

with regard to private Bills. It was explained that we undertook to introduce both of these Bills on behalf of the two companies, which share the same solicitor.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made me smile a little when he talked about the considerable expense people sponsoring a private Bill must go to. I refer members to the Standing Orders dealing with private Bills. They are to be found on pages 218 and 219 of our Standing Orders. I notice that one of the fees to be paid is as follows—

For every day the shorthand writer shall attend—\$2.10.

I point that out for the benefit of *Hansard* reporters. If we were to handle all the Bills as private Bills—

Mr Jamieson: That might need to be updated too.

Mr O'NEIL: Another provision is that for every transcript of notes, per folio of 72 words, a fee of 10c is charged.

I admit that perhaps the provisions need to be updated. However, in this case the Government elected to undertake the task. It is not as though it is a completely private Bill. It is a relatively simple amendment to an existing private Bill.

Mr Jamieson: Members have done race course Bills in that way.

Mr O'NEIL: Yes.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

*Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr O'Neil (Minister for Works), and passed.

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [2.19 a.m.]: With your indulgence, Mr Speaker, I advise I will be moving a special adjournment. I am tempted to move another adjournment, but we will not retaliate for the treatment we have received today from certain members of the Opposition.

I will move for a special adjournment but I want it clearly understood, at this stage, what the rules are. The special adjournment will be until 2.15 p.m. today, and by arrangement with the Leader of the Opposition we will commence the valedictory remarks no later than 5.30 p.m., regardless of the state of business. I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.15 p.m. today (Friday).

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.24 a.m. (Friday).

# Legislative Assembly

Friday, the 29th November, 1974

The SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

THE SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson): As there are no questions on the notice paper normally there would be no questions without notice. However, I have considered the matter and if the Leader of the Opposition wishes I will accept three questions without notice and then, if he wants to ask an additional question, I will entertain that request. Are there any questions without notice? There being no questions I will call on orders of the day.

## HIGH SCHOOLS

*Admission of 11-year-olds: Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 20th November, on the following motion by Mr T. D. Evans—

That in the opinion of this House, the age of transfer of a child from the primary to the secondary school should remain as it is at present and the Government should immediately and unequivocally declare that it will not implement any policy which will vary the said age of transfer.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [2.19 p.m.]: This motion moved by the member for Kalgoorlie was canvassed to a considerable degree when it was originally moved in the Chamber on the last private members' day. Owing to the normal practice in this place of allowing several matters to be debated whenever practicable during a private members' day, the debate was adjourned. I now resume the debate on behalf of the Government. I would like to make it clear that the amendment standing in my name on the notice paper is to be moved with the complete concurrence of my colleague, the Deputy Premier and Leader of the Country Party.

I make that comment at the outset because I do not want there to be any suggestion that this is entirely a Liberal amendment without the full concurrence of our colleagues in the coalition.

Those who listened to the introduction of the motion by the member for Kalgoorlie would have realised—particularly in view of the build-up which occurred in the Press previous to that—it was a predictable political manoeuvre by the Opposition. I have been in this place for over 21 years; some people would say that is far too long.

Mr May: You said that.

SIR CHARLES COURT: I well remember my first experience in this House when the then Premier was the Hon. A. R. G.

Hawke, and his worthy deputy was the Hon. J. T. Tonkin. I quickly learnt that they used to carry around a little bag filled with all sorts of wedges, some little and some big; and they had hammers some of which were small and some of which were big.

Whenever they had the chance they would parade those wedges and select one according to the nature of the occasion; and then they gave it either a little tap or a mighty big tap. It is to the credit of the coalition parties that in spite of the number of incidents which occurred during that period, and even long before that, good sense always prevailed and the wedges did not take hold but fell out. This, of course, is just another one of those occasions. There is no problem within the coalition so far as this matter is concerned. In fact, if anything the Opposition has done us a kindness, because it has made it necessary for all members of the Parliament, including members of the coalition parties, to study in greater depth certain aspects of the education policy.

Somewhere along the line many months ago when it became apparent that the Liberal Party had had a lot of work on education research done by some very competent people, there seemed to be a reaction of annoyance and almost of unbelief on the part of the Labor Party because it had made this a great issue in the Federal sphere, particularly during the election campaign leading up to the December 1972 change of Government in Canberra; it was as though the Labor Party was the only party that had ever thought about education.

Mr Bryce: Historically, that is quite true.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It does not happen to be true. It so happens that during the life of the Brand Government—this is what members opposite conveniently overlooked—far from being the poor relation in budgeting, education became the No. 1 factor.

Mr T. D. Evans: You did not have the support of your Federal counterparts, though.

Mr Bryce: Did not that happen in every other State?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The allocation for education changed from about 12½ per cent of the Budget to double that percentage. That is not dealing in dollars; that is dealing in a much more realistic figure. I think the honourable member will find that the growth in percentage in our State was much more dramatic than in any other State. Members of the Opposition immediately react and say, "You did not get the same support from the Federal Government as you are getting now." That does not bear examination.

Mr Jamieson: It does.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I refer to the most dramatic breakthrough which occurred in tertiary education—the thing of which Sir Robert Menzies can be most proud—namely, the dramatic, complete change in university education.

Mr Jamieson: He refused further investigations because he said they would bring in a recommendation for Commonwealth assistance. He constantly refused that.

Sir CHARLES COURT: That interjection makes me so amused and amazed that I can hardly believe the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who is probably the most down-to-earth member on the other side of the House made it. The fact is that Sir Robert Gordon Menzies personally inspired the commission which brought about this complete change of thinking.

Mr Jamieson: But he would not go into other forms of education.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Out of it came a dramatic change. Robert Gordon Menzies, of course, was not a person who wanted to browbeat and steamroll the States. All good things in good time. With the effluxion of time, we had various Federal Ministers for Education, but I believe the greatest breakthrough in the Federal attitude towards assisting rather than steamrolling the States—there is a mighty difference—occurred when Malcolm Fraser was the Minister.

Mr May: Hello!

Mr Jamieson: You were the advocate, were you?

Sir CHARLES COURT: We do not want a repetition of the nonsense that went on last night. I direct this specifically at the member for Ascot; this is far too serious a matter.

Mr Bryce: Yes, but what you are saying is utter nonsense.

Sir CHARLES COURT: During the period of that Minister, I know that Federal co-operation with the States was unprecedented. Some of the programmes he left behind when he relinquished that portfolio were absolutely first-class; this is acknowledged by people who understand education.

Mr Bryce: The annual allocation during his period was only \$112 million.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Dollars alone do not resolve the problems in education.

Mr Jamieson: No, but they help a lot.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Of course they do, but today we are dealing in inflated dollars and we must put a realistic figure on the assistance we are receiving from the Commonwealth.

I want to return to the particular part of education which inspired this motion—quite apart from the political shenanigans which were behind it. The attitude of the

Opposition in this Parliament towards the Liberal Party policy during the last election was one of, "This is too hard to do anything about, so let us forget it. It is too hard to attack. It cannot be done. We do not have the money, the building or the people, so let us sweep it under the carpet and put it in the too-hard basket."

I remind members that back in 1957-58 when the Liberal Party came out with the first really comprehensive programme for the north-west and the Kimberley the same unbelief was abroad not only amongst the Opposition but also amongst the community generally. The Hon. Sir David Brand would vouch for this. This area had been a poor relation of the State and we were told that these things could not be done. Have a look at that programme today! There is hardly a point of it that is not basic policy at both State and Federal levels today, and everyone is vying with one another to try to claim authorship of it.

It took years to achieve the breakthrough. The years of 1959-1962 were rather dramatic years, but always during that time there was this unbelief. However, all of a sudden we broke through and as a result this area changed from being a mendicant area to one that was a tremendous producer of resources for the nation and which would grow even greater. It was because we got people to look at the place and do something about it that we brought about this complete and dramatic change in the north.

It will be the same in the field of education. There will, no doubt, be times when the Labor Party will come up with dynamic ideas. Education is a dynamic thing; it is not static. Changes in education in my lifetime are unbelievable. The Labor Party will come out with these ideas, and no doubt, people will throw cold water on them or treat them with scorn and say, "It cannot be accomplished. We do not have the buildings, the personnel or the money." The same thing will happen to us. If the ideas are good enough, they will make the grade. Just because the problem is hard, we are not going to turn our backs on a programme which was put up by some very competent educationists and lay people.

We achieved a happy balance between competent, experienced academic people and people who were just good, common-sense laymen and it is the balance between the two that I believe will help us implement a good, solid policy. This cannot be done in two months, a year, or even two years.

Mr T. D. Evans: You said you would do it in three years.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Now that the Minister is in charge of the department and has had a chance to look at all the details of the department and has seen where there has been overemphasis or

underemphasis in the past, he is trying to achieve a balance and, above all, he has advised the Government—I believe correctly—that we should concentrate immediately on the primary sector because we find it has been a rather neglected part of education.

Universities came under a scheme which qualified them for Commonwealth money; then, tertiary education generally was assisted and other fields of education followed. But always, this section of education—this primary sector—seems to have been neglected. So, on the basis of this advice, and with justification, we are placing more emphasis on primary education—not to the neglect of other areas, but just placing more emphasis on this facet of education for the time being.

When one examines the policies of the Liberal Party and the Country Party there is not a wide gulf as would be implied by some of the comments made by members of the Opposition. In point of fact, let us have a look at them. We both want to see a situation where there is high quality education for all citizens; not only at the pre-school, the primary, the secondary, and the tertiary level, but at all levels of education.

It is now being accepted by all parties who understand this situation that throughout the lives of all people both parties seek, in a bold sort of way, to ensure that the quality of education, particularly in the remote areas, is being lifted all the time. We want to get education of quality brought closer to the people in a correct manner.

Mr Hartrey: But does the Premier think the quality of education today is any good? Young people cannot spell, cannot read, cannot count—they cannot even communicate!

Sir CHARLES COURT: I have to agree with the member for Boulder-Dundas that they cannot. In fact, I am on all-fours with him when he makes that statement, because it distresses me to find that when I receive a letter from an 18 or 19-year-old I find there are so many spelling errors in it that I can hardly believe the age of the person writing the letter, but then, in many instances, I have subsequently found that the person has matriculated.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: The fact that a person is not able to spell well does not necessarily mean he has not had a good education.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Then, when one takes that up with the person in question one is told, "it does not matter; you have a rough idea of what is meant."

Mr Hartrey: They cannot even communicate.

Sir CHARLES COURT: On what the member for Morley has said, I think there is a difference of opinion. Regardless of whether a person has had a good education or not he has to learn certain basic

techniques. Before a pianist becomes a great concert pianist he has to learn the five finger exercises; a pianist will never become a good pianist unless he does.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Don't you think there is more to a good education than being able to spell?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not propose to develop this argument beyond saying: would it not be a sad day when one has to have an interpreter when one is speaking to a 19-year-old to find out what he is saying or what he has written because he is speaking or writing in a form which only he can understand? Surely we have to get down to basic techniques. However, that is not the argument here today.

I want to move an amendment without labouring the matter, because we are trying, conscientiously as a Government, to give every member who has a motion on the notice paper a chance to be heard between now and 5.30 p.m. I wish to move this amendment to put the motion into proper perspective.

#### *Amendments to Motion*

The amendment appears on page 4 of today's notice paper in my name. I therefore move—

Delete all the words in the motion after "should" in line 3.  
I then intend to move to substitute in lieu the following—

be kept under review in the light of Government policy and the availability of finance and trained staff, with increased emphasis being concentrated on primary education at this stage.

If the amendment is agreed to, the motion would then read—

That in the opinion of this House, the age of transfer of a child from the primary to the secondary school should be kept under review in the light of Government policy and the availability of finance and trained staff, with increased emphasis being concentrated on primary education at this stage.

The motion, as amended, will be consistent with what the Government is doing. It will be consistent with what our advisers think can be done, and most members, if they are objective about the matter, will want to see our programmes implemented eventually. They do not have to be implemented in a way that disrupts or upsets families, but we want to see the programmes implemented so that they will lead children logically towards good education in pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.

We would be remiss in our programme if we did not insist on a policy to keep the system under review and reach a situation where the quality can be preserved for the education of the community,

where the student can be prepared not only for the higher forms of education but also prepared to take up a vocation. It is not every student who wants to go on to the university or to WAIT. Some students who do not go to higher education, ironically, will be the people who will create the industries that will employ the graduates. The Americans used to have a saying: If a person has a large family one of the sons has to leave in fourth standard to set up a business to employ his graduate brothers.

When one looks at the histories of the great industrial families in America it is found that that saying is not far wrong. It is just as true today, but the son that leaves school before his brothers does not leave in fourth standard, but probably discontinues his education when he matriculates.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: It is not true that education is undesirable; it is just that many of our priorities are wrong.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not disagree with the member for Morley. We are trying to overcome the very situation on which he has harangued us for hours. We are working to this end and so I accept completely what the honourable member is saying. There is a great deal of waste of the education that is being given at the moment.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Some of it is so specialised that one often worries whether students are getting a proper education.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is more a question of how they will adapt themselves when they leave the place of learning, so there is no difference of opinion. Therefore, I commend my amendment to the House.

MR J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [2.37 p.m.]: Of course, this is a stratagem and it is designed to get members of the coalition parties off the hook. There is no other purpose in the amendment. The situation is that the policy of the Country Party and the policy of the Liberal Party are in direct conflict.

Sir Charles Court: They are not.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Of course they are.

Sir Charles Court: You have heard the assurance of the Leader of the Country Party that there is no conflict.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: I do not care what assurance the Premier has had. I have seen the assurance that has been given to the electors because I happen to have a copy of the Country Party's policy and a copy of the Liberal Party's policy and they are in direct conflict. The Country Party's policy states very definitely that that party is not in favour of what the Liberal Party proposes to do.

The situation must be, if there is agreement now between the Liberal Party and the Country Party, that the Country Party has agreed to throw its policy overboard

and go along with the Liberal Party. If it is prepared to go on the hustings and tell the people one thing, and then, for the purpose of hanging onto Government, agree to something entirely different, that is its business; that is the way it operates. But it would indicate that no reliance can be placed upon its policy in the future, because as a matter of expediency, when the occasion suits it, it will jettison its own policy in order to follow the policy of the Liberal Party. That is the situation.

This amendment is designed for the purpose of enabling the Country Party members to avoid being put in a difficult position of having to support their own policy. I have said more than once, and I say again, that the Liberal Party policy on education is impossible of implementation and will not be implemented in the Premier's lifetime.

Sir Charles Court: It will be implemented, and in my lifetime; assuming, of course, I will live a reasonable span of time, unless the Leader of the Opposition is hoping for my demise tomorrow.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: I venture to say that the Premier has not taken advantage of the expertise in the Treasury and Education Departments to ascertain whether the education programme put forward by him can be implemented; and whether the figures he used during the elections or our figures were correct.

Sir Charles Court: I will say this: we did not accept the figures you gave to the public, but our policy will be implemented in good time and in a proper way.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: If the Premier did not accept the figures which we gave to the public that meant he did not accept the figures the officers of the Treasury and the Education Department gave us. They are the same officers whom the Premier has had ample opportunity to question, to find out whether or not they have deliberately or inadvertently misled me.

Sir Charles Court: No-one said they misled you. They did not have a chance to speak to the people who would have to implement the policy. You talk to them.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Has the Premier talked to them?

Sir Charles Court: Of course, we have. We are the Government and I happen to be the Treasurer.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Why did the Premier not come out and give a revised figure? He is not game to.

Sir Charles Court: We will do that in our own time.

Mr May: That was what the member for Scarborough said.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: What a golden opportunity for the Premier to come out and say, "Since we have become the Government we have discussed with the

officers of the Education Department and the Treasury the estimates they gave to the previous Premier, and they now admit they are wrong." What a golden opportunity for the Premier to say that; but, of course, he is not in a position to say that because the estimates they gave me were not wrong.

Sir Charles Court: We will make our own progress in education as fast as funds and training will permit.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: It is not difficult to calculate how many new secondary schools would be required to accommodate the children already in secondary schools, without having to take into consideration the additional need for accommodation which must result from an increase in the school population.

Sir Charles Court: You misled the public by saying there would be wholesale resumptions and demolition of houses.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: So there will be.

Sir Charles Court: That shows how little you know about the matter.

Mr Clarko: It is exactly—

Mr J. T. TONKIN: The honourable member will do himself a service if he keeps quiet.

Sir Charles Court: I think I back the judgment of the member for Karrinyup against your judgment.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: I say this more in sorrow than in anger to the member for Karrinyup: What he ought to do is have a talk with the Director-General of Education for his own edification and education. If he did that it might enable him to learn something, because at present he does not know what he is talking about.

Mr Clarko: I understand some senior members of the department think this is a good scheme.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: If I had the time and opportunity I would put some questions to the honourable member. What he has said shows how little he knows about the matter.

Mr Clarko: I am prepared to debate this question with you anywhere and any time.

Sir Charles Court: I would back the judgment of the member for Karrinyup on this issue against yours.

Mr T. D. Evans: You did not back his judgment last night.

Sir Charles Court: He is a person with higher qualifications than you have.

Mr Jamieson: What has he—a \$10 MACE after his name?

Mr J. T. TONKIN: The statement of the Premier only confirms in my mind how little he knows about the subject, and what little advantage he has taken of the opportunity which has been made available to him since he has been in

Government to find out whether the advice that had been given to me was sound or not. I say very deliberately, and I challenge anyone to prove otherwise—and members of the Government are in a position to prove it if they want to—that the information I gave to the public at the time was not information which I myself had collected, but was information which was gained as a result of consultation with top officers of the Education Department and the Treasury, and supplied to me because they were concerned.

Mr Clarko: What was the information based on?

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Those officers were concerned about having to implement this policy.

Sir Charles Court: Without even a telephone call to the people who would implement it?

Mr J. T. TONKIN: That has nothing to do with the matter.

Sir Charles Court: It has everything to do with the matter.

Mr Jamieson: What good would a phone call have done?

Mr J. T. TONKIN: What the Premier has said continues to confirm my opinion that the views of those who made a judgment on this matter have been disregarded. For example, if it is intended to limit the number of students at a high school to 1 000—

Mr Clarko: That is a most desirable thing in education. I think you will agree.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: The honourable member has confirmed what I have said. If it is intended to limit high schools to 1 000 students, and there are schools with more than 2 000 students already—

Mr Clarko: That is not correct. There is no school in Western Australia with 2 000 students.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: How many are there at John Curtin High School?

Mr Clarko: Nowhere near that number.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: How many?

Mr Clarko: I would suspect—

Mr J. T. TONKIN: The honourable member should not suspect. He should give us the number.

Mr Clarko: I make the statement that no high school has more than 1 500 pupils now. You said 2 000 students. We will check to see who is right.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: You are completely wrong.

Mr Clarko: The largest number is in a high school with 1 400-odd students.

Mr Moiler: You do not know what you are talking about. Governor Stirling High School has 1 500.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: We do not need to go any further, because in that one statement the member for Karrinyup shows he does not know what he is talking about.

Mr Clarko: You said 2 000 students. You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr May: You said the largest number was 1 400-odd students, but the member for Mundaring has said there are 1 500 at Governor Stirling.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: The policies of the Government involve the keeping in secondary schools children for a year longer than they are now kept there, and the Government has a specific policy which will induce children to remain at high school for a sixth year.

Sir Charles Court: Do you not think we should do that?

Mr J. T. TONKIN: That is not the point with which I am dealing. I am dealing with the number of children to be accommodated. I am dealing with the practical implementation of that policy, and not with what we want to do.

Sir Charles Court: Therefore you are prepared to remain second-rate all your life.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: The Government's policy is to limit the schools to 1 000 students. This means the Government has to accommodate the surplus, and in addition to that it has to find accommodation for children involved in the extra year of schooling. Furthermore the policy of the Government is to promote children into secondary schools a year earlier than they are now permitted to enter. If that does not amount to a tremendous demand for accommodation, what does it amount to? One does not have to make a telephone call to the Education Department to find out what it is all about, unless one is a numbskull.

Sir Charles Court: You should not have done what you did without getting in touch with the people who would implement the policy.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: I do not want to take up a lot of time, because there is not the time available. I say very definitely this is a stratagem to enable the Government to get out of a difficult situation, in particular to allow the members of the Country Party to extricate themselves from the position they are now in, with some attempt to save face. It means that they are prepared to jettison their own policy, declared to the electors during election time, in order to go along with the Liberal wing of the Government. Of course that is what will happen right throughout the life of this Government: the Country Party, in order to hang onto office and avoid difficulties, will crumble every time it comes into conflict with the Liberal Party in connection with policy. The more it does that the more it becomes

apparent to the people of Western Australia that this is what this party is prepared to do.

Sir Charles Court: It was not so long ago when you said that the Country Party was leading the Liberal Party by the nose.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Surely a policy which is espoused by a political party should be worthy of continued support by that party, and not be thrown overboard in order to meet the requirements of self-interest and harmony in the coalition Government. Because of that we say that a vote ought to be taken on the motion as it stands to give people who have sufficient backbone to back up their policy to declare themselves.

MR T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) (2.50 p.m.): When the Liberal Party announced its pre-election policies—and I refer to its education policies—it gave a clear undertaking that it would implement those policies within the present lifetime of this term—the only term—of the Government. A significant part of those policies was that relating to the age of transfer of the child from the primary to the secondary school.

I do not wish to fall into the error of annoying you, Mr Speaker, by anticipating another debate, but may I have the license to say that in some other debate earlier this year—I will not identify which one—the member for Karrinyup, who seems to have got himself into hot water both early this morning and this afternoon—

Mr Clarko: Not at all.

Mr T. D. EVANS: —indicated a change in attitude or emphasis relating to certain education policies of the Liberal Party? I mention that because the occasion will be given me later on to develop that theme.

When I introduced this motion just over a week ago, the member for Karrinyup again started to rewrite Liberal Party policy because he said that if this policy was implemented and it was shown that there were children in primary schools not sufficiently mature to be absorbed properly into the secondary school then arrangements could be made to leave them in the primary school, anyway.

Mr Clarko: That is done now.

Sir Charles Court: That is not a change of policy. Is that not done now?

Mr T. D. EVANS: That is not relevant, and the member for Karrinyup knows it is not.

Mr Clarko: Of course it is.

Mr T. D. EVANS: He prefaced his remarks on that occasion by saying, "This is not strictly in accord with Liberal Party policy". In other words, he took up the pen and started to rewrite Liberal Party policies, as with the transfer of entry into the primary school of the tender five-year-old child. So it is not surprising at all now

to find the Premier coming to the rescue of the sinking ship and moving such an amendment as appears on page 4 of the notice paper which indicates quite a clear rewrite of the Liberal Party policy.

I must take this opportunity also—and it would be discourteous if I did not with your permission, Mr Speaker—to make some comment on the general debate which has ensued. I strongly object to the practice being adopted by the Minister representing the Minister for Education—and I regret he is not here at the moment—because on this debate and an earlier one the Minister representing a Minister in another place, as soon as the motion was moved, stood up and with pre-prepared notes sought to answer the debate. Such procedure is not only discourteous to the mover of the motion, but also to other people who participate in the debate and expect some comment from the Minister. As he has already spoken, he is unable to make further comment.

The Minister for Education, seeing a notice of motion on the notice paper, has one glorious guess as to what theme and issues will be developed and what arguments will be presented. He makes one glorious guess and prepares notes before the motion is delivered. The notes are prepared and typed.

Sir Charles Court: You do not have to be clever to do that.

Mr T. D. EVANS: Surely to goodness the Premier can engineer his work better than that—

Sir Charles Court: I thought that was good operation.

Mr T. D. EVANS: —so that the Minister would at least wait until the whole argument has been determined and then, at a right and proper time, reply to the debate.

Mr Blaikie: Don't judge others by your own performance.

Mr T. D. EVANS: I do not. No-one can indicate that on any occasion I followed the path this Minister has followed.

Sir Charles Court: Do you mean the Labor Government when in office did not go straight on with a debate after a motion was introduced?

Mr T. D. EVANS: On an important matter such as this and on which one would have to make a glorious guess—no.

Sir Charles Court: On more important matters than this. In fact, on one occasion they guillotined it without a speech.

Mr T. D. EVANS: My leader has quite clearly exposed those views of the Premier as being a political ploy to get the Country Party members—and, in particular, the Leader of the Country Party and his colleague, the member for Narrogin—off a very uncomfortable hook.

I recall that when introducing this motion I read an extract from a letter which appeared recently in *The West Australian* from a lady in the deep south who was waving a flag most enthusiastically for the member for Narrogin and exhorting him to use his intestinal fortitude to stand up to the Liberal Party. If he votes for this, he will be standing on his knees. I do not think he will.

Mr McIver: Puppets on a string.

Mr T. D. EVANS: I do congratulate the Government on taking an opportunity to get itself out of a particularly awkward situation. Prior to the election the Liberal Party announced its policy which was the transfer of the 11-year-old-plus child from the primary school to the secondary school. I think one day before the Liberal Party announced its policy, the Country Party came out clearly and announced the age of transfer in its view should be the year in which the child turns 13 years. There is a distinct conflict between those two policies.

On the 15th August I asked the Minister representing the Minister for Education whether the announced policy of the Liberal Party now became the policy of both coalition wings of the Government. The answer was that while there was some minor difference in definition and emphasis, the answer was "Yes".

I asked again on the 19th November—just over a week ago—because of unrest in certain country districts which required the member for Narrogin to ventilate the fact that the Country Party policy was in quite obvious conflict with that of the Liberal Party, whether the Minister, in the light of the unrest expressed by the member for Narrogin, would adhere to his former answer. The answer was "Yes". Then the *Daily News* took up the issue under a heading "Rift claim denied by CP chief".

In November this year, when asked a question as to what age he thought would become Government policy, Mr McPharlin said, "I do not know."

Mr McIver: That's typical.

Mr T. D. EVANS: So on Tuesday, the 26th November—this week—I asked the following question of the Leader of the Country Party—

- (1) Would he, as Leader of his Party, confirm the two previous replies given me by the Minister representing the Minister for Education that the education policies announced by the Liberal Party prior to the 30th March General Election have been determined as the policies of the Government collectively?
- (2) If the answer is one of confirmation, on what date was this determination made by the Government?

I now ask those members who are interested to tighten their seat belts before I give the reply supplied by the Leader of the Country Party. If he ever loses his seat in Parliament, and Bullen Bros. are still on the road, he will be able to obtain a job as a clown. The Deputy Premier replied that the basic principles of the education policies of both parties were compatible, as was agreed when the coalition was formed prior to taking office.

That was way back before the 8th April this year. When asked what he thought the age of transfer should be the Leader of the Country Party answered, just over a week ago, "I do not know." No wonder the Premier has come to the rescue and come up with a device in an attempt to get the Government off the hook.

Mr May: You must admit he is consistent.

Mr T. D. EVANS: Consistently bad. I do not wish to delay the House, but I do emphasise the point touched upon by my leader. Although I do not regard this as the most important—or the more important—of the issues involved, my leader has quite clearly demonstrated that the policy of the Government will not get off the ground on the question of cost alone. I indicated it should not get off the ground on the question of educational merit, and I have no better authority than the Dettman report.

I do not want to canvass this matter again, but I challenge the Government to come up with a later report by eminent educationists of a similar peer group to the authors of the Dettman report. That committee included the present Chairman of the Teacher Education Authority, the present Director-General of Education, and two Assistant Directors-General of Education. That committee clearly came down—having canvassed the situation in the other States of Australia, and having canvassed the position in other countries—and made a firm recommendation to the Government that there be no change at all.

I commenced my remarks by indicating that the member for Karrinyup had rightly forecast a shift in emphasis. That shift in emphasis has been crystallised in the amendment moved by the Premier. In fact, the Premier is adding to what our leader has been forecasting: the policy will not be implemented. In the meantime, the Premier has said it will be difficult, by putting the question in the "too hard" basket.

MR BRYCE (Ascot) [3.03 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Kalgoorlie, and to oppose the amendment presented to the House by the Premier. My remarks will be fairly concise.

During the course of his remarks to the House, when he presented the amendment, the Premier made some statements which



clearly require rebuttal. We on this side of the House thoroughly appreciate that the Premier and his party have discovered the enormous political importance of a political party, and a Government, showing a very real interest in education.

The Conservative political parties in this country have behaved in exactly the same way, with respect to this matter, as they have with respect to so many social questions during the history of this nation. For decades they have opposed a whole variety of social advances, and I place expenditure on education in that category. For decades they have opposed the positive initiatives taken by Labor Governments.

Since these policies were implemented Conservative Governments, when returned to power, have realised that they could not turn back the clock. The basis of this whole question regarding education concerns the amount of money which has been provided for this important requirement.

The Premier is aware that in 1945 the precedent was established in allowing the Commonwealth Government to enter the field of education in a substantial way. I was not surprised to hear the Premier refer to Mr Fraser. I was delighted, because during the parliamentary recess I propose to collate the information which he will find very hard to accept when it is presented in a logical and chronological order to members of this House concerning Mr Fraser's attitudes. I intend to establish that for decades the Liberal and Country Party coalition Governments, at the national level, have refused to provide the money necessary for primary education, secondary education, and, for a substantial period during its term of office, tertiary education.

Sir Charles Court: Should not that be done through proper State finances? That is what we are objecting to.

Mr BRYCE: That is the important thing which killed State Liberal-Country Party Governments during the Menzies-Gorton era. The State Governments allowed their preoccupation with State rights and State initiatives—the division within the Australian community which they emphasised—to blind their better judgment, in spite of the fact that they knew the only source of adequate finance in this country was from the Federal Government. The State Governments continued to argue at election after election that education was not a national question and that it was the preserve of the States.

Mr Hartrey: According to the Constitution, it is not.

Mr BRYCE: Exactly, and that is the argument which was raised. The Commonwealth Liberal Governments used that excuse to avoid allocating money for education purposes. The Premier now realises

how terribly important it is, politically, to support the expenditure and the redirection of the resources of this nation into the field of education. The Premier would like to forget the period between 1949 and 1972 when his own party was in Government at the national level.

Sir Charles Court: Some wonderful things were done for education during that period.

Mr BRYCE: I am talking about the attitude of the national Government.

Sir Charles Court: Those things were done by the national Government.

Mr BRYCE: Let us examine that statement. When Menzies took over from Chifley he wound down this nation's first Commonwealth Education Office. A national education office was established, for the first time, by the Chifley Government, but its staff, and its scope, were wound down because the Menzies Government did not want to take it over. The States' rights excuse was used to back-pedal in the field of education, and we had to wait until 1972 for a change of Government before there was an awareness, at the national level, of what this country deserved in the way of education.

During his speech the Premier made some points about the growth in the proportion of the State Budget which was to be devoted to education. He pointed out that the proportion devoted to education had risen to No. 1 item.

Sir Charles Court: During the premiership of Sir David Brand the percentage doubled.

Mr BRYCE: Can the Premier indicate that the same did not happen in all other Labor and non-Labor States in this country? All that the Premier is doing is illustrating that Western Australia, during the period of 1959 to 1971, was in exactly the same position as the other States.

Sir Charles Court: No, the honourable member will find that we did better.

Mr BRYCE: I have statistics available, which I do not have at my fingertips at the moment. However, I promise the Premier I will present those statistics to him in a detailed form during the course of this Parliament.

Sir Charles Court: Is the honourable member not proud of the fact that Western Australia was ahead of most States in respect of the quality of secondary education?

Mr BRYCE: Now we are talking about quality. A moment ago we were talking about the proportion of funds in the State Budget.

Sir Charles Court: Talk about either. Are you not proud of that?

Mr BRYCE: The Premier is adept at switching ground when things get a bit

hot. Western Australia was no different from the other States.

Sir Charles Court: It was different. We were so far in front it was silly.

Mr Bertram: We are about equal to the Turks and the Arabs.

Mr BRYCE: My final point on this amendment is that the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Kalgoorlie clearly indicated this move was an attempt by the Government to come up with a rationalisation to enable it to get out from under. The serious part of the matter is not really the education policies involved; it is the political credibility of the Government.

It is no wonder people are cynical about their politicians, Parliaments, and Governments, when they are on the receiving end of bold promises at election time, and within the first session of Parliament after an election they see a gigantic step backwards, a regrouping, and rationalisation. This is what produces the cynicism in our society and a large degree of the people's disinterest in what is happening at different levels of Government. How many of us who have gone door-knocking in various parts of the State have come across the reaction, "Oh, yes, you are all the same—you make great promises at election time and never keep them"? That is a tragedy.

I am suggesting the action of the Premier in moving this amendment adds fuel to that fire. When he stood on the soap box at the hustings and promised that if the Liberal Party was elected to Government it would change this point of articulation between primary and secondary education as part of the three-tier change to the education system—to some of which I have no objection at all—he did not qualify it by saying, "We will do this if the Country Party agrees, if the trained staff are available, and if we have the ability to finance it", or "We would like to do this but we might have to review our policies." There were no qualifications whatsoever. It is not the Premier's style to add qualifications when he is making promises to the public. Bravado is the order of the day—the imaginative, the use of the superlative.

We now find, nine months after the Government has been elected, that the Premier is making excuses. He has moved this amendment which is designed to enable the Government to get out from under. It cannot finance these policies and it cannot bear the political embarrassment associated with the division within the coalition.

I conclude by drawing attention once again to the fact that when this promise was put to the people it was not accompanied by the qualifications that, "If the Country Party agrees we will change this point of articulation; if the trained staff are available we will adopt this policy; if

we have the ability to finance it we will adopt it; we would like to do it but we will keep it under review." It is no wonder the people of this State become cynical about politicians, Governments, and politicians' promises.

MR HARTREY (Boulder-Dundas) [3.15 p.m.]: To be frank, I think this is one of the more important matters we will be likely to discuss this afternoon. I therefore feel in duty bound to say something about it.

Mr May: It would be the only one.

Mr HARTREY: Quite probably. It affects the vital interests of the rising generation.

As usual, the Premier should be complimented on the astuteness of his amendment. It is well designed to get him off the hook and prevent the Opposition from driving any wedges between the Country Party and the Liberal Party. But it is not my object or intention to compliment him at the moment. Of course, I will support the motion and oppose the amendment, not because I do not think the amendment is very dexterous and astute but because I think it means absolutely nothing.

The amendment proposes that we keep constantly under consideration the question of the age of admission of children to secondary schools. That is a very poor substitute for the statement, which was made boldly and wisely by the member for Kalgoorlie, that the Government should unequivocally declare that it will not implement any policy which will vary the present age of transfer.

Governments can do many things but there are certain things they cannot do. They can give us daylight saving but they cannot make the sun appear in the zenith at 12.00 o'clock by declaring 11.00 o'clock to be noon. The sun will only appear in the centre of the sky at 1.00 o'clock instead of 12.00 o'clock.

Mr Jamieson: I do not know about that. We changed the Latin name of crayfish by an Act of Parliament at one time.

Mr HARTREY: We in the Air Force used to say the Air Board could do almost anything, with one solitary exception. I will not say what that was!

Not only can the Parliament not control the sun; it also cannot control the cycle of human life. It will not by an Act of Parliament make an 11-year-old child any more mentally fit or mature than he was before the Act of Parliament was passed or the administrative action was taken.

It is fairly clear that educationists in the past have always agreed that round about the age of 12 years was the time when a child was ready to start secondary education, unless we are to say secondary education includes what we now call the last year of primary education. We can get daylight saving or anything else by pretending we are doing something, but when

we really try to do something we cannot hasten the maturity of an 11-year-old child. We cannot give him the maturity of a 12-year-old child by throwing him at the age of 11 into the milieu of secondary education.

I have listened with a great deal of patience while a number of gentlemen carrying university degrees and having formerly wielded the chalk have argued across the Chamber as though the rest of us were incompetent to understand what they were talking about. The great poet Milton—

#### *Point of Order*

Mr A. R. TONKIN: On a point of order, I understand a guillotine motion is to be moved in the House to end private members' business at 5.30 p.m. We have spent an hour on this motion. I am asking whether there is a time limit provision which would enable all motions to be dealt with in the two hours remaining.

Sir Charles Court: There is no guillotine motion. It is in the hands of the House.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think it is an appropriate time to inform the House that an arrangement has been made, as the House understands, between the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, that at 5.15 p.m. I think—

Sir Charles Court: No later than 5.30 p.m.

The SPEAKER: —no later than 5.30 p.m., the formal part of the business of the House will come to an end and then the complimentary remarks will begin, thus enabling a period to be set by agreement for the end of this session. There is nothing in Standing Orders to allow for such matters; it depends upon the good sense of the members in the Chamber. So the point raised by the member for Morley is appropriate. If members wish to keep to the arrangement made by their respective leaders, then they should endeavour to accommodate their remarks to the time that is left. The member for Boulder-Dundas.

#### *Debate (on amendments to motion) Resumed*

Mr HARTREY: I appreciate the point raised by the member for Morley, but I do not think it was a point of order and I do not feel it was sufficient reason to interrupt me.

The SPEAKER: I am grateful for your advice.

Mr HARTREY: I want to say that a great poet, Milton, expressed a profound philosophy in these words—

Men conceit to themselves that they have control over words, but words often revolt and seize control over men.

Now one of those "revolting" words is education. We have had this word cast at us and banded about the Chamber many times in this present session of Parliament, without its meaning anything very specific. I think it is time we began to criticise or examine what we are really talking about.

Education is not a commodity that can be measured like wheat or barley. The idea that if one spends more years at both ends—starting younger and finishing older—in a curriculum through various types of schools, one would get more education is a fantasy.

Mr Skidmore: Sure!

Mr HARTREY: Also, the idea that one would get a better education is another fantasy. One cannot equate quality to quantity in an abstract concept like education.

Mr Shalders: Are they your words or Milton's?

Mr HARTREY: No, these are my words. Essentially education is a lifetime process. A wise Greek philosopher named Solon once said, "Call no man fortunate until he is dead." We could also say, "Call no man educated until he is dead."

A man who is incapable of assimilating education in the university of the world from the day that he was born until the day that he dies has died prematurely—he should have been buried years ago before he was actually interred.

I asked the Premier a question a little while ago, and I was very pleased with his answer. It is pleasing to see we agree on one subject at least. My question was whether in fact he thought the quality of education about which he was then speaking, and about which he has since spoken again by way of interjection, is any better today than it was in the days when the Leader of the Opposition and I—at round about the same time—laid down the chalk and dusted the blackboard for the last time. I do not think it is, and I speak as a person qualified enough by experience to know what it is like.

It is part of my job, and has been for a good many years, to interview a great number of young men and a certain number of young women about many problems that arise in their quite early years of adulthood. For instance, a number of boys—or men as we call them now—between the ages of 18 and 20 have come to me about traffic problems, difficulties with hire-purchase companies and insurance companies, traffic offences, and some problems even more serious than these.

The SPEAKER: I trust the honourable member will relate this to the motion.

Mr HARTREY: I hope to do so.

The **SPEAKER**: You have six minutes in which to do so.

Mr **HARTREY**: Thank you very much, that will do me nicely.

Mr **Bertram**: You are on borrowed time.

Mr **HARTREY**: I have been that way for a long while now.

Mr **Skidmore**: Still being educated!

Mr **HARTREY**: I hope so. These young people have brought me their problems, but they have been quite incapable of explaining the difficulties which caused them to seek my advice. It does not matter whether or not they can spell; the important thing is that they could not communicate. Education today should teach us how to communicate, but it does not.

I believe any doctor would say he has experienced the same difficulties in finding out what ails, what problems, what neuroses young people are talking about, unless he is a very experienced practitioner and knows how to do it.

I am a practitioner in another field, and I can, with some celerity, find out what young people are talking about. However, it frequently takes a young person 45 minutes to tell me something which could be communicated in about seven minutes. So what is being taught in the schools? They do not teach the children to spell, but perhaps that does not matter. They do not teach them to read, but that does not matter—the children can watch TV. They do not teach them to think and that does not matter either, because we must do as we are told. Everybody in this country is quite free to do as he is told, and that is why it is a free country. It is also the reason that legislation, such as we have seen this session, can be passed through this Chamber. I realise, of course, that I am not permitted to refer to this legislation.

If that is education, and the Government wants to improve that process by lengthening it at both ends at great expense to the general community, I do not favour it.

If we had the information and a set of statistics indicating exactly the best age at which young children's minds can absorb, comprehend, and discuss knowledge, and if we had a really good system to enable the children to absorb, understand, discuss, and propagate what they have learned, then we would have a worthwhile education system to spend money on. If we do not have that, we have only the worship of a false god. We only have words taking power over men instead of men having mastery over words.

We had the spectacle in the early hours of this very day of gentlemen on both sides of the House, gentlemen endowed with a solitary university degree, reminding each other that they hold these distinctions, and implying that members who

do not have such qualifications should listen to them with profound respect because they would not understand it anyway.

I have said nearly all I want to say. The age of 12 is quite soon enough to send a child to what ought to be secondary education. It is a little early if anything, and certainly the age of 11 is definitely too young. I also believe a five-year-old child is far too young to attend what is called pre-formal education. The type of education a child needs until past the age of five is the education a cat gives its kittens. No-one teaches the cat what to do with its kittens. Cats have been educating their kittens for a long time, and they do it very efficiently.

I say I am in favour of the motion. It is in keeping with human psychology, as the policy of the Government is not. One cannot stop the sun. The scriptures say it was once stopped to prolong a battle, but this is a mere myth. The fact is, we cannot do it by legislation—whether during daylight saving or any other period.

The motion moved by the member for Kalgoorlie is practical. It has common sense, and it is in keeping with modern ideas. The amendment moved by the Premier is a mere negation—although a very clever negation. I compliment the Premier on his amendment, but it is a mere negation unless we are all trying to avoid, evade, or both, the consequences of a difficult political situation.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

#### Ayes—22

Mr Blaikie	Mr Nanovich
Sir David Brand	Mr O'Connor
Mr Clarke	Mr Old
Sir Charles Court	Mr O'Neill
Mr Cowan	Mr Ridge
Mr Coyne	Mr Shalders
Mrs Craig	Mr Gibson
Mr Crane	Mr Stephens
Dr Dadour	Mr Thompson
Mr Grewar	Mr Watt
Mr F. V. Jones	Mr Young

(Teller)

#### Noes—16

Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bertram	Mr May
Mr Bryce	Mr McIver
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr A. R. Tonkin
Mr Fletcher	Mr J. T. Tonkin
Mr Hartrey	Mr Moller

(Teller)

#### Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Laurence	Mr Davies
Mr Mensaroe	Mr T. D. Evans
Mr Sodemam	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Grayden	Mr Harman
Mr Rushton	Mr Barnett
Mr McPharlin	Mr B. T. Burke

Amendment thus passed.

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [3.32 p.m.]: I move—

Insert in lieu of the words struck out the following words—

be kept under review in the light of Government policy and the

availability of finance and trained staff, with increased emphasis being concentrated on primary education at this stage.

Amendment put and passed.

Question (motion, as amended) put and passed.

## SCHOOL BUILDINGS

### *Community Use: Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 16th October, on the following motion by Mr A. R. Tonkin—

That in the opinion of this House the Minister for Education should present to this session of this Parliament a proposal for the establishment of a general design for—

- (a) primary schools,
- (b) high schools,

which will facilitate to an extent much greater than pertains at present the use by the community at large of such educational institutions.

The House further recommends to the Minister that in drawing up such a proposal he should draw upon the expertise and objectives of the Community Recreation Council, local government and other interested bodies and persons.

**MR A. R. TONKIN** (Morley) [3.33 p.m.]: I will be very brief because I want to co-operate with members and with the House. I realise we have many motions to get through, and I trust all members will co-operate in the same way.

As the Minister representing the Minister for Education is not in his seat, I will make a special appeal to the Premier. The Minister in his speech said the needs of the community are not necessarily compatible with the needs of education. I would suggest to the Premier those needs are compatible and can be compatible with greater flexibility so that the facilities are used for educational purposes during the day, and for community purposes after that. One small step towards this reform would be the provision of caretakers in high schools so that the facilities may be let out to the community.

The Minister said the Education Department could not afford the expensive features needed by the community; but, of course, it could afford to do this if it was done in partnership with the Community Recreation Council, the local government authority, and community organisations such as the boy scouts, and so on. With that type of co-operative approach expensive features could be introduced; but in any case most of the features are not expensive. What is most needed is space; that is the main expense.

I was rather amused to read a report compiled by the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission in 1930, which happens to

be the year in which I was born. The following is stated in that report—

The Commission is of opinion that State school playgrounds should be equipped with modern playground equipment, and should be available after school hours for the recreation of the children under trained directors.

My motion goes a lot further than that, but the same principle is involved in each case. In 1930 the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission said, "Let us use our school facilities for a much longer period of time"; and we have not seen much progress in the 44 years since then.

I repeat that our schools are used for only about 14 per cent of the time; they are closed for about 86 per cent of the time. This represents a colossal waste of money. A committee was set up by the member for Kalgoorlie when he was the Minister for Education, to inquire into the community use of school buildings. That committee met only once. Surely the Government could reconvene that committee so that it may examine the whole question in an endeavour to have schools designed so that the community may use them. Then the buildings would be used for more than 14 per cent of the time.

I asked a question of the Minister for Education regarding when the buildings committee had met. He said he did not know what committee I was talking about. Apparently I made a slight error in the name of the committee. I accept the Minister's rebuke; perhaps I did not do my homework perfectly. However, I am sure the Minister is aware of the committee to which I refer. I would appeal to him to get that committee to meet again. I believe it has not met since last year. Here we have a committee consisting of school principals, architects of the Public Works Department, and all kinds of other people who are involved in the design of educational buildings, and it met in 1973 but has not met in 1974. In other words, the Government is just not tackling the problem.

Sir Charles Court: I'll say we are.

**Mr A. R. TONKIN:** I really hope the Government is tackling it and I would be pleased to see evidence of that. If it is tackling the problem I would congratulate it. Of course, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and I hope we will see that proof.

The Lockwood school is being built in my area. I asked a question of the Minister regarding what has been done in respect of providing for the community use of that school. The Minister representing the Minister for Education told me that the changes which have been made amount to paths being altered. Apparently the direction of the paths has been altered so that it is easier for people to

walk into the school. If that is called the community use of school facilities, the Government is not tackling the problem.

I suggest that the Minister investigate the work done by the Liberal Government—and I emphasise that—in Victoria. The Government should take a leaf out of the book of the Victorian Government, or out of the book of the South Australian Government. It should study what has been done in Victoria, South Australia, and England. Let us see that some progress is made.

I would plead with the Premier—because the Minister representing the Minister for Education is not present—to show us some real action on this matter for the sake of education and also for the sake of properly using the taxpayers' money.

The Premier has said little is provided for in the Budget because we are short of money. That is true, but surely it is a waste of money to spend \$1 million on a facility and then to use it only for 14 per cent of the time. If the Premier has a limited amount of money available to him, let him plan its expenditure on facilities which may be used to the maximum extent possible.

I believe the Liberal Party has a policy in respect of this. If the Government implements that policy and if we see large steps taken in respect of this matter, then I am sure the Opposition and the community will congratulate and applaud it. All I ask is that we have no further policy statements or meetings of useless committees; what the Opposition wants is a great deal of action.

Question put and negatived.

Motion defeated.

## EDUCATION POLICIES

### *Condemnation of Government: Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 16th October, on the following motion by Mr T. D. Evans—

That in the opinion of this House, the Government should be condemned for having enunciated certain education policies at the hustings and now some six months later is:—

1. Unable to provide any significant rationale or meaningful detail by way of answers to Parliamentary questions as to the implementation of these policies, that is, in relation to:—
  - (a) lowering the admission age of children into the primary school;
  - (b) transferring children from the primary to the secondary school at the end of the year in which children attain the age of eleven years;

(c) limiting student numbers at high schools to 1 000 and at senior high schools to 400;

2. Endeavouring to reconcile patent conflict between certain key essentials in policy of the two coalition parties constituting the Government;
3. Unable or unwilling to state clearly and fully the criteria upon which it is expected to proceed with these policies without first having demonstrated the educational merits of the changes inherent therein and having failed, when asked to name those professional educationists, whom were or should have been consulted before enunciation of these policies;
4. Refusing to indicate the expected costing of implementation of each and all of these policies.

MR SHALDERS (Murray) [3.40 p.m.]: I intend to keep my remarks on this motion brief in order to facilitate the business of the House. However, I would not like members of the Opposition to construe my brevity as a capitulation.

The motion moved by the member for Kalgoorlie is divided into four parts. Part 1 (a) deals with lowering the admission age of children entering primary schools. I believe I fully explained the other evening why we believed the admission age should be lowered. I mentioned that the children aged between four years and seven years can be considered as one educational category and to bring them within the ambit of the Education Department would facilitate that stage of their education.

I also mentioned that the Victorian Teachers' Union had called on the 90 000 teachers of Australia to support its move to bring this form of education within the ambit of the Victorian Education Department. I suggest it is a very good move on the part of this Government to do the same thing.

Part 1 (b) of the motion relates to the Government's policy to transfer children from primary to secondary schools at the end of the year in which they attain the age of 11 years. The member for Karrinyup amply demonstrated the reasons for this and I do not propose to amplify them now.

Part 1 (c) refers to our policy to limit student numbers at high schools to 1 000 and, at senior high schools, to 400. This is a very sound move and I believe members of the Opposition would welcome the reduction of student numbers in both classes and schools so that education can be put on a more personal footing.

Part 2 of the motion relates to a supposed conflict between the policies of the two coalition parties. I believe the Leader of the Opposition, for whom I have a great deal of respect, has very cleverly endeavoured to drive a wedge between the coalition parties. However, of course, he has not been successful in that respect; I believe the Premier and Deputy Premier very ably and accurately answered the points he made.

I thank members for the hearing they have given me this afternoon. I do not want to keep the House any longer than is necessary; suffice it to say that I do not support the motion moved by the member for Kalgoorlie.

**MR T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie)** [3.43 p.m.]: I believe it is customary to thank members who have participated in a debate; this motion by the way, can rank as one of the most mature motions on the notice paper. Therefore I thank members because, if nothing else, this debate coupled with the previous debate, has highlighted what is after all a great—probably the greatest—social occupation of human beings.

I propose to be brief. This motion has been on the notice paper since early August and since that time—with respect—nothing has happened by way of contribution to the debate or by statements from the Minister which would have had the effect of modifying the motivation for the moving of this motion. What has happened only strengthens the reasons which existed then and which still exist today for moving this motion.

I refer to the rewrite of Liberal Party policy. We have seen a rewrite of that section dealing with the alleged entry into primary schools of five-year-old children. As late as this afternoon, we have seen a rewrite of the Liberal Party policy relating to the transfer of children from primary to secondary schools. In this regard, the Liberal Party in the “credibility stakes” has drifted from twos to tens. I commend the motion to the House.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

**Ayes—17**

Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bertram	Mr May
Mr Bryce	Mr McIver
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr Davies	Mr A. R. Tonkin
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr J. T. Tonkin
Mr Fletcher	Mr Moller
Mr Hartrey	

(Teller)

**Noes—22**

Mr Blaikie	Mr Nanovich
Sir David Brand	Mr O'Connor
Mr Clarke	Mr Old
Sir Charles Court	Mr O'Neill
Mr Cowan	Mr Ridge
Mr Coyne	Mr Shalders
Mrs Craig	Mr Sibson
Mr Crane	Mr Stephens
Dr Dadour	Mr Thompson
Mr Grewar	Mr Watt
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Young

(Teller)

**Pairs**

Ayes	Noes
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr Mensaros
Mr T. H. Jones	Mr Sodeman
Mr Harman	Mr Grayden
Mr Barnett	Mr Rushton
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr McPharlin

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

*Sitting suspended from 3.48 to 4.06 p.m.*

**HOUSING OWNERSHIP AND FINANCE**

*Inquiry by Royal Commission: Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 23rd October, on the following motion by Mr Barnett—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should give consideration to the appointment as soon as possible of a Royal Commission to inquire into home ownership and all finances pertaining to home ownership in the State of Western Australia.

**SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier)** [4.07 p.m.]: Very briefly in view of the absence of the Minister for Labour and Industry who was in the course of making his remarks when this motion was before the House on the 23rd October last and who is absent in Melbourne at the moment on official business of a rather important nature, I want to reiterate the comments made by him on that day, and also by my colleague, the Minister for Works, Water Supplies, and Housing; that is, that the Government is opposed to this motion. We have given our reasons as to why we believe the Royal Commission is completely unnecessary in view of the action that is already being taken. We oppose the motion.

Question put and negatived.

Motion defeated.

**LAND**

*Park at Reabold Hill: Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 13th November, on the following motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition)—

This House applauds the concept of a new park consisting of 800 acres of natural bushland to the west of Reabold Hill and urges the Government to take the necessary steps to have the area made an “A”-class reserve for such purpose.

**SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier)** [4.08 p.m.]: When this motion was last before the House the Minister for Local Government, Urban Development, and Town Planning spoke on it and indicated the Government's attitude. He summarised the events leading up to the amendment appearing on the notice paper. Members will recall that following the moving of this motion by the Leader of the Opposition, he readily agreed—which we appreciate—that his motion should be deferred, or given lesser priority on the notice paper, until such time as honourable members had made an inspection of the

area that is under question. Subsequently, with the co-operation of the Perth City Council, action was taken for an inspection to be made. I think it was a fruitful exercise. It was quite foolish for the motion to be considered without honourable members having physically inspected the area involved to get some idea of the current development and some idea of the topography; and to appreciate better the relativity of this site to the local community and its relationship to the rest of the metropolitan region.

Following this it was arranged that I would place a proposal before the Perth City Council and this was set out in a letter dated the 14th November, a copy of which was sent to the Leader of the Opposition, and the contents of this letter were, I believe, read to this House. The letter explained to the Perth City Council the motion before the House and the intention of the Government, through the Minister for Local Government, Urban Development, and Town Planning, to move an amendment to the motion which would set out certain conditions under which the Perth City Council would be given an opportunity to institute the necessary studies with competent people. Having made those studies a report would be made available to the State Parliament together with the observations of the council itself.

The idea was not to intrude unnecessarily on the rights and responsibilities of a local government authority, because it is certainly contrary to Government policy and I think it would be contrary to the wishes of the ALP to interfere unnecessarily with the rights and responsibilities of a local authority, especially one as important as, and one which has done so much in many fields as, the Perth City Council.

Following this I received a letter dated the 18th November which I would like recorded in *Hansard*. It reads as follows—

The Hon. Sir Charles Court,  
O.B.E., M.L.A.,

Premier of Western Australia,  
Superannuation Building,  
Perth 6000.

Dear Sir Charles,

Thank you for your letter of 14th November, 1974.

Well before the 26th November I will communicate to you the Perth City Council's decision in regard to the request as stated in the amended motion before Parliament.

I have worked towards the acceptance of the request.

Thank you for your comments in regard to our being able to look at the ground with a very good number of members of Parliament.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

ERNEST LEE-STEERE,  
Lord Mayor.

A copy of this letter was forwarded to the Minister for Local Government, Urban Development and Town Planning, and also to the Leader of the Opposition.

Subsequently I received the following, which is a resolution passed at a council meeting—

**RESOLUTION PASSED AT COUNCIL  
MEETING HELD ON  
18th NOVEMBER, 1974.**

**RESOLVED THAT** the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor, Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk recommend suitably qualified personnel to act as a study group to investigate if there are areas which could be retained for or regenerated to natural bush or other uses, their reasons for such recommendations, and the approximate costs involved.

Following the resolution, some added comments were sent to me in the handwriting of the Lord Mayor, as follows—

We will form this study group quickly and conform to the wishes expressed in your letter and the motion in Parliament. Ernest Lee-Steele.

Members will need to appreciate that in sending that note to me, the Lord Mayor was in possession of the amendment as it appears on the notice paper. I believe that through this memorandum of the Lord Mayor and the resolution of the council we can accept this as an assurance by the Perth City Council that it will conform with the request of Parliament, and that we can now accept this amendment with confidence. We should make sure that at the appropriate times we do two things.

Firstly, I think the Perth City Council—and I will advise the Lord Mayor accordingly—should let the Government know officially the exact form of the study group it is to establish, with particulars of its personnel and their qualifications. The council will also indicate to us the terms of reference given to the study group, and the timetable that is involved.

The Government has already made it clear to the council that appropriate State Government officers will be made available. I am quite certain that if we do not have the expertise within the State Government we will have little difficulty in negotiating for the expertise from bodies such as the CSIRO, or maybe some of the universities in the other States and from the Commonwealth's own resources. I do not anticipate any problem in marshalling the expertise that is necessary for this important study group.

Let me make it clear that this is no ordinary group consisting of some councillors to express an opinion on information furnished to them; it will be a study group comprising people many of whom



will have considerable scientific as well as technical expertise to look at this very carefully.

Most people will be conscious of the fact that the area concerned, where we hope eventually to have an expanded park established in perpetuity, is very brittle at the present time. We have seen the effect on the area after a few horses have been through and after a few of us have passed over it; therefore, there will be a need to implement a very scientific programme. This is not difficult to understand, and those of us who have spent our lives here will be aware that the coastal plain is very brittle. For that reason this group will have the responsibility of not only reporting on how the area should be used as a park, but how it can be permanently made suitable for standing up to public use.

I am one who believes that no useful purpose is served in having an area set aside, with or without a fence, if it is not available to the public. I think the development in King's Park over the last 20 years demonstrates this. It is a great pleasure to see thousands of people, including young children, making use of the park, particularly on Saturdays and Sundays in parts which have been prepared for their use so that they do not damage the other parts which we regard as "natural"; but in fact very little of it is truly natural these days.

The second point is that the council will have to make available to us the final report, together with the council's own comments. This will be a mixture of scientific data and advice on development and usage, as well as details relating to the inevitable question of finance.

I would like members to appreciate that the initial estimates are very considerable indeed, if we are to have a major park to be set up that will be available at all times in a safe condition for the people to enjoy and use. In the light of that and my belief that we have the necessary assurance of co-operation from the Perth City Council, I shall move an amendment to the motion.

We would expect as a matter of courtesy, apart from plain good sense, to make sure that as we get information from the council about the study group the Leader of the Opposition is advised, because jointly we might have to make overtures to the Perth City Council if we believe the form of it is not clear, the people are not of sufficient experience or expertise, or they have in any way misunderstood the intentions of Parliament. It is my intention and desire that the Leader of the Opposition is kept acquainted of this.

There might be some form of interim report to enable us to check on the way the research programme is being undertaken. If I had to name a date I would say it would take 18 months to two years at the least to carry out the scientific work. Whether we have to wait that long

is a matter to be determined when we have expert advice fed through to us.

I have not as yet referred to anything from the university. At this point we have not received the same assurance from the university, but I intend to take this matter up personally with the vice-chancellor, and if necessary with the chancellor, and through the Minister for Local Government, Urban Development and Town Planning, to make sure that no move, which is in conflict with the intention of Parliament, is made.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

I therefore move an amendment—

Delete all words after the word "park" in line 2 and substitute the following—

and requests the Perth City Council and the University to defer any subdivision of the undeveloped land in the proximity of Bold Park until the report of a study group has been received and considered by the State Parliament. The Perth City Council is also requested to convene a study group to examine this area in conjunction with the land within Bold Park and the contiguous University Land and make recommendations about its future use and development.

For this purpose, it is recommended that the study group comprise the necessary scientific and technical expertise to deal with all aspects of flora, fauna, topography, environment, community use and enjoyment, including overall Metropolitan Regional Planning and financial considerations.

It is also suggested that the State Government make available State Government officials, including Treasury and Town Planning representatives, on a basis to be mutually agreed with the Perth City Council.

Further, it is requested that the result of the study be presented to Parliament with the views of Perth City Council, as soon as practicable.

**MR J. T. TONKIN** (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [4.20 p.m.]: We are quite happy with the developments which have followed the moving of the motion. We were concerned at the time that subdivision might proceed and the possibility of retaining this land for the use of the people would be lost. That was why the motion was moved. There is no longer any danger at the moment of that taking place. We are quite happy with the proposed inquiry and as a result of that I think it is more likely that we will get a balanced judgment.

We had no intention of trying to push anyone around. We felt that those people who were moving in the council in the direction we desired to go would be supported if we could carry a motion similar to the one we moved in the House. I have no reason to be dissatisfied at all with what has occurred since. We accept the assurances given and rely on the fulfilment of the undertakings and, in due course, we expect to have the recommendations before us. I would hope they will be in the direction of retaining this land as open space for the use of the people. But I do not want to anticipate at all at this stage. We are quite content to leave the situation as it is in the hope that the right thing will be done eventually and the land will be retained for the people.

Amendment put and passed.

*Motion, as Amended*

Question (motion, as amended) put and passed.

### PRESS COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA BILL

#### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 30th October.

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [4.22 p.m.]: I am sorry that I have to participate in so many debates today, but I am doing so in the interests of expediency. Members can relax because after this item there is only one more in which I will be involved.

The member for Morley moved the second reading of this Bill which is designed to establish a Press council of Western Australia. My only regret is that like so many of these matters which are limited to the procedures which have to be dealt with on private members' day, we could not spend more time on a full-scale debate on the total question, because it is a vital issue and the whole matter envisaged in a Press council is, of course, under attack and examination in many parts of the world.

Much of the attack made and study being undertaken is biased and, let us face it, most of us react largely as it affects our own person and personal interests. We find a nice headline and we say, "The Press is not too bad today"; and then we see a bad headline and say they are a lot of so and so's. That about sums up the position. From my own point of view, in spite of the fact that I have plenty of arguments with the Press and the media generally—we are inclined to think only in terms of the Press, but we are dealing with the total news media—I have to say in my more calm moments that within the confines of the resources and space available to them they do, in fact, endeavour largely to portray a reasonable representation to the people of what is going on in our day and times. There are, of course, exceptions, and some rather nasty exceptions, where we have certain

journals established for no other reason than to make scandal and stir up mud and muck, but in the main I find that those responsible are despised just as much by the reasonable, stable, and more conservative members of the profession of journalism as they are by us and the community at large.

Mr Jamieson: Some of their elementary mistakes of quoting you as saying something when they are not your words at all are annoying, to say the least. They put you in quotation marks when they are not your words at all, yet the public at large believe that they are. That is very bad journalism.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I know we have these problems and have taken them up on occasions; it is very hard to correct them.

Mr Jamieson: You cannot do anything about them.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Especially when quotation marks are used. I have had occasion to complain and I have been told there is a certain amount of license and that I used 16 words to say what could have been said in six. I have been told that what they have said is actually a correct paraphrase of what I said; and it is a never-ending argument.

Mr Jamieson: They do it the other way with me. They use 20 words to interpret my six.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is a lucky fellow! I have made some notes on this Bill and I think that in the interests of expediency I should go through them as quickly as I can to leave a record. I am approaching the subject on the basis of the Bill introduced—and not on the broader question—and also the way in which the honourable member introduced it.

Although the Bill to establish a Press council is claimed as a measure to ensure freedom of the Press, it is a rather cunning, veiled attempt to remove the true freedom now enjoyed. That is how I interpret it.

Several members interjected.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Just listen. It is an effort to create ways and means of muzzling certain avenues of expression, of intimidating proprietors, and certainly of inhibiting writers. That is the critical part.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: I should say it is.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member for Morley may not have intended it this way, but if he studies the Bill he will find this is the situation.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Does that happen in Britain? It is modelled on the British system.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I will deal with the British system afterwards. I do not want to waste time.

Mr Skidmore: Skip this criticism and get onto it then.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is most restrictive, applying only to certain newspapers, and completely bypassing radio and television.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Because they are already covered by an Act.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Wait a minute. In my opinion it is not enough to say that radio and television are controlled by the board because, as most people know, some of the most evocative and provocative criticisms and comments today are from this section of the media.

I would remind members that it is in this section—the current affairs section—that the reporters and interviewers are not necessarily members of the AJA and are not subject to the discipline of that particular association.

Mr Bertram: Do you propose to amend the Bill?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Therefore they are not subject to any charter. For instance, most of us have less trouble with the straight news reporting of the ABC than with its current affairs programme reporters.

Mr May: They have very little conscience; that's for sure.

Sir CHARLES COURT: But they are still part of the media.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Will you amend the Bill then?

Sir CHARLES COURT: We will oppose the Bill. The Bill confines itself to the Press, rather than to the media as a whole, thus imposing controls on one form of the daily reporting of news, while exempting others. The Bill represents a costly exercise in bureaucracy. For instance, if we take it literally, would every edition of every newspaper be scrutinised as well as every page change and every addition to the stop Press? What purpose is served, when potentially intrusive, questionable TV programmes and radio talk-back shows are subject to no such scrutiny? Members know what happened to some people on these radio talk-back shows. I recollect what happened to the then Deputy Premier (Mr Graham) on a radio talk-back show, and the distress it caused. That was reprehensible, but what can we do about it? Such shows would not come under the Bill at all.

The Bill aims to impose a Press council on just one State, and this is not practicable. How would it police the reporting of Western Australian news in other States? How would it deal with alleged cases of misreporting in other States, but published in Western Australia? It would lend itself to a policy of double standards.

Canada's special Senate committee on the mass media, which studied the question of

a Press council—and in fact recommended the formation of one—made it clear that the major duties of such a council required a country-wide national platform, rather than a regional one, because news is rather mobile, especially in the days of radio and TV.

A statutory body, as proposed, could be a first step towards Government control of the Press because its functions could be changed by any Government, at any time.

Broadly, there are deeper philosophical objections to a compulsory Press council. The mover of the Bill is dabbling on an experimental basis in two difficult areas involving—

The official control of the Press which is subject to governmental appointment; and

The question of the invasion of privacy for which he favours no legislation.

The member for Morley also refers to problems re defamation and says that the law is unduly restrictive. It is noteworthy, however, that in the past few days judgments have been given by two courts in Australia opposing such a suggestion—one case brought by a Communist, Burchett, and the other by a Labor politician, both claiming that they had been defamed—and holding that there was no defamation. I pose this question to the honourable member: What is this body that is to have such a wide-ranging jurisdiction and power for criticism? One would expect to find it including a large proportion of persons whose education and experience fitted them to discuss the social and moral implications of the Press and what it publishes; that is, social scientists, political scientists, lawyers, psychologists, etc. However, in this Bill no such qualifications are required of any members of the council. Beyond saying that a certain number of members must be chosen from persons nominated by specified organisations, the Bill imposes no requirements on membership whatever.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: The Government itself will appoint them.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Here one may ask what particular claim the Trades and Labor Council, the Employers Federation, the Chamber of Manufactures, and the Chamber of Commerce, have to be nominating persons for the council.

Under the terms of this Bill, the AJA will not only be footing a share of the cost of the council, but also will be sitting in judgment most of the time on incidents created by its own members.

Mr Bertram: That is no good.

Sir CHARLES COURT: That is what is contained in the Bill. From my knowledge of newspaper management in Australia, management does not greatly influence the writings of staff members whose names invariably appear in the by-lines. I think a classic example is *The Sydney Morning*

*Herald*, and *The Australian Financial Review* which are owned by the Fairfax family. That family has not proved to be too effective in modern times in influencing editorial and news reporting—especially in *The Australian Financial Review*. It is not unusual for the proprietor to refuse to interfere in the editorial policy.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: That varies from paper to paper.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It therefore seems incongruous that views expressed in a by-line story by an AJA member can be the subject of a complaint against a newspaper, its proprietor, or publisher, who will then need to answer to the Press council on which the Journalists' Association representatives will be prominent.

The truth is that most editors and journalists in Australia observe the code of ethics of the Australian Journalists' Association. There are a few publications which do not—which are, for example, guilty of intrusion and misrepresentation. I do not think we have taken sufficient advantage of the AJA. On one or two recent occasions, I believe, members—including at least one from this side of the House—have accepted the invitation of the AJA to use its facilities. Perhaps we are being neglectful and we should allow that association to demonstrate that it does have ethics for its members. I believe it has, and if given an opportunity it wants to prove the extent of its ethics in this matter.

Mr May: They were against the provisions of the fuel Bill.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: They also want a Press council.

Sir CHARLES COURT: As I said, there are a few publications which do not observe the code of ethics of the AJA and which are, for example, guilty of intrusion and misrepresentation. They exist because enough people buy them—and apparently want them—to make them economically viable. Such publications are unlikely to be deterred by a Press council which has no really punitive powers.

I have in mind one particular publication which would thumb its nose at a Press council. Again, as the council is obviously to be involved in the assessment of evidence, and as it will be most desirable that it keeps its decisions reasonably consistent, one with the other, and in conformity with principles which it will proclaim—no such principles being stated in the Bill—it would seem essential that it be presided over by somebody of judicial capacity. Yet the Bill contains no such requirement. As the Bill stands it would be quite possible for the council to be constituted of persons, none of whom has any legal training or experience.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: With a lousy Government, that might happen.

Sir CHARLES COURT: There are some other important questions which need to be answered. What procedures is the council to follow? Clause 15(1) says when a complaint is received, the council may require the person complained against to appear before it to answer such complaint. What happens if the person so required does appear? What right of hearing will he have? May he be represented by a lawyer or other person? On what principles is evidence to be accepted or rejected? Are the proceedings to be in public, or in camera? Nothing is said about these things.

I remind members that it was not so long ago we found that even Senate Select Committees were able to take evidence in a way which was quite diabolical. I was amazed that those on a Senate Select Committee, with legal experience, allowed evidence to be taken regarding security measures in the way it was. For instance the committee was prepared to allow Senators to ask whatever leading questions they wanted to. A court of law would have been horrified.

Mr Hartrey: That was an inquisition.

Sir CHARLES COURT: That is true, I do not know what has been done since. However, the Senate Select Committee was brought into terrible disrepute because people could not understand why some of the senior members of the profession did not revolt within the committee. It was a bonanza for the Press when Senators were able to ask leading questions. I can imagine that the member for Boulder-Dundas is saying under his breath that if he had been there it would have been different!

This Bill gives the Press council power to investigate any complaint, claim, or question.

I emphasise that point; it is a reason we are disturbed. Even Britain's Press Council, a national rather than a segmented organisation, does not do that. It will not entertain complaints unless—

The complainant has already sought satisfaction from the newspaper and failed to obtain it, and

The complainant signs a waiver that precludes legal action on the complaint.

The statement of functions in this Bill incidentally has been lifted almost totally from the statement of functions of the British Press Council. The one difference is that the British Press Council refers to the freedom and character of the British Press, whereas this Bill refers to "The Press in this State and elsewhere". The effect is to make this Bill presumptuous and impracticable.

There are a number of other unpleasant features in the Bill. One is that it allows the Governor to dismiss any member of the Press council on grounds of inability,

Sir CHARLES COURT: It does a fairly good job for members opposite at no cost to the Labor Party.

Mr May: It failed.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I would like to refer to a story of one Perth paper published many years ago, in my very early life, which set out to be a great idealistic paper. It intended to publish only the truth, the facts, national events, and matters of public affairs. There would be no scandal, no divorce, and no cartoons.

Mr Skidmore: Sounds like the policy of the Government!

Sir CHARLES COURT: The fate of that paper which dramatically changed its policies is literally the story of how the reading public substantially influenced the form and scope of the news.

In conclusion I want to say that one other very unpleasant feature of the Bill is the suggestion that one of the council's functions would be to make representations on appropriate occasions to the United Nations.

It is considered that the argument of the mover of the Bill is largely motivated by his political bias in that the illustrations he quotes in support of his case are largely drawn from examples he takes to be so-called anti-Labor conspiracies. He overlooks the fact that political parties other than his own frequently complain that the Press does not report them adequately, that they are reported incorrectly, or that there is too much emphasis and bias given to their political opinions. I think this illustrates the point I made before; when both parties are complaining, the Press is probably presenting a fairly balanced political picture to the community.

The Press, if it is to be indeed free, must respond to the dictates of public taste and demand. If it is to be dictated to by requirements, whether statutory or otherwise, to publish all, or any matters which members of the public, political parties, or pressure groups consider important, or if it is required to devote a percentage of space prescribed by an outside organisation to put its views, not only will it probably lose its economic viability, but it will, in turn, lead to some kind of governmental or public control which will spell the end of a free Press.

MR MAY (Clontarf) [4.53 p.m.]: I wish to make a few brief comments on this Bill. It has been dealt with very fully by the member for Morley and the Premier. Like the Premier, I am disappointed that we have not had more time to discuss it. This is an important subject, and it is unfortunate that it has been brought on at this late stage. I do not accuse anyone of this; it has come about because of the circumstances of the session.

I want to refer to the first speech I made in Parliament. I criticised the Press in regard to the graphic account of certain happenings. The particular case to which I referred was that of two school-girls who were given a lift in a motorcar. The car drove towards Scarborough, and the girls were interfered with. They then endeavoured to run along the beach and the article told us that the girls were rugby-tackled, brought down, and that intercourse took place. Very graphic details were given in the Press.

At that time I said, as the father of three children, that I deprecated reporting of this type. If one tries to keep newspapers from children, they will usually find them and read what is in them.

I was very critical of this report, and subsequently the editor of the particular newspaper wrote to me saying that my comments were appreciated but he felt that detailing such matters in the Press would be a deterrent. From subsequent happenings, I do not think anyone has been deterred in any way. In fact, if anything, the situation has been aggravated.

Another unwarranted article was the reporting of a fatality which occurred between Kalgoorlie and Southern Cross. The headline in the Press was, "Bikie Killed".

The dead youth had not been the rider of a motorcycle; he was a "bikie". It is matters of this kind which require some rationalising on the part of the Press. It is wrong to print stories of this sort.

Another illustration of reporting of this type occurred after a demonstration march from King's Park down St. George's Terrace. Next morning we read in the Press that a particular demonstrator was bundled into the police car. We had seen on the television that the man had walked into the police car. He was asked to come with the police, and he was escorted to the car.

A Press council, as suggested by the member for Morley, would help to control reporting like this. The honourable member put a great deal of work into the drafting of this legislation, and it is most unfortunate that we must debate the measure in such a short time. I believe the member for Morley could have prepared a significant reply to the points raised by the Premier.

I would like to refer to another incident which arose when I was a Minister in the Tonkin Government. I assure the House that overall I received a very good Press in the time I held the portfolio, but I did not appreciate the reference to "May-lies" headline in the Press. Some people in my department took exception to it. The legal opinion was that it was defamatory and we should take action about it. I decided we would not take action, but I rang the newspaper concerned. It said it would print an apology, but the apology was in such a

veiled form that it was not a complete one. It did not do anything to offset the damage done by the original article, but we let the matter drop. As far as I am concerned, that was it.

One of the major problems I found when I was a Minister was to get the true facts over to the public. Very briefly I would like to relate a particular matter to the House because I feel it should be highlighted. I had occasion to be interviewed by a reporter of the major newspaper in Western Australia, and to ensure that the information I gave to the reporter was correct, I called upon two of my department heads—one from the State Electricity Commission and one from the Fuel and Power Commission—to be present so that the facts would be accurate. I assure the present Minister for Fuel and Energy I did this to ensure there was no animosity between the two.

These men came to my office and we sat down with the reporter who obtained a story in terms of the present and future power situation in Western Australia. He agreed it was a very good story and away he went. We anticipated an article would appear in the Press within the next few days, and I must mention that it was just prior to the State election this year.

On the 8th February I wrote to the managing director of the newspaper concerned—and I will not give its name. I will table later these papers which I will now read—

The publication of an article by Sir Charles Court on world mineral prospects in . . . of February 8 leads me to inquire as to the disposition of an article prepared previously by . . . of your staff.

Early this week, . . . interviewed myself, Mr. J. B. Kirkwood, the Commissioner for Fuel and Power, and Mr. W. J. Gillies, General Manager, State Electricity Commission, on the prospective demands for power in Western Australia, and the proposed means of meeting them.

We granted this interview and gave . . . a considerable amount of our time, on the understanding that the article would be published to supplement this week's news story dealing with the acceleration of the Muja Power Station expansion.

It is to put the situation mildly that I am now astounded to see that article supplanted in favour of one expressing Sir Charles Court's personal opinion about quite conjectural aspects of mineral policies to an audience in a distant part of the world.

One must wonder that this article should take precedence over a factual assessment, made on the spot by one of your top-ranking journalists and

the Western Australian Commissioner for Fuel and Power, about circumstances of the utmost immediate importance to the livelihoods and continuing prosperity of all Western Australians.

This is even more incomprehensible in that—as I have stated—the privilege of interview was requested by your own journalist.

Under the circumstances, and since " . . . " is the principal organ of public opinion and information in this State, I do not believe I am unreasonable in expecting that you would have published that article while the matter of Muja expansion was still before the attention of your readers.

The present Government has established a policy of taking the Press into its confidence on all matters of moment to the State, and this is readily acknowledged by all journalists who work close to the Premier and to Cabinet Ministers.

On the other hand, I will recall to your memory the difficulty which " . . . " experienced, during many years, in extracting from the Brand Government the simple statistic of the price which it was paying for the imported crude oil used for power generation in this State: within weeks of this Government's taking office your paper was supplied with that information.

To return to the article in question: any further delay in publishing it can only be for reasons other than editorial policy.

The least courtesy which I, or the Commissioner for Fuel and Power might expect, is an explanation of your intentions regarding Mr. . . . 's article.

I received the following reply, dated the 11th February, 1974, from the managing director of the newspaper—

It will be a sad day for our newspapers and for our country if politicians and, in particular, Ministers of the Crown grant interviews to reporters only on the basis that they, the politicians, will control how, when, where and why the article will be published.

You know as well as I do that this decision always has remained with the editor.

I have always tried to respond courteously to reasonable requests, but I must confess that I am of a nature that reacts very badly to aggressive and unwarranted demands.

I do not think I made an unwarranted demand. I again wrote to the managing director on the 22nd February, as follows—

I regret the delay in replying to your letter of February 11, 1974 but

inefficiency, or misbehaviour, thereby allowing political influences to usurp the so-called independent role of the council.

It can be taken from the speech by the member for Morley that all bias, error, or misrepresentation is aimed against Labor. He did not quote anything affecting the Liberal Party, the DLP, or even the Farmers' Union.

I would like the member for Morley to know we also have complaints. In fact, we believe that on many occasions the Press tries to help the Opposition a little too hard. It seems that it attempts to build up a good score, in helping the Labor Party, so that if it is challenged it can prove what it has done.

Mr May: The timing worries us.

Mr Jamieson: That would be a "Walter Mitty".

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to say, in terms of human judgment, when opposing parties both complain about the same thing it can be assumed that someone in the middle is trying to do the right thing! That has been my experience. We all have complaints at certain times when we think journalists misrepresent us in the Press.

Mr Skidmore: Why use the word "we"?

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the member for Swan does not want to be included perhaps I should say, "We, minus the member for Swan, have complaints".

At this stage I would ask the member for Morley what does he believe should influence a Minister in making appointments to the proposed Press council. Probably he would choose people who represent his idea of the "general public". This could change automatically with a change of Government. I have been challenged on this particular point and I got into some trouble in America when I used the term "Joe Blow". I notice the member for Mt. Hawthorn now uses it so perhaps the term will be excused.

Mr May: So does the Civil Affairs Bureau.

Sir CHARLES COURT: This could change automatically with a change of Government.

A statutory body as proposed would be a first step towards Government control of the Press because its functions could be changed by any Government at any time. There are historic reasons why the media are generally wary about any form of Government control. They always react with great sensitivity immediately anyone tries to put his hands on the Press or any components of it. There is a very good reason for this. Newspapers began as publishing ventures which were licensed by the State. They existed at the pleasure of the King and Commons, and could be shut down when they inconvenienced the authorities of the day. In some countries that still applies. It took a long, courageous fight, even in Australia, to end this arrangement. The battle for

the freedom of the Press thus became an important part of the evolution of freedom of speech. It is understandable, then, that the media should view Government intrusion as the chief threat to Press freedom.

The Bill's announced intention to study ownership of papers implies a preparedness to restrict or regulate the Press or the ownership of it. This must be seen as being aimed at a system of Government licensing of the Press. That conclusion gains credence from the comments of Dr Cairns who in recent weeks has quite openly talked about a State paper. Any measures which empower a Government-appointed board to affect a media company's ability to print what it chooses is a potential danger to Press freedom. At the moment, in connection with radio and television, we are seeing a very quiet but effective intrusion by the Media Department at the Federal level with the intention of becoming more and more a force in influencing what is shown on television and what is said on television and radio.

A Press council as suggested by the member for Morley would represent another move to add to the proliferation of boards and commissions which tend to flourish under the patronage of the Labor Party in Canberra at the present time and which keep many senior counsel so tied up that it is a wonder they ever have a chance to get around to administering the law.

It may well be argued that the reading public is a Press council in itself. Public opinion and response constitute a stimulus to all newspapers to retain a reputation for accuracy, responsibility, and fairness. I think it is fair to say that on world standards Australian newspapers are generally considered to be honest in character. Even the risk of the odd lapse does not warrant the greater risks which are inherent in any body which can exercise control or pressure over or threaten Press freedom or the freedom of any editor or writer to express his views or report events without fear of being hauled before a board every time someone does not like what he writes. If he has committed a crime there already exists abundant legal machinery to punish him.

Mr Jamieson: That is a lot of nonsense. A small person in the community has no chance of getting relief from a newspaper.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Such a person would not be interested in a Press council. The people who would be interested in a Press council would be politicians, big business people, and organisations like the Chamber of Commerce.

When introducing his Bill the member for Morley stated that on one occasion when it published an editorial *The West Australian* should have indicated that much of its revenue came from cigarette advertising. It is a fairly elementary fact about newspapers that they rely for much

of their revenue on advertising from thousands of diverse sources, such as lost and found, births, marriages, and deaths, and even as diverse as classified advertisements—

Mr McIver: Liberal Party notices.

Sir CHARLES COURT:—motor vehicle and cigarette advertisements—they are all there. If the honourable member is suggesting that each time a newspaper publishes an editorial on any subject it should first check whether it has received advertising revenue from a source associated with that subject, and then publishes the fact, he is being a little naive. If one wanted to write an editorial about the Salvation Army one would have to say, "Two years ago the Salvation Army inserted an advertisement about its Red Shield Appeal", and so on.

The newspaper has often been called a daily miracle. Each edition is the result of hundreds of human decisions, each calling for swift judgment, instant clarity, and a balancing of perceptions. There are few enterprises so demanding in terms of speed and judgment.

The member for Morley also said—

Before interpretive reporting, the function of the journalist was merely to make himself available—space permitting—to those wanting to say something.

My reaction to that was that it was an insult to the craft of journalism, or that the member for Morley did not understand the craft of the professional journalist.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: I was talking about 50 years ago. I said "Before interpretive reporting".

Sir CHARLES COURT: There has been interpretive reporting for as long as I can remember and before that. If the stories of war correspondents, for instance, are not interpretive reporting, I do not know what is.

The member for Morley reveals a pathetic misunderstanding of the role of newspapers when he talks of them as "editorial harlots", and when he suggests that they inform people almost by accident while going about their purpose of achieving a profit. He is being less than honest, just, realistic, and fair. He was trying to give the impression that the whole of the profession of journalism is motivated by profit. I believe that is a reflection on the profession rather than on the proprietors.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Do you know of any newspapers which exist for altruistic reasons?

Sir CHARLES COURT: No-one denies that newspapers are published for profit; but I am concerned about the product they produce. I have given the instance

of *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian Financial Review*. I happen to know the proprietors of those papers. No other two papers are more critical or antagonistic towards me, yet the proprietors are people I know and respect greatly. They never lift a finger to interfere with the editorial side.

The honourable member is slandering the people to whom his proposed Press council would look for the "highest professional" standards. It is a sad reflection that a member of this House who professes to want to ensure the freedom of the Press and who expresses concern about professional standards should judge newspaper men so harshly.

I want to record these matters in *Hansard* so that they can be studied at a later date.

The honourable member who introduced this Bill used some convoluted logic to suggest that because roughly half the people who advertise in newspapers are Labor supporters, newspapers should consult them before they oppose the Labor Party editorially.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: They get their revenue from consumers, and I said approximately half the consumers would be Labor supporters.

Sir CHARLES COURT: By some distorted logic he is saying the newspapers should consult these people. But how?

On one hand, he wants assurance that newspapers are not influenced in forming their policies by advertisers; on the other hand, when those advertisers are Labor voters, he has no qualms about their influencing policies. That was a deduction I made from the comments of the member for Morley, as I heard them and as I read them.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: No, I say the consumer provides the revenue for newspapers, and therefore, the newspapers should represent the consumers.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The honourable member discussed for some time his objection to the newspapers reporting trivia. When he was making his speech I made a quick calculation of the type of newspaper he was advocating, and I believe it would be a mighty dull document. The fact that the Press publishes stories about the life of film stars, race horses, or perhaps dogs, quite frankly does not worry me. I pass over those articles if they do not interest me. But some people are interested in these things. The honourable member would subject us to very dull reading, and that is why all Labor dailies in Australia have failed—they have not been able to attract the reading public.

Mr May: You would not call the *Independent* a Labor daily?



this has been unavoidable as since that date I have been involved in a considerable amount of travel.

It is my belief that you have mistaken the emphasis of my 8th February, 1974 letter, which certainly was not intended to dictate the policy of your paper.

I assure you that I would never seek to establish any political power in this respect, and would deplore as much as you any attempt by anyone so to do.

If you will study my letter again I think you will agree that at most I did nothing more aggressive than to ask why your paper had not printed an article written as a result of your representative specifically asking for an interview with a very busy senior Government official.

I then enquired of your intentions regarding Mr . . . 's article, and believe this was not an unwarranted demand. I am firmly of the opinion that its publication would provide a great deal of information to the general public on a subject of the utmost importance and one which could greatly affect their future.

I still believe that I intruded no discourtesy or direction in making the latter request.

If you do not wish to use the material made available to your representative, then I will offer the story to another outlet for publication now, so that the subject may be ventilated while still fresh in peoples' minds.

In the circumstances would you kindly let me know of your intentions regarding Mr . . . 's article. I am not asking that it be published, but seeking to find out whether you intend to make use of it.

The SPEAKER: The member has eight minutes.

Mr MAY: Thank you, Sir, I will not take that long. The following is the final letter I received from the newspaper—

Thank you for your letter of February 22.

I am sorry if there was any misunderstanding regarding your previous letter dated February 8.

All I can say at this stage is that publication of Mr . . . 's article has been postponed. It is the present intention of the editor, Mr . . . to make use of the article but not before further enquiries have been made and more information has been gathered.

The reporter was in my office for about two hours. We are still waiting for that article to be published, eight or nine months since the information was first conveyed to the reporter. I do not blame

him for this; he did his job; he took the story to the editor. The reason the editor decided not to print the story is obvious, and subsequent events have proved it.

I am not being party political; I am merely saying that this is the type of thing we encounter with the Press. We had an opportunity to tell the public of Western Australia what was going on in respect of the fuel and power situation. The reporter involved will agree that we gave him a considerable amount of time; but, of course, when he took his story to the editor it was not used because the State election was drawing near. I feel the publication of the story would have had a detrimental effect on the parties opposite.

I oppose that situation. It is to cover such situations that a Press council is required. It would give people a chance to express their point of view and to place information before the Press council to illustrate the true situation.

I reiterate that I have received a good go from the Press, and I am not deprecating that body. I feel the Press does a good job. We should always endeavour to provide the Press with the true facts of a situation so that they may be presented to the public. In the instance to which I referred the true facts were given, but the letters I have read out indicate the article did not appear in the newspaper because the election was near.

Therefore, I would like to support the Bill introduced by the member for Morley. It is unfortunate that we have insufficient time in which to debate it fully. I have referred to only a couple of incidents to which I take exception. This matter has not arisen out of the blue, because if members read my maiden speech in this place in 1962 they will find I took exception then to the manner in which some articles appear in the Press. I commend the Bill to the House and sincerely hope that members on both sides will support it.

**MRA A. R. TONKIN (Morley)** [5.07 p.m.]: I would like to thank the member for Clontarf for his contribution to the debate. I believe the Legislative Assembly has been insulted by the Premier, who has not judged this issue on its merits. He ignored the British experience.

Sir Charles Court: I did not. I quoted the British situation.

**Mr A. R. TONKIN:** The Premier referred to it, but he was selective. He decided that he would not agree to the establishment of a Press council, and then he looked around to see how he could justify his decision. The Premier believes there are weaknesses in the Bill. I will not say it has no weaknesses, but if the Premier believes there are weaknesses, then amendments could be produced to resolve them.

The weakness of the provision that the Australian Journalists' Association should have to bear half the financial burden arose purely because of a stupid rule of this Parliament which says, that, as a private member, I cannot incur a financial burden on the Crown.

I point out that I represent people, and I represent more people than some members on the Government side represent.

Mr Nanovich: I represent people, too.

Mr A. R. TONKIN: I did not say the member for Toodyay does not represent people; I said I represent more people than some members opposite represent.

Mr Nanovich: I said that I represent—

Mr A. R. TONKIN: Why does not the member for Toodyay listen? He should close his foolish mouth.

Sir Charles Court: And you talk about honour and dignity!

#### *Withdrawal of Remark*

Mr NANOVICH: The member for Morley has passed a remark which I feel is unwarranted, and is a reflection on me. I ask him to withdraw the remark.

Mr A. R. TONKIN: To expedite matters, I withdraw the remark. I was not saying the member for Toodyay does not represent people. I said the member for Morley represents more people than some members on the Government side.

#### *Debate Resumed*

Mr A. R. TONKIN: As I represent people I do not see why I should not be able to suggest a charge on the people. However, because we have this rule I was forced into seeking that the AJA—a very small and penurious organisation—should bear half the burden of this council. I think the Premier should have been genuine and acknowledged that I have made a point and that we should have such a council.

Of course, the Premier is not genuine in this. This is in line with his attempt to misrepresent what we want to do. He said that we are trying to control the Press. This is quite untrue.

Sir Charles Court: Of course you are.

Mr A. R. TONKIN: Does the British Press Council control the Press? The Premier is a cynic! It was a cynical use of the term, because he knows it does not control the Press in the manner he ascribes to it. The Premier said that this measure will not provide the Press council with punitive powers. However, I expect that if I had provided for punitive powers in my legislation, the Premier would have said that we were trying to muzzle the Press. People have asked me, "What chance has your Press Council of Western Australia Bill really got?" and I have said, "No chance at all; Charlie will not accept it."

The SPEAKER: The Premier.

Mr A. R. TONKIN: I am sorry, Mr Speaker; that is how I refer to the Premier when I am outside the House, and I was quoting remarks I made outside. I am not at all surprised that my Bill is to be rejected by the Government.

We are not trying to control the Press. All we want to do is to enable there to be established some body to which the public can come to talk about who might the Government appoint to the board. Could we not say that people who are ministerial appointees might be bad appointees? Of course this is a possibility! It is always possible that a bad Government may appoint bad members to such boards.

But the Premier is selective in his argument and I think it is intellectually dishonest because he applies this kind of logic only to this Bill, and not to legislation put forward by his Government. It is true that the Government of the day could appoint to the Press council people who were unsuitable, but that is so in the case of every board in existence.

I do not propose to spend any time on the Premier's objects; I believe some of the criticisms he made were valid and I will look at the record of his speech carefully to see whether my Bill could not be improved. Nevertheless, I believe the Premier started from the standpoint that, "We are going to knock it, so how can we justify knocking it?" I do not care about that.

We on this side believe in open government and an open Press as well as the importance of the Press and of the people. Therefore, we believe the people should have access to a body which will hear complaints against the Press. I am not knocking the Press in particular; however, the Press is one of the most important aspects of any community and there is less facility to appeal against the Press than against other organisations. Governments are powerful, too, but there is an election every three years and we can get rid of Governments. However, at present, we cannot appeal in any way against the Press.

To talk about this Bill being an attack on the freedom of the Press and so on is to ignore completely the British experience. I am disappointed, not so much because the Premier has rejected the Bill, —I expected it to be rejected—but because there has been no genuine attempt to look at the whole programme. It has just been a simple exercise of, "How can we shoot this Bill down in flames?" As we all know, and as the Premier tells us so proudly, the Liberal Party will have a free vote on this issue. I am most interested to see the results of this free vote.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

**Ayes—16**

Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bertram	Mr May
Mr Bryce	Mr McIver
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr A. R. Tonkin
Mr Fletcher	Mr J. T. Tonkin
Mr Hartrey	Mr Moller

(Teller)

**Noes—22**

Mr Blaikie	Mr Nanovich
Sir David Brand	Mr O'Connor
Mr Clarko	Mr Old
Sir Charles Court	Mr O'Neill
Mr Cowan	Mr Ridge
Mr Coyne	Mr Shalders
Mrs Craig	Mr Silson
Mr Crane	Mr Stephens
Mr Grewar	Mr Thompson
Mr Laurence	Mr Watt
Mr Mensaros	Mr Young

(Teller)

**Pairs**

Ayes	Noes
Mr Davies	Dr Dadour
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr P. V. Jones
Mr T. H. Jones	Mr Sodeman
Mr Harman	Mr Grayden
Mr Barnett	Mr Rushton
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr McPharlin

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

**UNEMPLOYMENT**

*Want of Confidence in Government:  
Motion, as Amended*

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate, from the 20th November, on the following motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition), as amended—

In the opinion of this House, because the policies of the Commonwealth Government have—

1. seriously aggravated inflation to a point where it has become a national economic crisis,
2. forced the State Government to impose steep increases in taxes and charges with the prospect of more to follow if the State financial position is to remain stable,
3. withdrawn incentive from basic primary producing agricultural and mining industries,
4. frustrated resource development programmes and damaged public confidence,
5. forced up interest rates to unprecedented levels with devastating results for home buyers and industrial expansion,

it has produced a disturbingly high level of unemployment with, on its own admission, worse to follow. For this the Commonwealth Government

is deserving of the condemnation of this House and further, in the opinion of this House, the Commonwealth Government should expedite the programme of Commonwealth-State co-operation offered by the States to prepare a national strategy to defeat the present scourge of inflation.

Question put and passed.

**MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

*Declaration of Financial Interests:  
Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 13th November, on the following motion by Mr A. R. Tonkin—

That in the opinion of this House immediate steps should be taken requiring all Members of Parliament to reveal their directorships, shareholdings and any other financial interests or rights which could lead to a conflict of interests.

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [5.17 p.m.]: I think I have drawn the short straw today. I did not think we would reach this motion, but I will be as brief as I can. The motion is one of tremendous importance, and again I think it is one on which we could have spent more time. The honourable member who moved it really left himself exposed more than he realised, because he posed as a great paragon of virtue. From my experience of life, people who reach such lofty heights and talk about morals, honour, dignity, and clean hands and all these sorts of things must realise, of course, there is such a thing as living a total life.

**Mr A. R. Tonkin**: You are judging other people by yourself.

**Sir CHARLES COURT**: No, I am not. I am just making a statement from my own experience, that people who pose as being on a very lofty plane and speak of such words as honour, dignity, and clean hands must not only have clean hands, but must appear to have clean hands.

**Mr Jamieson**: That is my idea of you, on some occasions.

**Mr A. R. Tonkin**: You show me that my hands are not clean.

**Sir CHARLES COURT**: I am not suggesting that they are not clean. I am just using the honourable member's own phrases which he used when he introduced the motion and when he spoke about honour, dignity, and clean hands. I looked at his hands from over here and they appeared to be physically clean; that is, judging from appearances, but I make the point that when people pose as having such high moral standards such an attitude does bring with it some pressure, because in my experience all of us are human and, in the course of a lifetime, even those

people who make the greatest claims to virtue occasionally find themselves in a situation that is of some embarrassment.

However, having made that statement, I hope I have made the point, because it does not only refer to financial matters. In dealing with morals, dignity and honour one is dealing with the total question, because it is not only related to the man who has a great deal of money. A man can have no money, but he can lay claim to having high morals, honour and dignity. On the other hand, a man can have a great deal of money but could not honestly claim that he is endowed with high morals, honour or dignity. Therefore the amount of money a man has is not the final arbiter in deciding whether a person has high morals, honour or dignity.

In the course of his remarks the member for Morley made great play of the question of a full-time member. I want to make my position very clear in this regard. There have been many members in this Parliament who were not full-time members in the sense that they had surrendered all their professional, commercial, or farming interests and activities; and they were the better for it. When a member becomes a Minister the position is different, because there is no room for a part-time Minister.

In my experience some of the best men in this Parliament, from both sides of the House, have been those who retained their particular connections with the interests they held before they were elected to Parliament. There is a good reason for this. The position is not as evident today as when I first became a member. In those days the Labor Party had a greater tendency to draw its candidates from the trade unions and the industrial sphere. Many of those men brought a very earthy approach to the whole question of industrial and other relationships, and they brought an understanding which was quite different from the rather academic attitude we find today.

I shall not mention any names, but members who have been in this House for 10 years or more will recall that a few of those members are still with us. They had lived in an industrial atmosphere, and were experienced in the settlement of industrial disputes and trade union matters and many personal problems. They brought about an understanding of these matters to this place; and that was needed. We had our individual differences of opinion, but there was tremendous respect for one another.

Without mentioning his name, I recall one Labor member for whom I had great respect and admiration. When asked a question he had a very tantalising method of dodging it; he would say, "That is a very good question. Remind me to answer

it before I sit down." When he finished he sat down with such speed that no-one was able to catch up with him!

When he dealt with industrial matters he did so in an entirely different way from the manner in which some members of the Labor Party deal with them today. He dealt with those matters with a very earthy approach. It was the sort of approach one could well understand, because it was based completely on practical experience. At the same time he realised he had to talk to the boss, and he was aware that all bosses were not bad, that there was good and bad on both sides of the fence, and that there had to be a point of communication.

Today a lot of that approach has gone out of the window, because we do not have so many members with that earthy approach; instead we have members who are better educated in terms of education and university training, but I doubt whether they have the same wisdom as their forebears.

**THE SPEAKER:** I take the opportunity to remind the Premier that it is about eight minutes before 5.30 p.m.

**SIR CHARLES COURT:** I shall not use up those eight minutes. It is my considered opinion that if we say to a member, "The moment you are elected to this House you have to drop all connections, whether you be a farmer, a lawyer, or somebody else"—

**MR A. R. TONKIN:** Not drop all connections, but just money-making connections.

**SIR CHARLES COURT:** This obsession on the part of some members opposite, particularly of the member for Morley, is nauseating. I could not care less if members continue to make money after they are elected, provided they do not neglect their electorates or their parliamentary duties. Most of them have greater capacity to look at legislation when they have that experience, than when they have abandoned everything. Most people who want members to abandon everything have nothing to abandon themselves.

The member for Morley referred to pecuniary interest. I would like to spend some time in dealing with this aspect, so that I could straighten it out. I hope that in the recess you, Mr Speaker, will do some work on this question and tell members where they stand.

In regard to death duties which were recently under discussion, to suggest that members of this House have a pecuniary interest in voting on this question is stupid. If the suggestion is upheld many members would not be able to deal with most legislation; for instance, half the members of the House would come under this test when they voted on the amendments to the Country Areas Water Supply Act the other day.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: You are getting off the motion.

Sir CHARLES COURT: No, I am not. The member for Morley talked at great length about pecuniary interests. If we followed the honourable member's logic to its conclusion we would have to say we do not want people who have had any success; we do not want people with any money; and we do not want people with any assets. In other words, we want people with no performance, no capacity, and no brains.

### *Point of Order*

Mr A. R. TONKIN: On a point of order, the motion refers to the revelation of interests, not to their disposal.

The SPEAKER: There is a relevance in what the Premier is saying and he may continue to speak if he wishes.

### *Debate (on motion) Resumed*

Sir CHARLES COURT: I have nearly concluded my answer to what the honourable member said. He went to great length on these particular issues. I conclude by saying that there is a great distinction between directorates and shareholdings and between holding shares in private companies and holding shares in public companies. For instance, before I became a Minister I got rid of all the shares I had in private companies at great cost because it is possible for a Minister to have an influence on decisions in respect of them. This is unacceptable especially if they are trading with Governments. I got rid of those completely. Shares in public companies involve a different matter altogether. A shareholder has no capacity to alter decisions of the boards of those companies.

For a Minister to be a director of a private or public trading company is reprehensible. A family company is different because that company trades with no-one.

What the honourable member is advocating really is a situation under which a parliamentary candidate would have to be stony motherless broke or very close to it. I sincerely hope that if we are to look at the question of disclosure we will leave it to the conscience of individual members because that is where the responsibility rests. We oppose the motion.

MR A. R. TONKIN (Morley) [5.27 p.m.]: The reaction of the Premier was predictable. In my short experience in the House I have seen the greatest misuse of the word "nominal" that I have ever seen and I am not at all surprised the Premier takes this attitude.

He claims he believes in the British tradition on various matters, yet in the House of Commons in May of this year the vote was overwhelmingly in favour of the establishment of a compulsory register. I do not think everyone would consider I

am a no-hoper—I know the Premier does—because I do not make a fortune. They would not consider me to be a fool, a Joe Blow, and a no-hoper.

Such values are not mine or those of the Opposition and we do not believe that because a person has made a fortune he is wonderful. We do not all worship the almighty dollar. That does not happen to be my God, although I suppose, if I put my mind to it I could be a successful businessman. A lot of money is not relevant to living life as I believe it should be lived.

I did not say we should get rid of directorships or shares. I merely said that the people who must elect members of Parliament have a right to know what interests they have. If they know what these interests are they can then say, "Well, this bloke is a millionaire and has 18 directorships, but he is the greatest bloke and we are prepared to elect him". That is fair enough.

We come back to the same thing I mentioned before. Prior to the last election the Government stated that it wanted open government because it believed in open government. It stated it believed the people had a right to know what interests it represented. However, when it comes to the point, we find that what was said then was merely words.

Those on this side believe in revelation. We believe a register should be established so that people could look at it openly. We believe in open government and that the people have a right to know exactly what interests we represent.

The expression of opinion by the Premier was completely predictable and I venture to suggest that if I walked down St. George's Terrace or down a street in any town and told the people what the Premier had said, they would reply, "What did you expect?"

Mr Jamieson: They would laugh.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

### *Ayes—16*

Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bertram	Mr May
Mr Bryce	Mr McIVER
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr A. R. Tonkin
Mr Fletcher	Mr J. T. Tonkin
Mr Hartrey	Mr Moller

(Teller)

### *Noes—22*

Mr Blaikie	Mr Nanovich
Sir David Brand	Mr O'Connor
Mr Clarko	Mr Old
Sir Charles Court	Mr O'Neill
Mr Cowan	Mr Ridge
Mr Coyne	Mr Shalders
Mrs Craig	Mr Sibson
Mr Crane	Mr Stephens
Mr Grewar	Mr Thompson
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Watt
Mr Mensaros	Mr Young

(Teller)

Ayes	Noes
Mr Davies	Mr Laurance
Mr H. D. Evans	Dr Dadour
Mr T. H. Jones	Mr Sodemman
Mr Harman	Mr Grayden
Mr Barnett	Mr Rushton
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr McPharlin

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

### CLOSE OF SESSION

#### *Complimentary Remarks*

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [5.32 p.m.]: We now come to the stage of the session where all the business has been completed. I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Government, and others who sit with me in coalition, to express to you, Mr Speaker, our thanks for the way the proceedings have been conducted.

We know that you were a successful member, and we know that you were a successful Minister but, of course, you had to be proved as a Speaker. As far as I am concerned, the remarks I made and the hopes I expressed when you were installed have been more than fulfilled.

Mr O'Neil: Hear, hear!

**Sir CHARLES COURT**: It has not been an easy session and I think that you have brought great dignity to the office of Speaker, and you have also done a service to the Parliament by endeavouring to inculcate a standard which, I hope, members will reflect on in the interim before we meet again in March.

We have a responsibility to the institution of Parliament. After all, we are the people involved in the passing scene. We are here today but we have the prospect of new faces tomorrow. In some cases changes are the results of the decisions of the electors, and in other cases they are for various other reasons. Whatever the reasons, and in spite of the changes, the institution does go on.

Those of us who have been here for a considerable time like to think there is an understanding of the importance of the rights and privileges we enjoy, and we think they should be protected. I want to thank you, Mr Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues for the way you have endeavoured to remind us of our responsibilities. We do have a tremendous role to play in our responsibilities to the Parliament.

We convey to your wife, Mr Speaker, and your family our greetings for the coming festive season. We sincerely hope it will be not only a happy time but also a healthy time for you and yours, and that you will be able to relax a little without hearing incessant voices! I know you have been under great restraint and some stress in not being able to interject in the inimitable style you had when you were a member and a Minister.

To the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues I say "Thank you for your co-operation." It has not been an easy session for the Leader of the Opposition any more than it has for me, but I have enjoyed his co-operation and I thank him for it. I wish him and his wife, and his colleagues and their families, a very happy Christmas and a good New Year. I trust that when we return to this place in March, refreshed and the better for our labours in this session; we will be able to get on with the business of the Parliament of this State.

Mr Jamieson: Have you set any tentative date in March?

**Sir CHARLES COURT**: I indicated that we would reconvene on Thursday, the 13th March, and have a ten-day break at Easter, making sure we finish well before the school holidays in May.

Through you, Mr Speaker, I also thank the staff—the Clerks at the Table who have always been very efficient. They do a wonderful task in preserving some sanity and law and order in this place. We are grateful not only to them but also to the other assistants. I also thank Mr Edmondson and his wife, and his staff.

I say a special "thank you" to *Hansard*. They come up week after week with this volume which is of such tremendous value and importance. We thank Mr Cox and all his staff and congratulate them on the success of their work and the consistency of it, which is done under rather trying conditions at times.

We know our friends in the Press have their problems. They have a boss just as we have. Ours happens to be the electorate, theirs the editor and those who put the blue pencil through their material at the subediting stage. We thank them and wish them the best for the festive season.

I must not forget to thank our friend the constable in the gallery, who never seems to become excited or the least bit worried or concerned, although he must often feel like interjecting and giving his own views about the way to handle a particular subject, because he has a rather lofty view of the proceedings: he sits there and, whoever is in Government or Opposition, he preserves a sphinx-like look.

I thank my deputy, the Minister for Agriculture, who has been very loyal and hardworking. He is new to Government and the Ministry and has worked tremendously hard to lead his party and be a loyal member of the coalition.

To my own Deputy Leader (the Minister for Works, Water Supplies, and Housing), my Ministerial colleagues, and the patient band who sit behind us, I say "Thank you." I have never had the experience of sitting as a back-bencher to a Government, although I have had plenty of experience as a back-bencher in opposition.

I thank all members and hope we will see you, Mr Speaker, return with renewed vigour in 1975.

**MR J. T. TONKIN** (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [5.39 p.m.]: I am pleased to join with the Premier in the felicitations he has just expressed. It is the custom at the end of a session to express our appreciation for the work which has been done by the various people associated with the running of the House.

I would like to say to you, Mr Speaker, that we have been very happy with the way you have carried out your responsibilities—truly, in the best tradition of the office.

Government and Opposition members: Hear, hear!

**Mr J. T. TONKIN**: You have been admirably fair and have at all times endeavoured to weigh up a situation and deal with it in a way which would be most readily acceptable, and I think in this regard you have achieved a considerable amount of success. There could have been some quite awkward situations had matters been handled differently. I say it is to your credit that you rose to the occasion and in so doing completely justified the confidence in you which I expressed upon your appointment.

I would also like to thank the members of the staff. The Clerk at the Table, whom I have known for many years, is a most reliable servant who has carried out his responsibilities meticulously and with very great efficiency. I would like to express to him my personal satisfaction for the way he continues to discharge his responsibilities; likewise, his assistants at the table.

I would also like to express on behalf of those I represent appreciation of the other members of the staff of the House, the Sergeant-at-Arms, and the messengers. I would like to say to Mr Edmondson how much we have appreciated the way in which he has discharged his duties. The constable has not had a very difficult task but he is always there to ensure that people conduct themselves as we would expect them to conduct themselves.

The staff of *Hansard*, of course, invariably earns our respect and appreciation. Over many long years I have marvelled at their endurance and the way they have risen to the requirements from time to time, which on occasions have been very exacting; but they have always been able satisfactorily to discharge their duties.

I would like to say to the Premier that I, personally, have appreciated the opportunities we have had to discuss the notice paper and arrange the conduct of business in a way which we felt would be mutually satisfactory.

Of course, this must have been a very interesting session to new members. Any person, whatever his makeup, must

undergo a new experience during his first session in Parliament. It is very strange, but nevertheless most interesting and vital.

I have watched very closely the way the various members have comported and directed themselves to their duties. I am sure they must have experienced considerable satisfaction in being in a Parliament and in a position to play a part in the government of the State. They have the opportunity to learn at first hand just how the system of government works. To all members whether on my side, or on the Government side, I would like to wish a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year. I would like to say to my deputy that I have appreciated the help he has invariably given me when I have asked for it from time to time. I am very grateful to the other members who have supported me so loyally and so well, and I wish them, their wives and families, a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

This is the time in the session when we all, I think without exception, are glad we have reached the end of our parliamentary duties for the year. However, I venture to say that quite a while before it is time for us to reassemble here, a number of members, and especially the younger ones, will be rearing to go.

**Mr Sibson**: And some of the older ones.

**Mr J. T. TONKIN**: That is a very good thing, too; because unless one experiences that enthusiasm for the job one will not put very much into it. Ours is a task which requires a lot of enthusiasm, otherwise there would be a great deal of boredom. If we have that enthusiasm we can put up with the boredom in the knowledge that we have a job to do and we are doing it to the very best of our ability.

I have not deliberately overlooked anybody. Nevertheless, it is quite possible I have. If so, I want to bring them into my remarks, too. It is my fervent wish that they will enjoy particularly good health—that is most important—and that the coming Christmas will be a very happy one for them and their families; and that they will have a happy and prosperous New Year.

**MR STEPHENS** (Stirling—Chief Secretary) [5.46 p.m.]: In the absence of the Leader of the Country Party, I would like briefly but sincerely to support the sentiments so ably expressed by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. I will not enumerate all the office bearers and staff, but I feel I speak for all members when I thank them for their assistance and co-operation. I feel I also speak for all members when I include the Chairman of Committees. Perhaps he has been inadvertently overlooked. I express our sincere thanks for the manner in which the Chairman has carried out his duties, and the fairness with which he has conducted proceedings from the Chair.

I would like to make particular reference to the parliamentary staff, from the Clerk of the Assembly, to the youngest attendant. I never cease to be amazed at the courteous and efficient manner in which they carry out their duties and assist the members of this place. They must at times feel a little frustrated; and unlike members, who are able to let off a little bit of steam in the House, they must stick to their task. At no time have they appeared to be anything but most obliging.

I would like to express to the Liberal Party the appreciation of the Country Party for the co-operation which has existed between the coalition parties. We started off as a new coalition, and the co-operation has been of a two-way nature; we have now settled down very amicably.

The last point I would like to make—and I am sure I speak for all back-benchers here in this regard—is that I congratulate the Premier on the manner in which he has conducted the notice paper, and particularly for the way in which private members' business was allowed to continue right through to the end of the session. I am a comparatively new member in this place, but in the four years I have been here this is the first occasion on which private members' business has been given such consideration. On behalf of the back-benchers I express appreciation to the Premier for this.

I wish everyone associated with Parliament, and their wives and husbands, a very happy Christmas and the best of good fortune in the New Year.

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Hutchinson): I wish to thank the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Chief Secretary—who represented the Leader of the Country Party—for their kindly and in some instances very cordial expressions. I have much pleasure in accepting those expressions. Perhaps I could say I repay them with relevant reciprocity.

I would like to convey my real appreciation of the friendly acceptance by members of my position as Speaker of this House. Let me confess it gives me some pleasure that I have been able to navigate reasonably safely through the shoals and rocky reefs of my maiden session as Speaker. I am sure we are all looking forward to the break from sitting, as the Leader of the Opposition has mentioned.

I join with the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Chief Secretary in proffering the warmest possible greetings of the season to all. I refer to the Premier himself, the Leader of the Opposition, the Chief Secretary, and his leader. I thank them for the courtesies and kindnesses they have extended to me during this rather difficult session.

I express my appreciation, too, to the members of the Government side and members of the Opposition for their ap-

preciation of the difficulties I experience in this House as their Speaker. I pay tribute to and thank the Chairman of Committees (Mr Thompson) and the Deputy Chairmen for the admirable way in which they have been able to fulfil their responsible tasks and for the way they have assisted me in the role I play in this Chair.

I pay a high tribute to the Clerks of the House, in particular, Mr Jocelyn Bartlett. His advice to me is invaluable, as indeed is his deputy's assistance. They have both exhibited a great deal of understanding of Standing Orders and parliamentary procedure, not only to me in my office as Speaker but also to previous Speakers in previous Parliaments. This is a rather special day for Mr Bartlett because it is not only the last day of the first session of the 28th Parliament of Western Australia; it is also his birthday. We wish him many happy returns of the day, with many more to come.

Members: Hear, hear!

**THE SPEAKER:** I proffer the warmest of Christmas greetings to members of *Hansard*, who do such a great job of work. Mr Cox and his staff must toil long and arduous hours and the quality of their work is always very high. I compliment them and wish them well.

I should like to pay special greetings to the Assembly staff, which comes under the jurisdiction of the Speaker. They have done a dedicated job and I thank them and wish them well in the festive season and the New Year.

To the Press I offer my compliments and good wishes for the festive season. Members of the Press are an oft maligned race of people, but in my book they do very great and responsible work. There is no doubt that many of us find occasion when we may disagree with the way something is reported, but if members look at their work generally, over the whole year and the entire range of subjects which they cover, I am sure they will agree with me that we are fortunate indeed to enjoy such a high quality Press in this State.

There are others, too, to whom I pay my respects. I refer to Gordon Bathols, the policeman, and Mr Edmondson and his staff. Let me conclude by giving to all in Parliament, and to their near and dear ones the traditional greeting of a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [5.54 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until a date and hour to be fixed by Mr Speaker.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 5.55 p.m.*