with this Government; because of the confidence tricks included in the Government's booklet; and because of what the people have had to suffer from this Government, not only in relation to finance but also in relation to humanity and other matters about which we have heard earlier tonight, the people of this State have had all they can stand and will toss the Government out. I am sure that the

attitudes it has displayed have not been in the best interests of the people of this State, and the people of this State will make sure they are not caught again.

Mr H. D. EVANS: I second the motion.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [9.47 p.m.]: The Opposition has moved the motion that we could have predicted. I must admit that the Leader of the Opposition in his first major sally into matters to do with Government finance and economics, in spite of prepared material, performed rather disappointingly. We were looking for something better.

I wish to say at the outset that it does not matter how many statistics Opposition members cite if they believe that this is the great election winner that they need.

Mr B. T. Burke: You are just a great election loser.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The public are not fooled.

Mr Bertram: You have not fooled them either.

Sir CHARLES COURT: They understand, more clearly than people opposite seem to accept, the devastation that was caused in Australia in three years of disastrous socialist government in Canberra.

Mr Bryce: That is excuse No. 1. We shall count them.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not make that an excuse at all.

Mr Bryce: It has been an excuse during all your term of office.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the member would sit back for a moment he might learn something that would help him a little. The public will interpret the position much more accurately than the people on the Opposition benches. They will understand what happened in those disastrous three years. They will understand that anyone making a commitment in March, 1974, would have been working on the basis that there was going to be a change of Federal Government fairly quickly or, if there were not, that even the Labor Government in Canberra would have had the good sense to know that it had gone the wrong way and would change course. They know that neither of those things happened. There was no change of Government in May, 1974, and the Whitlam Government pressed on in its merry way.

Mr McIver: How is it that it did not affect the people of New South Wales? They soon changed course.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not know what the member is bleating about, but I am talking about the situation between Western Australia and the Federal Government, and particularly the devastation that was caused during the Whitlam era. The public understand this and they voted on this issue on the 13th December in a

way that left no doubt in my mind that they thoroughly understand what it is all about.

Mr Bryce: Six months later in New South Wales they realised the blue they had made and they reversed the decision.

Mr McIver: Eleven per cent!

Mr Bryce: They set a precedent for this State.

Sir CHARLES COURT: That is wishful thinking.

Mr Bryce: We will test it as soon as you are ready.

Sir CHARLES COURT: During that period Australia just lurched along, and all the States were dragged by their heels. I want to remind the Leader of the Opposition about a statement that was made again and again by the then Prime Minister. It was, "Make the user pay."

The greatest critic of that was Mr Dunstan, the Premier of South Australia, and time after time we joined in a chorus in opposition, because it was the great dictum of Mr Whitlam to make the user pay. Every time we left a Premiers' Conference it was with the same words ringing in our ears: "Make the user pay." I want to remind the Leader of the Opposition of that, because it was the dictum of Mr Whitlam that the user must pay.

We did not make the user pay to the extent that Mr Whitlam wanted us to make the user pay. It was the Premier of South Australia and I who pleaded the hardest with the then Prime Minister to let up on State finances, so that we could minimise the charges in our respective States. We were prepared to give an undertaking together with other Premiers that any extra money made available by the Commonwealth Government at that time would be used to minimise the charges.

We pleaded the causes of inflation then, because every increased charge the State Government makes or is forced to make is an addition to the inflationary momentum. We know there are many State charges which affect the CPI. I do not know how often one has to say this: I stress that the then Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) sent all the Premiers away telling them to make the user pay. This seemed to have become an obsession with him. If members opposite want to go back to the origin of some of the charges they should go back to that theme of the then Prime Minister. I do not have to make excuses for increased charges. Some of the things I will say may be news to members opposite, and may cause them to look at the situation in a different light.

The simple cold hard fact of inflation is that the nation has inherited a wage structure which is completely unrealistic and completely unrelated to productivity, if we wish to be competitive by world standards. This fact was acknowledged by trade unions and their leaders, and the inevitable result was unemployment.

Mr Jamieson: That is the second excuse.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is not. The sooner members opposite grow up the better. I would remind them that it would not be a bad thing for them to take note of, not what I say, not what Mr Fraser has said, not what anybody else has said, but what their own revered leader in both trade union and ALP matters (Mr R. J. Hawke) has said.

On the 7th July he came out in the most forthright terms to warn the unions. I quote from *The West Australian* of that date. The report states—

The president of the ACTU, Mr R. J. Hawke, said yesterday that it would be "totally unreal" for trade unions to expect a continuation of the big wage gains made in 1974.

He told the special federal union conference that unions had to face the fact that wage movements affected the economy.

The report states further—

In his second attack in two days on left-wing extremists, Mr Hawke accused them of breaking into his Melbourne office and painting offensive slogans on the fence of his house.

Mr Harman: Will you read the whole of the report?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The honourable member can have the full report with pleasure. Further on the report states—

Mr Hawke said conference discussion of the economy, including unemployment, wage indexation and industrial legislation, had been overshadowed by the Medibank strike decision.

But the state of the economy was of fundamental importance.

What he was trying to tell his colleagues was to forget about the nonsense of industrial action on Medibank if they wanted to get down to the nitty-gritty of dealing with unemployment and inflation. The report also states—

Mr Hawke said: "We have to see whether, by negotiation with employers and with the Government, we can move to a position where we can gradually eliminate the level of unemployment in this country and produce the sort of situation which the resources of this country intrinsically are able to provide—full employment for everyone who wants to work and rising living standards."

I also invite the attention of members opposite to the quotations appearing in *The Australian Financial Review* of the 7th July which said that the ACTU accepted the wages policy. The report also contained further words uttered by Mr Hawke.

I use that as the basis to deal with the first part of the motion which says—

the Premier has presided over the highest inflation in Australia . . .

I remind members opposite that it does not have to come from me. It can come from the best economic brains in Australia or from Mr Bob Hawke himself, because he is the man they would be more prepared to listen to than they would to me.

So, I make the point that once we have this rampant inflation, which was steamed up by the fires lit by the Whitlam Government, it is inevitable we will get unemployment. The Leader of the Opposition has referred to the fact that Western Australia has the highest rate of inflation. When people talk about statistics they have to be careful how they interpret the statistics. It is very easy to take the percentages. I think my colleague, the Minister for Labour and Industry, interjected by raising the question of actual prices as distinct from percentage increases. Many people are inclined to misunderstand the percentages. It is not only the percentage increase that has to be considered; we have to get down to the nitty-gritty of the problem to know what factors cause inflation, in order to get true relativity.

If one measures the rate of inflation in CPI terms it is not always reliable, but taking the CPI as the denominator, Western Australia did not have the highest rate of inflation for the year ended the 30th June, 1976. In fact, the Perth Consumer Price Index for June, 1976, was 13.4 per cent above the level of the year before, and it was below the rates for Brisbane and Hobart—in one case it was 14 per cent and in the other it was 14.9 per cent.

We should look at the inflation rates and the CPI readings in proper terms to arrive at the proper figures, because month by month the figures will jump all over the place. For instance, the seasonal recession and drought conditions hit the Eastern States earlier than they hit Western Australia. That meant in the Eastern States a lot of meat was forced onto the market and the reflection of that appeared in the CPI. That was because of the drought and the forced disposal of stock in the Eastern States, which took place there earlier than in Western Australia.

I would remind members opposite that the weekly earnings per employed male unit in Western Australia increased by 48.9 per cent between March, 1974, and March, 1976. That increase was significantly higher than the national average. In point of fact if people are getting more, and wages are such a potent factor in the CPI figures, they cannot have it both ways. This must project itself into the cost structure.

The cold hard fact is that we are faced with an unrealistic cost and unrealistic wage structure, and we are not getting productivity from it. The result is that we are in a difficult situation in Australia, and we are struggling day after day to try to get people to make investment decisions

and to be convinced that our cost structure will stabilise, so that we will be able to get away from this rampant inflation that faces us and be able to do some of the things which Mr Bob Hawke has counselled the unions should do in order to get the pressure off the wage demands.

Mr Davies: You had the panacea in six months.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The next point raised in the motion was the question of unemployment, and the way the Leader of the Opposition spoke anyone would think we had the worst unemployment in Australia. In point of fact we were the lowest for month after month.

Mr Bertram: When?

Sir CHARLES COURT: My colleague will deal with this situation much more effectively than I will because I do not wish to delay the House on each item. However, I invite the attention of members to seasonally adjusted unemployment figures. I do not care what list members study. Our unemployment figures were as follows—

July, 1975—Lowest
August, 1975—Lowest
September, 1975—Lowest
October, 1975—Lowest
November, 1975—Lowest
December, 1975—Second lowest
January, 1976—Lowest
February, 1976—Lowest
March, 1976—Lowest
April, 1976—Second lowest
May, 1976—Second lowest
June, 1976—Second lowest

I have some news for members on the other side—something they are inclined to overlook, but with which they must not be allowed to get away. On this side we talk employment, but members on the other side get this depressing attitude towards unemployment.

If members opposite want to stick to unemployment let me give figures which are rather interesting and concern the actual movement in unemployment between June, 1974, and June, 1976—two years. In Western Australia our unemployment figure went up 171 per cent, but I ask members to consider the Australian and other State figures which are as follows—

| | Percentage Increase |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Australia | 236 |
| New South Wales .. | 284 |
| Victoria | 211 |
| Queensland | 305 |
| Tasmania | 171 |
| South Australia | 142 |

And did the last two-mentioned States get some money pumped into them by Mr Whitlam!

Mr Bryce: That is excuse No. 4!

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is not an excuse. If the honourable member attended Premiers' Conferences he would find these are no excuses. He would find everything spelt out in loud and clear terms, especially by other Premiers short of money. They know what happened there.

I just remind members that Western Australia was the second lowest in percentage of increase with 171 as against the national average of 236 and the highest State's average of 305.

The next figures are the ones about which I wish to remind members. This aspect has been overlooked, and there is an explanation for this. The only State in the whole of Australia between April, 1974, and April, 1976—they are the latest statistics available—that has had an increase in the number of people employed is Western Australia. It has increased its employment by 3.1 per cent while the Australian figure decreased by 4.9 per cent. The State figures are as follows—

New South Wales—minus 2.5 per cent.
Victoria—minus 2.6 per cent.
Queensland—minus 1.4 per cent.
South Australia—minus 1.5 per cent.
Tasmania—minus 2.5 per cent.

And why was this? It was because people were coming over here—the most prosperous of the States—to get work.

Mr Bryce: You are still avoiding the basic issue.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I just want to emphasise that State by State we have done better than any other State. Only Western Australia had more people in employment at the end of the second year. All of them have a minus quantity. How do members opposite argue against that?

Mr Bryce: You are still avoiding the basic issue.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Certainly not.

Mr Bryce: Which other States promised to solve the problem?

Sir CHARLES COURT: We had no desire to erect a fence at the border to prevent the people coming here.

Mr Bryce: The Premier promised he would solve it, not find six excuses.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Sodeman: Rubbish!

Mr Bryce: Six excuses—that is all we have had.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Can I supply a few statistics to indicate why we have 3.1 per cent more people employed than we had two years ago when all the others had a minus figure? Surely that gives some encouragement. It should make members opposite proud that people come over here because they have a chance. I wish to give some further statistics.

The heavy inflow of job applicants from the Eastern States—maybe some from New Zealand, but mainly I imagine from the Eastern States—was attracted by better employment opportunities here. This inflow exacerbated our own position, but we welcomed it. In June the weekly average of these applicants was 282 compared with the weekly average of 158 a year before.

I will give another figure to indicate why our employment rate is as high as it is. If we go back three years we find the average registered number of Aborigines was 600, but today it is running at about 1 600 and this figure is included in our unemployment statistics.

Mr Harman: How do you know that?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I have had the statistics checked.

Mr Bryce: Do they record the race?

Sir CHARLES COURT: There is a reason why—

Mr Harman: Do they discriminate?

Sir CHARLES COURT: There is no discrimination.

Mr Harman: Of course there is.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We are not complaining about this figure. We accept it because these people are part of our total population.

Mr Bryce: Excuse No. 7!

Sir CHARLES COURT: I remind members opposite that, compared with the situation they had to handle, this is a tremendous factor we have absorbed and one we have been proud to absorb better than anyone else in Australia.

I remind members opposite that as at the end of that second year we had more people in employment whereas every other State has fewer people in employment than was the case two years ago.

Mr Bertram: Figures will not solve your problem.

Mr O'Connor: That is a complete answer.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If members opposite do not believe me let them talk to their Federal leader (Mr Hawke). If we have rampant inflation and unrealistic wage demands we will have the twin evil of unemployment. It is as simple as that.

Mr Bertram: What will you do about it?

Sir CHARLES COURT: We will do plenty.

Mr Harman: When?

Mr Bryce: Which month?

Mr Bertram: Which year?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to relate inflation and unemployment to resource development. In this State we have the greatest resource potential of any State. In fact, very few places in the world have a portfolio of potential development as great as ours. Why could we not get it off the ground, working day and night?

It was because we have an unrealistic cost structure and industrial militancy. The margin between what must be obtained in order to get projects going and others expanded, and what the world can afford to pay is intolerable at present. The situation can be coped with in only two ways—by getting stability in our cost structure, and by getting some stability in our work force.

Mr Skidmore: That is your job.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am glad to hear that because this was not admitted a while ago.

I wish to indicate that 5 per cent of our work force was responsible for 62.8 per cent of lost manhours in 1975. What can we do with a situation like that? Members opposite cannot blame the Government for that one. As I said, 5 per cent—20 000 of our work force in quarrying out of about 400 000 in all forms of employment—was responsible for 62.8 per cent of lost manhours. This concerns a commodity in regard to which we are in direct competition with the rest of the world. It is just as well this matter has been raised here tonight so that it can be understood by the members in this House.

My colleagues, the Minister for Industrial Development and the Minister for Labour and Industry, have talked with the TLC leaders, and we will talk to them again. We have talked to the Confederation of Western Australian Industry and the mining company interests. The disparity between what is necessary and what exists today is tremendous.

I believe that the talks we had with the TLC members were fruitful because they had an opportunity to tell us their problems and why they were worried about certain situations. We also had an opportunity to tell them why we were unable at this juncture to complete the final negotiations so necessary if we are to get some of the resource projects off the ground.

Mr Harman: It took you 2½ years to have a talk with the TLC members.

Sir CHARLES COURT: My colleagues talk to them all the time. The Minister for Labour and Industry is the man who should normally talk to them.

Mr Harman: It took you 2½ years.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The Ministers are competent and the Minister for Labour and Industry does his job extremely well. When the time came and it was considered necessary for talks at Premier level, we talked immediately to them and we will talk to them again.

Mr Harman: It took you 2½ years to talk to them about productivity.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We have to get a little sense and stability into the whole situation. We cannot afford 5 per cent of the work force creating 62.8 per cent

of the lost manhours. If members opposite had any sense of responsibility or any genuine desire to create employment they would be talking quietly behind the scenes to these fellows and telling them to quieten it down a bit.

Mr Skidmore: Tell me why they go on strike?

Mr Coyne: Because blokes like you are behind them.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member for Swan should know that in the areas involved the workers have living conditions better than we have ever had before in the mining industry.

Mr Bertram: So they should have.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Who is to be thanked for them? The Brand Government insisted on those standards. It was the first Government really to insist on a standard of housing and amenities.

Mr Jamieson: That is a fairy story. The Premier is aware that the men could not be kept on the job if those standards were not available.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We laid down the conditions of employment at the time. It was no accident. The towns were properly planned.

Mr Skidmore: If a man loses his job he is on the next plane out.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If members opposite are sincere and have any influence with Trades Hall, why do not they talk to someone about the Telfer situation? In that case a decision was brought down and had it not been upset on appeal there would never have been another mining project started in any remote area of Australia.

Mr Harman: Rubbish!

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is not rubbish. That decision was upset because it was so patently unrealistic. It had to be upset. Now people whom members opposite represent are doing their best to stop another major project getting under way. Members have only to look in this morning's paper to read about a project which wants to get off the ground. However, union pressure will not let it start. Members opposite talk about unemployment but here is a project, planned by the Swan Brewery, which will provide many jobs for workers in this State. We read in the morning's paper about the movement to stop a large project getting off the ground, and tonight we have this motion moved by the Opposition.

Mr Harman: Who said there was a move to stop it?

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is in this morning's paper.

Mr Bryce: Is it not passing strange that the people about whom the Premier is talking vote Liberal?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to remind members opposite of a few statistics. In March, 1976, wages and salaries represented about 67 per cent of the gross domestic product at factor cost. That figure compares with 58 per cent in September, 1973. That increase has been at the expense of another section of our economy, where company profits have dropped from 16.2 per cent of the GDP to 11.3 per cent. One cannot compete internationally with those figures. It is not possible to get capital to undertake great projects in a situation like that.

Let us look at the situation in America, and some other countries, and compare it with the rapid growth of wages in Australia. Between March, 1974, and March, 1975, the average weekly earnings in Australian manufacturing industries increased by 34.5 per cent compared with the OECD countries aggregate of 17.2 per cent. In the USA the increase was only 10.6 per cent.

Mr Jamieson: But what was the overall inflation rate?

Sir CHARLES COURT: We will come to that. These great industrial countries are our main buyers and our customers. They are the countries to which we are trying to sell our merchandise, whether it be raw materials or anything else. We are trying to sell to them when they have not only a lower rate of wage increase, but also a lower rate of inflation. They have a lower rate of inflation because their wage increases are so much less damaging than in our country.

Mr Skidmore: Are you saying that the workers are to blame for inflation?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The leader of the ALP at the Federal level, and the leader of the ACTU, has been trying to tell the workers that they have had their birthday party, and that they have to pull up their socks.

Mr Jamieson: If you believe in controls, why did you oppose the referendum to control wages and prices?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I would not have a bar of it.

Mr Jamieson: You want both sides of the penny.

Sir CHARLES COURT: These things can be kept in balance. There can be higher real wages if there is higher productivity. It is not only what one pays but also what one gets in return that determines value.

Mr Bryce: Would you be prepared to accept the rise in unemployment in West Germany and Japan as the price to pay for their level of inflation?

Sir CHARLES COURT: There is no need to couple those levels of unemployment with our State. The honourable member is completely wrong, and that is what we are trying to get across. Members opposite

think in terms of large deficits and unemployment instead of in terms of having a well balanced type of Government, financially and economically. We demonstrated in the 1960's that it is possible to have an economy going at full bore and bringing prosperity to the nation, and creating new opportunities for careers without unmanageable inflation.

Mr Jamieson: That is not right, of course.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It would be a relief to what we have now, and we would be able to cope with the inflation of the 1960s.

Mr Jamieson: That is the point I made previously. I was challenging that you have to ride along with it.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The last thing I want to do is to ride along with inflation.

Mr Jamieson: You have to with our type of industrial development.

Sir CHARLES COURT: What a negative attitude. Here we have the Leader of the Opposition—who would love to be Premier—saying we cannot afford to have the prosperity of the 1960s.

Mr Jamieson: I did not say that; you said it. It would not have mattered what Government was in power in the 1960s; it would have received a purple patch.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to remind members that during that period, in spite of criticism, we were able to get an unprecedented rate of growth compared with the national average and still cope with inflation. Any inflation is too much. The early 1960's high inflation figure that nearly upset the Menzies Government had nothing to do with the Australian development programme. It was caused by the Korean war and the crazy price which was paid for wool.

Mr Jamieson: There was another reason.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to tell members opposite that unless we get an investment-led recovery we will not have any recovery. I know the Labor Party is in favour of having a bigger deficit. It even believes in a bigger State deficit which would mean taking money away from loan funds and reducing employment. How silly can one be?

Western Australia is dependent on resource development. It will be only through investment-led recovery that we will have some stability and prosperity brought back into the community. There is no magic in consumer-led recovery without investment-led recovery. Without investment-led recovery there will be a phony recovery which will collapse.

Mr Jamieson: The recovery in America and Germany was consumer-led.

Sir CHARLES COURT: How little does the Leader of the Opposition know about those two countries!

Mr Jamieson: The Premier does not know very much about them.

Sir CHARLES COURT: With an investment-led recovery, consumer recovery automatically flows with it, but they flow in a way which can be absorbed, because investment-led production leads to consumer activity and prosperity without "stagflation."

I want to move on to the next part of the motion which deals with the new federalism. The Labor Party has a phobia about double taxation; a phrase which someone invented.

Mr Bertram: What phrase would you use to describe a fact?

Sir CHARLES COURT: For the first time we will have in Australia a situation where Commonwealth, State and local Governments will share in personal income tax and, if there is a change in the taxing techniques, there will be a transference to the new form of taxing; but assuming we live in the foreseeable future with personal income tax, we will have a sharing in that by the States, the Commonwealth, and local government. No-one has mentioned local government tonight. Local authorities must be feeling that new federalism is not a bad thing.

Mr Jamieson: Who started that system?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Not Labor.

Mr Jamieson: You ought to have your tongue scrubbed with soap and a big scrubbing brush.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not see how anyone on the other side would have the temerity to claim participation by local government in income tax sharing as a product of the Labor Party.

Mr Laurance: They tried to destroy it.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Yes, and they put local authorities under the grants system. Members opposite should have a look at the grants and ask why some local authorities missed out altogether.

Mr Jamieson: Because they did not deserve it.

Mr Bryce: Because they were dominated by the Liberal Party and would not ask Mr Whitlam for the money.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We will now have a situation where local government as of right will participate in the income tax of the nation.

Mr Jamieson: Local authorities will get it whether they need it or not.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I would have thought members of the Labor Party, who are always looking for a new form of local government and new methods of financing it, would have cheered this one. Local government in this State will get 75 per cent more than it got last year. It is getting 80 per cent in this State as of right on a *per capita* weighted average basis, with no strings. The other 20 per cent

will be given according to need, and if after experiences this year local government wants to vary the percentages the variation will be made at the behest of the State. Surely this is a wonderful product of the so-called new federalism.

I want to say—and I hope the member for Maylands is listening—that under the new federalism and tax sharing percentage we get from the total national personal income tax, Western Australia will receive this year more money than it would have received under the Whitlam formula.

Mr Bertram: In real terms?

Sir CHARLES COURT: So I invite members to have a look at the participation by the State in this new federalism and income tax sharing, and that is the basis of it all.

When we come to loan funds, of course we were upset. No-one could have protested more than I did at the Loan Council meeting. To my mind, 5 per cent was and still is too low a figure. We wanted 18 per cent in order to cover inflation; we always go for the figure with which we can live best. Had we received 12 per cent we would have felt it was our contribution to inflation. I made no bones about it at the conference, when I returned, and here tonight, that the Federal Government made an error in cutting off at 5 per cent instead of 12 per cent, which would have been midway between what the States wanted and what they got.

The fact is for the first time we are back to a situation where we can predict our income, and the income will come to us as of right and not at the mercy of somebody who decides he will squeeze the States and push them into special purpose grants.

Mr Bryce: Level with the people of Western Australia and tell us how much State income tax will be.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I just told the honourable member that under the arrangement no State can impose the surcharge this year.

Mr Bryce: I am asking you to tell us what your plans are.

Sir CHARLES COURT: After that, if any State in its wisdom or otherwise wants to impose a surcharge, it can do so.

Mr Bryce: Do you propose to do so?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I would not know at this stage, and neither would the honourable member if he were in my place. The first people who will be keen to impose the surcharge will be Labor Governments.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Sir CHARLES COURT: They will say, "This is getting into income tax; it is not a bad way to get some money and the people will not notice it so much." Other Governments—and even people on

the other side might applaud such action—might want to impose a surcharge to get rid of some vexatious inflationary taxes.

Mr Bryce: So you are not going to tell the people whether or not you are going to charge tax?

Sir CHARLES COURT: We do not have to. The time to tell people about taxing strategy is when a Budget is brought in. I have put the honourable member's mind at rest and he has already admitted I am right: there can be no surcharge this year.

Mr Bertram: We all know that.

Mr Jamieson: There would not need to be.

Sir CHARLES COURT: There would need to be a very good reason before I would advocate a surcharge, and I think most Premiers would take a bit of talking into it because they would be breaking new ground and would almost need encouragement and applause from the people to get rid of one tax of an iniquitous or vexatious nature and impose a surcharge in order to obtain an amount equivalent to the income lost. As far as I am concerned, I do not relish the day I have to preside over a surcharge. But the talk about double tax is a misnomer and completely false, and it is time people talked about the basic system which has been laid down and which I believe the States, both Labor and Liberal, will welcome.

I remind members that after the matter was thrashed out Mr Dunstan came away from the conference—forget what he has said since—expressing some surprise, first of all, that the Prime Minister had been so realistic in his handling of the formula and, secondly, that it would in fact give him more money than he would have received had he been tied down to the formula. In the meantime, he has said it is in tatters, but he has to say that because he is one of the Labor boys, and we are delighted that he is going to run the Labor campaign over here.

Mr Jamieson: He will be invited here as often as we desire, and we will invite anybody else we want.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Western Australians do not take kindly to people coming here to tell them how to run their business.

Mr Shalders: What about Mr Whitlam? Will you bring him here?

Mr Jamieson: Yes. Anybody is welcome to do work for us.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Old: What about Jim Cairns?

Mr Bertram: At least Whitlam is not a liar, which is more than you can say for Fraser.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir CHARLES COURT: I conclude my remarks regarding the new federalism by saying I hope the Leader of the Opposition, for the sake of the Parliament as well as for his own sake and the sake of his party, understands there is a big difference between sharing income tax and the amounts we receive for loan funds and semi-governmental authorities. There is a great difference and they must not be confused. The new federalism is a tremendous breakthrough for us and local government. Loan Council and semi-governmental borrowings are a different matter which has to be argued at the Loan Council quite separately and distinctly and at a different conference from the Premiers' Conference which deals with income tax sharing or reimbursement.

The last item in the motion is—

- (d) there have been unprecedented increases in an unprecedented number of taxes and charges.

I would be interested to know whether members of the Opposition have zealously followed through the difference between taxes and charges, and whether they have followed through what has been done in the different States. Have they really looked at our Budgets to see how few taxes we have imposed? Have they?

Mr Bertram: Certainly.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If so, this paragraph would not be in the motion.

Mr Davies: Your others were so vicious.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Let us have a look at the taxes. I doubt whether the Government of any State has imposed fewer taxes than we have in the period we have been in office. Pay-roll tax went up from 4½ per cent to 5½ per cent in line with all the other States. In the meantime we have made some concessions to small employers and increased the amount of money available for emergency cases in the country under the Assistance to Decentralized Industry Act.

Mr H. D. Evans: How much?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Further concessions are under consideration for the Budget. Then there is probate. We removed the anomaly in respect of probate which was put back into the Act by the Tonkin Government. We have committed ourselves in the next Budget to further concessions in respect of probate.

We have legislated already for considerable relief in respect of land tax. Does not anybody remember these things? Many people who would have paid land tax had we not altered the Act will not pay it in future. They could still be paying this tax.

Mr H. D. Evans: You got so much more in you could afford to do it.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am amazed at some of the Opposition members. They do not understand the growth in income,

the growth in expenditure, and the growth in social services. How are these services to be paid for?

Mr Bertram: Social services—what next?

Sir CHARLES COURT: If we do not have increases in State revenue through natural growth we cannot cope with that growth. The fact is we have granted tremendous concessions in land tax, and we have made it much easier for development to take place and for more serviced land to come onto the market at the right price and at the right time.

Mr B. T. Burke: What about the pensioners?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I wonder where the Leader of the Opposition obtained his arguments in regard to taxation.

Mr Jamieson: There are plenty of arguments there.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We were the last of the States to impose a tobacco tax. Other States have all sorts of taxes that we do not.

Mr Davies: You have others that they do not.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Surely we must be given some credit for good house-keeping. We raised the tax on cheques to 8c, and we are one of the few States with such a low charge. Queensland and Victoria have a 10c fee on cheques. Tell us about other taxes that we have put up.

Mr Davies: Tell us about electricity charges.

Sir CHARLES COURT: What about the taxes we put down?

Let us turn to charges as distinct from taxes, because the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition collapsed in relation to taxes.

Mr B. T. Burke: Your Government will collapse too.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I invite members of the Opposition to tell us what the increases have been—

Mr Jamieson: What about 3 per cent on the SEC?

Sir CHARLES COURT: —even if they wish to forget the charges that have been reduced.

Mr Jamieson: Oh, you reduced the one on the SEC?

Sir CHARLES COURT: That is not a tax on the people; it is a charge on an authority. It is a lower charge than that made in other States.

Mr B. T. Burke: It is a turnover tax on a utility.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Is it wrong in South Australia?

Mr B. T. Burke: It is still a tax.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is a charge on an instrumentality which receives a tremendous amount of service from the Government.

Mr B. T. Burke: Nobody introduced it until you came along.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Let us come to charges, and let Opposition members name one charge where the increase has been as great as increased costs incurred by the instrumentality. We are not dealing only with wages when dealing with the SEC, but also we must consider the cost of fuel and other items. When we talk of the State Shipping Service, we must consider increases in the cost of fuel and other items as well as wages. The same analogy applies to the railways. Name one instrumentality where the increased charge has been as great as or greater than the increase in the actual inescapable costs that have been incurred.

Mr B. T. Burke: What about the State Housing Commission?

A member: What about the price of natural gas?

Mr Jamieson: How do you account for that one? Its costs did not increase.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Of course the honourable member wants to take one thing out of the whole range of the commission's activities.

Mr Jamieson: You said name one and I named one.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am talking about the operations of the State Energy Commission.

Mr Jamieson: I am trying to help you.

Mr B. T. Burke: The Leader of the Opposition did not know that was a rhetorical question and that he was not supposed to answer it.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would like to refer to natural gas, but I am talking of the total State Energy Commission situation and the total situation in relation to the Metropolitan Water Board.

Mr Jamieson: That charge was put up separately from the other SEC charges.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We have not at this time put up charges for water in country areas, although there has been a slight increase in metropolitan charges. I remind members that our water charges are still lower than those in New South Wales and Victoria.

Mr Skidmore: That does not say it is a good deal for Western Australia.

Sir CHARLES COURT: What does then? What about wage increases? We have had a higher increase in wages than the national average.

Mr Skidmore: Be careful—we have some figures here.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I remind the honourable member that we have lower charges for water in Western Australia than does New South Wales and Victoria.

Mr B. T. Burke: Less water as well!

Sir CHARLES COURT: Let us come to fares.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is not a bad thing to record that the average charge for water and sewerage in Western Australia is 18 per cent lower than that in Sydney and 16.15 per cent lower than that in Melbourne.

Mr Bryce: What about electricity?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The figures are for comparable homes.

Mr B. T. Burke: And we have the least sewered capital in Australia—what about that?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Let us come to fares. We have the lowest fare per section of all the States of Australia. If we look at the figures for 1974, our fares were the lowest, Canberra was second lowest, Brisbane third, Sydney fourth, Adelaide fifth, Hobart sixth, and Melbourne seventh. In 1976 we still have the lowest fares per section. Adelaide fares are the second lowest, Sydney is third on the list—and that is allowing for the reduction introduced by Mr Wran as I asked for that lower figure to be taken into account—Canberra fourth, Brisbane fifth, Hobart sixth, and Melbourne seventh. These facts just cannot be ignored.

Mr B. T. Burke: We are the only State with a Housing Commission management fee.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Look at the increase in our rail freights. We are the second lowest percentage increase. We have shown that we have been responsible in the management of our railways and our rates compare favourably with those of other States, particularly when one bears in mind the distances over which we carry goods.

Mr T. H. Jones: Not carrying as many pensioners though.

Sir CHARLES COURT: As a result of our responsible management, we will have a balanced Budget partly because the severe restrictions placed on the growth of our work force. In this regard I am talking not only of the restriction of growth in the Public Service, but also the restriction on total Government employment.

We had a balanced Budget, and we also have some money to carry forward to this year. People should be singing the praises of our Government for that. We will have some money to carry forward to create more employment, and I cite the example of \$2.4 million to be carried forward to create more employment with the Metropolitan Water Board.

Mr B. T. Burke: Donated by water supply employees whom you tried to sack!

Sir CHARLES COURT: The honourable member is so uninformed—

Mr B. T. Burke: Two thousand workers had to take a week off without pay.

Sir CHARLES COURT: —that he does not know the truth. He should be grateful that the Government, from its own resources, made available a great amount of money—

Mr B. T. Burke: What about the pensioners?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am talking about employees of the Metropolitan Water Board. The State Government made available to the Metropolitan Water Board a generous amount of money in order that the board could keep as many men as possible in employment. Opposition members give us no thanks at all for that. More money has been allocated in the year just ended and this additional money will be carried forward to this year for no other purpose than to create more employment in the Metropolitan Water Board. This employment will help the self-same men to whom the member for Balga referred.

Let us come back to the pensioners. Members will be aware that most of the recommendations of the inquiry will need to be implemented on a national basis. It was the Whitlam Government which said the matter had to be referred to its inquiry. When there was a change of Government, I referred this matter promptly to the new Prime Minister and he gave the same reply that Mr Whitlam had already given. I would like to add that we are collaborating with the present Government as we offered to collaborate with the Whitlam Government.

Mr Jamieson: There are umpteen things in which the State has a personal interest.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Of course we have an interest in these matters, but we cannot do it all alone.

Mr Jamieson: What about fishing licences?

Sir CHARLES COURT: We give the pensioners more travel concessions than does any other State. I should have mentioned that earlier. I referred to fares before, and I must remind members of the "Clipper" service introduced by the Tonkin Government and operated by the State free of charge.

Mr B. T. Burke: Are you intending to change that?

Sir CHARLES COURT: This "Clipper" service operates for nothing. The transfer system still operates free. Also, pensioners still have the same free concessions they had before—not a cent of that has been taken from them. It does not matter how much Opposition members distort things, not a cent has been taken away.

Mr Jamieson: You are trying to square something that just won't square off.

Mr B. T. Burke: What about the State Housing Commission management fee? We are the only State to have that.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I come back to the motion. The Government rejects it completely; it accepts no responsibility for the situation in Australia that was created by three devastating years of Labor Government in Canberra.

Mr Bryce: Excuse No. 1.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is not an excuse at all. The cold, hard fact is that Australia as a country has to try to fight its way out of the devastating situation that was created by the previous Federal Government. We in Western Australia are doing our part. We are doing our best to collaborate with a Commonwealth Government that is committed to trying to sort out these things as quickly as possible, to trying to get some control over the wage structure and the cost structure of Australia, and to getting some control over productivity; and by that means to regain some investment confidence. Until we get an investment-inspired recovery we will not see a proper abatement of inflation, nor will we see a return to proper levels of employment. I remind members that, in spite of all the troubles, we were the only State in those two years to have more people employed at the end of the two-year period than we had at the beginning; all other States had fewer people employed.

We reject the motion.

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.42 p.m.]: I would like to make observations on several of the aspects raised by the Premier in what he purported to present as a defence against the motion moved by my leader. He immediately reverted to his old tactic, to which we have become accustomed. He could not blame the Whitlam Government, as has been his wont in the past, but he did blame the trade union movement. Of course, he referred to exorbitant wages. He omitted to mention Mr Anthony, who has become involved in this of late. The Premier suggested that the historical basis for the poor performance of his Government should be taken into account.

Sir Charles Court: It is not a poor performance.

Mr H. D. EVANS: We will look at the performance and evaluate it. In the meantime, in regard to the historical aspect, the Premier went back one step and said it was not the fault of his Government but of the Whitlam Government. He referred to the Korean boom. However, Sir, as you know, the genesis of the problem of inflation in Australia goes back to the failure to devalue the Australian dollar in December, 1971. That was the

most irresponsible decision taken by any Government in the last two decades, and during the 12 months that followed a disastrous amount of grey money came into Australia. No Government could contend with between \$1500 million and \$1900 million of hot money flowing into the country. There was a most unhealthy speculative boom, as is witnessed by the vacant office space throughout the capital cities of Australia.

There was also a rural boom which was followed by a slump; and there was a lending boom. Those national aspects added to a period of liquidity and speculation which made handling any economy very difficult indeed. Certainly a revaluation did occur in 1973, but the action was not taken early enough, and it was not sufficient. Those points indicate the attitude of the Premier and his failure to take full account of the situation.

It is all very well to use an historical illustration—or excuse as it turned out to be in this case—but the Premier did not take it far enough. He did not take the matter to its origin. Of course, he would not do that; it was sufficient to blame someone else—the Whitlam Government or the trade union movement.

His claim that the unreal cost structure and unreal levels of productivity can be resolved only by stability in the work force and stability in wages amounts to just so many words. Just consider the record of the party he represents in respect of industrial relations in this country. We can trace this down from the Hawke Government. The first action taken by the Premier's Liberal predecessor was to reverse industrial decisions that had been fought for and won during the time of the Hawke Government. I refer to such things as the concept of the basic wage and margins for skill. His predecessor also reintroduced penal clauses in the industrial arbitration legislation.

To take some smaller examples, while there is a Legislative Council there is no chance of unions being represented on the Midland Junction Abattoir Board. But that is just a small matter in an area of very tender and fragile industrial relations. Motions moved on this side of the House seeking worker participation have been answered by virtually the same lame excuses we have heard tonight.

What about wage indexation? One of the first things the Fraser Government did was to oppose wage indexation, not in its entirety, but by throwing sufficient abrasive material into the works to ensure that indexation could not work to a great extent. That action has been followed up by the State Government, and in particular, by the present Minister for Labour and Industry. The cry now is that there is a need to reduce real wages. Medi-bank fees will do that fairly successfully

by amounts of from \$6 to \$10 a week; that will represent a cut in real wages, and we will see what is said about the matter when that occurs.

The claim that the only chance of recovery is that of a private investment-led recovery is just so much eyewash. As my colleague pointed out by interjection, where a recovery has occurred in respect of inflation it has not been a private investment-led recovery but rather a consumer-led recovery. This has been evidenced in quite a number of countries.

The forthcoming cuts in public spending, such as those which have been applied already in the matter of sewerage, must have a repercussion on inflation in one way or another. The first thing that will happen is that the level of employment will be reduced. Naturally the spending power of those concerned must decline, with the result that the purchase of consumer goods will become even less.

That is obviously the strategy of the present Federal Government, and it is a strategy that has not been applauded or proven in overseas countries. There is in the good Book a quotation which says, "Judge not lest ye be judged." That is fair enough; but if there is any judging to be done, let it be done on equitable terms. Let the judging take place on the same scales.

The Premier was not very enthusiastic at all in his response to the motion. I would like to refresh his memory because it was rather amusing to hear him speak tonight and to recall what he said in the course of moving a motion in this House on the 16th August, 1972. That debate is to be found at page 2577 of *Hansard* for that year, and the first part of the motion was as follows—

- (a) In spite of considerable financial assistance running at a record level from the Commonwealth Government, the State Government has proved incapable of arresting the increase in unemployment in Western Australia with the result that this State has a much higher rate of unemployment than any other State in the Commonwealth.

In the course of that debate, the now Premier insisted on sticking strictly to this State; he did not make any comparisons with other States, or deviate to any degree. His attitude was that this was a State affair and it was not valid for a State Labor Government to refer to actions of the Commonwealth Government. However, apparently it is quite in order for a Liberal Government to use arguments based on such a comparison. One can blame anybody if one happens to be a Liberal, and that has been the tactic continually adopted.

Let us examine the subsequent situation. A comparison between unemployment figures for 1972 and 1976 is very interesting. In August, 1972, the number of unemployed in Western Australia was 12 846, representing 2.9 per cent of the work force. At the expiration of 2.25 years under this Government it has reached 21 103, or 4.02 per cent of the work force.

Mr Clarko: But in June, 1972, under your Government, the figure was over 12 000.

Mr H. D. EVANS: But the overall, total figures do not reflect the worst situation. When we break down the figures we find the worst implications are quite frightening. In March, 1974, there were 809 junior males, 1 264 junior females, and 596 school leavers, a total of 2 669 young people unemployed.

But in June, 1976, there were 3 373 junior males, 3 894 junior females, and 1 076 school leavers, a total of 8 443 young people unemployed. We had this large number of unemployed school leavers as at June, 1976, and it will not be very much longer before we find the school leavers of this year coming on to the labour market. Once again, that does not reflect the worst situation, because the figure does not include the number of students who chose to remain at school rather than risk the soul-destroying experience of being unemployed.

I should like to make reference not merely to numbers but also to the social implications involved when people are unemployed. During the Australian Broadcasting Commission's programme "AM" this morning, a representative of the Brotherhood of St. Laurence organisation quoted its report and expressed concern that so many young people throughout Australia were unemployed.

We have more than our share in Western Australia, and concern was expressed that the young people involved have very little chance of obtaining employment. A greater percentage of the unemployed are in the 21-year age group and they are out of work longer. So, not only is it more difficult for them to find a job but also their period of unemployment is much greater than that applying to other groups.

Let members try to imagine the feeling of frustration experienced by a person of this age who is unable to get into the work force, and the severe implications of what is likely to follow later in his life; let us imagine the conditioning through which he must pass when he is forced to stand in the dole queue.

The implication goes beyond that, and encompasses an attitude which developed during this frustrating period. Let me remind members opposite of the syndrome they deliberately developed of "dole bashing". Anybody who was unemployed was made to feel like a criminal by members opposite.

The Government is in a position to find employment for these people now, and to create career opportunities; however, it has failed most miserably in this task.

The words of the then Leader of the Opposition when speaking in support of the motion he moved in 1972 must ring very hollowly in the light of the comments I have just made. In that debate, the now Premier said—

We must never forget this. In my opinion it is the responsibility of a Government to provide opportunities of employment for the work force. It is drafted to do that job when it is elected . . .

The Premier continued—

If we are given the opportunity to perform we will solve the problem . . . We would love to have the responsibility to show what can be done by a Government with the right philosophy.

Sir Charles Court: That is right!

Mr H. D. EVANS: What has the Premier done?

Sir Charles Court: When was that said?

Mr H. D. EVANS: The remark was made in 1972, when the Premier knew the colour of the Government in Canberra, and knew the problems which existed.

Sir Charles Court: Yes, it was the McMahon Government.

Mr H. D. EVANS: The Premier knew of the problems that Government had, but he chose to totally disregard them. He was quite free to make his appraisal of the situation.

Sir Charles Court: I was very interested to hear such caustic and extravagant language from a person who comes from a primary producing area when you criticised the decision to devalue.

Mr H. D. EVANS: I will say I was caustic! Half the troubles of the primary producers in this State are due to the mismanagement of the McMahon Government. It was a shocker!

Sir Charles Court: But the farmers are the first ones to gain by devaluation.

Mr H. D. EVANS: It was the most irresponsible decision seen in this nation for three decades, and what was the result? The Australian economy was hopelessly out of kilter, and every person in the world with hot money took the opportunity to invest in Australia. This is where our problems commenced.

Mr Clarko: You are kidding!

Mr H. D. EVANS: Does the member for Karrinyup not believe that a couple of thousand million dollars a year would have

no effect? Members opposite are frightened to go back. Before I get sidetracked, I should like to finish the quote. The Premier continued—

I would be prepared to stake my reputation on success.

I interjected and asked the Premier—

How long would it take you to do it?

The Premier replied—

Within six months of getting back into office

His reputation was not too bright at that stage, but it is in tatters now!

An interesting corollary is contained in the Liberal Party policy document. The State Government is to be condemned for the difficulties being experienced by school leavers attempting to find jobs. At the end of June, when all school leavers could reasonably be expected to be absorbed into the work force there were still 1 076 jobless in this State. However, the Liberal Party policy states as follows—

A State Liberal Government will have a programme of strong, well-planned economic growth.

This programme will be implemented as a means to an end, and not as an end in itself.

It will give Western Australia the economic and financial strength to achieve a better total way of life for its people.

I wonder what those 1 076 unemployed school leavers would think of that comment. The policy document continues—

The objectives will be:

A rising living standard.

Security against unemployment.

A broader range of career opportunities in existing enterprise and new projects selectively encouraged for the purpose.

A broader range of career opportunities! They cannot even get a job! Look at what happened to the apprenticeship system under successive Liberal Governments. If it were not so tragic it would be funny. Meanwhile employment opportunities—never mind career opportunities—are diminishing. The tragedy of these young people being made to feel criminals in addition is unforgivable, and I trust that the people of this State will be as unforgiving as I feel.

The question of country unemployment cannot be overlooked. I can recall the Premier chiding the then member for Albany during the same debate. He said that the then member for Albany had not raised one bleat against unemployment in that area. He said that in 1961 there were 106 people unemployed in the Albany district and that in 1972 the figure was 427. But in June of 1976 there are 711 people unemployed. Between March, 1974 and

June of this year there has been an increase of 480 unemployed people which is a rise of 207.8 per cent. I do not hear the present member for Albany raising much of a bleat on that matter either. As far as I and the public at large are aware there are no plans to rectify that total situation.

This is the position not only in Albany but also in the country in general. In the Albany area there has been a 207.8 per cent increase in unemployment. In Bunbury the increase was 612 or 114.4 per cent. In Esperance the increase is 67 or 85.9 per cent; in Geraldton the increase is 241 or 96.1 per cent; in Kalgoorlie the figures are 293 or 110.9 per cent; in Kwinana the percentage increase is 112.7; in Manjimup the increase is 269 or 201.2 per cent; in Merredin the figures are 36 or 43.9 per cent; in Northam 228 or 100.4 per cent and in Port Hedland 555 or 57.45 per cent. The total nonmetropolitan increase was 3 178 or 100.6 per cent in the 2½ years of operation of this Government when compared with the previous Government's first 2½ years.

The total metropolitan increase is even greater. The numbers have increased by 10 398 from 4 368 to 14 766 which is a rise of 238 per cent. On the total State scene the overall percentage increase is 180 per cent. The percentage of the work force unemployed in the period ending in March, 1974 was 1.62 per cent and in June, 1976 the figure was 4.02 per cent.

That is not the full story at all because other factors have probably not yet come into play. There is still a steady diminution in the number of active rural holdings in this State. There is a continuing and steady decrease in rural population despite the so-called policy of decentralisation which is espoused by this Government. I am grieved that the responsible Minister is not in his seat tonight, because I would have quoted to him the words he used when speaking to a motion that he moved. His solution was to create incentives to enable small and medium-sized businesses to become established which would create decentralisation, absorb unemployment, and restore the economy. What a pity it is that I cannot quote his words to him in the light of the current experiences. Never mind; opportunity always knocks again.

In former times country people could have stood a chance of finding employment in the metropolitan area. No longer can they do so because the position in the metropolitan area is even worse with unemployment being virtually 2½ times as great, the main centres being metropolitan.

The trends in the country areas must continue. Drought will certainly be a cause of unemployment in some areas. This is an unfortunate phenomenon for which I attach no blame to the present Government.

Mr Old: Thank you!

Mr H. D. EVANS: I am not saying that it would not have attached blame to us but we do not attach any blame to it. There would be very few job opportunities not only on the farms but also in the service industries which are involved.

I can vividly recall it having been suggested that drought will cause a loss of \$400 million for the country. I do not know how accurate that is but a loss of that magnitude will have an effect which will flow right through. Unemployment will be one of the grave aspects of it and there is little opportunity for the people concerned to be absorbed.

While the Government is not to be blamed for that situation, I cannot say the same for its handling of rural industries and its lack of current policies for rural industries. The apple industry and the manufacturing side of the dairy industry are good illustrations.

There is not one new industry in country areas; certainly not in the south-west as far as I can recall. In considering an assessment of the south-west and its probabilities at the moment one can see that the wood chipping industry was certainly nurtured under successive Governments, particularly by State and Federal Labor Governments. In addition the establishment of the deep water port at Bunbury, which was achieved despite the initial deficiencies in contract that were inherited by the Tonkin Government, and the soft wood plantings that offer in the long term a good chance of economic revival in the south-west, are not the prerogative of the present Government. They have been the results of the endeavours of successive Governments. The particle board plant that has been established in the vicinity of Dardanup was set up by the previous Minister for Industrial Development who is seated on the front bench of this side of the House.

Despite the fact that he is not in the Chamber I cannot resist the temptation of quoting the words the present Minister for Industrial Development used in a motion regarding unemployment and the economy on the 12th April, 1972, as reported in *Hansard* at page 590. He said—

The private sector should be boosted. It might be asked, "How?" I know that the Government cannot borrow money directly, but at least it can help to promote borrowing by private enterprise by setting up the private enterprise.

That is a solution and the Minister is in a position to implement that solution. After 2½ years there is very little evidence to suggest that he has had even any degree of success. He would probably have the distinction of being the Minister for Industrial Development with the poorest record and the smallest achievement that this State has ever seen.

Mr Grayden: That is another one of your completely untrue statements. You make them quite frequently.

Sir Charles Court: The member for Warren will be eating his words soon.

Mr H. D. EVANS: I will be pleased to do so if I have to, but tell me where I am wrong.

Mr Rushton: What about what has taken place at Rockingham and Geraldton?

Mr H. D. EVANS: Can the Minister name them?

Mr Rushton: Do you not read?

Mr H. D. EVANS: If I have something sensible to read I do so avidly, but I should point out that a void exists. The Premier did venture into the subject of inflation. There is one inescapable fact: when this Government took office in March, 1974, Western Australia had the lowest rate of inflation. From March, 1971, to March, 1974, in the term of office of the Labor Government the prices in the CPI rose by 23.8 per cent in Western Australia, while the Australian average was a rise of 28.6 per cent. The Premier might try to fiddle with the figures as much as he likes, but the figure for Western Australia was 4.8 per cent below that of the national average.

Under the same indicator in the comparison between March, 1974, and June, 1976, the figure rose by 41.2 per cent in Western Australia, and 36.7 per cent in the rest of Australia, thus making the Western Australian figure 4.5 per cent above the national average. So from a figure of 4.8 per cent below the national average the figure for Western Australia rose to 4.5 per cent above the national average. That is the track record of this Government.

It is of no use the Premier saying there were stock movements in the Eastern States in periods of drought. The fact is that meat prices fluctuated on both sides of the continent. He claimed it was the beef scheme which kept prices high in Western Australia, but when those prices plummeted he did not make any reference to the beef scheme. That is the sort of situation which arises in regard to the fluctuation in the prices of commodities to which he made reference.

In the last two successive quarters, March and June, 1976, Perth recorded the greatest CPI increase of any Australian capital city. That is the plain and simple fact. In the March quarter an increase of 3.3 per cent was recorded, and this was .03 per cent above the national average. In the June quarter an increase of 3.4 per cent was recorded, and this was .09 per cent above the national average. Again the increase in Western Australia was the highest of any capital city.

I now refer to the Premier's reaction, and to the statements he made in the House on the 30th March. He said—

We have managed to achieve a state of economic prosperity which is better than any other State.

Heaven help us if this is a state of economic prosperity! We should ask any visitor from the Eastern States, the Premier said, and the visitor would confirm it; he would deal with the overall picture.

In respect of the facts presented in the CPI, the Premier continued to assert that the only way to beat inflation and unemployment was to restore investor confidence, and that was what his party and the National Country Party stood for. The Premier went on to say—

This is the policy of the present Government—to build up confidence and to make the State economically stable and prosperous. It is a policy that is succeeding.

Again I say heaven help us. I do not see how the Premier can validly and justifiably claim this.

When his policy speech was written the Premier was aware of the problems on the international monetary scene, and of the difficulties the various overseas economies were facing; he was aware of the Government in office in Canberra, and the policies it had enunciated; yet he continued to speak in this vein—

Inflation can be beaten to a substantial degree State by State.

The answer to inflation on the home front is to get back to Government in WA.

That was all that was required; One could ask what this Government is doing. It has the magic formula and the opportunity to do something about the problem, but its performance has turned out to be miserable, as I have indicated.

Because it does have considerable relevance when weighed against the total economic scene of the State, it is necessary to point out that the average weekly wage from March, 1974, to July, 1976, underwent a 62.1 per cent increase. The Premier made great play of blaming excessive wage demands as being the major root cause of the problem in our economy. I repeat that the rate of increase was 62.1 per cent. In the same period between March, 1974, and July, 1976, the charges levied by this Government increased by the following amounts—

| | % |
|---------------------|-------|
| Excess water rates | 111.4 |
| Sewerage rates | 95.2 |
| Water rates | 60.3 |
| Drivers' licences | 66.6 |
| Electricity charges | 66.5 |
| Hospital charges | 100.0 |

So the increase in charges outstripped the increase in wages by a considerable amount.

In a Press statement the Premier said that as a matter of Government policy to minimise the burden on the public, tax and charge increases had not kept pace with constant and high wage demands. However, the effect of these taxes and charges on the economy is very substantial indeed. One cannot just blame wage increases for the predicament and plight which we face.

I refer also to the 3 per cent surcharge imposed on the State Energy Commission and the Metropolitan Water Board, and the levy on the profits of the Rural and Industries Bank which are channelled into Consolidated Revenue.

In the period between March, 1974, and March, 1976—the first two years of the Court Government—water rates in Perth increased by 45.8 per cent; excess water charges by 102 per cent; and sewerage rates by 72.4 per cent, making an average increase for those three items of 75.4 per cent. The significant aspect is that these increases directly affected the housing component of the CPI. The significance of these excessive increases is evidenced by a 67 per cent increase in this subgroup in the two-year period. This is the highest in the housing group of the CPI for that period. This group increased by 67 per cent in Perth, and 49 per cent in the rest of Australia.

In certain cases a bookkeeping fee was charged.

Mr P. V. Jones: What bookkeeping fee?

Mr H. D. EVANS: The charge that was levied on certain State Housing Commission clients. This was the management fee.

Mr P. V. Jones: A management fee of \$5 per month.

Mr H. D. EVANS: The essential point was that through these increased charges the housing group of the CPI was confronted with a 67 per cent increase in Perth and a 49 per cent increase in the rest of Australia.

The rents on State Government-owned houses increased by 61.1 per cent in Perth in the last two years and, on private dwellings, by 30.1 per cent. Land title transfer fees increased by 15 per cent and the housing group increase in Western Australia was 44.1 per cent.

The total aspect of increase in charges, levies, and taxes of this sort does not stop there. It is passed on into the rural and country areas and as a consequence the increase in costs of farm inputs must necessarily rise. The costs of water and irrigation, of electricity, and of cartage and transport have, to a very large extent, eroded the net income of the farming community.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has another five minutes.

Mr H. D. EVANS: I would have liked to develop that theme to some degree because you, Mr Acting Speaker, and others of similar experience know that the difficulties charges, especially in the south-west, have caused, have been very significant indeed. This is not to the credit of this Government because these increases have outstripped wages by a considerable amount, and were unnecessary to a very large extent.

Before he departed the Premier referred to the new federalism. It is interesting to go through the file and to note how the agreement of the Premiers suddenly changed. There was a certain amount of chagrin as they realised the small print was just not in the interests of the States. The claim that the new federalism will hand back power to the States cannot be substantiated. What it will do in the ultimate is make the States even more dependent on the Federal Government and its centralism will be compounded through the economy.

This year there is certainly a guarantee that there will be no decrease in the amount received by the State. General revenue will increase by somewhere between 10 and 12 per cent, but the Premiers had hoped for something more like 20 per cent.

What will happen in connection with loan funds and specific purpose grants we are not sure, but we have a good idea when we recall what happened to the funds made available, especially for sewerage. Let me remind the House that the area of the metropolitan region which is unsewered has increased over the last 10 years. An effort was made by the Whitlam Government to rectify this, but now the trend with the metropolitan area will continue and there will be an increasing amount of unsewered land. This is something which should not happen to a pearl of a city like Perth.

Mr Sodeman: Would you not agree that Whitlam wrecked the economy of Australia?

Mr Jamieson: No. He changed it. He put all those things in that you like and you are not prepared to admit it.

Mr H. D. EVANS: Some of the achievements in certain areas such as education were far greater than they had been for the past 20 years.

Mr Jamieson: If MacMahon had been there you would never have got it.

Mr Sodeman: Nonsense.

Mr H. D. EVANS: The Premiers do not know what loan funds and specific purpose grants they will get. If they are to maintain at their present level the facilities and services which we have come to expect they have one alternative. They have been told very clearly that they must

cut back on public spending. Works like sewerage will come under the cleaver. Therefore the Premiers will have to raise a surcharge in their own States and this will come back to a second tax. *The West Australian* devoted an editorial to this and I think it summed up the situation very neatly and took to task very severely the explanation the Premier tried to make away with. It simply points out that the euphoria which surrounded the Premiers' Conference, especially in connection with the income tax sharing, had dissipated to a large degree. It made the analogy of the housewife who received a big increase, but found she had to make her capital commitment from that same source.

The total balance is yet to come when the States know what they will receive in the Federal Budget this year and it will be only then that we can get a clear idea of how the States have been treated. On present indications it is quite optimistic but the new federalism will ultimately bring about a degree of centralism which is rather frightening to contemplate because of the economic dependence the States will finally have on Canberra.

I wholeheartedly support the motion.

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [11.26 p.m.]: I find the motion by the Leader of the Opposition an extraordinary one and it is extraordinary for one main reason; that is, that it leaves the Opposition open to a charge of misleading the public—

Mr Nanovich: Hear, hear!

MR GRAYDEN: —with the object of gaining some political advantage which can be described only as fraudulent.

Mr T. H. Jones: You know all about that.

Mr GRAYDEN: One has only to look at the part of the motion dealing with unemployment in particular. I say that the intention of the motion is to give the impression to the public that Western Australia has an unemployment problem in isolation from the rest of the States.

Mr Jamieson: It was never said, and you know it. You speak properly. Cut out your nonsense.

Mr GRAYDEN: It was a carefully worded statement. I am rather pleased to hear the denial by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Jamieson: If you had stayed and heard the case you might have known more about it.

Mr GRAYDEN: He says he does not want to give the impression that Western Australia has the worst unemployment.

Mr Jamieson: I did not say that, either. You made a statement quite different from that.

Mr GRAYDEN: The Leader of the Opposition cannot have it both ways.

Mr Jamieson: Nor can you—and don't correct your speech to alter what you first said.

Mr GRAYDEN: He has set out in this statement to give the impression that Western Australia has an unemployment problem in isolation from the rest of the States.

Mr Jamieson: No it did not at all—at no time.

Mr Bryce: Just read the motion.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask members of the Opposition to give the Minister an opportunity to develop his speech. One interjection at a time is quite sufficient.

Mr Skidmore: I am quite sure we can deal with him later, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr GRAYDEN: The thing is that if a firm in this State or any other State went out of its way to mislead by false advertisements it would be brought before the Trade Practices Commission under the Trade Practices Act. That is what would happen to it.

Mr T. H. Jones: That has no relationship to the argument at all.

Mr GRAYDEN: If a criminal set out in this State to mislead with the object of defrauding, what would happen? He would be charged. An Opposition in this Parliament can go out of its way with the intent of misleading and defrauding, and it would appear it is perfectly legitimate, but I emphasise again that it is precisely what the Opposition has done—

Mr Skidmore: Tell us how.

Mr GRAYDEN: —because the figures which can be produced and which are absolutely indisputable give the lie to the imputation in this motion of the Opposition.

The Premier referred to some figures and I think they should be emphasised in order to find out whether any members of the Opposition object to them. As far as I am concerned they are official figures and cannot be disputed. They are compiled from the monthly review of the employment situation, and are put out by the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations—the only real authority.

I intend to go through the figures, month by month, for the last 12 months commencing with July, 1975. In Western Australia the percentage of unemployed was 3.51 per cent. The figures are seasonally adjusted. The figure for New South Wales, for the same period, was 4.89 per cent. For Victoria it was 5.23 per cent; for Queensland, 5.91 per cent; for Tasmania, 4.15 per cent; and, as I said, for Western Australia it was 3.51 per cent—the lowest of all the States. Those were the figures for July, 1975.

The figures for August, 1975, were: New South Wales, 5.20 per cent; Victoria 5.09 per cent; Queensland, 6.51 per cent; South Australia, 4.09 per cent; Tasmania, 4.33 per cent; and for Western Australia—again the lowest percentage of unemployed—the figure was 3.58 per cent. That comparison is not merely with South Australia or with Victoria; but with all the States.

Point of Order

Mr BRYCE: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to inquire whether you would permit me to move to take the necessary action to allow the Minister to incorporate all these tedious figures into his speech in order that he may continue with his contribution to the debate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. Will the Minister resume.

Debate Resumed

Mr GRAYDEN: I can well imagine that the member for Ascot does not want these figures quoted in the House.

The figures for September, 1975, were: New South Wales, 5.48 per cent; Victoria, 4.88 per cent; Queensland, 6.41 per cent; South Australia, 4.50 per cent; Tasmania, 4.39 per cent; and Western Australia, 4.08 per cent—again the lowest percentage of unemployed of all the States of the Commonwealth.

I will now quote the figures for October. In New South Wales the percentage of unemployed was 5.58 per cent; in Victoria, 5.04 per cent; in Queensland, 6.22 per cent; in South Australia, 4.66 per cent; in Tasmania, 5.04 per cent; and in Western Australia the figure was 4.32 per cent—again the lowest of all the States.

Mr Skidmore: They have already gone up, though.

Mr GRAYDEN: I do not know that there is much point in giving the figures month by month. However, I will proceed to the next month.

Mr Jamieson: Put them all in.

Mr GRAYDEN: The figures for November, 1975, were: New South Wales, 4.95 per cent; Victoria, 5.16 per cent; Queensland, 5.40 per cent; South Australia, 4.75 per cent; Tasmania, 5.37 per cent; and for Western Australia the figure was 4.47 per cent.

Mr Skidmore: It is still going up.

Mr GRAYDEN: The figures for December were: New South Wales, 5.05 per cent; Victoria, 4.72 per cent; Queensland, 4.79 per cent; South Australia, 4.31 per cent; Tasmania, 5.27 per cent; and Western Australia, 4.37 per cent—in that case, the second lowest State.

So I could go through the figures month by month. They date from July, 1975, to June, 1976. In eight out of the 12 months Western Australia had the lowest figures

of all the States. In the remaining four months, Western Australia had the second lowest figures. In other words, Western Australia had the lowest percentage of unemployed of all the States during the year 1975-76.

Notwithstanding those figures produced by the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, which are accepted by all sections of the community, the Opposition has moved a motion and has the temerity to claim that unemployment has increased by 180 per cent since the present Premier came to office, despite his assurance that he would solve the problem. Without any doubt at all, the Premier has solved the problem in so far as he has done better than any other Premier in Australia.

The Premier of this State has achieved the lowest figure of unemployment and that cannot be disputed. I challenge any member of the Opposition to dispute the figures by way of question.

Mr Skidmore: Let me have the figures for this year.

Mr GRAYDEN: Obviously, members opposite will have to produce something which is false because the figures are clear.

Mr Bertram: Has the Minister anything else to talk about?

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will the Minister for Labour and Industry resume his seat. I believe members ought to have some regard for the job which *Hansard* is required to do in this place. It might be very good fun for members to interject on the Minister, but it is not fair to *Hansard* and I do not believe it reflects to the credit of this Chamber. I ask for fewer interjections, and I call on the Minister for Labour and Industry to continue his speech.

Mr GRAYDEN: I will now quote the December unemployment figures, which are quite significant. I do not know where the Opposition plucked the figure of 180 per cent from. It must be a seasonally adjusted figure.

Mr Bryce: It is not.

Mr GRAYDEN: It must be. The official figures have not been on a seasonally adjusted basis for more than two years.

Mr Bryce: Where did you obtain the figures?

Mr Skidmore: Would the Minister table the figures which he quoted so that we can look at them?

Mr Bryce: Would the Minister quote the figures for the various regions?

Mr GRAYDEN: The member is confusing the issue. The Leader of the Opposition said earlier he had used seasonally adjusted figures, which would have been higher.

Mr Jamleson: That is right.

Point of Order

Mr SKIDMORE: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask whether the Minister will table the figures he has quoted. I was unable to obtain a copy of the figures.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: As I understood the Minister for Labour and Industry, it was his intention to table the paper for the information of members, and I ask that that be done.

Mr GRAYDEN: I will do so as soon as I complete my speech, which I think is the normal procedure.

Mr Sodeman: Everybody knew that.

Debate Resumed

Mr GRAYDEN: Members of the Opposition have plucked a figure out of the air—180 per cent. They have deliberately gone out of their way to avoid mentioning the national figure for the same period, which was an increase of 236 per cent. So in comparison with the Commonwealth figure of 236 per cent, even on the figures which have been advanced by the Opposition Western Australia without question has done extraordinarily well.

The interesting point about the whole question of unemployment is that the situation which has arisen in Australia was brought about directly as a consequence of the Whitlam Government's financial policies, and no-one can deny that. We know that when the Whitlam Government abolished tariffs it virtually destroyed the clothing industry in Australia. What happened when those tariffs were so savagely slashed? Clothing factory after clothing factory throughout Australia closed down and the individuals concerned were put out of employment. The Whitlam Government went out of its way to slash tariffs simply to cause a flood of foreign goods into Australia and reduce prices.

The Whitlam Government knew when it cut those tariffs that it would cause massive unemployment. The unions which represented the clothing workers approached the Federal Government and pointed out what would happen, but the Government ignored their pleas. The tariffs were slashed and the clothing industry came to a standstill. Hundreds and thousands of people working in the clothing industry were dismissed from their employment. That is only one of the policies which were put into effect by the Whitlam Government.

We know what happened in respect of the development of resources in Australia. We saw mining come to a standstill as a result of the policies of the Whitlam Government. It wanted 100 per cent Australian ownership before it would permit the development of many resources. Now, of course, we are paying the penalty.

Mr B. T. Burke: Ownership in what?

Mr GRAYDEN: Every mining project in Australia. Mining went into moth balls. Since then inflation has caught up and the confidence of investors has been shattered. Consequently, it will take time to get projects off the ground, but the Commonwealth Government and the State Government are starting to succeed in that long, slow task.

Mr Bertram: It is slow, all right.

Mr GRAYDEN: The Whitlam Government slashed those tariffs when it knew it would cause massive unemployment. It did what I have already described to the mining industry throughout Australia, not only in Western Australia, knowing what effect it would have on the Australian economy and employment generally. And what else did it do? It removed every taxation incentive it could think of which would have caused investment in industry, and it removed every taxation incentive in the rural areas—incentives which had originally been given for the express purpose of encouraging development of those industries. In the light of those kinds of policies which were put into effect, what else could we expect?

Mr Skidmore: Could you be more specific?

Mr GRAYDEN: The Commonwealth Minister for Labour talked in terms of his own Government having an obligation to resign if the unemployment figure passed 250 000.

Mr B. T. Burke: What about this 100 per cent ownership?

Mr GRAYDEN: When unemployment reached the 250 000 mark, the Federal Minister for Labour decided, of course, it was much more prudent for him and his Government to remain in office. It remained in office and shortly afterwards the unemployment figure was up to 300 000 and people were talking in terms of 400 000 and 500 000, all as a result of the policies of the Whitlam Government.

Mr Bertram: What is the figure now?

Mr GRAYDEN: In those circumstances, for members on the other side of the House to suggest in a motion such as this that Western Australia is in isolation as far as unemployment is concerned—

Mr Bertram: Does it do that?

Mr GRAYDEN: —is a deliberate attempt on the part of the Opposition to deceive the public for the purpose of gaining some cheap political advantage.

Mr Bryce: Do you remember 1972 and 1973?

Mr GRAYDEN: The Opposition is in exactly the same class as a firm which deceives the public by false advertising and which would therefore be brought before the Trade Practices Commission. In what it is doing the Opposition is in exactly the same situation as a criminal who goes

out to mislead with the object of defrauding people. If it is contrary to the law for an individual in private industry to make statements such as those made by the Opposition, and if it is unlawful for a criminal to mislead and defraud people, why should the Opposition in this House be permitted to make statements which are clearly designed to mislead?

The SPEAKER: I trust the Minister is not reflecting on the Chair.

Mr Bertram: He is reflecting on our intelligence.

Mr GRAYDEN: No, Mr Speaker. I take exception to the fact that members of the Opposition in this House are using the last session of this Parliament to disseminate what is to my mind palpably false propaganda. They are showing disrespect for this Parliament and using it purely as a means of disseminating false political propaganda. This motion falls into that category. Every statement in the motion is palpably false and designed to mislead.

Mr Bryce: That is an outrage.

Point of Order

Mr JAMIESON: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, as I have moved this motion I take strong exception to the remark that every statement in it is false. Surely the Minister must be asked to retract his remark. The motion was moved in good faith, and what the Minister has said is more than he can say without positively proving his statement.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition requests the Minister to withdraw his statement.

Mr GRAYDEN: I will certainly withdraw the statement.

Debate Resumed

Mr GRAYDEN: I do not know precisely what the Leader of the Opposition is objecting to. His motion reads—

- (a) the Premier has presided over the highest inflation in Australia, despite his election assurance that inflation could be beaten to a substantial degree State by State;

That is palpably an untrue statement. The motion continues—

- (b) unemployment has increased by 180 per cent since the Premier came into office, despite his assurances that he could solve the problem;

As far as I am concerned, that is untrue because members of the Opposition have said the figure is on a seasonably adjusted basis.

Mr Bryce: It is not.

Mr GRAYDEN: The Leader of the Opposition said it was.

Mr Jamieson: I did not. I said that the seasonably adjusted figures for the work force were worse.

Mr GRAYDEN: It is possible to get a seasonably adjusted figure only for the past two years, so his figures are false. The motion continues—

(c) the Government has actively approved and promoted a system of so-called new Federalism which will lead to major cutbacks in necessary public works and community services, with a consequent rise in unemployment, and the imposition of a second income tax on Western Australians;

Now again I would say the bulk of that paragraph is palpably false. Then we come to paragraph (d) which reads—

there have been unprecedented increases in an unprecedented number of taxes and charges,

Again that is false. In these circumstances I cannot quite see what the Leader of the Opposition was objecting to when he asked for the withdrawal of remarks.

I come right back to the point which is that in moving a motion such as this, the Opposition has gone out of its way to mislead the public in order to gain cheap political advantage, and to my mind that is the equivalent of a criminal seeking to gain by fraud.

We have heard a great deal about unemployment but I point out that we have an extraordinary record in this regard. In eight of the last 12 months Western Australia had the lowest percentage of unemployment of all the Australian States. For the remaining four months we had the second lowest incidence of unemployment.

Mr Bryce: What is the current position?

Mr GRAYDEN: Because we had the lowest unemployment for eight months and the second lowest for four months, we have the best record of all the States in regard to unemployment.

Mr Skidmore: Rubbish!

Mr GRAYDEN: We have the best record, and yet the Opposition seeks to give to the people of Western Australia the impression conveyed in the motion. It is for this reason that I take exception to the wording of the motion.

Mr H. D. Evans: But you were going to cure it altogether before March, 1974.

Mr GRAYDEN: The Premier spoke of the disadvantages as far as Western Australia is concerned in regard to the incidence of unemployment. The Premier mentioned that in Western Australia 1600 Aborigines have made application for unemployment benefits. We have 27 000 or so Aborigines in our State and I would be extremely surprised if there were 200 Aborigines in Victoria.

Mr Clarko: No full bloods.

Mr GRAYDEN: The position would be similar in New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia would have a few more Aborigines.

Mr Jamieson: It is a pity you did not use that argument in 1972.

Mr GRAYDEN: As a result of our large Aboriginal population, we have 1 600 unemployed on our books who would not be shown on the books of the other States. That is one aspect of the figures. The next aspect is a really significant one. In previous years itinerant workers migrated from Victoria to New South Wales and then to Queensland, or vice versa. The workers moved between those three States. However, because of the reputation of the Court Government, people throughout Australia now think of Western Australia as a forward-moving State and the pattern of the itinerant workers has changed. These people from the Eastern States are now coming to Western Australia in very large numbers indeed. In fact, the other day we saw a report that 50 per cent of the people applying for jobs at a quarry just north of Perth and not far from the metropolitan area were either from the Eastern States or from New Zealand.

Mr Bertram: How many are going east?

Mr GRAYDEN: So we have this great influx of people to Western Australia; those who cannot obtain jobs in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, or New Zealand.

Mr Davies: Can they get jobs in Western Australia?

Mr GRAYDEN: They come here to Western Australia, and one of the first things they do on arrival is to apply for unemployment benefits. So even though our unemployment figures are the best of all the States, they have been swollen by this new development, this phenomenon that has occurred in the last eight or nine months. We suddenly had this great influx of workers, and it has been suggested that the bituminising of the Eyre Highway is a contributing factor.

Mr Davies: What surveys have you undertaken in this regard?

Mr GRAYDEN: This is a most interesting feature and it is to the credit of our Government that it has been able to cope with this influx as well as the fact that we have these 1 600 Aborigines on our books which they do not have in the Eastern States.

Mr Bryce: Were they on our books when we were in Government?

Mr GRAYDEN: Despite this we have the best record of any State in the Commonwealth as far as unemployment is concerned. As the Premier pointed out and emphasised, in the last two-year period

Western Australia is the only State where more people are now employed than formerly. Why is this? It is purely and simply because of the initiative and the bold methods adopted by the Government in order to attract industry to the State.

It is rather interesting that the first task undertaken by the Fraser Government was to halt inflation. I think members on the other side of the House would have been dismayed to see a month or so ago that inflation had been reduced to the vicinity of 13 per cent as a consequence of the policies of the Federal Government. What a wonderful achievement. If there is one way to overcome unemployment it is by reducing inflation. The Federal Government, with the support of the non-Labor States, has already achieved a reduction to 13 per cent.

Mr Skidmore: That is not so.

Mr GRAYDEN: What an incredible achievement. As a result of this, what do we now find in the business sector? I have here a circular distributed by one of the leading sharebrokers in Perth. I would like to read some of it because I believe that if we want an indication of the state of the economy we should look at the share market. This circular is dated the 26th July, 1976, and it reads—

Recently, buoyant trading on the Australian Stock Exchange has taken share indices to new peaks. Trading has reflected the steadily increasing confidence of the larger institutions in the medium-term prospects of the economy, while private clients have also displayed keen interest. Led by the mining sector, which is expected to benefit first from the strong recovery now under way in the USA and Japan, share prices through all sectors have continued with increased momentum to consolidate the gains of the past few weeks.

In our view, the market has potential for further considerable gains. Strong leadership at both government and board room level, an upturn in the American, and more importantly Japanese economies, and a return of confident local and overseas institutional investors—are the ingredients needed. All these are becoming slowly evident. As well, we believe inflation should record a significant downturn during 1976-77, and there will be a strong case for the government to lower the long-term bond rate. This will have bullish implications for the stock market, and encourage corporate borrowers back into the capital markets to borrow funds for investment programmes.

There is no point in my continuing to read this.

Mr Carr: Very true.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has five minutes.

Mr GRAYDEN: This circular is a good indication that confidence is returning. Throughout Australia sharebrokers are sending similar letters to their clients. They are saying that inflation is being reduced and confidence in industry is returning.

Mr Bertram: What would you expect them to say?

Mr GRAYDEN: This is very different from what they have been saying for the last three years. The implication is this: buy shares and participate in the new upsurge. This is the sort of confidence that has been restored in Australia in the few months the Fraser Government has been in office.

Mr T. H. Jones: Where are all the new industries you have been talking about in Western Australia?

Mr GRAYDEN: This confidence is also the result of policies adopted by the Premier and his Government.

Mr T. H. Jones: Where are all these new industries in Western Australia that you have mentioned?

Mr GRAYDEN: Has the member for Collie been reading the newspaper articles in respect of the Perseverance project? Does he think that project would have got off the ground 18 months ago under the Whitlam Government? Has he read about what is happening on the north-west shelf? The honourable member does not want to talk about that.

People in business circles are so confident that an upsurge will occur in the Australian economy that they are recommending that the public should invest. I recommend that the member for Collie should take their advice; if he does not he will rue the day.

The thing to which I take exception is the fact that the Opposition, in moving a motion like this, has laid itself open to the charge that it is deliberately misleading the people of Western Australia for the sole purpose of gaining a cheap political advantage. The means to which the Opposition has resorted in this instance are in my opinion fraudulent in the extreme. I think it is disgraceful that the Leader of the Opposition has made his first major speech in this place in his present position in the terms in which he spoke tonight. I find it incredible that he should move such a motion as this and speak to it in the way he did. I hope, of course, that the motion will be defeated.

The table of unemployment figures was placed on the Table of the House.

MR HARMAN (Maylands) [12.02 a.m.]: We have just listened to a typical speech from the Minister for Labour and Industry and the member for South Perth.

Mr Nanovich: A good speech.

Mr HARMAN: In his speech he did what he always does; that is, he made all sorts of outlandish statements without quoting any source or giving any proof. That is what he usually does, and on this occasion he ran true to form.

I would like to remind the Minister of what he said in 1972 when he entered into a debate on unemployment. On that occasion the debate revolved around what was happening in Western Australia, and I think the same should apply on this occasion. Mr Speaker, one can quote all the figures in the world and present all the arguments in the world; but I want you to place yourself in the position of parents with young families with one or two members of the families getting to the stage where they are about to look for employment. If you think about that situation for a moment and remember that in Western Australia we have something like 11 people after each vacancy, you will appreciate that every mother and father in Western Australia must be very concerned about the prospects of employment of their children. This is a situation which concerns people who live in Western Australia; it concerns the Government of this State, and it concerns the Opposition of this State.

Mr Jamieson: It doesn't seem to concern the Minister for Labour and Industry, though.

Mr HARMAN: I do not think anything concerns him, because in his speech tonight he demonstrated his absolute hypocrisy. He has displayed that not only tonight but on many other occasions. Let us see what he had to say on the 16th August, 1972, as recorded on page 2615 of *Hansard* for that year.

Mr Bryce: I think he won an academy award that night.

Mr HARMAN: I wish to quote the last paragraph of his speech, and we must remember that at that time he was in Opposition and was attacking the Tonkin Government for its record in the achievement of employment for the people of Western Australia. He was endeavouring to illustrate that the problem was caused by the Tonkin Government. He did not present figures from around Australia, but centred his argument on what was happening in Western Australia, which is different from what he did tonight. This is what he said—

I did not intend to speak tonight, but I would like to stress that there is tremendous scope for the Government to exercise some sort of initiative to correct the present position as far as the downturn in the economy of Western Australia is concerned.

There we have it.

Mr Grayden: Have what?

Mr HARMAN: There we have the situation tonight. The Minister for Labour and Industry has said, "Western Australia is

doing okay; we have something like 4.2 per cent of our people unemployed, but we are doing all right in comparison with the other States. So we in Western Australia do not have to worry or exercise any initiative to resolve the problem." As far as the Minister is concerned, so long as there is this pool of unemployed in Western Australia he and other members of the Government are quite happy.

Mr Rushton: That is an untrue statement for a start.

Mr HARMAN: The Minister for Labour and Industry is quite happy to see that there are people in Western Australia who have not the opportunity to obtain employment for at least 12 months after leaving school, and possibly longer. In previous years school leavers have had the opportunity to obtain employment at least within six months of leaving school. That situation no longer applies in Western Australia, and the Minister for Labour and Industry is quite happy about that.

Mr Grayden: That is not so.

Mr HARMAN: In effect he is laughing because there are children leaving school in this State who have not the opportunity to find employment.

Mr Old: Cut it out.

Mr HARMAN: Apparently the rest of the members of the Government agree with the Minister for Labour and Industry, because that is exactly what they are doing.

Mr Clarko: The Federal Labor Government was quite brutal to Australian unemployment.

Mr HARMAN: The reason that we have this massive unemployment in Western Australia is the inaction of the Premier of this State and the members of his Government. It is the result of their failure to take any initiative, and that is just what the Minister for Labour and Industry was complaining about when he was in Opposition in 1972; that is, he said it was the responsibility of the State Government to take some initiative.

Mr Grayden: The State Government is taking the initiative, and that is why it has a better record than any other State Government.

Mr HARMAN: If the State Government is taking any initiative, it is not demonstrated in the employment figures. I put it to the Minister for Labour and Industry that he should think about the parents in Bunbury, Albany, Kalgoorlie, and Northam who continue to live in the country for the good of the State and who are looking forward to their children obtaining employment in those areas. But what do we find? Unemployment is increasing by something like 200 and 300 per cent in some towns. That is really what this motion is all about.

I do not wish to present any figures tonight to show the Government that there is record unemployment in Western Australia. I do not wish to produce figures to

tell the Government that inflation is rampant in Western Australia. It must be very obvious to even a grade 7 student that we have unemployment and inflation in this State.

Mr Shalders: Does inflation worry you?

Mr HARMAN: It certainly does worry me; I think it should worry every member of this Parliament, because if inflation is allowed to continue on its present course it spells definite problems for Western Australia and Australia as a whole.

Mr Grayden: Why do you say that it worries every member of this Parliament? It may worry you but it does not worry your colleagues.

Mr Blaikie: The Leader of the Opposition said that inflation never killed anybody.

Mr Jamieson: I did not say that!

Mr Blaikie: Yes you did.

Point of Order

Mr JAMIESON: Mr Speaker, I take a point of order regarding an interjection which I would like corrected. The statement was made that I said, "Inflation never killed anybody".

The SPEAKER: Order! Is the Leader of the Opposition asking for a withdrawal of the remark?

Mr JAMIESON: I merely point out that I did not make such a statement during the course of this debate.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will take it that the Leader of the Opposition disagrees with the remark and that there is a difference of opinion.

Debate Resumed

Mr HARMAN: A grade 7 student in Western Australia would have to be aware that, on the face of the figures, there is massive unemployment in this State. The figures have risen in the last 2½ years from 7 000 people unemployed to 21 000 people without jobs. From those figures, one would have to conclude there has been an increase in unemployment. One would also have to agree there has been an increase in inflation; no-one here tonight has denied that.

In the period since World War II, this particular Government would have to be the most incompetent, inefficient, inept, inferior, inhuman, insensitive, insolent, and, above all, insufferable Government we have had in Western Australia.

Sir Charles Court: What a joy it is to be in Opposition; you must have stayed up all night working that out.

Mr HARMAN: I listened last night to a speech by the member for Mt. Hawthorn and received inspiration from him.

Sir Charles Court: You have amazed even the member for Mt. Hawthorn!

Mrs Craig: You have woken him up!

Mr HARMAN: Members opposite seem to think it is quite a joke. However, I am sure the people of Western Australia are not very happy about the fact that they are looking at the possibility that their sons and daughters may not be able to find employment when they leave school. The reason for this—

Mr Clarko: Is the Federal Labor Government.

Mr HARMAN: —is the lack of action by this Government. It has had ample opportunity to take firm steps to overcome the problem but has not done so.

What really concerns me is the lack of sincerity displayed by this Government. When it went to the people in 1974 it said to the people, "We will provide you with the opportunities for employment and with an economic environment in which you will be able to secure a permanent position and be able to achieve all sorts of things as a result." The Premier built up amongst the people of Western Australia a great expectation that he would cure the economic problems confronting Western Australia at that time; namely, inflation and unemployment.

However, the Premier has failed to achieve that objective and it is no wonder that we now have reached the stage where people are really concerned about their future. They put their trust in the Liberal Party and the National Country Party in the belief that the coalition could resolve the problems facing Western Australia at that time; but in 2½ years of Government, the coalition has not been able to achieve its ambition. So, we have this very nasty situation where people do not really know what it is all about. They are losing confidence in the Government and are turning their attention now towards what the Australian Labor Party proposes for them.

To add to that, I should like to refer to some of the promises made by the Premier during that period and since relating to the relief of unemployment in Western Australia. About 18 months ago, the Premier referred to a State-controlled unemployment relief programme; he said he would activate it himself and provide relief for the unemployed. That was a very bold statement, and appeared in *The West Australian* newspaper. However, we have not heard one word of that scheme since it was first proposed.

The Premier also said he would bring forward labour intensive works programmes to provide jobs for some of the unemployed. We have had no further news of that proposal. These are statements which the people of Western Australia read and upon which they built their aspirations and expectations.

The next statement made by the Premier was in 1972 when he stated as follows—

Given leadership from the top, there are men in the Public Service and industry who can go out and take the necessary action to get people back to work again.

I agree that there are people in the Public Service and in industry who are quite capable of taking the initiative and doing something about the situation. I also agree with the Premier when he states they need leadership from the top. However, what they now lack is that leadership from the top.

The Premier obviously is going along with the policy of the Fraser Government that the only way to do anything about inflation is to build up a massive pool of unemployed—a policy which our State Government accepts and follows. According to the Fraser Government once that situation is achieved, some sort of economic recovery can commence.

I believe it has been amply pointed out by many top economists in Australia that that is not the way in which economic recovery in Australia will be achieved. They point out that if we tighten down the lid of the economy so tight that we produce a situation where a large number of people are out of work, we will reach a stage where consumers choose to save their money rather than to spend it which in turn will create a situation where people in business withhold investments; as a result the time taken for economic recovery will be much greater.

Therefore, the Fraser policy of defeating inflation and getting Australia back on the road again will take something like two years to achieve, if in fact it is achieved at all. Personally, I doubt whether the Fraser Government's policy will work because during that time so many people will be unemployed that the Government will change as a result.

It follows that any recovery in a mixed economy such as ours must be led by the consumer. Unless the consumer spends money, we will not have people investing in businesses to provide the goods consumers want. The Australian Government must provide an environment in which people once again start spending money. Once the consumers start spending money, the business people and the manufacturers will take the lead and commence investing once more.

Neither consumers nor investors will make any decisions unless they can see some sort of sincerity coming from the Government. If one looks at the sincerity of the Fraser Government one sees that the first thing Mr Fraser said was that he would not dismantle Medibank. I think he has successfully achieved that aim. He also said that he would not do anything

about the Prices Justification Tribunal. Already he is starting to do something about that tribunal.

How is it possible for people in Western Australia and in Australia as a whole, for employees, for employees and for the trade unions to have any sort of confidence in a Government that has been in office for only six or seven months but which is already breaking the promises it made? The only way we will achieve some sort of economic recovery in Australia is for Governments to be sincere; and the Government in Western Australia has not been sincere.

The Premier and his Ministers gave expectations to the people of Western Australia that this Government would do all sorts of wonderful things that would provide them with economic security, with jobs for themselves and their families and with a way of life for which everyone had an expectation. The Government has achieved none of those things. That is why there is a holding back by consumers in their desire to spend some of their money. One need only look at some of the figures. Savings in Australia have risen and investment has gone down. It is the result of this insecurity for many people in Australia which is holding back any sort of economic recovery.

Tonight the Premier made some remarks about federalism. In September, 1975, when the Liberal policy on federalism was announced by the Leader of the Opposition at that time, Mr Fraser, the Premier of Western Australia said that it was a monumental decision which would provide the States with all sort of benefits which previously they had been denied.

What do we find? When one really analyses the federalism policy that is now coming forward one finds that it is not a monumental decision but a disaster for Western Australia. The Premier has already said that he is receiving less money under the new federalism policy this year. We do not know what Western Australia will get in succeeding years but we can assume that the amount will be no greater than at present. In fact the Prime Minister is insisting that if the States want to develop, increase or expand some of their activities they must raise the taxes themselves. In other words, the States have to ask the Commonwealth Government to raise a surcharge on taxation for purposes within those States.

It seems fairly obvious from the figures that are now coming forward that this year the Australian Government will be giving Western Australia a lot less money in real terms than it received under the previous Labor Government. I wish to cite a few figures to illustrate this point, although I know that all the figures are not available.

I suppose the most important figure would be that known as the financial assistance grant. In 1975-76 the Western Australian

Government received \$363 million. In 1976-1977 it will receive \$444 million. That is an increase of \$81 million. In the previous 12 months the increase for Western Australia on its previous allocation under this heading was \$97 million. What do we now find? This year the increase will be only \$81 million. When one allows for an inflation rate of 15 per cent, in real terms the money able to be spent will be less than the \$81 million. So under this major heading of Commonwealth assistance to the States we find that this year Western Australia will receive less.

Another heading of money coming to Western Australia from the Australian Government is an item called general purpose capital grants. In 1975-76 Western Australia received \$40 million. In 1976-77, this financial year, the allocation is \$42 million, which is an increase of only \$2 million. Inflation will well and truly absorb that increase in terms of the money that it will be possible to spend in Western Australia.

In 1975-76 the allocation by the Whitlam Government for sewerage was \$12.4 million. The allocation this year by the Fraser Government is \$7 million, a decrease of \$5 million. Yet the Premier has said that under this policy Western Australia will be better off.

I fail to see—and there will be plenty of time to prove this—how Western Australia will be better off under this new federalism policy of the Fraser Government.

I wish to quote from an article in *The Australian* of the 21st July, 1976, which is just after the Premiers' Conference. It stated—

In Perth the office of the Premier, Sir Charles Court, confirmed yesterday that many major Government projects would not get off the ground this financial year. "There will be less money, less work, and fewer jobs", a senior Treasury official said. Sewerage will probably be the worst hit area. Perth is the least sewered city in Australia partly because its sandy soil is so suited to septic tanks. The Transport Minister Mr O'Connor says the State can expect no extra capital grants for roads in the coming year and that the planned expansion of the rural roads programme will also have to be curtailed. The Treasury says the whole area of the capital works is under review, a euphemism for facing cut-backs, but will not specify details until the effects of the Federal Budget is known.

The Premier has said publicly that there will be less money and that employment will be a problem. He has said that he will confer with his Cabinet to see whether they can juggle finances to minimise unemployment. That is the position as we see it today. We already have too many

people out of work in Western Australia but under this new federalism policy we will have a lot more people out of work.

That is a situation which the Opposition does not relish. In fact, we believe that if the Premier and his Cabinet really put their minds to it they could do something to alleviate unemployment in Western Australia, but they are not of a mind to do that. Why are they not? The reason is that they want to tie their policy to the apron strings of the Fraser Government which seeks to defeat inflation by building up a massive number of unemployed. This massive number would represent people who want to work, but have no opportunity to do so because no jobs are available.

The Australian Government is removing something like \$50 million a week from the economy of the country. I have already shown that in Western Australia over the next 12 months a certain number of dollars—which we have not yet been able to calculate—will be removed from the economy of this State. This will mean the Government will not be able to employ as many people as it would like; it will not be able to carry out the sewerage works it would like to implement; and it will not be able to provide contracts to the private sector for the carrying out of various works for the Government.

I have not referred at all to the loan programme, in respect of which there has been a 5 per cent increase in the allocation. On the basis of what is available from revenue to Western Australia we can see that in the next 12 months there will be a lot less money for the State; and that will result in fewer people being employed.

What we are facing is an increase in unemployment. As a parent and being conscious of the aspirations of other parents in this State, that really disturbs me. We will have to face up to the inevitability that our sons and daughters will not be able to obtain employment and will spend a great deal of their time on the dole. This is a situation about which the Australian Labor Party believes it can do something, if given the opportunity.

The Premier made great play—as he has done on other occasions—about the need to get back to the days of the 1960s, and he claimed that we should recall the great prosperous times of that era. I want to remind the House of some of the things that happened in the 1960s. In so doing I make the point that what the Premier is trying to put before the people of Western Australia is only an illusion, because in the 1960s we had an education system which was absolutely impoverished. In those days there was a scarcity of building blocks, and if a person was able to procure one it cost him an enormous amount of money. At the time there was an archaic transport system; there was a

shortage of hospitals and hospital beds; there was a completely inadequate community health service; there was a shortage of recreational facilities; and there was a number of impoverished local authorities. That was the real situation in the 1960s, but the Premier likes to make great play about the prosperity of that era.

Sir Charles Court: Prosperity did come out of the 1960s.

Mr HARMAN: How did it affect the people of Western Australia? I have just shown what happened in that time.

Sir Charles Court: The developments of the 1960s corrected that.

Mr HARMAN: In 1972 an Australian Labor Government was elected at Canberra, and it decided to change many things.

Sir Charles Court: It changed them all right; it ruined the whole country!

Mr HARMAN: It provided the finance for the States to do something to improve the education system. I am sure members opposite will be aware that during the term of the Whitlam Government a massive dose of—

Sir Charles Court: Unemployment and inflation.

Mr HARMAN: —finance was provided for the education system. I know this upsets the Liberal Party and its supporters in this State. What the Whitlam Government really achieved in those years was to give people a chance to participate in what happened to them. Prior to that the opportunity was available for Governments only to direct and dictate as to what happened to the people in the community.

Mr Sodeman: What did the Governor of the Reserve Bank say to Dr Cairns?

Mr HARMAN: During that period the Australian Labor Party worked to a plan. It did not rely upon *ad hoc* decisions made week by week, as is the custom with Liberal Governments. That plan was to provide some sort of equality of opportunity in education, health, employment, and housing so that we would not have a system of haves and have-nots—a system which prevails under Liberal Governments. What the Liberal Party thrives on is inequality and privilege, and that is the state of affairs it would like to maintain. If it is able to do so everything will go well for the Liberal Party.

However, that is not the policy of the Australian Labor Party. The policy of the Labor Party is to make sure that the people of the community have an equal opportunity in all the fields I have mentioned. As I have said, the Australian Labor Party had a plan to remodel the whole structure of federalism, but unfortunately because of a hostile Senate and the work done by the Premier of this State and by some of his colleagues in other States with Liberal and National

Country Party Governments, at every opportunity steps were taken to prevent the properly elected Labor Government at Canberra from achieving its ambition.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has four more minutes.

Mr HARMAN: Finally, the policy of the ALP was to redistribute the resources of the country in the most efficient manner so as to provide the best for all in the land.

Sir Charles Court: If nothing else, you are loyal.

Mr HARMAN: In its three years of office at Canberra, the Labor Government did not really have full power, but it was able to achieve some remarkable reforms.

Mr Grayden: What did it achieve in reducing unemployment and inflation?

Mr HARMAN: The motion moved by the Opposition attacks the Western Australian Government for its failure to do something about unemployment, which it promised to do; to do something about inflation, which it promised to do; and for its failure to stand up to the Government at Canberra, as the Premier said on many occasions that it should be doing. The new policy of federalism means that in Western Australia we will have a great number of people unemployed, and there will be a winding down of the economy, so that the people of this State can look forward to a situation where they and their families will not have an opportunity to gain meaningful employment, or the opportunity to achieve full satisfaction in their living standards. In fact, what we will see will be a reduction in the living standards in Western Australia, if the policy of the present Government is continued, and it persists in adhering to the policy of the Australian Government.

MR SHALDERS (Murray) [12.40 a.m.]: It is with some reluctance that I rise to speak in the debate. My reluctance is as a result of only one fact.

Mr Skidmore: You are tired!

Mr SHALDERS: The fact is that the Premier and the Minister for Labour and Industry have so completely and utterly destroyed the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition that there is very little left for those on this side to say.

Mr Skidmore: Having said that, sit down.

Mr SHALDERS: I say that they destroyed the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition because the comments made by other speakers on the other side, by way of speech and interjection, were as cold and inspiring as a plate of bubble and squeak.

Mr Bryce: You remember that when you see the figures after the next election.

Mr Skidmore: How have you got permission to speak tonight?

Mr Sodeman: We can speak any time we like. You don't know what you are talking about.

Mr SHALDERS: I have two reasons for speaking. The first is the temerity, bluff, and hide of the Leader of the Opposition in submitting a motion that in part criticises the Government over inflation. I will come back to that aspect later on. Another point which has caused me to rise is a statement the Leader of the Opposition made during the course of his speech. He said that every person in this State will be financially worse off, or is financially worse off, under the present Government. I intend to submit some evidence very briefly to show how patently false is that remark of the Leader of the Opposition.

I refer to the Consumer Price Index figures as at June of this year. They show that Western Australia is equal with Adelaide in having the third lowest CPI figures in Australia. We are 2.3 points less than the combined figure for Australia, over 7 points less than Sydney, which has the highest figures, and lower than Hobart as well. We are the third lowest State on CPI figures in Australia. I repeat that we are two points under the combined figure for all the Australian States.

I come now to the minimum wage rates in Australia. In May, 1974, when this Government came into office, the minimum wage rate in Perth was \$77.18. At that time the highest minimum wage rate in Australia was in Queensland where it was \$83.64. So the Western Australian rate was 92.2 per cent of the highest rate in Australia.

In May, 1976, the Perth minimum wage rate was \$125.12. The highest figure in Australia in May, 1976, was still Queensland with \$133.24, and Western Australia was then 93.9 per cent of the highest minimum wage rate. In other words, on the minimum wage rate Western Australia's relativity has improved by 1.7 per cent.

Mr Skidmore: Which does not prove a thing.

Mr SHALDERS: If the shadow Minister for everything will give his speech later on, I am sure the other shadow Ministers will show confidence in him by deserting the Chamber and leaving him to it. I guarantee that will happen. I ask members to watch their performance.

I would like to bring to the notice of the House the percentage increases in the current average weekly earnings. The Australian average weekly earnings at the present moment is \$165.80. It has increased since March, 1974, by 46.3 per cent. I repeat that the figures I am quoting now are for May, 1976, and I will also repeat that the Australian average weekly wage was \$165.80, an increase of 46.3 per cent since the Court Government assumed office.

In New South Wales the average weekly earnings is \$168.10, an increase of 46.3 per cent. The Western Australian average weekly earnings is \$166.50, an increase of 48.9 per cent.

Mr Bryce: Is this another excuse?

Mr SHALDERS: I want to point out that Western Australia has the second highest percentage increase of all States in its average weekly earnings, and only point one of one per cent less than the highest increase in average earnings, of any State in Australia.

Mr Bryce: Is this another excuse?

Mr SHALDERS: No it is not an excuse.

Mr Bryce: That was your Premier's excuse No. 3. You should have listened to him.

Mr SHALDERS: It is not an excuse at all. It absolutely destroys the argument of the honourable member's leader that every person in Western Australia is worse off financially under this Government. If I may I wish to demonstrate the relativity of those figures.

In Perth in May, 1974, the average weekly earnings was \$111.80. The highest average weekly earnings in Australia was then \$116.70 in New South Wales. So the Western Australian rate was 95.8 per cent of that of the highest State in Australia.

What is the situation today? In Perth in May, 1976, the average weekly earnings was \$166.50. The highest average weekly earnings in Australia was in New South Wales with a CPI figure of over seven points above Western Australia's. The rate in May in New South Wales was \$168.10, so the Western Australian rate is 99 per cent of the highest rate in Australia. Western Australians have improved their relativity with New South Wales residents—who have the highest in Australia—by 3.2 per cent. Western Australia's current CPI figure is 96.5 per cent of the New South Wales figure, which is the highest CPI figure. Yet the average weekly earnings in Western Australia is 99 per cent of that of the State with the highest weekly earnings.

It is patently obvious that Western Australians have greatly improved their position in relation to all other States of Australia. There is no question about that. Therefore, the charge made by the Leader of the Opposition is just so wrong that—I will not stir up a hornet's nest again—the Minister for Labour and Industry described it so beautifully when he described the efforts of the Opposition on this motion.

Mr McIver: Does this high finance mean that we will treble the housing programme next year?

Mr SHALDERS: The Leader of the Opposition set the rules for debate. He brought out figures to establish his grounds for attacking the Government. All I am

doing is replying to the points raised in his contribution to the debate and submitting figures of my own. This brings me again to the absolute temerity of the Leader of the Opposition who has the least right of anyone in the Opposition to raise or support a motion criticising the Government on inflation. At least others do not have the track record established by the Leader of the Opposition in his statements on inflation.

Mr McIver: I am just delighted to know that we are financially so well off.

Mr SHALDERS: I wish to draw attention to statements made by the Leader of the Opposition. He took exception earlier in the evening to a point of order about an interjection. I believe he said he had never made the statement that inflation never killed anyone. I wish to quote from page 88 of volume 203 of *Hansard*, as follows—

I suggest there is nothing wrong in letting inflation run the full cycle.

Mr Sodeman: He denied that though.

Mr SHALDERS: To continue—

I feel we do more harm to the community if we run in and try to stop inflation.

Obviously he is at loggerheads with the member for Maylands who said it worried him. There we have a shadow Minister in conflict with his leader, and the only honourable thing the shadow Minister can do is resign. It is the only possible thing he can do unless he can reconcile his statement—in answer to my interjection, that he was worried about inflation—with the statements of his leader.

I believe that one or two members opposite have already threatened to take some action. So that we get the record completely straight I will refer again to the same page in the same volume of *Hansard*. This is very important to members opposite because of the point of order taken by the Leader of the Opposition. He said—

So we must let inflation run; it has never killed anybody.

Mr Sodeman: He denied that he said that.

Mr SHALDERS: Those are his words.

Mr Jamieson: Quote all of what I said.

Mr SHALDERS: The Leader of the Opposition said—

So we must let inflation run; it has never killed anybody.

Mr Jamieson Do not take my words out of context.

Mr SHALDERS: They appear in *Hansard*.

Mr Jamieson: Do not take the words out of context. I have a copy of the speech right here.

Mr SHALDERS: I am glad the Leader of the Opposition has returned.

Mr Jamieson: I hope you will quote me correctly.

Mr SHALDERS: I am quoting correctly.

Mr Jamieson: I deny saying, "Let it rip".

Point of Order

Mr CLARKO: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has denied that he said, "let inflation run". It is in *Hansard*, in black and white.

Mr Jamieson: I did not say that.

Mr Bryce: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order. I am still listening to the member for Karrinyup.

Mr CLARKO: I think the Leader of the Opposition owes an apology to the House because his words appear in black and white.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order. I do not think that is a true point of order, as was the point raised initially by the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition eventually disregarded the possibility of asking for a withdrawal.

I think members need to watch the situation with regard to points of order. A difference of opinion does not constitute a reason for asking for the withdrawal of words under a point of order. Differences of opinion will always occur in this place; it is part of the democratic system. The member for Murray will proceed.

Debate Resumed

Mr SHALDERS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I had almost reached the conclusion of my remarks, anyway. For the Leader of the Opposition to say that every person in Western Australia is worse off under the Court Government is patently wrong and false as shown by the review of the CPI and wage figures I have presented. I cannot understand also how he could have the humbug to move a motion which is critical of the Government's handling of inflation. It certainly is hypocritical humbug, and I urge members to vote against the motion.

MR BRYCE (Ascot) [12.54 a.m.]: I rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I suggest if members opposite were concerned for their credibility as elected members of Parliament they, too, would support the motion.

Members opposite have missed the point of the debate so far tonight because the motion is based on the question of credibility. If we are faced with an election in the very near future members opposite will be led by a man who will make the most outrageous promises similar to those he made in 1974. Members opposite will follow the Premier meekly and not be the slightest bit concerned about their credibility as members of Parliament. They

are obviously not concerned with the statements he made in 1974 with regard to economic undertakings.

A member: Has not your leader ever made promises?

Mr BRYCE: I suggest that my leader will not make statements as outrageous and as politically deceitful as the statements made by the present Premier in 1974. At that time he used his political geiger counter to find out which way the wind was blowing and then had the temerity to promise to solve inflation, State by State. That statement from a man of his political experience was politically deceitful.

Sir Charles Court: Do not talk nonsense.

Mr BRYCE: No matter which way the Premier twists or turns we remember the facts well. In 1974 he gave an undertaking to the people—the specific wording has been quoted many times tonight and I do not intend to repeat it because it is well known to us in this Chamber—that he would cure inflation.

I suggest that at the time of the next election, whether it is in December, February, or in April, if the Premier believes the people are interested in a trip to the moon more than anything else he will promise them such a trip. At the time there will be no suggestion of listing excuses in case his crazy scheme comes unstuck and he is not able to deliver the goods.

The Premier, because of his supreme ego, believed that he could sell the falsehood to the people of Western Australia that inflation, as an economic phenomenon, could be solved State by State.

Mr Sodeman: Do you suggest that nothing has been done to fight inflation?

Mr BRYCE: I did not suggest that. The facts are as they have been presented a number of times this evening. During the entire three-year period of administration by the Tonkin Government the rate of inflation increased by 23.8 per cent. It has been suggested by one of my colleagues that that figure was 4.8 per cent below the national average. That was for the three-year period. As far as the performance of this Government is concerned, since March, 1974—which is not a three-year period—the value of the dollar has already deteriorated to the tune of 41.2 per cent.

Normally, in this Chamber, this sort of argument would not be very relevant. Normally it would not be related to the question of State Government finance or economic responsibility. It is related only to the question of credibility. We have a man who was so desperate for votes that he was prepared to say anything in order to win those votes. He made the outrageous promise to the people of Western Australia that he would solve inflation.

No matter what figures are produced by members opposite with regard to unemployment or taxes and charges, the point is they should all be related to the credibility of the Premier. He said he could cure inflation and unemployment. At the time the Premier made the promise he did not provide a list of qualifications. He did not say that in 2½ years' time his performance would be compared with the performances of the other States. He made unqualified promises; that is the point of the debate.

He has not delivered the goods. His credibility has folded about him and his reputation is in ruins because he made these unqualified promises.

Sir Charles Court: The people have more sense in interpreting these things than you appear to have.

Mr BRYCE: I suggest inflation was one of the principal issues on which the Premier won in 1974 some of those votes he needed to put him into office and I suggest the actual promise in its conception was deceitful because he knew he had no chance of delivering the goods.

Despite the expediter—

Mr Bertram: Who?

Mr BRYCE: The famous expediter who was appointed in a shallow, simplistic, and laughable attempt to solve inflation in Western Australia. Despite the expediter, the Premier and his Government have been their own worst enemies because of the charges and taxes which have already been referred to in some detail. I will not go into the same detail because at this stage nobody needs to be reminded of the extent to which the charges have already been increased.

The point I stress is that the increases which have taken place have greatly exceeded wage increases and rates of inflation. That has been proven from this side of the House; and for the benefit of the member for Murray, the gobbledygook he presented to this House a few moments ago in respect of relative wage rates in Western Australia and other States did not prove a darned thing. It was quite clearly proved earlier this evening that the increases in wage rates in this State have not kept pace with the rate of increase in charges imposed by a Government which gave a bona fide undertaking to the people of the State that as a basis of its platform it would set about curbing taxes and charges. That is a promise which I again relate to credibility. At the time it was made nothing was said in parenthesis to the effect that it depended on what happened in other States.

Sir Charles Court: Take the words as they are quoted and measure them against our performance, and you will find we have done just that.

Mr BRYCE: I spent some time during question time today doing just that with this document entitled "Court Government Policy and Performance", and I hope the Premier will take a leaf out of the book of the Victorian committee investigating the use of gobbledygook in Government documents and communications, because if ever there was a document produced by bureaucrats which constituted gobbledygook this certainly is it. There is no better teacher in the use of gobbledygook than our Premier if by suggesting what happens in other States softens the blow for him he thinks he can get himself off the hook on the promise he made to curb taxes and charges.

I regret the Minister for Labour is not in the Chamber at this stage. I noticed the Premier wincing during the course of the Minister's contribution this evening, and I think the Minister produced a very good reason to this House why he should resign. I suggest the Minister's performance in the way he presented information to the Parliament on this issue was so disgraceful that it was a fine example of why the Government has become a one-man band. I do not know how the Premier could sit back and relax and rely on that kind of performance, to represent the view of the Government.

I draw attention to some of the hopelessly inaccurate information the Minister for Labour presented to the Chamber soon after the Leader of the Opposition had presented the facts. He used the word "seasonably" about 15 times, when in fact he meant "seasonally".

Mr Sodeman: The Leader of the Opposition also said the same thing.

Mr BRYCE: With his tongue in his cheek. An important fact needs to be related to the Chamber in respect of the information which was presented to us. Seasonally adjusted figures with which to compare the performance of this Government and that of the Tonkin Government are not available. Seasonally adjusted figures were not made available until May, 1974. Just to put the record straight, the figures which were quoted by the Leader of the Opposition and which were referred to by all members on this side of the House this evening were actual figures or original data.

I suggest members opposite might convey the message to the Minister for Labour that if we do use the limited amount of information which is available for purposes of comparison on seasonally adjusted figures the Government's track record on the question of unemployment is in fact very much worse because, instead of the Premier having presided over a period of economic activity which has produced an increase in the rate of unemployment to the tune of 180 per cent, which is based on actual figures, the rate is in fact 195 per cent.

It was outrageous for the Minister for Labour to suggest the Leader of the Opposition was using a devious tactic and presenting palpably false information to mislead the public. Rarely has a politician ever entered this Chamber who had more expertise than the Minister for Labour in palpably misrepresenting information when he decides to put on a performance in this place; and scarcely a week goes by that that very Minister does not discover a red, a militant left unionist, or a communist conspiracy of some sort in order to denigrate the reputation of the entire trade union movement. He does it so frequently we have become accustomed to it. He then stands up in this place—it is part of his general strategy—and complains that the Leader of the Opposition was adopting that strategy here this evening.

The real significance of the reference to unemployment in this debate lies in the arguments which have traditionally been used by the Premier himself during his career in this Parliament, and again they highlight his lack of credibility on this question.

Sir Charles Court: You are not on that again? You have worn out the record.

Mr BRYCE: He has been the most outstanding exponent in this Chamber of the view that a Government's performance in respect of efficiency, effectiveness, or competence is best measured by the level of unemployment. We certainly heard it during the life of the Tonkin Labor Government, and from what I have read he certainly did not give his theory any rest during the term of the Hawke Labor Government. So in the past the Premier more than anybody has been found to use the level of unemployment as the measure of the competence and efficiency of a Government and its overall performance.

The figures speak for themselves and these are the facts, regardless of the Minister for Labour's suggestion earlier in this debate that they were not the facts. I challenge him to disprove these figures. Unemployment has jumped by 180 per cent during the period the present Government has been in office. I suggest the Minister do the very simple arithmetic involved, using the original data I quoted by way of interjection when he was making his speech. The number of unemployed has jumped from 7 527 in March, 1974, to 21 103, which constitutes in anybody's language an increase of 180 per cent. If we relate the number of unemployed to a percentage of the work force, when this Government came to office 1.62 per cent of the work force was unemployed. That is the situation the Government inherited.

Mr Grayden: How does it compare with the national increase?

Mr BRYCE: The situation today is that 4.02 per cent of the work force is unemployed. If that simple arithmetical exercise is performed again, it will prove to anybody that it is an increase of 180 per cent.

Mr Grayden: How does it compare with other States?

Mr BRYCE: How the Minister can stand in this Chamber and say it is palpably false, on a factual basis, for the Opposition to condemn the Government for presiding over a period of unemployment which has seen the number of unemployed increase up to 180 per cent of the work force is absolutely beyond me. The way he used and abused the information at his disposal to do this is astounding. As my colleague, the member for Maylands, said somewhat disappointedly, he would have expected something different from the Minister.

Mr Grayden: Your leader said the figures were seasonally adjusted.

Mr Jamieson: I did not say that.

Mr BRYCE: The Leader of the Opposition did not refer to seasonally adjusted figures. Seasonally adjusted figures have not existed in the form in which we have been using them tonight since 1971.

Mr Grayden: That is what I am trying to tell you.

Mr BRYCE: And that is precisely why we used original data. If the Minister checks *Hansard*, I am sure he will be only too ready to apologise to the House and certainly tomorrow he will apologise to the Leader of the Opposition when he realises that original data was used, and certainly not seasonally adjusted figures.

This phenomenon of unemployment concerns the Opposition a great deal. We believe we have every right to condemn the State Government for its attitude towards the question of unemployment and the suffering it produces. The State Government could be doing a great deal that it is simply not doing in respect of unemployment. The Government has demonstrated very clearly its opposition to relief schemes. It gave a fairly straightforward indication of its insensitivity. Liberal Governments, State and Federal, have regarded unemployed people as necessary statistics from time to time; constituting a part of essential economic medicine.

Mr Clarko: What is the basis for saying that?

Mr BRYCE: This was apparent throughout the whole of Menzies' career.

Sir Charles Court: Whitlam accepted that there had to be a dramatic increase in unemployment.

Mr BRYCE: May I suggest that every Government, Labor and Liberal, has been faced with periods of unemployment.

Sir Charles Court: That is an admission.

Mr BRYCE: However, they have not used the tool of unemployment as a means of trying to solve inflation and deliberately and knowingly thrown people out of

work for this purpose. I must say that it was not a national Labor Government—

Mr Clarko: Dr Cairns admitted last year that the policy would lead to higher inflation and unemployment.

Mr BRYCE: —which pursued this policy. However, we are all well aware that the State Government, through its leader and its national spokesman, condemned the NEAT Scheme and the RED Scheme.

Sir Charles Court: The RED Scheme was a crazy waste of money. We could perhaps have doubled the benefit of the money had the States been permitted to handle it.

Mr BRYCE: Is not everyone wise after the event?

Sir Charles Court: Even the Labor Government in South Australia recognised this.

Mr BRYCE: That is the Premier's excuse. His party never offers any form of relief to people who are unemployed. If this State Government were genuinely concerned about such people and the suffering they endure it would embark right now on a scheme to assist those unemployed to find jobs. This Government should adopt a scheme such as that operating in South Australia. I suggest the Government's inaction is one reason that our State no longer has the lowest percentage of unemployment.

Mr Grayden: We are trying to get projects like Telfer and the Swan Brewery under way.

Mr BRYCE: I would very much like to hear the Minister for Labour and Industry come out in this forum and say openly that he believes the communist-inspired extreme left-wing trade unionists are destroying the economy of the State. I would like the Minister for Labour and Industry to label openly the people living in the Pilbara—

Sir Charles Court: He has never said that. Do not distort what he said. He has never mentioned the people living in the Pilbara.

Mr BRYCE: We have been told that the trade unionists are causing the greatest disturbance.

Mr Mensaros: Inspired by the leaders.

Mr Jamieson: That shows how little you know.

Mr BRYCE: That is a disgrace from the Minister for Mines.

Mr Mensaros: You agree with the Telfer business do you?

Mr BRYCE: I wonder whether my friend the Minister has been to Telfer.

Mr Mensaros: You can find work there for more than \$340 a week. Many people would like that.

Mr Jamieson: You go and work there!

Mr Mensaros: Do you think that is not enough, plus accommodation?

Mr BRYCE: I think the Minister for Mines would wish to sell his services for a great deal more than the workers of Telfer are asking for theirs, especially if he were expected to work in the same conditions.

Sir Charles Court: You do not know what they are being paid.

Mr Mensaros: Have you been there?

Mr BRYCE: The future, as far as employment is concerned, is indeed very bleak. There is absolutely no doubt that the policies of the Fraser Government—supported to a man by members opposite—will create further unemployment. By Christmas we could well be facing a situation of 30 000 people out of work.

Mr Grayden: It will be exactly the opposite.

Mr Bertram: Like to have a bet on that.

Mr BRYCE: I guess only time will tell us who is correct. I am suggesting to the House that the financial policies of the Federal Government are based on nineteenth century economic thinking; after all, our friend the Prime Minister is not post-Keynesian but rather pre-Keynesian in his thinking.

Mr Clarko: You are pre-Cambrian!

Mr BRYCE: He believes what is needed is a sudden, short, sharp shock of such magnitude that hundreds of thousands of people will be thrown out of work deliberately. Western Australia will pick up its share of this additional unemployment and members opposite will find that there is no excuse which the electors of the State will accept, bearing in mind that it was their leader who stated time and time again, without any qualifications, that unemployment in this State would be solved within six months of his gaining office. He even went so far as to stake his reputation on achieving this.

We have heard a whole list of excuses for the Government's failure in this objective. In fact, I respectfully suggest to the Premier, through you, Mr Speaker, that when he gives consideration to the drafting of his policy speech for the next election, alongside any brave promise he should include in advance a list of 13 excuses in case he fails to attain his objective.

Sir Charles Court: You are a funny boy.

Mr BRYCE: When the Premier fails, the people can tick off his excuses one after the other, in much the same way as we have done on this side of the House over the last 2½ years.

My colleague, the member for Maylands, drew attention particularly to the tragedy of the particular type of unemployment we are experiencing in Western

Australia at the present time. The most disturbing feature of our unemployment is its effect on junior workers and school leavers who are seeking employment. In the period that the Government has been in office—a Government that was pledged to solve unemployment—the number of unemployed junior workers and school leavers has trebled.

Mr Clarko: This figure has quadrupled for Australia.

Mr BRYCE: This figure jumped from 2 669 to 8 843. Once again the Government has failed to grasp the significance of the motion moved by the Opposition.

Mr Clarko: Is my statement true? Deny it if you can.

Mr BRYCE: The honourable member is not in a position to remember that during 1972, when his leader was on this side of the House, various international economic policies of the United States and Japan threw the Pilbara, in employment terms, into chaos. Thousands of workers from interstate and overseas, including New Zealand, lost their jobs. The then Leader of the Opposition, the present Premier, reached the stage of advocating the withholding of Supply and his reason for this was the incompetence of the Tonkin Government in not being able to solve quickly the resulting unemployment problem.

Mr Clarko: You had 12 000 unemployed.

Mr BRYCE: Yes, but it constituted about 2.99 per cent of the work force.

Mr Clarko: You doubled it when you came to office.

Mr Jamieson: And you have doubled it again.

Mr BRYCE: That was very short-sighted indeed, because a man who was suggesting in this Parliament that the upper House should take the unprecedented step of withholding Supply from the Government because unemployment had jumped in that manner, then went to the people and made this preposterous statement, and was not able to produce the goods. The fact is that he now has egg on his face, and there is no point in his turning to what is happening in the other States, because that has little relevance to the promises and undertakings he gave to the electorate in 1974.

Mr Grayden: Why did the Whitlam Government create such a huge pool of unemployment?

Mr BRYCE: I answered that before the Minister returned to the Chamber.

Mr Clarko: Hawke forecast 500 000 by January, 1976.

Mr BRYCE: On a more constructive note, the tragedy in this State of the young people who are unemployed is based upon the sense of frustration, confusion, and bewilderment experienced by those

who are hoping to enter the work force but are knocked back time after time in their applications for jobs.

From members opposite and their colleagues in other Parliaments in Australia we hear too often a lack of concern for those young people, because they tend to be grouped together with typical generalisations about "dole bludgers". Members opposite in their public utterances on this sort of question have been developing a prejudice against the jobless without making any attempts to discriminate in respect of the very important element of the unemployed young people who have been through the education system and who have had elevated expectations, but who when they reach the actual work force are being made to feel unclean and unwanted.

They are made to feel isolated by so many members of the Liberal Party who seem to pander to a very small percentage of the populace who are concerned about the regular ratbags in any society who are taking advantage of the welfare system.

Mr Clarko: Labor made sure they were not lonely; it quadrupled the number of unemployed.

Mr BRYCE: The only quotation I would like to make is that of a fairly responsible writer of *The National Times*. In an article in that publication of the 16th-21st February, 1976, Lyndsay Connors under the heading of, "The jobless young in the doldrums" put the matter in a manner much better than that in which I could put it. He said—

With a good deal of unsubstantiated popular gossip going on about "dole-bludgers" and official pronouncements which seem to consist mainly of tougher measures to tighten tests for benefits it is no wonder that some of those who cannot find jobs say that they have a feeling of isolation and rejection, and of being the undeserving objects of punitive attitudes and ignorant and indiscriminate attacks.

Members opposite and some of their colleagues in other Parliaments have been guilty of making these indiscriminate attacks. I suggest that a Government so concerned with the human element of unemployment—with the humane problems that are associated with it—should be doing something for those people, rather than considering them merely as statistics for the purposes of economic measurement.

I do not know that this Government has come out and condemned the Fraser Government for very much; but one interesting area in which it has been found wanting is when the Fraser Government decided to wind up a very important committee of inquiry into employment problems which was established some two or three years earlier. For the information of

members who may not be aware of it, a working party on the transition from school to work was set up by the Australian Education Council, and the purpose of the committee was to look at and examine very carefully the problems being encountered by young people entering the work force, the restructuring of the work force, changing job opportunities, and associated problems.

One would imagine that any Government that was genuinely concerned for unemployed people and, more importantly, the effect on the life of a person of being unemployed for any period of time in the early stage of his working career, would not wind up this committee of inquiry before its work had been completed. That would be the last thing such a Government would do. I would suggest that, given the direction in which western economies are travelling, this sort of committee of inquiry should be a permanent feature of economic assessment in this vitally important area of unemployment.

If this State Government was concerned about the effect on people of unemployment it could do something about that by setting up its own committee of inquiry into the matter thus ascertaining in some detail what are the problems associated with the restructuring of the Western Australian economy, and the particular problems facing young people leaving school in this State in trying to find positions in the work force. The information which could be obtained from such inquiries could place the Government in a position of doing something about the matter.

I repeat that one of the reasons I believe the Government is not interested in this matter, and one of the reasons that it has no doubt failed to protest against the Fraser Government's decision to wind up this committee of inquiry, is that it sees unemployed people as statistics and not as people who are suffering.

The other unnecessary and rather undesirable action by the Fraser Government is that it has made an across-the-board reduction in the staff of the Commonwealth Public Service at this particular time when the number of unemployed people is growing and the number of problems being presented to Commonwealth departments is growing. The Fraser Government has reduced the ability of Commonwealth public servants to handle the problems and effectively to assess the needs of people who are unemployed. I suggest that if this State Government is concerned for people who are unemployed it could be doing something in this respect also.

The final area to which I would like to make some brief reference is that of the new federalism. Some figures have been used by members on this side of the House this evening to demonstrate what has happened with the various categories

of financial grants that have been made to the States. At this stage, nobody can be certain what the new federalism will mean in fine detail. It is almost as bad as Medibank, because Mr Fraser changes his mind almost as often as he changes his socks, and we are not in a position to be certain of what the implications of the scheme will be within the next six months or at the end of the next financial year.

In essence the new federalism which has been publicly supported right along the line by the Western Australian Government has been a conspiracy by arch conservatives, and not just ordinary conservatives or Liberal politicians, but arch conservatives who hold leadership positions in this country. They have got their heads together and this scheme has been designed particularly for the purpose expressed so well in the words of Sir Eric Willis in a letter to the Prime Minister after a Premiers' Conference when he was asked to comment about the new proposals. He described the proposal as being a bulwark or a structure against any plans by a future Labor Government to continue national reform programmes of a social welfare nature.

If members opposite think seriously about that they may be prepared to admit—perhaps not tonight, but subsequently—that this is precisely the motivation behind the new federalism. There was such revulsion on the part of some members opposite at some of the social welfare programmes which became a reality under the previous Federal Government, that they set about the task of trying to ensure such things could never happen again. This is the purpose.

It took exactly six months for one-third of this nation's people situated in New South Wales to change their minds quite decidedly in an 11 per cent swing against the State Liberal Government and I suggest that precedent will be followed in Western Australia next year. The collapse of the Court Government in this State will sound the death knell to new federalism because, with four State Labor Governments after the next election in this State, it will be impossible for Fraser to obtain the co-operation he needs to make this system a reality; and, Fraser being the pragmatist that he is, will see the writing on the wall and the whole messy scheme will be scrapped.

In the second instance, the scheme is a genuine attempt at being reactionary. By definition, there can be no question about that. Anybody who sets out deliberately to turn back the hands of time and resurrect a system of double taxation that was dismantled in 1942 quite clearly is being reactionary.

Sir Charles Court: What is this double taxation?

Mr BRYCE: The mind boggles at what cherished, nineteenth century schemes the Premier and the Prime Minister have in mind to resurrect in this way. Their motivation for so doing will be to preserve the privileges of a relative few in an elitist form of society.

There is no question that this is where it all leads to, and it was the attempts of the Whitlam Labor Government to introduce national programmes aimed at reforming many areas of great social need that caused them to panic. If there had been no reaction in favour of an elitist society as opposed to an egalitarian society they would not be setting themselves at this moment to create a structure designed to frustrate future Labor Governments at a national level.

I should like to make a final comment relating to this so-called "new federalism" which justifies its inclusion in this type of censure motion. In fact, I prefer to call it oldfashioned federalism; that is a far more accurate term, because any system of federalism which involves an attempt to turn back the hands of time 30 or 40 years can scarcely be called new federalism.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has four minutes remaining.

Mr BRYCE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I refer to the means by which the Federal Government is going to force its austerity campaign upon the States. This is something the Premier has not acknowledged. Far from the claim that it will give the States greater independence and responsibilities, we will find that because Mr Fraser says there must be a short, sharp, shock to the economy not only on a national basis but also on a State basis, we will be forced to follow.

Mr Clarko: Whitlam said that.

Mr BRYCE: The member for Karrinyup should read some of our daily newspapers; he should not rely only on *The West Australian* but should broaden his outlook and take in some of the others.

In conclusion, on this subsection of federalism, there is no question that more spending responsibilities will be placed on State Governments, with less resources to carry them out. It amounts to the fact that this State has been sold a pup.

The tragedy of it all is that we have had nobody to stand up for this State and condemn the ravages of the Fraser Government since its election. We all remember well the extent to which the Premier campaigned as a knight in shining armour against the Whitlam Government. But this State now is leaderless and without a voice at a time when some of the more serious ravages in terms of economic policies are being perpetrated upon Western Australia by a national Government. We are without a voice. The Premier is absolutely silent on these issues. He has not yet taken one significant step to come

out and condemn the most extreme right wing Prime Minister the country has ever seen—a man born and brought up in privilege who is determined to create a society to serve that philosophy.

Sir Charles Court: Here we go again. The most class conscious people in this State sit opposite.

Mr BRYCE: The Premier has used at least five excuses for his failures; he is a man who has never been able to admit publicly that he is wrong. He has blamed the Whitlam Government, his coalition partners, Doug Anthony, left wing organisations, subversives and "eco-nuts"; anybody expressing concern for the environment and all those other people are responsible for stifling the economic development that would give him the chance to do what he wants to do.

When all these excuses fail, the Premier resorts to bashing unions and the hatred campaigns; and he is at his very best when he divides our society by encouraging one group to oppose another group. The Premier does this very successfully. To a substantial extent, the violence that is creeping into industrial relations in this State can be laid at the Premier's feet.

Mr Clarko: You are intoxicated.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr BRYCE: Mr Speaker, I realise that this probably will take up the remainder of my time, but I deeply object to the statement by the member for Karrinyup that I am intoxicated, and demand a withdrawal. The statement is defamatory and an outright lie and I insist he withdraws and apologises to the Parliament.

The SPEAKER: Order! Will the member for Karrinyup withdraw?

Mr CLARKO: Mr Speaker, could I ask you a question?

The SPEAKER: Have you an explanation?

Mr CLARKO: Yes, I certainly have. My understanding of semantics is that the word "intoxicated" can be used in many respects, the reference to alcohol being only one of them.

Mr Jamieson: Do not crawl out of it—be a man!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CLARKO: I can explain.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Karrinyup in what sense he used the word.

Mr CLARKO: I used the word "intoxicated" in the sense that the honourable member's remarks were full of his own importance and full of verbosity. In no way was alcohol involved. In fact, I would be surprised if the member for Ascot has had anything at all to drink, because he sounds as though he is normal.

The SPEAKER: Order! It will have been quite obvious to the member for Ascot that the member for Karrinyup has informed me and the House that he used the word "intoxicated" in another sense.

Mr BRYCE: Mr Speaker, I believe it is my right to insist that the member for Karrinyup withdraws what I consider is an insulting reference to me. I find his use of the word "intoxicated" in respect of my speech to be quite offensive. I believe it is unparliamentary and ask that it be withdrawn.

The SPEAKER: Under the circumstances, and considering the explanation offered by the member for Karrinyup that it was not his intention to use the word in such a manner as to imply that alcohol was involved, I do not believe the member for Ascot is in order in insisting on the withdrawal of a word; it is not unparliamentary.

Debate Resumed

The SPEAKER: The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr Bryce: If you want to play politics like that, Clarko, I will be happy to accommodate you.

MR WATT (Albany) [1.39 a.m.]: Early in the speech of the member for Ascot he mentioned that the Leader of the Opposition had mispronounced a word with his tongue in his cheek. I suggest that, similarly, the motion now before the House was moved in such a way. I should like to address a few remarks to paragraph (c) of the motion which deals with the so-called "new federalism".

Mr Jamieson: You had better deal with unemployment as it is so bad in Albany.

Mr WATT: I shall mention that. I want to suggest that this motion is a combination of fact and opinion. The first part of paragraph (c) states—

The Government has actively approved and promoted a system of so-called new federalism—

Apart from the word "so-called" that is fact and I am sure the Government makes no apology for it. It goes on to say—

—which will lead to major cutbacks in necessary public works and community services, with a consequent rise in unemployment, and the imposition of a second income tax on Western Australians.

This is certainly opinion. The final part of the motion which states that the Government no longer has the confidence of this House is very much the opinion of the Leader of the Opposition and will be proven to be wrong very shortly.

There are many factors which contribute to the sort of problems which the Leader of the Opposition has suggested in this motion—cutbacks in public works and

community services and rises in unemployment. I suggest that the forces which produce these things are created far more often by the policies of the Federal Government of the day, whichever political colour it be, than the policies of a State Government.

I should like to refresh our memories on some of the points in this new federalism policy because during the course of this debate we have strayed far and wide. If we look at just one or two salient features of it it will help us understand just what we are talking about.

Mr Bertram: A double tax.

Mr WATT: I will come to that also very shortly. The first point is that it is to be introduced in two stages. Stage 1, which is to commence next year, covers the income tax sharing proposals. Stage 2 provides for the States to be able to levy. Everybody keeps saying that a levy will be struck, but it may or may not be. The interesting point that has not been mentioned is that it also provides for a State to grant a rebate of personal income tax if it so elects.

I agree that it is probably fairly unlikely to happen, but it could happen. Let us look more closely at the proposals. The word "double" means to multiply by two. The Leader of the Opposition has tonight admitted that the essence of the type of government that the Labor Party espouses costs more to implement than that which a Liberal Government espouses because the basis of Labor philosophy is that it provides this, that, and the other thing free of charge.

Mr Blaikie: At the taxpayers' expense.

Mr WATT: Precisely. The Leader of the Opposition has admitted this so there should be no argument about the matter.

Mr Jamieson: What is the big deal? I do not see any big deal.

Mr WATT: Whatever a Government provides has to be paid for.

Mr Jamieson: Of course it does and we will pay for it and give it to the people of Albany.

Mr WATT: Where does one get the money to pay for it?

Mr Jamieson: From the people.

Mr WATT: From taxation in one form or another.

Mr Jamieson: That is elementary.

Mr WATT: So the Leader of the Opposition agrees with what I am saying. It matters not what one calls it, whether one calls it a surcharge, a levy, or anything else, but a Labor Government will invariably have a higher rate of taxation than a Liberal Government. The Leader of the Opposition has admitted this tonight, so there is no argument.

Mr Jamieson: I did not necessarily say it would be higher. I said that normally it provides services that could cause a higher rate.

Mr WATT: A classic example of this is the Federal Labor Government which introduced Medibank. It made frequent claims that Medibank would be provided at no cost to any member of the public. Although many people tried to deny this, I recall Mr Hayden saying on several occasions that it would not cost anything to the public and that there would be no increase in taxation. One does not need to be very clever to realise that that just cannot happen. Obviously when a Government provides a service somebody has to pay and of course that somebody is the taxpayer.

Mr Jamieson: Which service was this?

Mr WATT: If the Leader of the Opposition had been listening instead of conducting a conversation across the Chamber he would have heard me talking about Medibank.

Mr Jamieson: Of course you will recall that he originally intended to impose a tax which you people refused.

Mr WATT: The Leader of the Opposition would have heard me say that the Labor Government claimed quite frequently that it would cost nothing. That is the point I am trying to get across.

Mr Jamieson: That is not so.

Mr WATT: It did.

Mr Jamieson: You want to read *Hansard* more clearly than that. We knew that it would be a cost and so did everybody else.

Mr WATT: I believe the tax-sharing arrangements have considerable merit for this and other States. I can recall standing in this spot last year and saying so, and my attitude has not changed.

Mr Skidmore: It will be your last year for standing in this spot.

Mr WATT: The member for Swan would know all about that! How is his crystal ball? We have had to remind the Opposition on numerous occasions that we are entitled to a share of personal income tax. The people of this State pay their income tax and they are entitled to a share on a *per capita* basis. How members opposite can suggest otherwise I find very difficult to understand. The centralist policies of the Whitlam Government in Canberra were seen for what they were. When the people of Australia went to the polls that matter was very much an issue in Western Australia. It is a matter of history now that the people of Western Australia at least judged for themselves what they thought about the issue. The Australian Labor Party recorded a dismal performance by winning only one seat out of 10 and that one candidate got the fright of his life. So the people voted overwhelmingly for a Government which is prepared to be a little tough in economic matters and to make some unpopular decisions and which has abandoned the "She'll be right" attitude of the previous

Administration. The people no longer accepted the philosophy that if one runs out of money one prints a bit more.

As a result of this election the brakes have had to go on and the Federal Government has made some unpopular decisions. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the proof is that the inflation rate is coming down; and that too is a matter of fact. While it brings no joy to anybody that unemployment is at the high rate that it has reached, it is also a matter of fact that it is substantially the same as it was when Labor was in office.

Mr Bertram: Come off it!

Mr WATT: I say that it is substantially the same and I stand by that.

Mr B. T. Burke: Do you mean State Labor or Whitlam?

Mr WATT: I am talking about nationwide.

Mr Bertram: We are talking about Western Australia tonight.

Mr B. T. Burke: We are doing things State by State tonight.

Mr WATT: Members opposite should listen and they might learn a bit. The ALP whipped up a storm by saying that under the tax-sharing arrangements the less populous States would receive less money. The Prime Minister made it quite clear that this was not to be so.

Mr Bryce: Do you trust Fraser?

Mr WATT: I trust him a lot further than I would trust the member for Ascot. It is rather interesting that in this State the Government has managed almost to break even with its management of the economy. It had a surplus of about half a million dollars but when it came into power it inherited a deficit of \$5.73 million.

Mr Bertram: What is the total Budget?

Mr WATT: Of course, that could prove to be a tremendous blessing, as the economy is almost certain to take a downturn as a result of the drought this year.

When the Premier of South Australia (Mr Dunstan) was visiting Western Australia recently, he supported the new federalism policy. When he realised that he was not standing with the mob—and he was probably brought into line—he changed his mind. He then said that the new federalism policy was a “con job”.

On the subject of “con jobs” we ought to reflect for a moment on the one that was perpetrated on the people of New South Wales in the recent State election, and on the lies that were told to them about so-called double income tax. I also criticise the Liberals in that State for the fact that they did not get their message across to the people better.

Mr Bertram: Did they run out of funds?

Mr WATT: They might have. They are the so-called wealthy Liberals.

Mr Harman: You cannot hide the truth.

Mr B. T. Burke: You can turn off the lights.

The SPEAKER: This whole spate of interjections must cease.

Mr WATT: They probably help to keep members opposite awake. I found the comments of the member for Maylands about the inspiring speech of the member for Mt. Hawthorn to be rather humorous. Coming at the end of a line of speakers on the motion, much of what I had planned to say has already been said. I do not wish to traverse ground that has already been traversed by other speakers, but I do wish to mention a couple of points. One is related to the tax sharing arrangement with local government.

Mr B. T. Burke: The Peppermint Grove Shire will get \$10 per head. Do you agree?

Mr WATT: I know those people make contributions through taxes, the same as anybody else. They do not receive their *per capita* grant on the same basis as other people receive it; they receive a much smaller amount per head, and that is a fact.

Mr B. T. Burke: If that was so the City of Stirling would receive \$1.6 million.

Mr McIver: What did the Albany Town Council receive by way of grant this year?

Mr WATT: For the first time the council will know what it will receive in State and Commonwealth grants. The council will know this in time to enable it to consider all factors in framing its budget. The Albany Town Council will receive an increase of about 33 per cent.

Mr McIver: What about next year?

Mr WATT: The Mayor of Albany was very pleased with the increase. I hope the Mayor of Albany will not mind my saying this: he is not easily pleased.

Mr B. T. Burke: What about the Fremantle City Council?

Mr WATT: This Government made an election promise to place more responsibility on local government. The fact is that both State and local government will know what they will receive. I hope that the local authorities, in being able to anticipate the amounts they will receive in this way, will use the funds wisely to keep down their rates—and this I believe they are now able to do.

Under the old system they did not know what they would receive in the way of grants; therefore they had to strike rates and frame a budget with no certain knowledge of the amounts they would receive. For that reason the rates were struck fairly high. When they did receive the grants from the Commonwealth in some cases they use the funds on schemes and

projects that were quite unnecessary. The money could well have been used to ease the fairly high rating situations in some districts.

Finally I wish to make a couple of comments on unemployment. The member for Warren, who is not in the Chamber at the moment, made some comments earlier about unemployment in Albany. I wish he would refer to the Albany district. It has increased by over 200 per cent. Certainly I am not pleased about this increase.

Mr T. H. Jones: What action are you taking?

Mr WATT: It was rather strange that the member for Warren should comment about the increase of 207 per cent in Albany. I should point out that the increase in Manjimup is 201 per cent, or nearly the same rate. That has occurred at Manjimup, despite the massive injection of capital into the wood chipping industry, and also some fairly massive injections of Government money into propping up the white elephant known as the Manjimup canning company. The words of the member for Warren had a fairly hollow ring, when he cast aspersions on the electorate of Albany.

The member for Maylands also had a shot at this, and he used some fairly emotional words to suggest that he might be the only member who is concerned about the unemployment problem confronting school leavers. I have news for him. Speaking for myself, I am very concerned about the fact that so many young people are forced to leave the town that I represent. I know that most other members hold the same view. I would not want the member for Maylands to think that he is alone in his concern for these people.

Mr T. J. Burke: He is genuinely concerned.

Mr WATT: I beg your pardon? I think it might have been the member for Ascot who referred to the use of the term "dole bludgers". It is not a term that I use myself, but it is quite apparent that he misunderstands the way in which the term is used. He has implied that the term is used to describe people who are unemployed.

Mr Bryce: It is used indiscriminately,

Mr WATT: That is not so. I have heard this term used to describe people who are unemployed because they want to be unemployed. Whether or not members opposite accept that is immaterial; it is a fact. I have spoken to numerous young people who are unemployed because they find this to be a more convenient way of life. They prefer to be unemployed and to live on the dole.

Mr McIver: Did you report them?

Mr WATT: It really amazes me how members opposite are trying to oppose the federalism policy. In raising their opposition they must have been speaking with

tongue in cheek. In all the time this country laboured under the Whitlam Government, I cannot recall members of the Opposition in this House raising their voices in opposition to the highly inflationary policy of that Government. Therefore, it is nonsense to suggest that this State Government no longer has the confidence of the House. I oppose the motion.

Mr Bryce: The Whitlam Government did not make ridiculous promises.

MR SKIDMORE (Swan) [2.00 a.m.]: A lot has been said tonight about seasonally adjusted figures. I feel that we ought to put the record straight so that people may understand exactly what the Government Statistician means by the term and what it does in fact mean when it is used for the purpose of supposedly making arguments better than they would be if the original data were used.

Under the notations given in the June issue of the "Monthly Review of the Employment Situation" issued by the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations is the following concerning seasonal adjustments—

The purpose of seasonally adjusting a statistical time series is to remove the effect of estimated normal seasonal variations so that one can assess more clearly the effects of other influences on the series, and thereby judge more accurately the underlying trends in economic activity.

Then some more remarks are made, but the last paragraph is pertinent. I hope members listen so that in future they leave seasonally adjusted figures where they rightfully belong—outside this House.

Mr Grayden: You do not mean that.

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister will understand in a moment. About seasonally adjusted figures the statistician comments as follows—

Mr Grayden: Why do you think they are adjusted?

Mr SKIDMORE: He says—

For these and other reasons, the Statistician has warned that seasonally adjusted series "are always in a sense estimates, and are not definitive statistics . . .

Mr Grayden: They have—

Mr SKIDMORE: Wait a minute. Apparently the Minister has more knowledge than the man who prepared the figures the Minister used.

Mr Grayden: You yourself have always put emphasis on seasonally adjusted figures.

Mr SKIDMORE: The quotation continues—

. . . They must be treated with caution as being no more than useful indicators of movements . . . a useful aid to critical interpretation, but . . . in no way . . . a substitute for it".

In other words in essence the statistician is saying that the original data figures are the only substantive and real statistics which should be used, but the seasonally adjusted figures take note of certain factors including unemployment due to school children coming onto the market, meat industry employees being laid off, and so on. They are purely estimates because no-one is able accurately to forecast precisely the number of those affected at any given time.

Mr Sibson: You remember that.

Mr Grayden: I am going to take you up on the statements you are making now.

Mr Bryce: Take it easy now.

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister can go for his life. I do not care what he picks me up on.

I am quite happy to use both figures to show how stupid the Minister is to rely on seasonally adjusted figures.

Mr Grayden: Why do you think they convert them to seasonally adjusted figures?

Mr SKIDMORE: If the Minister will be patient he will get the message. All the Minister and his colleagues are endeavouring to do by their interjections is to prevent me from convincing them because they will not listen. However, others will and perhaps may be better informed as a result.

I received from the Minister the document from which he was quoting and he was quoting accurately. It also shows that in New South Wales the original figure of unemployment was 4.9 per cent. I will not quote them all, but it is significant that although the Minister said Western Australia's figures were the lowest, they are not.

Mr Grayden: What are you talking about now?

Mr SKIDMORE: In essence South Australia has an original data figure of 3.1 per cent of the work force and the seasonally adjusted figure is 3.57 per cent.

Mr Grayden: What are you talking about?

Mr SKIDMORE: In Victoria the figure is 3.96 per cent while the seasonally adjusted figure is 4.41 per cent.

Mr Shalders: You just told us they were no good.

Mr SKIDMORE: In Western Australia the original data figure is 4.02 per cent while the seasonally adjusted figure is 4.24 per cent, an increase on seasonally adjusted figures of .22 per cent. The significance I place on the seasonally adjusted figures is the variation the statistics now reveal if we make a comparison of the percentage increase State by State with the seasonally adjusted percentage increase.

It is most significant that Western Australia goes from 4.02 to 4.24 per cent. In other States they are up varying amounts; for example, .78 per cent, .45 per cent, .43 per cent, and .29 per cent, while the national figure is .55 per cent. Therefore one cannot use those figures as a true reflection of the situation. However it is true to say the Minister's statement—that is, that Western Australia's employment figure is better than the figures of the other States—is false. It is not true.

Mr Grayden: Absolutely untrue.

Mr SKIDMORE: South Australia's figure is 3.14 per cent, Victoria's is 3.96 per cent, and Western Australia's is 4.02 per cent. If that does not make us the third worst State in Australia, I do not know what it does.

Mr Grayden: You obviously cannot read the schedule I gave you.

Mr SKIDMORE: Any time he likes the Minister can get his experts from the Department of Labour and Industry to check Hansard.

Mr Grayden: What about reading all the figures?

Mr SKIDMORE: I will prove undoubtedly that what I said is true.

Mr Grayden: Read the statement.

Mr Sibson: Read the lot.

Mr Sodeman: Read out the figures.

Mr SKIDMORE: It is not my intention to give the lot.

Mr Shalders: You are not game to.

Mr SKIDMORE: I gave those figures which clearly illustrate the Minister was wrong.

Mr Sodeman: You have mentioned only one month.

Mr SKIDMORE: The figures I have given clearly indicate that Western Australia's unemployment situation is not the best in Australia. In fact its problem is probably rated in about the middle of all the States.

Mr Grayden: It is the best.

Mr SKIDMORE: It is not. The figures do not show that.

Mr Grayden: Overall, it is the best of the States.

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister can use all sorts of terms. I have used the official figures he gave me.

Mr Sodeman: For eight months we had the lowest unemployment figure of all the States and in the remaining four months we were the second lowest.

Mr SKIDMORE: I come now to the original data figure for June. As at June, 1976, the unemployment figure was 21 103. In June, 1975, it was 17 003; in 1974, 7 782; and in 1973 it was 8 461.

Mr Sodeman: What is your solution?

Mr SKIDMORE: So the total figures indicate that unemployment is continually increasing in Western Australia. Whether or not it is good or bad or better or worse does not matter. As the member for Maylands said, surely the question of the human being becoming a figure on a piece of paper is not the significant factor which should be considered when debating the problem of unemployment.

The Minister stated that the Whitlam Government took away tax and other concessions from businesses. He said the Whitlam Government did not leave one of these concessions. Later on I will quote from the Budget speech of the 25th August, 1975, of the then Whitlam Government. A summary is made in a document issued by the Government and is called "Weekly Digest 121". I will come to that later.

First of all I would like to deal with the magnificent contribution made by the member for Murray. I do compliment him on the manner in which he presented his figures. He submitted them very well and indicated that there had been an increase in the minimum wage in the States and that Western Australians did not seem to be disadvantaged in any way at all. He also indicated that the average of the wages seemed to reveal that Western Australia was not disadvantaged. The honourable member can fool some of the people some of the time, but there is one person on this side that he cannot fool at any time. All he was doing was making a comparison of wages which bear relativity in a national scene. Whether we like it or not commissioners in all States follow the Federal scene.

So there is an equalisation of those wage factors but they are not true wages when compared with what a worker receives in his pay packet. Using the argument raised by the member for Murray, I would simply say he failed to take note of the very essence of the motion before us. It complains about the inflation rate which this Premier and his Government were to solve within six months. The Premier has found that he has been unable to get within cooee of fulfilling that promise.

The member for Murray did not bother to indicate that whilst the worker—nationally and in Western Australia—appeared to be receiving a wage of \$120—and I do know that that is reasonable—this did not allow for inflation. Inflation is the sole responsibility of the Court Liberal Government, because the Premier, in his policy speech, said he would make it his responsibility. There is no question about it; he would solve inflation within a certain period.

I do not intend to quote all the relevant figures because already there are so many in *Hansard* it would be impossible to add any further weight to what has been presented by the Opposition tonight, but the percentage change for Perth between March, 1974, and June, 1975, was 24 per

cent. From March, 1974, to June, 1976, the figure was 41.2 per cent. I cannot be told that the Premier will solve inflation with one wave of a magic wand. An examination of the position in other States shows that they face much the same problem.

The rate of inflation in Western Australia, between March, 1974, and June of this year, has been the highest in Australia. During that period the Consumer Price Index for Perth increased by 41.2 per cent whereas the national average increased by 36.7 per cent. Perth is 4.5 per cent above the national average. The member for Murray claimed that the worker has received equality of wages based on the national concept, but he failed to realise that the worker was 4.5 per cent worse off than the national average because of inflation in this State.

On the 30th March, 1976, the Premier said it was the policy of his Government to build up confidence and make the State more stable and prosperous. In the month of August, 1976, I can see nothing but disaster facing us. I can see no sign of the Premier's promised stability and prosperity. If that is the way he intends to control inflation, we could easily have another 5 000 unemployed by the end of the year, as was pointed out by the member for Ascot.

The Premier claimed that he would beat inflation, State by State. Many of the increases complained about in the motion have already been stated but it is worth while to state some which have not yet been given. The WAGR road freight has gone up by 38 per cent, and railway and bus fares have increased by 17.5 per cent. No doubt country people will feel happy that they can share in that increase! The price of natural gas has gone up by 20 per cent. Rents on Government-owned dwellings have risen by 60.4 per cent and transfer fees have increased between 25 per cent and 84.6 per cent. It is irrefutable that charges have been increased to cover increased costs and inflation.

When the Whitlam Government was in power the Premier blamed it for all his sins. When the Premier realised he had made some rash statements he had to go into the international market, and he made some magnificent claims about what he had in the pipeline. However, the pipeline is about to be opened and it will be shown to be completely empty.

The Minister for Labour and Industry made great play on the efforts of the present Government to ensure that the Telfer mine got off the ground. Again, it appears that the workers are preventing that proposition from getting started. The Minister for Mines took to task a member of the Opposition on the question of wages. I would like to dwell on the justification of the workers for those high wages.

Mr Coyne: Four hundred dollars a week!

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not care whether they get \$4 000; that has nothing to do with the attitude of the Industrial Commission. The Commissioner heard the case, and granted an increase in wages which was considered to be fair and equitable. That increase caused a great deal of concern to the employers, and they said they would not pay it because they could not afford to do so. The workers then denied their labour, which they are justly entitled to do.

There are two sides to the question. In the opinion of the Minister and the Government the worker is to be held to ransom for asking for a fair and reasonable return for his labour.

Mr Mensaros: They accept justice if it suits them, but they do not accept it if it does not suit them.

Mr SKIDMORE: When a worker considers he is not receiving justice he has only one way to fight and that is to deny his labour. The developers should not complain about that. If the workers do not want to work for the wages which are offered they have a right to withdraw their labour.

Mr Coyne: They do not have to declare the site black.

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not think they have to, either; but who would want to work in those primitive conditions in a very isolated area? It is not only air-conditioned huts which cause trouble among the workers. They can be offered as a sop in isolated conditions like that. Is that all they are supposed to require?

Mr Mensaros: If you feel no-one wants to go up there, I guarantee I can get people to go up there without any trouble.

Mr Jamieson: Go up there yourself.

Mr SKIDMORE: The simple fact is if the workers do not want to work there they have the right to withdraw their labour.

A point about which the Minister for Labour and Industry was worried was touched on by other speakers; that is, the question of junior workers. The record of the Government in this State in regard to apprentices is abysmal.

Mr Grayden: That is untrue.

Mr SKIDMORE: It is shocking. The apprenticeship problem will never be overcome with the thinking of the Government and its attitude to what has been proposed at various times in the interests of apprentices. We had instant bricklayers. One could go out and do a six-week course and then become an instant bricklayer working on a cottage. There were no apprentices in the industry. Who would want to be apprenticed for five years on low wages when he could supposedly learn the job in six weeks and go out and get top wages? The carpentry industry has been bastardised and again there are no apprentices in the industry.

Mr Grayden: Of all the States only Western Australia and Tasmania have improved the situation in the last 12 months.

Mr SKIDMORE: I have been assisted by the Minister's remark that Western Australia and Tasmania have increased their apprenticeship intake in the last 12 months.

Mr Grayden: They are the only two States which have done so.

Mr SKIDMORE: I turn the Minister's statement back on him and say he had better have a look at the situation. This is an instance of the duplicity of the Minister when he raises these matters in the House. He forgets that while there may have been an increase, in real terms there should have been an increase of 300 or 400 per cent in apprenticeships in Western Australia based upon the number of people who are engaged in industry. Employers have a right to a certain percentage of apprentices. It appears the Minister is not so concerned as the Federal Minister (Mr Street). He expressed concern in a document dated as late as the 18th July, 1976, which states—

Boost for Industrial Training

13 July 1976—The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, the Hon. Tony Street, said today that a recent national survey of 140 firms indicated an average annual expenditure on training of only \$40 per employee.

Forty dollars per employee on the training of apprentices is the national figure. That is not a very good piece of the cake for the training of apprentices. It is a disgraceful record and I blame all States for it, be they Labor or Liberal. The apprenticeship intake for 1976 is expected to be 9 per cent lower than that in 1975. Those are Mr Street's national figures, and the Minister in this House says the number of apprenticeships is increasing. Mr Street went on to say—

In some trades there are about 100 young people seeking apprenticeships for every vacancy registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service. These facts provide disturbing evidence which suggests that industrial recovery will be retarded by shortages of trained manpower.

Apparently we have an immigration policy to bring tradesmen into this country because there is a shortage of tradesmen, yet we have hundreds and hundreds of young people who are out of work and cannot become apprenticed because it is not an economic proposition for them to do so. Other avenues are available to them and they are shot to pieces by staying in an apprenticeship on such low wages. All in all, it is just another activity or nonactivity of this Government to try to solve the unemployment problem.

Mr Grayden: South Australia dropped 20 per cent in apprenticeship intake this year and we are on the increase. That is the difference.

Mr SKIDMORE: Some of the figures for registered unemployed juniors have been dealt with and I do not intend to go into them. I simply say that in March, 1974, the total number of junior males, junior females, and school leavers who were registered as unemployed was 2 669, while in June, 1976, the number was 8 343, an increase of 5 674 or a percentage increase of 212.69. So even if the Minister is able to increase the apprenticeship output considerably to cope with the 9 per cent of the national work force, we will still be behind with junior workers. We have a long way to go to solve the problem of those people.

Some of the statements of the Premier might be worth quoting. In *Hansard* on the 16th August, 1972, he said—

In my opinion it is the responsibility of a Government to provide opportunities of employment for the work force. It is drafted to do that job when it is elected . . . This is a State responsibility.

The responsibility was abrogated by the present Government. On the same day the Premier also said within six months of getting back into office and sorting out some of the mess which had been created his party would be able to solve the problem.

Mention has been made of the grants under the RED Scheme and the AAP Scheme which had only just started to become fruitful to people in many areas. The AAP Scheme was a concept which it was hoped would develop into a big virile, involved committee, as I understand it, and it is to the discredit of the Fraser Government that it saw fit to abolish the funding of that scheme, thus destroying the incentive of local communities to overcome their own problems.

Mr Blaikie: That is a lot of rot. You do not know what you are talking about. If there was anything that destroyed the local community it was the AAP Scheme.

Mr SKIDMORE: Apparently the member for Vasse was unable to make it work as well as the committee in Midland did. It was operating very satisfactorily in the Midland area and was destroyed by the withdrawal of the funding. People who showed such enthusiasm for local issues have now become so dispirited that they have gone back into their shell and it will be a long time before we can motivate the local community as well as the AAP did in my area.

If the member for Vasse did not have the ability to do that, I am sorry. He should go back and try a bit harder.

Mr Blaikie: I live in a community that has made its own way for a long time and what the AAP did was almost to wreck that situation.

Mr SKIDMORE: While the area has a member of the capabilities of the member for Vasse, I can understand why the situation was nearly wrecked.

Mr Jamieson: It is a wonder they did not all commit suicide.

Mr SKIDMORE: Perhaps the most stupid policy of the Federal Government has been its opposition to the full flow-on of the 6.54 per cent rise in the CPI. The Premier referred to the CPI and said that the full flow-on should not be met and that the unions should show a responsible attitude to wage increases. It is a most remarkable thing that the question of wage indexation was adopted and agreed to by the Commonwealth and State Governments and the unions as a package deal, but when the matter went to the Commonwealth commission, in its wisdom the commission imposed certain guidelines under which the unions would work. This was a prerequisite that the Governments and the unions had not envisaged. However, after a certain amount of disputation, the unions accepted the guidelines which merely stated that any union whose relativity had been destroyed at a certain date would be allowed to catch up to the maximum amount.

The unions have been responsible; the only irresponsibility in this State was the interference by the Government of the day in the present hearing on wage indexation. We have an advocate from the Government arguing before the commission on the question of wage indexation in this State. Before coming to the advocate's remarkable verbal gymnastics and the castigation of him by the Western Australian Industrial Commission—

Mr Blaikie: You are not bringing up matters which are *sub judice*, are you?

Mr SKIDMORE: I wish to talk about the way in which the Government's advocate, in his wisdom, put forward the point of view of the Government on wage indexation. I will refer to the statement made by the Minister assisting the Treasurer (the Hon. Eric L. Robinson, MP) on the 14th April, 1976, in Press release No. 75. He remarked that the third major policy in issue is the battle of inflation and this involved a direct attack on wage indexation.

So there is no question of the constancy of the Government in its opposition to this particular matter. I suggest that members should look at the report in today's copy of the *Daily News* where it states that the Government's advocate (Mr L. E. Boylen) suggested to the full bench that the commission should wait for the Federal decision before considering an increase in wages in Western Australia.

Now the Western Australian Government has said to the unions, "You may have wage indexation"; the Industrial Commission has said to the unions, "You may have wage indexation"; and they were all very happy about it. However, when the workers of this State looked like getting an increase before their Federal counterparts the Government said that such a move was not justified because although the commission had agreed to wage indexation, the State Government wanted to wait until the Federal commission arrived at a decision.

The commissioners were quite correct in saying that they could see no point in listening to Mr Boylen's submissions if they were simply being asked to follow the Federal decision. In tonight's Press we see that Commissioner Collier asked, "Is this tribunal merely a rubber stamp for a Federal decision?" So much for the statement that the trade union movement should be responsible! A pattern has been established, and it is typical of the Government that it has gone into battle, not because of its views or a policy based on fact, but merely because it wishes to wait on the Federal decision.

Mr Mensaros: Why don't you try to relate your remarks to the motion?

The SPEAKER: The member has five minutes.

Mr Old: Too long!

Mr SKIDMORE: I will accept your statement, Sir, that I have five minutes remaining. However, I observed the time when I commenced and it appears I should clean my glasses because apparently I misunderstood what I saw.

In the five minutes remaining to me I wish to comment further on the Minister's statement that some of the matters the Whitlam Government was supposed to have taken away from industry were those which made it almost impossible for industry to sustain itself in a viable way. This does not seem to agree with the Budget speech made by the Treasurer in the Whitlam Government because in that speech it was stated that the Government would make recommendations for assistance to local government of \$79.9 million or 42 per cent more than in the previous year. The Treasurer also went on to say—

We shall, of course, keep the question of business profitability and liquidity under careful notice but, in all circumstances, we have turned to the other alternative in this area which was mentioned by the Mathews Committee—namely, a reduction in company tax.

Yet the Minister said the Whitlam Government took everything from the companies and did not do anything for them.

I have quoted from the Treasurer's Budget speech, and he continues—

The Government has decided to adopt this alternative and proposes to reduce the general rate of company tax by 2.5 per cent to 42.5 per cent. The new rate will apply to 1974-75 income and will cost an estimated \$120 million in 1975-76.

If that does not give the lie to the Minister's statement that the Whitlam Government was always trying to chop off big business, I do not know what will.

Mr Grayden: That was a desperate attempt to retrieve the situation.

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not like to have to show the Minister that he is wrong and incorrect in his statements and it does not give me any joy to do this. However, at least I try to quote reliable figures and I do not attempt to mislead the House.

Mr Grayden: Why not tell us the rest of the story?

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not think there is anything more I can say about it. If he likes, the Minister may read this book entitled *Australian Government Weekly Digest*.

Mr Grayden: Tell us about investment tax.

Mr SKIDMORE: All through this Budget we see a tremendous impetus to the States in regard to funding.

I will conclude on this note: I do not pretend to be an economic wizard—in fact, I am probably the biggest economic dunce in this place.

Mr Old: Don't be modest.

Mr SKIDMORE: It seems to me that the policy of solving inflation by creating an unemployment pool will succeed. A high percentage of unemployment will withdraw money from the market; people will be unable to spend and they will worry about their jobs; they will accept conditions and wages which would not otherwise be acceptable and already some industries are not working full time—the workers are sharing the degree of unemployment. The rot is starting to set in. Such a system will cure inflation but it will not cure unemployment. Both could be cured by positive thinking on the part of the Government, but creating unemployment will not solve the problem at all. As I say if we follow the present policy, in two or three years' time we will have a disaster in this country of ours.

Perhaps if we were shown the pipeline about which the Premier has been talking for so long we would see something that would help us in this State. But we know there is nothing; it is a myth. It is the greatest hoax that has been perpetrated on the people of Western Australia, ever. In my opinion the Premier is again misleading the people and is certainly misleading the Opposition when he says, "You

wait; you will see; they are in the pipeline." I have been waiting. I cannot see them, and I think the pipeline has just about disappeared.

MR McIVER (Avon) [2.41 a.m.]: I appreciate the hour is late, and I will make my remarks brief. However, the motion before the House is an important one and I, as a member of the Opposition, would be failing in my duty if I did not challenge some of the remarks made by Government speakers tonight.

Mr Old: We would forgive you.

Mr McIVER: Firstly, I commend my leader for presenting this motion to the House to show to the people of Western Australia the incompetence of the Government they elected in 1974. I am sure that decision will be reversed when they go to the polls next year, because they have been conned just as the Federal Government conned the people on a national basis.

I repeat that the Leader of the Opposition is to be congratulated for bringing the motion to the House and for the manner in which he presented it, although in extreme difficulty. I take the Premier to task for his opening remarks when he said the effort of the Leader of the Opposition was a very poor one. We must have regard for the state of the Leader of the Opposition tonight. We all know that he should be in a hospital bed.

Mr Jamieson: Thanks, I feel better already.

Mr McIVER: I am also surprised that we have not heard one Country Party member speak to this motion. This is one of the reasons that the present Government will be defeated at the next election: because of the dividing line that exists between the Government parties. No-one can tell me that Country Party members in this Chamber are in full agreement with what has been said tonight by Liberal members. The Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Housing were placed in positions of great responsibility in this State as a result of certain circumstances. Although I do not agree with their political philosophy—

Mr Old: Good Lord!

Mr McIVER: —I believe they have carried out their duties conscientiously and to the best of their ability. What will they get in return? If possible, the Liberal Party will see they are unemployed. That will be their reward for tagging along with the Liberal Party of this State. That will be their reward for the many hours they have contributed to the Liberal Party.

The SPEAKER: Will you tie this in with the motion?

Mr McIVER: Yes, Sir. I thank you for your indulgence in allowing me to go so far; but I think it was necessary to say what I have said. I repeat that it is strange that we have not heard from any member of the Country Party tonight.

I stand here as a member of the Labor Party, and I know that when that title is mentioned to the people of Western Australia next year they will certainly flock to us in their thousands seeking the leadership that we have given in the past, and particularly between 1971 and 1974 under the Tonkin Government. One of the great differences between the two sides of this Chamber is that we on this side stand solidly behind our leader to a man. It is the responsibility of each and every one of us to see that our leader will become the next Premier of Western Australia.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr Grayden: No possibility.

Mr Jamieson: We have a good candidate against you, too.

Mr McIVER: We in this State are in a very sorry mess in respect of unemployment. I will not quote figures and statistics, because I prefer to believe in reality than in statistics. The rate of unemployment presently existing in Western Australia has been imposed upon the State by the policies of the present State Government and its counterparts in Canberra. Of course, our problems will be compounded by the situation we will face as a result of the present drought. We will not face that situation this year, because farmers have carry-on finance, but next year; and then the pattern set in the past will be followed. When the State gets into trouble a Labor Government is elected to get it out of trouble; that has been the history of Western Australia. It is all very well for young members opposite to laugh—

Mr Davies: They don't laugh; they giggle.

Mr McIVER: —because they all come from fine homes and have received a good education and have never known what it is to want. However, believe me, before very long we in this State will all be in a sorry position.

I do not think people in the metropolitan area realise the unemployment we will be faced with when people presently employed on farms will not be able to be employed next year as a result of the drought. I notice no-one opposite is laughing now.

Mr Old: You are not funny any more.

Mr McIVER: This is a very serious situation indeed. Of course, it will be up to the Labor Party to implement its policies in respect of rural areas just as it has done in the past when the State has faced serious problems. In those circumstances it has always been the Labor Party that has provided the necessary drive and direction for rural areas, irrespective of socialism and the militant left-wing unions of which members opposite speak. At such times it is always up to the Labor Party to provide leadership, and I know it will happen again.

I feel sorry for the Minister for Housing in particular, because no doubt he will be crucified as a result of the reduction in the funds he receives from the Federal Government.

I note from the Press that the State Minister for Transport has met with his counterpart in Canberra and has been begging for funds which he is not going to get. I do not intend to dwell on the transport situation, except to say that it has never been in such a shocking mess as it is at present. Transport was one of the principal issues in the recent New South Wales election, and it is no wonder that the people voted for a change of Government after years of Liberal domination of the Government of that State, when the Liberals in New South Wales did not have a transport policy; they totally disregarded the issue.

The same situation applies in Western Australia, because our State Government does not have a transport policy—irrespective of the couple of paragraphs sent to me the other day by the Minister.

Mr Mensaros: You are proving how weak the motion is because you are forced to talk on other subjects.

Mr McIVER: The Minister is like a goldfish coming up for air. In every facet of administration in this State, such as taxes, health, transport and services we have never been in such a sorry state as we are today, yet all we have heard from members opposite tonight has been figures and statistics. They have refused to discuss the real situation facing the people of Western Australia.

Mr Mensaros: Are you amending the motion?

Mr McIVER: No, I am not.

Mr Mensaros: I thought you might be, because you are speaking on unrelated subjects.

Mr McIVER: The situation is so bad that not even the Minister's seat of Floreat is safe. He will be one of the people who will be blamed by the country people when it does not rain; let the Minister mark my words!

Mr O'Connor: Do you think Avon is safe?

Mr McIVER: I think it is; it has been safe for the last 42 years and I cannot see any change occurring in the future. A great deal has been said tonight about the Whitlam Government's policy of centralism.

Mr Rushton: It was disgusting to see what Whitlam did to us all.

Mr McIVER: Is that a fact? The Minister should have a look at what is happening at present. Up to a few weeks ago, a person could make application for unemployment or sickness benefits in the regional centres of our State, such as

Northam, Kalgoorlie, Albany and Geraldton. However, since that chap called Fraser has been in office this function has been taken away from the regional centres and has been centralised in the great bank of computers which has been installed in the Department of Social Security in Perth. The personal files have been taken away and the regional officers have lost their responsibility for assessing individual claims.

Mrs Craig: Mr Whitlam installed the computers.

Mr McIVER: I think the member for Wellington is missing my point. The computers were installed long before the Whitlam Government came in.

Mrs Craig: You said that in the last six months or so a computer had gone in which has centralised welfare payments.

Mr McIVER: For the benefit of the member for Wellington I repeat that the responsibility for regional officers and Commonwealth Employment Service officers to assess claims has been taken away from them. Submissions must now be sent to Perth. I know the member for Wellington is sincere in her interjection, but is that not centralism?

Mrs Craig: It commenced before the present Federal Government was elected.

Mr McIVER: No, it was introduced by Senator Guilfoyle, the responsible Minister.

Mr T. J. Burke: It is part of the Public Service cutbacks.

Mr McIVER: Of course it is, and what a shambles has resulted. In the last month my office has been inundated with people asking me for assistance. I know it is a Federal matter, but I am all heart and I try to help them. I do not know what my next telephone bill is going to be!

Members opposite continually talk about socialism and centralism, but the example I have just given shows what hypocrisy it is for them to make such comments. Members opposite thrive on hypocrisy, and have done so ever since the formation of their party.

One thing which can be said about the Australian Labor Party is that, from the day of its inception, it has never been found necessary to change the name of the party. Members who sit opposite cannot say the same about their own parties. In fact, I understand a motion was moved at the last Country Party conference to change its name yet again. They will probably run out of space soon because they have changed their name so often.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think the honourable member should return to the motion before the Chair.

Mr McIVER: I refer now to the question of double taxation, which will serve to further increase unemployment. It does

not matter what one calls it; the Premier will have no option but to place further imposts on the people of this State. It would not matter which party were in power; under such financial conditions, a Labor State Government would be forced to do the same because it would be left with no option.

It is a pity the Premier does not join with his colleague, the Premier of Victoria (Mr Hamer) and the Premier of South Australia, with whom I know he has joined at previous Premier's Conferences in order to put forward a joint case for the States to try to gain additional finance.

On this occasion, the Premier has been very reluctant to work in co-operation with the other State Premiers. Of course, we know a State election is coming up and the Premier is anxious not to draw attention to the situation in Western Australia. However, he fools nobody, and certainly not members on this side.

Members opposite talked about Whitlam and the men who sat with him, but we have a Prime Minister in Canberra for whom words escape me. The most shocking thing I am permitted to say is that he is a blatant liar.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: Order! I must ask the honourable member to withdraw that remark.

Mr McIVER: Naturally, Mr Speaker, I will abide by your request.

Debate Resumed

Mr McIVER: I have shown in this House on a previous occasion a newspaper heading indicating that Malcolm Fraser did not intend to oppose Mr Snedden, the then Leader of the Liberal Party. He also stated that there was no way he would attack the concept of Medibank. There was also no way that he could touch wage indexation and more importantly, he stated that the Queen summoned him before her. However, this was later denied; it was Fraser himself who asked for an audience. I can appreciate your reprimand, Mr Speaker, but when I submit those facts, was my remark not the truth? Of course it was!

In conclusion, I believe the Opposition's case has been adequately put forward by the Leader of the Opposition and my colleagues on this side. We have adequately pointed to the poor performance of this Government. We can understand the party loyalties of members opposite, but believe me, when members opposite go to the polls next year, they will find the situation is reversed. It will not be very long before my colleagues and I are sitting on the other side. I have every pleasure in supporting the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR T. H. JONES (Collie) [3.00 a.m.]: I should like to join the member for Avon in congratulating my leader on his foresight in proposing this motion in the House this evening. I should like to indicate from the outset that it is not my intention to delay the House for any great length of time due to the lateness of the hour.

However, it would appear to me that most of the speakers from the other side of the House have given the impression tonight that everything is rosy and there is little to worry about. That is the impression I have gathered from the Liberal members who have spoken. Of course, as the member for Avon has said, we have not heard any views expressed on behalf of the National Country Party. But it would be true to say that everybody on the other side is quite happy and believes that we are going along well in Western Australia irrespective of attitudes and problems being encountered in other parts of Australia. Of course this view is not expressed by other States of the Commonwealth and by other people within the State.

The motion refers to the new federalism policies introduced by the Fraser Government. There are a number of questions to be asked about these policies. I know it is early yet to determine the level of finance to the States, but there are a number of matters to be raised.

The theory behind this new concept of federalism is that the States will be in a better financial position because of access to gross tax, namely, personal income tax, and will have much greater freedom in making decisions because there will be an increase in untied grants at the expense of tied grants. Then there is the reality attached to the federalism policies, and whether the theory will bring about the reality is very arguable.

Of course there are also the consequences of the policies which concern me and no doubt will concern us all when we see the position in which the States must find themselves when they will have no alternative but to impose a second or State tax, which could be excessive. I think it has been generally conceded by all States that the introduction of a State tax is inevitable. Of course we can look at the reasons and also go into the theory of the new concept of federalism and its effect on the State.

Whilst the Minister for Labour and Industry has said that we have achieved great things so far as unemployment is concerned, his views are not shared by any organisations within the State. He has argued that the position here and in Tasmania is somewhat different from the position in other States. Of course other organisations are concerned about the cut-backs in the programming and the money made available by the Federal Government.

I shall quote briefly some of the remarks made by people associated with industry generally throughout Western Australia. Concern is being expressed about the \$10.2 million cut by the Minister for Post and Telecommunications. The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (Mr Street) announced that funds for trade union training had been cut by \$950 000 to \$6.75 million. Concern has been expressed in many different directions. An article in *The West Australian* of the 17th July, stated—

Local government seeks more Federal aid

Sydney: Australian local government bodies wanted their share in the Federal Government's recent income tax and postal trading windfalls, the national secretary of the Australian Council of Local Government Associations, Mr G. Miles, said yesterday.

Mr Miles, who is also secretary of the NSW Local Government and Shires Association, said councils in each State would seek additional grants totally \$7.5 million during the next year.

I do not know whether members on the other side of the House have been in contact with shires in Western Australia but I have been and I know that concern is being expressed as to whether the shires will be able to retain their works programmes at the levels that were achieved in the last financial year. This is concerning not only members on this side of the House but no doubt members from country areas on the Government side also realise the situation. Country shires find themselves in dire straits as a result of the new federalism policy which is supported so strongly by Government members generally. An article in *The West Australian* of the 11th June was headed, "Familiar gloom". In *The West Australian* of the 12th June the Premier said that the loan cuts will cost jobs. He said that unemployment was inevitable in Western Australia because of the Federal Government's cut in loan funds. He was talking of the present Federal Government, not the Whitlam Government. The Premier did not hide behind a bush but made a bald statement that our works programmes will be cut because of the reduction in loan funds.

This policy is already being reflected. I know that the Minister for Housing is concerned because he cannot keep up his housing programme in Western Australia. In my own area, where we are at last achieving some viability, we are to get only six homes in the next 12 months. We find that sewerage programmes have been cut back as a result, in my opinion, of the new federalism policies which are so strongly supported by members opposite.

Of course the Aborigines are most concerned. If any people have any reason for concern it is the Aborigines. The Minister for Housing knows the plight of the Aborigines in the area which I represent. Invalid pensioners and aged people are living in tents under very wet conditions and have been living there for 12 months. Recently the member for Avon complained in the Press about the deplorable conditions for Aborigines in Northam. Will the new federalism policies guarantee that these problems will be overcome? I am sure they will not. I know the Minister for Housing is expressing concern because there will not be sufficient finance to alleviate this problem.

Mr Shalders: We would be worse off under Whitlam.

Mr T. H. JONES: If my memory serves me correctly, the member for Murray supported these policies and went to great lengths to say what they will mean to the State. He said that wages were high and there was nothing to worry about. Time alone will tell whether the problems I have indicated will be alleviated as a result of the new federalism policies. I look forward to the confidence that has been displayed by members of the Government who say there is nothing to worry about and that the new federalism policies will rectify the anomalies I have mentioned.

The Minister for Labour and Industry tonight indicated that this State should compliment itself on its programme to alleviate unemployment. Other leaders in the State do not express the same view. A survey conducted by the *Weekend News* which appeared in the issue of the 24th July paints a totally different picture from that painted by the Minister for Labour and Industry in his submission tonight. It states, in part—

Four of every 100 workers are now out of a job, with three of those four queuing for the dole, and fewer jobs available.

But perhaps the most disturbing feature in the battery of figures released this week is the number of young people who cannot get jobs.

There were 27 youths for every job vacancy at the end of last month—two years ago there were four youths for each place.

And it was worse for girls. Forty of them were available for each job—a rise from five two years ago.

The director of the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations in WA, Mr W. R. Clark, said the situation was "a sad thing."

"School leavers are usually cleared by April, and already we are getting close to the period when more of them come on to the market," he said.

There were 8 343 young people, nearly 40 per cent in the total of 21 103 registered as unemployed last month.

What did the Federal Minister (Mr Street) have to say? In the article he is reported as saying—

This month that apprenticeship intake in Australia has dropped from a record 42 000 in 1973-74 to an expected 32 000 this year.

This is a situation which concerns the members on this side of the House.

Mr Grayden: Have you seen today's *Daily News*? It contains a report to the effect that WA has the best job chances.

Mr T. H. JONES: This Government has tried to contradict the figures I have quoted, but they have been supplied by a person in authority—namely, the Director of the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations—regarding the intake of apprentices.

I am concerned about the position in the south-west. I know the Minister is proud of the record that has been achieved, but the position in the south-west is most alarming. The rural industry is confronting a plight, and the apple industry might go by the board within a short space of time. We have to ask ourselves this question: where will the young people be employed?

Relating to unemployment, in Port Hedland the number is 1 521; in Geraldton 492; in Kalgoorlie 557; in Merredin 118; in Northam 455; in Kwinana 938; in Bunbury 1 147; in Manjimup 253; in Albany 711; and in Esperance 145. To me that forecasts a very gloomy employment situation.

A survey conducted by the metal industry last June predicted a gloomy picture in Western Australia. The report states—

The number of metal workers employed in major workshops in the metropolitan area during the past year has dropped sharply, according to a survey by the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union.

The union has predicted that more metal workers will be retrenched before the employment position improves.

The survey shows that the 18 firms surveyed employ only 55 per cent of the metal workers who were on their pay-roll a year ago. Two of the firms have closed.

If that is the situation could anyone blame the Opposition for moving the motion before the House? I hope that the forecasts made by Government members will turn out to be correct. Only time will tell. Unfortunately we on this side of the House do not share their views. We are unhappy with the actions taken by the Court Government since its adoption of the new federalism policy on pensioners.

What a shame this Government has had to withdraw the free travel concessions of pensioners. When the present Government came to office it appointed some committee to inquire into the plight of pensioners with a view to giving them a reasonable spin. What have we heard about the inquiries? We have asked questions of the Premier. The Premier told us that he had appointed a special committee to bring down recommendations to alleviate the plight of the pensioners. Instead of bringing relief, the Government has now taken away the free travel concessions which the pensioners enjoyed up to a few months ago.

I do not want to cover the matters that have already been covered. I express concern at the inflationary spiral which will obviously be accentuated in this State. I am concerned about the unemployment situation, and with the obvious cutbacks in public works.

For the reasons I have given I have much pleasure in supporting the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool—Leader of the Opposition) [3.14 a.m.]: I do not wish to take up a great deal of time in replying to the debate. Nothing that has been said has convinced me that the motion is not warranted. The Premier has definitely presided over the highest inflation in Australia, despite his assurances that inflation might have been beaten State by State.

Unemployment has increased by over 180 per cent compared with the level when we left Government. Despite what the Minister for Labour and Industry has said and the figures he has produced, this fact cannot be denied. Even if I produced the best statistics in the world the Minister would find another set from which to quote.

Mr Grayden: Nobody can disprove the figures I have quoted.

Mr JAMIESON: Neither can anyone disprove the ones we have quoted, because those statistics come from official sources. The fact is there has been an increase in unemployment. The only real point the Minister has made is that there are more Aborigines in Western Australia than in the other States. I should point out that we had more Aborigines than any other State when the Tonkin Government was in office. I do not think it was of very great moment for the Minister to mention that.

The Government has adopted this new system of federalism; it has not denied that. We say that such a system will not work as well as members on the Government side say it will work. We say it will prove to be detrimental to the people of this State.

There have been unprecedented increases in the number of taxes and charges. The Premier became rather pedantic when we

termed them taxes or charges. Nevertheless, the community has to bear those charges or taxes. There has been quite a number of such increases.

The Premier talked about a few which might have been reduced. However, in gross receipts—due to inflation—his Government has not lost any income. At the beginning of his comments he said that the public are not fooled. I say the public will not be fooled, and they will not be fooled when the next State election takes place early next year.

The memory of the people about the incidence of unemployment and the other problems which have become manifest will be of greater moment than the emphasis which the Premier places on the day-to-day finances of the State and his desire to balance the Budget at the expense of the pensioners or others in the community who are deserving of gainful employment.

A great deal of criticism has been levelled at the Whitlam Government. We could go on criticising that Government and other Governments for a long time. I should say very quickly that had there not been a change of Government the static condition of education, health, and similar matters would have remained. With the development under the Whitlam Government we received an impetus in educational standards which will never go backwards. Irrespective of any failings of the Whitlam Government, it has left that advance in education with us.

In other fields the Whitlam Government also started initiatives, such as the sewerage of cities. This work will have to be continued by the succeeding Government. The situation in which various boards and instrumentalities have been placed may not be very favourable, but nevertheless they have been forced to plan ahead. I am sure that eventually the projects will be carried to their finality. It is because of the initiatives displayed by the Whitlam Government in that regard that I say some credit should be given to it.

For those who were hasty in wanting to quote what I said, and to enable the member for Karrinyup to appreciate the position fully, I draw attention to what I am recorded at page 88 of the 1974 *Hansard* as having said. The debate took place on the 30th July of that year. I was having a dig at the Whitlam Government when the question of inflation came up. I suppose it could be claimed that I had the same dig at the Government today. I said I had never seen such a high rate of inflation as existed, and I did not like the Government indulging in stop-go economy. I considered that would hurt too many people, and therefore it was far better to go along with it. As a matter of fact I said—

However, that is not satisfactory to the people of Australia, so we must let it go.

At that stage and up until now we had not been presented with any cure for that situation. To continue—

The situation will straighten itself out in the long run. It is wrong to think we can hold out against the world tide, when the spiralling cost of money is evident in all the countries of the world—in some to a greater extent than we are experiencing. Other countries have got by.

Later I made a point which has since oft been misquoted deliberately. In fact I challenged the Deputy Premier to correct the misquotation after he had included it in the political notes in *The West Australian*. He said that I had stated that we should let the economy 'rip', and I have never said that and have always denied having done so. They were not my words nor my intention. I said—

As long as we have a little inflation people are reasonably happy. But excessive deflation does a terrible amount of damage to the community. It puts people out of work and has no regard for their welfare.

I said that there was nothing more heart-rending than to have that situation. Earlier I said—

Of course one must. Obviously the Minister was not listening when I explained that we have a different class of people from that of other countries, and a higher standard of living. So we must let inflation run; it has never killed anybody.

I still stick by that in the context in which I said it and under those circumstances I believed we should let inflation run because the method being adopted to improve the situation would hurt too many people. It was quite wrong of the Deputy Premier to say that I had said we should let the inflation rip. Such a statement was wrong.

Whatever one cares to say about inflation it is certainly worse now than it was when the Tonkin Government had its record of 23.8 per cent CPI increase over its period of office. The present Court Government has had a 41.2 per cent increase in under three years which is 4.5 per cent above the average. It is still the highest and is increasing.

The Premier is always on about higher wages causing the problem, but the statistics reveal that from March, 1974, to mid-July there has been only a 62.1 per cent average minimum weekly wage increase here. However, the cost of some other facilities necessary for everyday life increased by a tremendous amount, including sewerage and water rates. The Premier said that those increases compare favourably with increases in other States. So they should. The cost of laying the pipes and so on in Adelaide is five times the cost it is in Perth and it is as much in Sydney where it is necessary for the

pipes to be laid in rock in nearly every locality. In South Australia a considerable number of clay beds are encountered. Therefore one cannot compare one State with another because the cost of installation of services and the capital outlay varies considerably and must be recouped. This is a bad comparison and I did not set out to make it.

The Premier should have another thought about his statement that the Whitlam Government did not initiate the finance for local governments. If he ponders a while he will realise that the Whitlam Government did not initiate it in its present form. However, Mr Whitlam gave local authorities access to the Grants Commission and many received amounts in previous years. Therefore they certainly were not receiving the money from the Fraser Government.

The Premier will also recall that much time was taken up at the Constitution Convention he attended—and, for his information, at the one he did not attend—in dealing with the granting of financial assistance from the Federal source to local authorities. Therefore it was certainly very much a programme initiated by the Whitlam Government. Certainly I would not like to see the present policy continued and in our policy for the next election it certainly will not be the same as the scheme proposed by the present State Government. The money will be applied where it is necessary and will not be wasted, particularly while we have a system of a limited franchise and all the people are being taxed, while the money obtained is applied to an area of limited franchise. Those on this side of the House will not support such a proposal.

In case the message did not get through to the Minister for Labour and Industry, at no time did I mention seasonal adjustments in the figures I quoted. They were the real figures taken from the statistician's submission. I did not intend to imply that they were any other figures. When we tried to check them we ran into the problem he encountered and also we found they were much higher in many cases and thus only exaggerated our case if we wanted to put more emphasis on it.

A number of speakers on this side have ably replied to the points made as the debate ensued. I do not believe I should labour the situation. I am somewhat surprised that no-one from the NCP has indicated his opinion on the motion one way or the other. One would really not know how members of the NCP would vote if we did not have knowledge of their previous actions in this House when the vote was taken.

Of course one cannot say that the lack of a speech by the NCP is a criticism of it, because we have been referring to the Liberal Party's policy, not its performance. We are arguing against the policy

of the Liberal Party rather than that proposed by the National Alliance or whatever it was at the time. Therefore I suppose it is fair to say that they would not enter the debate to defend the policy of the Liberal Party when it had no due regard for the thoughts of the NCP.

That is all I desire to say and I conclude by recommending to the House that it supports the motion and gets rid of the present Government.

Mr Laurance: It is a fizzog.

Mr Jamieson: Talking about yourself again?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—16

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Mr Bateman | Mr Harman |
| Mr Bertram | Mr Hartrey |
| Mr Bryce | Mr Jamieson |
| Mr B. T. Burke | Mr T. H. Jones |
| Mr T. J. Burke | Mr McIver |
| Mr Carr | Mr Skidmore |
| Mr Davies | Mr Taylor |
| Mr T. D. Evans | Mr A. R. Tonkin |
| Mr Fletcher | Mr Moiler |

(Teller)

Noes—27

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Mr Blaikie | Mr O'Connor |
| Sir Charles Court | Mr Old |
| Mr Cowan | Mr Ridge |
| Mr Coyne | Mr Rushton |
| Mrs Craig | Mr Shalders |
| Mr Crane | Mr Sibson |
| Dr Dadour | Mr Soderman |
| Mr Grayden | Mr Stephens |
| Mr Grewar | Mr Thompson |
| Mr P. V. Jones | Mr Tubby |
| Mr Laurance | Mr Watt |
| Mr McPharlin | Mr Young |
| Mr Mensaros | Mr Clarks |
| Mr Nanovich | |

(Teller)

| Aye | Pair | No |
|------------|------|------------|
| Mr Barnett | | Mr O'Neill |

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [3.33 a.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 11.00 a.m. today (Thursday).

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.34 a.m. (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 5th August, 1976

The SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson) took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., and read prayers.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Luncheon Suspension: Announcement

THE SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson): I wish to advise members that, after consultation with the Premier and the Leader