

# Legislative Council

Thursday, 11 August 1994

**THE PRESIDENT** (Hon Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 2.30 pm, and read prayers.

## MOTION - URGENCY

### *School Closures List, Announcement Failure*

**THE PRESIDENT:** Today I received the following letter -

The Hon Clive Griffiths MLC  
President  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000

11 August, 1994

Dear Mr President

At today's sitting, it is my intention to move under SO 72 that the House, at its rising adjourn until 9.00 am on December 25 1994 for the purpose of discussing the Minister for Education's failure to announce the list of schools which will be reviewed for possible closure despite repeated assurances over the past eight months that parents would have a long period of consultation on the likely impact of closure.

Yours sincerely

John Halden

Leader of Opposition in Legislative Council

The member will require the support of four members in order to move the motion.

[At least four members rose in their places.]

**HON JOHN HALDEN** (South Metropolitan - Leader of the Opposition) [2.35 pm]: I move -

That the House at its rising adjourn until 9.00 am on 25 December 1994.

The reason for moving this motion today stems from another enlightened episode in the issue of school closures, as enunciated by the Minister for Education, Hon Norman Moore. He said there was no school hit list, and all of a sudden there was a school hit list; then there was no school hit list, because he denied it, and of course there was one.

Hon Tom Stephens: Mr Moore has just doctored a hit list.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: In terms of deception and deceit, this saga has yet again taken another turn. The turn today was the announcement by the Premier that there would be a by-election in Helena on 10 September and his decision that no school in Helena would close. That was a surprising move, was it not?

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Your government closed Middle Swan without consulting the parents.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I can remember the member at West Midland, where he was torn to pieces because he could not tell the truth.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Order! My attention was distracted for a couple of moments by a member who wanted to talk to me about some other urgent business in the place, and I turned my eyes for a second and World War III started. I am a pacifist; therefore, I cannot tolerate it. I say to the member addressing the motion that he must address the Chair and not be provocative while he is addressing the Chair, because that may hurt my feelings. I say to the other members that if they do not like what the member is saying, they do not have to stay in here and listen to it, but if they do stay in here, they do have to

listen to it. I suggest to the member that he proceed, because the time is being used up by me at the moment.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I have no doubt that those opposite will not enjoy this speech, but they will get it anyway. The situation is that today, in a by-election context, the Premier went into the electorate of Helena and announced that no school in Helena would close, yet when people ring the Education Department to ask why is that, they are advised, "We can assure you that there is no cluster of schools where perhaps one school might want to close".

Hon Doug Wenn: Might want to close?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Yes, but of course the situation, if we look at the original list, is that there was a cluster - Midland and West Midland Primary Schools, both in the electorate of Helena, one of which was designated to close - but conveniently that has been forgotten.

Hon Peter Foss: It was your list.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It was not our list at all, but we will get to that. The Minister for Health is starting to sound like the Minister for Education. He does not know the difference between the facts and what the Minister for Education tells us. I will give members the date of the list. It was not our list or my list.

Hon Peter Foss interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, Minister! I will not tolerate interjections from either side of the House, so I say to members, sit and listen, and I say to the member on his feet, stop provoking people and direct your comments to the Chair.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is interesting that in a document put out by the Minister for Education entitled "Ensuring Quality Education for all Students in Western Australian Government Schools" -

The PRESIDENT: Order! I do not want any interjections, and that applies to Hon Sam Piantadosi in the same way as it applies to anyone else.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The document sets out the selection criteria to be applied to all schools. It reads -

- A. Student/classroom ratio  
If the ratio of number of students to permanent classrooms, after allowing for specialist classrooms and libraries, is less than 20 students per permanent classroom.
- B. Declining enrolment trend  
If the school population has declined by more than 20% over the past five years.
- C. Cost per student  
If the cost per student is greater than \$3 200 in a primary school or more than \$4 100 in a secondary school.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I want to hear what the member is saying. With that audible conversation, I cannot.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am delighted that the Premier has announced that for two months the school community in Midland can be assured that its schools will not close. In regard to the selection criteria the document states that the schools exhibiting one or more of the criteria could be considered in the review process. Let us consider West Midland Primary School. As I understand it, in 1992 its enrolment was 102, and it is now down to 94. It has six available classrooms, so that means less than 20 students a classroom. It is not an outrageous assumption to assume that the cost per student is probably above \$3 200 per annum. Therefore, that school falls into all three categories. The Minister should check it. The school seems to fit the criteria, but for some reason today the Premier is able to exclude not only this school but also all the other schools in

Helena. Perhaps the Premier should be generous enough to exclude all schools, or do we need to wait for another by-election for that to happen? The Minister's document also sets out the exclusion criteria which will apply to identified schools. The list runs from A to F, and I suggest to the Premier and the Minister for Education that there needs to be a G: "If there is a by-election in the electorate."

I now turn to a letter that I received from the Education Department. It is a briefing note to the Minister from the Director General, dated 22 March 1994, stating that the integrity of the policy must be unquestionable; all schools identified by the criteria must be nominated for review. The Director General is probably correct in that advice to the Minister because this matter is very sensitive - I have had some experience in the area - but from the beginning the Minister has played politics with the matter. I intend to detail how. However, today is the ultimate in hypocrisy with this policy issue. It can get no worse than the events today. Because there will be a by-election the Government will not consider the closure of a school in the electorate of Helena - any school! Not even the ones on the hit list provided by *The West Australian* in February. All schools will be excluded no matter the policy. The policy has no integrity; the Minister has no integrity. The integrity has been removed by the Premier's statements.

I turn now to the pitiful history of the closure of schools since the Minister for Education took office. On 15 April 1993 the Premier told Radio 6PR listeners, "We will not be closing a school in Western Australia." He has now told the electors in Helena the same thing, but I do not take too much comfort from that. The school closure issue arose in September 1993 following the receipt of the McCarrey report in which it was claimed that 50 schools would be closed according to Education Department advice. The Minister had been softening up the community prior to the handing down of the McCarrey report by saying that there were 600 vacant classrooms in Western Australia. By April this year the Minister was saying that there were 1 000 vacant classrooms. Suddenly, he could find an additional 400. The Premier's announcement that not one school would close in Western Australia soon fell to the real test, which was the Leederville Primary School. In December 1993 the Minister, in a display of arrogance, rode roughshod over the parents, teachers and community at Leederville and closed the school, and refused to meet parents to discuss any alternatives to closure. In spite of promises of compensation or other services being provided for the children as a result of the inconvenience, the promises were not honoured.

Hon N.F. Moore: No promise was made by anyone.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That is not correct.

Hon N.F. Moore: They took \$400 each to the schools they went to.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: To the schools, but not the promises made to the individuals. They were not kept.

Hon N.F. Moore interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon JOHN HALDEN: At that stage the Minister said there would be a full consultation period regarding school closures. The period would be 12 months, but this year, to be fair, the Minister said it would not be 12 months. In February or March this year he said it would be for the remainder of the year. The Minister may now want to proffer the suggestion that no schools will close this year and that the process will take a long time.

I have another document which states that as a result of school rationalisations this year the Government is proposing to make savings of \$1m. In fact, in 1995-96 it would make a saving of \$4m, and in 1996-97, \$7m. In the lead up to the announcement in *The West Australian* about the list, the Minister was saying that no school hit list existed and he was not considering one. However, in a note to the Minister the director general said, "Within the context of the current budgetary strategy, an assessment of possible consolidation and closure is being made on the basis of defensible criteria." That was in June 1993. In February it was stated that no list existed. It is strange!

I cannot allow to pass the statement by the Premier that no school will close in Helena. What will the Minister say to the people whose schools could close, those people at Babakin, Belmont, Bengier, Bindi Bindi, Birralee - all the way through the 54 schools to Yealering Primary School? How will he justify this decision when there is a potential for those schools to close? As I understand it, a few National Party members are worried about the effect of that list. Soon after being caught out over the original list, the Minister made it clear there would not be a great many school closures in country areas. He would focus then, because of the political pressure of the National Party -

Hon N.F. Moore: What did I say?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It was by way of a press release stating that country schools would be treated differently; that they would not close and special considerations would apply to them.

Hon N.F. Moore: I would like the member to produce the press release. I would like the document to be tabled.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I will quite happily provide that press release to show once again that this process is politically dominated, by his mates in the National Party who have been annoying him in Cabinet and his ministerial office by saying, "Don't you dare close a school in my electorate." A specific example is the Minister for Transport, who has already had his community meeting about Tammin Primary School. The people there made the clear statement, "You are not closing our school." We will see whether that school is on the hit list. This is a politically corrupted list already, and today it was corrupted by the Premier. We may see some more of this. I wonder if when we get to a by-election that involves the schools of Greenwood, Hawker Park and Kingsley we will suddenly find that the schools in the electorate of Kingsley are not to close. When we get to the electorate of Wanneroo, which might have a by-election shortly, will we see that Yanchep District High School is not on the list? Does the Minister make policy about school closures by looking around for the cheap political point and deciding, "No, we will not close a school there"? What about Rockingham? It does not matter whether it is Rockingham, Nedlands or wherever; the Minister's policy is corrupted by political demands and dictates. It was from the very beginning, because we remember the Minister saying then the policy did not exist, but later there was a by-election and we were told that everyone would get a vote, and so it went on. This was politically corrupted the whole way.

Hon Mark Nevill: You are a pack of jelly bags.

Hon N.F. Moore: What do you think should happen?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I was saying about the previous by-election in Glendalough that the original list came out in *The West Australian* and you might recall, Mr President, it was of considerable annoyance to the Minister for Education.

Hon N.F. Moore: It was not accurate.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Nothing else since has been terribly accurate and the Minister has not had the courage to come forward, in spite of promising long consultation periods and a whole range of things. To this date seven months later the Minister has produced absolutely nothing.

Hon N.F. Moore: You absolute, fundamental, blatant hypocrite. You should read this document sometime.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Let us deal with hypocrisy, if the Minister wants to, and what he asked his department.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Let us get to a little bit of good old-fashioned hypocrisy. This

Minister in an effort to blacken my name asked his departmental people to inform him how much were the school renewal costs involved when I compiled the report. I intend now to provide those figures to the House.

Hon N.F. Moore: \$60 000.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister's figures as quoted to him are: 1991-92, \$490.60; and 1992-93, \$2 754.84, which was for the publication of the report. The Minister was not very successful in trying to blacken my reputation, because it would not work. The Minister had his own costs for 1993-94 of \$170 000 plus. That is a bit of a difference. When he asked his departmental people for that he received it one day and I bet him that I received the figures the same day. When he attempted to have a go at me it did not work, because when he went to those bureaucrats he made a mistake. They at least accepted that there needed to be fair play. If the Minister wants to have a go at me he will have to do so on the basis that I am not going into this debate blind. I know what the Minister intends to say, and I am going to make sure I do not go down in a screaming heap.

The Minister for Education asked me the date of his media release in regard to special consideration for country schools. It was on 16 February. The release states -

Specific and comprehensive considerations will be applied to Western Australian country schools before any decision about amalgamation or closure. Education Minister Norman Moore said today that country schools would be exempt from consideration about possible closure if country students had to travel too long each day to and from the nearest alternative schools. Mr Moore said that country schools would also like to be exempt from consideration if there had been recent improvements or additions to the school buildings and facilities . . .

That is interesting. It continues -

Low numbers of students would not mean a school would be closed.

In spite of the criteria in this press release, it did not mean that country schools, Liberal schools or National Party schools, and it does not now mean schools in Helena, will be closed.

Hon N.F. Moore: The same criteria are contained in that document.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister has made a wonderful attempt to distort this whole exercise, which on his part has been a distortion from the beginning.

Hon N.F. Moore: Read the exclusions.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It mentions projected enrolments, bus travel, travel distance, safety factors, net cost savings, and accommodation of other schools.

Hon N.F. Moore: That is exactly what is in the press release.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: No. It talks about low numbers. Where are the low numbers as an excluder? Low numbers put a school in the category, but not a country school, or one in a Liberal Party electorate or a National Party electorate. Quite obviously that is what the Minister meant, because he had to satisfy his mates in the other party.

Hon N.F. Moore: That is not true.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: My argument is pretty compelling based on his words.

Hon N.F. Moore: Your argument is totally illogical. You do not bother to read anything.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister can bluster and carry on.

Hon N.F. Moore: Read it.

The PRESIDENT: Minister, I have asked you a hundred times to stop interjecting. I am asking you for the last time.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Let us hark back to Glendalough. When the hit list was first announced the Minister denied it and proceeded to attack the authenticity of the

document. Members will recall the number of times the Minister has denied the authenticity of leaked documents, which later proved to be totally authentic. I need do no more than recall the case of industrial relations in the Education Department. It was a leaked document which the Minister said did not exist and was not authentic and then, "Whoops, yes it does." There was then a document of which I have a copy today about the possible implications of school closures. The Minister denied the existence of the document; in fact, he asked me if I could give him a copy.

Hon N.F. Moore: I wish you would give me one.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I did. The realities are that the Minister knew that that high level document existed and I provided him with a copy. The document was a draft involving staffing, personnel and industrial issues arising from the school rationalisation process. That was denied, and then all of a sudden, "Yes, it exists." This Minister denies everything. The only way one gets the truth from him is to bludgeon him at every opportunity.

Hon N.F. Moore: Or get somebody to pinch something out of my office. That is one way of getting information.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: There is no doubt I am saying to the Minister that people in his department do not like him and do not like the way he does business.

Hon N.F. Moore: Or somebody you know who pinches things.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: They do not like him.

Hon N.F. Moore: I don't care. I do not like people who pinch things.

The PRESIDENT: Order! As I have said so many times, members do not have to like what the member says or believe it, but while they sit in this Chamber they do have to listen to it. Eventually a time will come when the Minister can refute the comments the member makes, if that is what he wants to do. In the meantime let him make his comments.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Mr President, I was just coming to the point that this Minister on every occasion does one predictable thing - he shoots the messenger. He does not address the issue; he always denies; he does not verify; he does not explain what the facts are; and he shoots the messenger. What is he doing right now? Shooting the messenger. At all costs he denies the matter and tries to get off the hook and shift responsibility, but he does not deal with the issue - he shoots the messenger. That is the tactic of this Minister.

I turn now to what I am sure the Minister refers to as that communist organ, *The West Australian*; the organ which the Minister so vilely denigrates in this place from time to time.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: It is not a communist organ; it is a socialist organ.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I apologise to the House. I was wrong, but I thank Hon Ross Lightfoot for that correction.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: The journalists are blushing.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am sure they are! *The West Australian* editorial on 16 February 1994 headed "Closing down the schools" states -

If the State Government wants to take some of the community anger out of the disclosure of proposals to close up to 64 WA schools, it should be open with the public about its plans to rationalise WA's primary and secondary education system.

Education Minister Norman Moore's attempts to play down the significance of official documents listing schools for possible closure or amalgamation do not help.

Mr Moore said that some schools on the list might close and some might not. But his failure to outline in detail the criteria for rationalisation and instead to

obfuscate about the nature of the documents will merely fuel speculation and heighten community anxiety.

Members should remember that in June 1993 at least, this policy was being prepared in the department. The editorial continues -

Few would dispute that school rationalisation is necessary when student numbers drop, classrooms are unused and resources go to waste.

Based on my experience in that matter I would not dispute that. However, any closure decision must be made public. The Minister previously took the opportunity to have the odd go at me in this place; however, in my involvement in this matter everything I did was made public. The report was documented in this House. I remember Hon Reg Davies criticising me for spending \$2 700 on printing the report; he thought it a waste of money. However, everybody at least had the opportunity to know what I thought about this issue, what my criteria were, and what my processes would involve. The editorial continues -

But any closure decisions must be made publicly, handled sensitively -

It was a particularly sensitive approach by the Premier today. The Government wants to win a by-election. It would not want any integrity about the policy! To continue -

- and in full consultation with parents, teachers and other involved local people.

Education is one area in which economic rationalisation must be tempered according to the specific needs of schools and the communities they serve.

Again, I do not disagree with that. To continue -

Schools are much more than a collection of classrooms in which children take their daily lessons. They are often the hub of community life and are well used for other activities out of school hours.

After the controversy that erupted last year over the closure of historic Leederville Primary School, Mr Moore promised that there would be no closures this year, that from 1995 legislation would ensure school communities were told 12 months ahead of any moves and that any such decision would be made only after community consultation.

Schools would be kept open if there was no room for students at nearby schools, students had to travel too far to a new location, there had been big improvements to a school, or there were no cost savings in a closure.

They are reasonable provisions. Mr Moore must stick to them.

Already today the actions of the Premier - although I am sure the people of Midland and the West Midland Primary School are delighted for the reprieve - have already breached this. There has been no community consultation. For short term political gain the Premier decided that the integrity of this policy would again be thrown out the window. Where is Mr Moore to repudiate the Premier for breaching the integrity of this policy? Nowhere.

Hon N.F. Moore: If you sit down and give me a chance, I will do that.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister will repudiate the Premier? I will be delighted when he does that.

Hon N.F. Moore: No, I will respond to you.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I thought the Minister said he would repudiate the Premier.

Hon N.F. Moore: I am not going to repudiate the Premier. I will tell you where you have it all wrong, if you give me a chance.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister is always prepared to tell me where I have it all wrong. However, the facts put forward in an analytical way suggest that the Minister keeps getting it wrong: He keeps getting the policy wrong and he keeps getting the politics wrong.

Hon I.D. MacLean: When you were responsible you didn't encourage out of hours use. You were irresponsible.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: He did.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Hon Iain MacLean does not know what he is talking about.

Hon I.D. MacLean: The schools weren't encouraged to do it by you.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I know that the member is new and that he needs all the help, particularly in an intellectual way, that he can get. He should not make those accusations. I remember sitting on a committee in Wanneroo on behalf of the government at the time which was considering out of hours use on a joint basis between local government and the state government. Before Hon Iain MacLean makes those silly comments -

Hon I.D. MacLean: From your rhetoric nothing happened. It is starting to be implemented only now.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The member opposite should be quiet for a minute. He made the allegation that the former government and I did nothing. I have just tried to correct him.

Hon I.D. MacLean interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! When I call order the member will come to order if he wants to stay in here.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is interesting that on 18 February the Minister responded to the editorial in *The West Australian* in a letter to the editor entitled "Quality of education not in doubt" as follows -

Your editorial "Closing down the schools" (16/2) demonstrates a surprising confusion and fundamental lack of understanding about the public consultation process on the issue of school rationalisation.

Members may recall that at that stage no public consultation whatsoever had occurred. The letter continues -

The facts are that early last December I released, for community comment until February 25, the document "Ensuring a Quality Education for All Western Australian Students". This document, copies of which were provided to your reporters on that occasion and again this week, contains more than 60 detailed criteria against which schools could be measured before any closure decision was made.

It has been in the public domain for nearly three months and the resulting public input will be vital in my decision about the final package of measures.

If your staff members had read this document properly, they would have noted the guiding principles about this Government's intentions for school rationalisation. The key ones are that the "quality of education of all students affected by a (school closure or amalgamation) decision will be maintained or enhanced" and that "schools are selected for rationalisation against consistent and publicly available criteria".

There is not much consistency if the schools have to wait until every time there is a by-election to have their name taken off the list.

Hon Reg Davies: They may be regular in the future.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I understand that in Hon Reg Davies' electorate that they could be, too. We are getting closer to that.

Hon Reg Davies: I was thinking more of south of the river.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I do not think Hon Reg Davies is right. I may know just a little more about that than he does. The letter continues -



Despite this, your editorial criticises me for a perceived "failure to outline in detail the criteria for rationalisation" when the criteria, and the public comment period, have not yet been completed.

In one breath, you criticise me for not announcing the final criteria . . . and, in the other, you urge me to involve "full consultation with parents, teachers and other involved local people".

Your confused editorial only increases the damage done to your newspaper's credibility by publishing a leaked internal working document, naming the schools on this so-called "hit list", and causing completely unwarranted community fear and distress.

Objective observers can only question the hidden motives behind publishing such a disruptive, internal working document in the current by-election atmosphere.

We will not have any leaked documents in Helena this time, because no schools will be closed there. *The West Australian's* response is worth reading into *Hansard* -

*The West Australian* is not confused about Mr Moore's process of school closures or his lack of established criteria. The reality is that the Government was always going to try to close roughly the number of schools which the McCarrey commission targeted - about 50 of the state's 763 - for purely cost cutting reasons.

The community will soon be able to evaluate whether consultation has been genuine by measuring the final list against the so-called "internal working document".

Mr Moore may cast his mind back to the WA Inc royal commission's deliberations on the excessive secrecy in government. *The West Australian* believes its readers can make their own decisions about the status of an Education Department document which labels schools with the words "to close".

*The West Australian*, unlike the Minister, has no hidden agenda. What annoys Mr Moore is that some of his agenda is now in the public domain. The paranoia demonstrated in the Minister's final paragraph is unsettling. - *Editor*

Hon N.F. Moore: The editor always gets to have the last word.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: He does. We might not agree on too much today, but we will agree on that.

It is interesting when we think about what happened at that time and remember what happened to the Minister. The Minister denied the authenticity of that list of 64 schools. However, on 16 February, the day of the editorial, onto the centre stage as the Minister is often wont to do, he pushed the Director General of Education. He decided that it was too hot for him and that it was time for the Director General to protect him.

Hon N.F. Moore: That is an unfair comment.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: No, it is not. What did the Director General say about this list that had no authenticity and no status? He made the embarrassing admission that the list had authority and status but that it was not the final list. I will bet that Mr Black was not allowed out to make any more public statements for a month.

Hon N.F. Moore: You said that I keep putting him on the public stage.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister does. I remember the day he did and he had to go on radio soon afterwards to correct the statements.

The Minister is going down the same path on school closures as the Kennett Government went down. The Government has adopted policies that are very similar to the policies adopted in Victoria. However, it has tried to hide those policies from public scrutiny. There are probably a number of policies of which we have no knowledge. We know that the Government wants to close schools and that it wants to reduce the number of teachers.

Hon N.F. Moore: That is not true.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is true; the Minister's document tells us.

Hon N.F. Moore: It does not say that.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I will quote it to the Minister. We also know that the process will be disruptive and that he wants to change the working conditions of teachers and the administration mechanisms within the Education Department. Those are all procedures that were adopted in Victoria. However, at least in the Kennett Government's case, it had the honesty to do what it said it would do. In this state we have had to extract inch by inch every detail from this Minister.

Today, the Premier was asked whether any schools in the Helena electorate would close. He was asked where was the hit list. He was told, "If you can say none will close in Helena, you must have seen the hit list. You must know what will happen." The Premier did not answer the question. For how long have I been asking this Minister in this place and in the public arena when the list will be released and for how long people will have to consult? I asked him in February, in March, in April, in June, in July and again today whether he will produce the hit list? Will he give people 12 months to consult? How will he achieve the savings he wants to achieve next year - the \$1m? Will he give them only three or four months to consult? How will he achieve those ends? Based on the political history of this policy, I will bet London to a brick that I can work out when the policy will be announced.

Hon Doug Wenn: So can I - about the eleventh of next month.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Yes, about 11 September. The interesting thing about the original list is that it was going to be announced on 15 March, three days after the Federal by-election for Fremantle.

Hon N.F. Moore: Who said that?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I did.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Wrong again.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I was wrong about the hit list, I was wrong about the industrial relations changes, and I was wrong about the impact that would have on teachers! I was wrong every time according to members opposite. However, every time out came the documentation.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: You got it wrong.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I do not know what the member is talking about. If he stops parroting on about how I got it wrong and tells me what I got wrong, we may be able to have a reasonable conversation. Hon Derrick Tomlinson and I know West Midland Primary School very well. He probably knows it better than I do.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Very well, indeed. They are very nice people.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: They are indeed. They were not too happy with the member the last time we went there.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: I agree.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is interesting that, of all the primary schools in Western Australia that were on the hit list, West Midland was probably the most vocal and vociferous in its assault on this Government and on the member for East Metropolitan Province, Hon Derrick Tomlinson. The people at that school were well organised. They were able to get stories into the Press and to lobby in a particularly effective way. If that school were still on this list today and that list became public, we can imagine that the people involved could be particularly troublesome for the Government between now and 10 September. Therefore, it has been taken out of the equation. That is to its benefit and I congratulate the people involved on the strength with which they lobbied. They were very successful. However, that is not how an education policy should be run.

Hon N.F. Moore: That school did not satisfy any of the three criteria.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It did not satisfy any of the three criteria?

Hon N.F. Moore: Not according to the information I have.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: You mean that having 93 students in six classrooms does not mean that the student-classroom ratio is less than 20. The last time I divided six into 93, the answer was certainly less than 20.

Hon N.F. Moore: You left out that schools can be used for other purposes.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I understand that. Does it not cost more than \$3 100 to educate a child at that school?

Hon N.F. Moore: Apparently not. That was the figure I was given.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I had a debate with a television journalist. Those figures are so low, based on the federal figures - \$3 100 per primary student - that most schools in Western Australia fall into that category.

Hon N.F. Moore: You're not comparing apples with apples. However, I am happy to discuss it with you at any time.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That may be the case.

Hon N.F. Moore: It is the case.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister's policy and the integrity of his schools closure policy is so tattered -

Hon N.F. Moore: I don't have a schools closure policy.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: - that it is difficult to know what is fact and what is fantasy. What an outrageous thing it is that we have seen today. The Minister announced today the exclusion of a school in an electorate one-fifty-seventh of the size of this state from the schools rationalisation program of this Government and it is excluded on the same day that a by-election is announced in that electorate. What a coincidence. I am sure the Minister will explain to me in policy terms how the Government made its decision! I am sure it can be shown beyond doubt that this decision was policy driven out of the Education Department and that it involves no other consideration whatsoever!

I am sure that the Minister will want to discuss a document that I prepared on this matter.

Hon N.F. Moore: Quote it. Give me a little pleasure, as I am looking forward to reading it back to you, especially the part about country schools being different from city schools. You just accused me of saying the same thing. Read out the executive summary on page 4.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: Are you saying that he has plagiarised your report?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It refers to special attention -

Hon N.F. Moore: Read out the heading.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It reads that "country and metropolitan schools are to be treated differently".

Hon N.F. Moore: You said a moment ago that I said the same thing because of the National Party.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I will read out the entire reference -

Special attention has been given to country schools; it is recognised that, particularly in those areas where rural populations are declining, the closure of a school may have a cumulative effect on small communities.

What an outrageous statement!

Hon N.F. Moore: You accused me of treating them differently.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I should be castigated for writing such a thing!

Hon N.F. Moore: Read *Hansard*. What about the third paragraph on page 6 under "Rationale"?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: This reads -

While the size of the school is not directly related to the quality of education provided, the renewal process involves a decision as to whether or not the delivery of education can be improved. This may involve closure or reorganisation. The nature of the school's existing facilities may also constrain the delivery of a modern education programme.

Hon N.F. Moore: Exactly.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am pleased that we all agree.

Hon N.F. Moore: I am glad you acknowledge that.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I wrote that paragraph. However, a significant difference exists between what I proposed and what the Minister is -

Hon I.D. MacLean interjected.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The member should take a tablet before he does something dangerous.

Hon I.D. MacLean: You are not supposed to be talking to me; I'm in Coventry.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: A tablet, George, quick.

Significant differences exist between my proposal and the Minister's. The Minister is motivated by the McCarrey report and is driven to formulate a proposal as a cost saving exercise. In the field of education it is reasonable to make savings and improve the quality of the education. I accept that the Minister has said that. However, this Minister has said that this policy will be driven by items unspecified. In the "School Renewal" document I made reasonable accommodation to this aspect in referring to the need for curriculum assurance. I said that every child in this state should be assured of a certain standard of education, and that this standard should not be set in general terms but be specific with a comprehensive curriculum comprising seven components: Mathematics; language and communication; social studies; science and technology; physical and health education; vocational and person awareness; and practical and creative arts. I referred to the need to ensure that numeracy, literacy and social skills had a place in the process. We have not seen such guarantees from this Minister's process. I would have thought, given that the Minister has plagiarised my document, that he would have come up -

Hon N.F. Moore: Are you trying to tell me that I am running with your document? What are you complaining about?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I complain about the way the Minister is handling it.

Hon N.F. Moore: Your Minister was going to close the schools.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: There was one difference: I had the courage to table my document in the House.

Hon N.F. Moore: You and your government did not have the guts to do anything about it. You left it on the shelf.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: What has the Minister done during the past 12 months?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: He has closed schools.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the member not to interject. I do not want Hon John Halden to enter into a conversation with the Minister. If these members want to discuss the merits of the two proposals, they should pop outside into the corridor for that discussion. If the member addresses the Chair, all members can participate in the debate.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Thank you, Mr President. I had the courage and fortitude to produce a document in this sensitive area. However, I never produced a hit list.

Hon N.F. Moore: Your Minister did.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Mr President, the Minister has a little problem here. I want to be clear on this point: I did not produce a list.

Hon N.F. Moore: I did not say that you did.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister implied that I did. I was appointed to chair the School Renewal Committee on 26 November 1990, and from that date until the report was presented I never allowed a list to be produced. I have since discovered that Mr Peter Walton, a director in the Education Department at the time - I am not sure whether he is still there - wrote to the then Minister, Geoff Gallop, on 17 September 1990. That letter, and the associated list, came to my attention recently, and I was unaware of it when I was involved with that committee. It was written before I was appointed to that committee.

To further highlight my point on the school rationalisation issue, today I received a letter from the Yanchep District High School, which reads -

On behalf of the Yanchep Education Council, I have once again been asked to write to you regarding the future of Yanchep District High School.

It is understood that Yanchep District High School does not fall within the Rationalisation Document's scope because of Stage 2, nor does it come under the guidelines for the re-classification of District High Schools.

We have, in fact, today been advised by the Premier, the Hon. R. Court, that there are no current plans for the reclassification of Yanchep District High School to a primary school in 1995.

We have, however, had no notification from you regarding our School, even though we are now in Term 3. Students, parents and staff alike are becoming quite anxious as they do not know where their future lies.

Given all the public discussion which has surrounded Rationalisation and this school, community members are waiting to hear a definite statement from you about the status of the school with regard to Rationalisation. Could you please provide this and tell us when the Rationalisation list will be announced.

We would appreciate a reply prior to our next P & C Meeting to be held at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 9th August.

I doubt whether they would have received that reply. The Yanchep District High School was originally on the school closure list. I have questioned the Minister regarding the school, and he has made a commitment to the parents - those who have written this letter - regarding the proposal. Nevertheless, they still do not know what the future of the school is. We can play political games in here, and the Minister and Premier can play games in Helena and Glendalough. However, the reality for the community is that they want to know what the future holds for them. They have wanted to know since February, but a complete vacuum in policy matters has been evident from February until 11 August. Do some people want the district high school to go back to being a primary school?

Hon N.F. Moore: Some people do and some people do not.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That is right.

Hon N.F. Moore: That is half of the problem.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Until such time as some guidance is given in the policy direction regarding which schools will be involved in rationalisation, we will never be able to resolve this matter by providing options to people, let alone which one will be adopted.

It is interesting also that when this document was first released in February, Mr Moore denied its existence, status and authenticity.

Hon N.F. Moore: Which one is that?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The original hit list.

[Resolved, that the debate be continued.]

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I have been supplied with a document entitled "Confidential

School Rationalisation Program, Education Department of Western Australia", dated November 1993.

Hon N.F. Moore: Which document is that? Show me the cover.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: This document has some handwriting on it which states that it is the real policy, prepared by a consultative group, which went to Minister.

Hon N.F. Moore: Who pinched that one?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I do not know. This document came in the mail. There are some interesting facts in this document. I am sure the Minister has a copy of it.

Hon N.F. Moore: I do not know which one it is because it is a document prepared by the Education Department, many of which I do not see.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The document states that it went to the Minister, so I can only believe that. This document starts from the presumption that the student-classroom ratio will be less than 15 students, but in the other document that is changed to 20 students. There are a number of differences between the two documents, and that is to be expected, but it is interesting from the point of view of the denial that there was a hit list, when considerable work was being done within the department, and the Minister was well aware of that. The Minister also played down the impact of closure on staff levels. However, we were able to produce a document in this place which indicated that there would be considerable disruption to staff in regard to redundancy, redeployment and severance. In fact, that document included such wonderful euphemisms as a possible severance package to avoid blockage in an already seriously strained promotional system. The Minister had been saying for days that this package would be accepted and there would be no problems with staff, yet in this proposal he was offering affected staff access to confidential counselling services with a clinical psychologist.

Hon N.F. Moore: What is that document?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That is the one from which I quoted.

Hon N.F. Moore: I have never heard of that.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That was the document entitled "Staff, Personnel and Industrial Issues Arising From the School Rationalisation Process", dated 27 May 1994. I have asked the Minister questions in this place about that document. The Minister firstly denied its existence.

Hon N.F. Moore: I will ask you to table those documents at the end of your speech so that I will know what they are and so that I can compare them with the stolen documents to see whether they are the same.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I knew the Minister would do that. The Minister has already received them from me. It is interesting that again we had to go through a process which was like extracting teeth in order to get this Minister to say yes, obviously issues would have to be resolved in regard to staffing. Again, the difference between the Minister's approach in this document and my approach in the other document is that I have always said that these matters will pose problems and that we will have to be very careful and adopt a consistent approach to these issues.

It has been a sorry saga. The issue of school closures commenced on 15 April 1993, when the Premier said the Government would not close schools. The Government closed Leederville Primary School. When a hit list was announced, the Government said it had no authority or status, and the Director General of the Education Department then said it did have authority and status. The Minister said that school rationalisation would not have an impact upon staff, yet it did. The Minister said that he did not envisage a situation where there would be considerable industrial changes, yet there were. For a considerable time, the only information which we have been able to get about this process has been by way of extraction from the Minister and from leaked documents. I can understand that leaked documents infuriate the Minister.

Hon N.F. Moore: I can handle leaked ones. It is the stolen ones about which I get upset.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Stolen or leaked -

Hon N.F. Moore: There is a difference.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister implied once in question time that it might have been me.

Hon N.F. Moore: You would not do that, but I am sure you got information that had been stolen.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I told the Minister at the time that my copy of the information came from the State School Teachers Union by way of fax.

Hon N.F. Moore: I do not know how you got it and I do not much care. All I care about is how it left my office.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister said to me - I remember it well because I must admit I was offended, but I did not bite -

Hon N.F. Moore: How could anyone offend you? You are unoffendable.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That is probably correct. The Minister said, "Why would they send it to you when they would not send it to me?" I can tell the Minister why they would send it to me and not to the Minister: I do not call them Neanderthal. I do not abuse them. I do not endeavour to play politics in their organisation. I do not endeavour to divide and conquer them.

Hon N.F. Moore: You are all about that. That is what you do for a living.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: You do all of those things.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order! Let the member address the Chair.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is obvious, and it should be obvious to the Minister, why they would send me a copy of that document. I will put it in simple terms: They do not like the Minister.

Hon N.F. Moore: And I do not like them.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: That is right.

Hon N.F. Moore: The feeling is mutual - not all of them, though.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister should not be surprised that they would fax me a copy of that document.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: It has everything to do with people who vote for you and people who vote for the Minister. It is about politics, not personalities.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I have learnt the odd bit about that in my short time here.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: We were hoping you were drawing your remarks to a conclusion.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am, and the sooner the member stops interjecting, the sooner I will be able to conclude my remarks.

Hon N.F. Moore: You are making sure I get no time to respond before 5.00 pm. There is such a thing as question time.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Let us get on with it, otherwise it will be past 6.00 pm.

Hon N.F. Moore: I have been listening to this rubbish for the last hour and a half.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I was trying to explain to the Minister why the teachers union might give me information that it might not give to him. Realistically the whole process of school rationalisation or school closure - the Minister can call it what he likes - has in a political sense been handled particularly poorly by this Minister. It has not helped that the policy was to be announced, presumably in March - whether my information that it was to be 15 March was right or not, it was to be around that time - and it is now 11 August. An example came from my office today of a community wanting to know what the future holds for it.

Hon N.F. Moore: Quite right.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Or when you think you should tell them some untruths.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Jarrah has arrived back, are we not pleased about that!

Hon N.F. Moore: Old 4 x 4 is out of the room.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order! The interjections are out of order, particularly those coming from members not sitting in their correct chair.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: He should not call anyone dieback.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Death is over there! It is now incumbent upon the Minister to stop the cause for speculation and for concern in the broader community about the proposed final policy on school rationalisation. We have been sitting around waiting for this announcement for months and the concern has been added to by the Minister. By way of press release the Minister has advised on no fewer than four occasions that a policy announcement was imminent. It is now 11 August and the only policy announcement is that we know it will not happen in the electorate of Helena. It seems very strange that the Government can make that announcement when it cannot make a total announcement about the future of this policy. Why is it that the Government is able to announce that in Helena no school will close?

Hon E.J. Charlton: Because you were going to say they would close.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I have never said that.

Hon N.F. Moore: That is tomorrow's question.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The Minister for Transport has a problem. He thinks he knows a lot more than he is capable of handling.

Hon N.F. Moore: This is devastating stuff. You really are mauling us; it is terrible!

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I had my fun earlier.

Hon N.F. Moore: This is not a game, this is real. It has been a really good debate, only one person has been talking.

Hon Cheryl Davenport: You have done pretty well.

Hon N.F. Moore: Hon John Halden always wins the debate because he is the only person speaking.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am sure there was more than one person speaking. It is incumbent upon the Minister to give school communities some security. The 64 schools on that original list want to know their future. There is probably potential for more schools to close. I do not know how many; I am sure it would be in the tens, it may even be more than that. I am not even convinced about the Minister's per capita student costs; there may be more.

Hon N.F. Moore: Or less.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is time for the Government to tell us the true situation. If this policy will achieve a \$1m saving by the end of this year, \$4m the following year, and \$7m the year after that, let us know how that will be achieved. Let us not have this ludicrous situation where we are continually able to get answers from this Minister only on the basis of leaks or from the odd question the Minister is prepared to answer in a frank way in this House.

*Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.00 pm*

[Questions without notice taken.]

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I have only a couple of comments to make before concluding my speech. We were discussing school closures, and I now briefly refer to a question raised yesterday by Hon Murray Criddle with regard to the Ogilvie Primary School. His question arose from a question I had asked the previous day. There is no doubt that the



Minister and I have a different perspective on what has happened at the Ogilvie Primary School. I was contacted by a parent who advised me of negotiations between the superintendent and the community. The Minister advised me yesterday that the negotiations were instigated by parents. I do not know who is correct. The Minister suggested yesterday that I had breached some confidentiality. However, the person who rang me said he was representing the entire community, which, as we are all aware, is not a large community. When a person gives me information with full knowledge of what I will do with that information, I am not breaching any confidentiality.

Hon N.F. Moore: I acknowledge that now that I know where the information came from. Someone at the Ogilvie Primary School breached the confidentiality.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I understand they all knew what would happen.

Hon N.F. Moore: Because they were at the meeting.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: When talking to me.

Hon N.F. Moore: They have changed their minds about whether it was to be confidential. It would have been helpful for the member to check it before making that outrageous statement. He should have talked to the district superintendent whom he has maligned by his suggestion.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The people suggest my statement and press release are correct, despite the Minister's comments.

Hon N.F. Moore: It is not correct.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: After those comments last night, I asked my staff to check and they have confirmed it.

Hon N.F. Moore: Then I must ask the superintendent to make another explanation.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: This is an issue because the parameters of the matter with which we are dealing are not clear. These problems will arise. We will not have problems in Helena, but we have problems at Yanchep and Ogilvie which emanate from lack of policy. That policy has been promised since February.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: It is lack of your policy for 10 years.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I thought the breach of confidentiality claim was a bit over the top. My network is extensive but it does not go all the way to Ogilvie. The lack of policy is making it impossible for people to have any certainty in regard to this matter. The problems at Yanchep and Ogilvie result from a lack of policy.

It is acknowledged by the Minister and me that this is a sensitive issue which, quite clearly, must be handled in an open and reasonable way, otherwise the Minister might never achieve that which he aspires to. The Premier announced today that one-fifty-seventh of the state would not be affected by this policy. That is an absolute breach of faith in this policy initiative. It is a breach of faith based on what departmental officers have said; that is, the integrity of this policy, if it is to be successful, must not be breached. Today in a quite insensitive but blatantly political way the Premier of Western Australia has breached the integrity of the policy. The Minister carries responsibility for that. It is now incumbent upon the Minister to say when we will have the policy announcements about potential school closures, school rationalisation - call it what you like - but let us know what those changes are and when they will occur. Let us not have this policy folly continuing. The only announcements we get are during by-elections with the Government always on the back foot trying to pedal out of danger. This is not in the interests of the public, education or students in Western Australia.

Hon N.F. Moore: The member referred to hand written notes and called them "the real story." I want to make sure the document is tabled.

[See paper No 247.]

HON A.J.G. MacTIERNAN (East Metropolitan) [4.41 pm]: I want to highlight a few particular aspects of the points that were raised by Hon John Halden. I want to focus on

the utter irresponsibility of the Minister in his pronouncement on school closures in the electorates of Glendalough and now Helena.

Hon N.F. Moore: I have not said anything yet. If you give me a chance I will tell you.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I assume the Minister has some communication with the Premier and that announcements relating to education matters by his leader are made in consultation and with his approval.

Hon N.F. Moore: Don't say I said it.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: If I am wrong and the Minister has had no involvement in the -

Hon N.F. Moore: I said I did not make that statement and you said I had; so get your facts right.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I did not say that the Minister had, but I am certainly making an assumption that the statement -

Hon N.F. Moore: You always make assumptions regardless of truth.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: One needs to make assumptions. One could not progress in this world unless one made a few assumptions.

Hon N.F. Moore: You never worry about whether it is true before you open your mouth.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I would be interested to hear from the Minister -

Hon N.F. Moore: If you sit down I will tell you.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: - if the line he is taking is that the statement made by the Premier was not one with which he agreed.

Hon N.F. Moore: I said it was not made by me.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I accept that, but it does not change the thrust of what we are saying. The pronouncements, whether they were made directly by the Minister or the Premier, are nevertheless utterly irresponsible. In 1993 the Minister closed the West Leederville Primary School.

Hon N.F. Moore: It was Leederville; try getting your facts straight.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I misread that. Interestingly, that was in the electorate of the then Leader of the Opposition.

Hon N.F. Moore: It was to be used for a particular purpose. If you go down there, you will see why. It is being used as a distance education precinct and Mr Helm should have a look at it.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister can make his point clear when he responds.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: The process that led to the closure of that school was high-handed. There was a refusal to meet with parents to discuss possible alternatives.

Hon N.F. Moore: That is not true, I met the parents.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: This appeared to be the view of the parents at the time.

Hon N.F. Moore: I was at the meeting.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: This was a major source of complaint, and the Minister cannot deny that it generated enormous ill will in the local community.

Hon N.F. Moore: By Ian Taylor's secretary.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: It was not only the nature of the decision but the way in which it was made. The Government pressed on regardless, because the community outrage did not particularly matter as this was in a Labor electorate and there was no election in sight. However, some months later a by-election was called in Glendalough and schools in that electorate had appeared on these lists of schools that were being

considered for closure. I do not believe that the Minister can deny there was indeed such a list and in particular that Osborné Primary School was on it. The polls showed that the Government and the Opposition were running head to head in that by-election and suddenly the Government became very sensitive to the electorate of Glendalough. It was clear, certainly from those who doorknocked and polled that electorate, as we presume the Government did, that school closures was a very definite electoral issue. Even outside the catchment area of the Osborne Primary School, and that school appeared in this list, there was a general sensitivity about the possibility of closures of their local schools. The Government's response, and that of the Minister in particular, was to make a quite extraordinary statement that there would be no further closures of schools without the consent of parents concerned.

The implications of this approach in deciding the allocation of government resources has quite frightening implications if it is extended across the board. It effectively means that decisions about rationalisation of schools are not to be based on any objective criteria. It also means that those who are enjoying the benefit of an existing school may continue no matter how much this distorts the allocation of resources. Petitions regularly come before this House from people in new areas with burgeoning populations on the fringes of the Perth metropolitan area asking for new schools. These people - for example, in Singleton - must bus primary school children 25 kilometres a day; often there is no existing bus facility and they must provide private transport. These are not country areas, but suburban areas.

Hon I.D. MacLean: Because you wasted \$300m.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We have received many petitions in this place for new secondary schools and we have been told by the Minister that because of the resources we can have only one new high school a year.

Hon John Halden: In spite of the excessive demand in the northern suburbs.

Hon N.F. Moore: Which certainly beats your program.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Yes, and also in the eastern hills suburbs. The question is one of allocation of resources and who will make the decisions. Those parents who do not have a local school at the moment, do not have the rights the Minister is granting these other parents to determine how resources will be allocated; they have to wait until these thresholds are met. Despite their efforts the coalition parties did not manage to win the Glendalough by-election. The electors of Glendalough were not fooled by this very insincere and irresponsible pronouncement by the Government and decided not to alter their vote on that basis.

Indeed, we saw a swing to Labor in that by-election. We have always argued that full and proper consultation should take place on school rationalisation and school closures. We do not think one could simply apply a mechanistic formula for a certain number of students or classrooms, or for the cost per student. They are all factors that should be taken into account. Consultation with the community comes into play in considering the other special circumstances that might apply in a particular school; for example, the role that the school and the buildings may play in a community. That has been highlighted by the statement that Mr Halden read in relation to country schools. It is not limited to country schools. All sorts of special circumstances can be taken into account. There may also be other financial possibilities that can be exploited to make the retention of a school with a small population a more economically viable proposition. So, that consultation is very important. It must be genuine preparedness to consider the issue of special circumstances, and to consider the alternatives which may be brought into play to make a school viable. Ultimately, the Government must make a decision. That is what it is elected to do. It must be a decision that is fair to all of the community, not simply to allow itself to capitulate its responsibility in order to move itself up a few percentage points in a by-election.

The Minister has told us that he has not had an opportunity to make a pronouncement. The Premier took the rather dubious glory of making the announcement today -

Hon N.F. Moore: I said that the statement you began with was not correct. You said I had made two statements at two by-elections, when I had not.

Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I accept that technically that is correct, but that does not change the fundamental point, which is made on the assumption that the Minister was consulted and agreed with the announcement made by the Premier today. I put it to the Minister that this is not an attack on him personally. It is an attack on the position of the Government through its education - I would hate to dignify it with the word "policy"; perhaps education reactions or procedures.

Today, the Government has been able to say that notwithstanding that a school in Helena has been listed as one that must be considered for closure, and notwithstanding that the policy has not been finalised or the fact that pronouncements cannot be made on all the schools, suddenly the Government is able to make statements about all the schools in Helena. Again, the Minister has compromised totally the integrity of the policy process. For some hope of gain in a by-election context, he has thrown out any proper benchmarks of good government. That is a most disgraceful event. It is a most disgraceful trend. We can only hope that when all the by-elections are over the Minister will put all these statements to one side and get on with the job of properly considering the schools, where the rationalisation should be, and consider where the new schools should be. He should consider how the limited education resources can be provided in an equitable fashion, and not provided in such a way as to maximise a government advantage in by-elections. It is not the slightest bit clever. It is an obviously cynical abrogation of responsibility by the Government and if the Government had any electoral sensibility at all it would realise it would gain an advantage.

It is not just simply an issue of what schools will close. It is an issue of where the resources will be properly and adequately allocated; who will get them and for what reason, and whether we are to have an education policy that is fair to all the community.

#### *Point of Order*

Hon JOHN HALDEN: When tabling a document earlier, I omitted part of it. The document is entitled "School Rationalisation Program". It is a draft, with a handwritten note which reads "The Real Policy prepared by Consultative Groups which went to Minister". I request that this document be incorporated with the rest of the documents tabled today.

[See paper No 247.]

#### *Debate Resumed*

HON N.F. MOORE (Mining and Pastoral - Minister for Education) [4.56 pm]: I am pleased that Hon Alannah MacTiernan received the call ahead of me because I can now respond quickly. I am not worried about Hon Doug Wenn. I can imagine what he is about to say. He will sink himself by his own words without any trouble.

I will address the comments made by Hon Alannah MacTiernan first. Leederville Primary School was closed for the specific purpose of converting it to a distance education precinct. Yesterday, at that precinct, I launched an integrated television program which will enable televised lessons and activities to be beamed to remote parts of Western Australia to enable young people to receive a decent education. That whole process will deliver the best distance education in the world. We have used that school for the distance education correspondence section. It will be tied in with the old WestEd Media Centre, which is a technology centre, to develop a significant distance education precinct. That was the aim of the exercise and that was the reason the school was closed.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: You could have done it at a different location.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I invite the member to come with me one day to the Leederville precinct. I will show her the WestEd Media Centre, and she will see it was appropriate to use the Leederville Primary School premises and the ground in between for buildings to make up a proper precinct. That is the reason we used that site. The WestEd Media Centre cost the previous Labor government \$10m. The previous Minister for Education

and the Arts took it away from the education system and gave it to the Arts about a week before the last election. Fortunately, it has been retrieved and is used for educational purposes. I will be happy to arrange for someone to show the member around the precinct so that she will know what is happening and why we did it. That is the reason I made the decision to close Leederville.

I did meet with the parents at Leederville. I did not meet with Liz Schubert who lives in Ballajura, and happens to use Leederville as a place to drop off her kid on the way to work. She does not live in Leederville, just like about 40 per cent of the parents of children who attended that school. They came from outside the district. That was the same Liz Schubert who worked for Ian Taylor when he was the Minister for Health. She was active in beating up the story and beating up any opposition to close the school. It was a very political activity.

My point is that I met with the parents in my office and explained the Government's situation. That is not to say they agreed, but I did meet with them. Any suggestion that I did not, is not correct.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: I said that you did not consult.

Hon N.F. MOORE: No, the member said that I did not meet with them - I made a note of that. The member has now castigated me for letting the parents make the final decision. She called that irresponsible. When I made the decision, the opposition spokesman on education thought it was a good idea. He said that he thought it was an appropriate way to go.

Hon John Halden: We happened to have a difference of opinion.

Hon N.F. MOORE: We are accused of not having a policy. On the day we are debating the issue, Hon Alannah MacTiernan has called me irresponsible for letting the parents have a say, and on the day that I made the announcement the opposition spokesman on educational matters said it was a good idea.

The member cannot have it both ways: Either he agrees or does not that parents make the decision. What is his policy?

Hon John Halden: We have two individuals with different views.

Hon N.F. MOORE: What is his policy?

Hon John Halden: We have not -

Hon N.F. MOORE: Out of his own mouth he has not got one.

Hon John Halden: Where is your policy?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order!

Hon N.F. MOORE: Our policy is in my hand and is the policy document on the rationalisation of schools of May 1994, which was released after public consultation of three or four months on the draft policy, and it is the final policy of the Government. Hon Alannah MacTiernan is not entitled to call me irresponsible because I have given parents the choice on these matters when her leader says it is a good idea. He would have been castigated from one end of Western Australia to another if he said I did not make the right decision. Was the reason because of a by-election?

Hon John Halden: School Renewal was my policy.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Mr Deputy President, let us have a look at School Renewal. I think this document is quite good, and I always thought so.

Hon John Halden: You did not think that when I presented it here.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I was not the spokesperson on education. It is quite a good model. We have a position in our party, as does the Opposition, where one person makes pronouncements on behalf of the party. When one looks at the school renewal process one sees that the announcement of closures was to be made by the chief executive officer and the Minister. At the end of the day it is a decision made by the Minister and not the parents.

Hon John Halden: After consultation with them.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Hon John Halden provided within that particular process for community initiated school closures and rationalisation, and so have we. At the end of the day if the community initiates it the Minister does not make the decision but the community does. There is also in this document central office initiated closures. This means that the central office initiates it, it goes through the process and then the Minister makes the decision at the end of the day.

Hon John Halden: Under the Act you have to do that.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: You should be making those decisions .

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Order!

Hon N.F. MOORE: Under the Government's policy, which has a lot of similarities to "School Renewal" because it contains some very good ideas -

Several members interjected.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Is politics not extraordinary, Mr Deputy President? I have been criticised all day, and for an hour and a half I have been beaten about with a wet lettuce leaf because we have a policy that somehow or another is no good. When I say now that it is very similar to the previous government's policy I am told I am plagiarising. The policy is in the document -

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon N.F. MOORE: Hon Alannah MacTiernan is criticising me because I have put into our policy the provision that parents of children attending a school will make the final decision. That is a policy decision by the Government. It was not part of the original draft policy but made as a result of the submissions we received when the draft policy was being considered.

Hon John Halden: Just before a by-election was announced.

Hon N.F. MOORE: The member can make those cynical comments and those snide suggestions if he wishes, but the bottom line is that the overwhelming concern of parents and organisations responding to that draft document was that they believed they were threatened and that decisions would be made against their wishes. They are the taxpayers who pay for the system and the parents of the children who attend the schools. They are the people with a particular and dedicated interest in the education of their children. Their overwhelming concern was that some government would make a decision about their school against their wishes. I thought about having an ombudsman.

Hon John Halden: You rejected my idea about that.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I did not come to the conclusion that we should have one, but I thought about it. I thought about some independent body and a lot of other things to try to allay those fears. The bottom line of that document and the draft that preceded it is that any decisions on school closures or amalgamations had to be on the basis of improving or maintaining the quality of education in a district, and that I would not agree to the closure or amalgamation of any school if it meant any diminution of the quality of education. When people came back to me after the draft document had been out for three months, which is one month more than Hon John Halden's - but it did not matter with his document because nobody took any notice of it, not even his own Minister -

Hon John Halden: We closed more schools than you. We closed two.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Are you suggesting we should close more?

Hon John Halden: I am saying you should come out and be honest. You have had 10 months to provide the list and you have ducked, dived and weaved because this is a hard decision and you will not make it.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon N.F. MOORE: I was hoping I might get a chance to make this speech instead of having to listen to Hon John Halden. It has taken an hour and a half already to have a go at this, and then I had to hear Hon Alannah MacTiernan - fortunately I did not have to hear Hon Doug Wenn.

If we are talking about intestinal fortitude let us consider that this school document came out in about 1991-92, about a year before the election. It was prepared by Hon John Halden as chairman and provided to Hon Kay Hallahan. It contained some suggestions in it I would like to re-emphasise, amongst which are the reorganisation of schools. Hon John Halden provided for the Minister, Hon Kay Hallahan, a very detailed and comprehensive process for going about reorganising and closing schools. He acknowledged at the time that there is a problem within the education system and his document outlines that. He has also - and very sensibly - looked at various models for reorganising preprimary-primary collocation, amalgamation of junior primary and primary schools, twin or multicampus schools, consolidation of two schools on one site, the expansion of the age range of a school, reconfiguration or clustering of secondary schools, the establishment of a hub school for years 11 and 12, joint post-compulsory institutions and senior colleges. Those good ideas all should be looked at in a sensible and positive environment by parents whose children are affected by the education system. That document was heading towards a solution to the problems that the system obviously has. It is fair to say both sides of politics acknowledge the problem that we do not have common growth rates throughout every suburb in Western Australia. We heard Hon Jim Scott talking yesterday about the problems of inner city suburbs. One of the ironies of inner city urban renewal is that it brings in less children. One of the problems with Leederville was that with urban renewal it had less children, because those smaller units attract young married couples who leave to go to the outer suburbs when they have children.

Hon John Halden: How do you explain West Midland?

Hon N.F. MOORE: I will come to that. The member should let me make my speech.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister is on his feet. Let him make his speech.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan interjected.

Hon N.F. MOORE: That interjection is interesting, because one of the alternatives is that we put children on buses in large numbers and shift them from one suburb to another. If the member thinks that is a good idea she might say so perhaps by way of interjection.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: It is not a good idea.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Does Mr Halden think it is a good idea!

Hon John Halden: No.

Hon N.F. MOORE: That is now the policy of the Opposition. The next time Hon Alannah MacTiernan makes a speech perhaps she should say that she believes we should bus children.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: Unlike yourselves we make our decisions in a considered manner -

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: We do not make our policy decisions like that.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! May I remind Hon Alannah MacTiernan she has made her speech. That is her contribution to the debate. She cannot do anything more by interjection.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I am sorry Mr Deputy President (Hon Barry House), I was out of order in asking a question. The fact that there has been no response indicates that the member probably thinks the busing of students is a possibility. It could be one of the possibilities, except that most people do not like the idea and it has not worked anywhere

else in the world. Unequal growth is occurring in the suburbs of the metropolitan area and the rural towns. There is a problem in that some of the schools are half empty. When Hon Kay Hallahan was the Minister for Education she alluded to that fact in quite glowing terms in some of her statements. She also said that she hoped nobody would make the school closure business a political football. However, ever since I have been the Minister that is all it has been used as by people who want to make political mileage out of it.

Hon John Halden: When the report came out your people knocked the hell out of me.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Ironically it is Hon John Halden, the shadow Minister for Education, who is running this scare campaign about school closures and who talks about hit lists in his press releases. It is this very person who, when on this side of the House and acting in a more statesmanlike manner, was able to come up with a report on school renewal which clearly identified the problems with the system in Western Australia, and with a solution to the problem. I do not agree with all that he came up with, but it was a good start. He put forward many good ideas about what we might do with some of our schools. I have just referred to some of those different models. They were good ideas which should be considered because they would enable us to use the assets in our education system in a more beneficial way to enhance and improve the quality of the education of our children. That is good. However, the then Minister for Education, Geoff Gallop, announced the closure of some schools, and in fact announced the closure of Carmel Primary School without even telling the parents.

Hon T.G. Butler: That's not true.

Hon N.F. MOORE: It is. Do members know how parents in Carmel found out that the school was to be closed? Hon Ian Thompson asked the Minister in the Legislative Assembly whether it was a fact that the Carmel school was to be closed and Dr Gallop replied that it was to be closed the next month. That is the way the Labor Party operated. When that happened and the parents took the former government to court Dr Gallop decided that the best way to sort out the matter was that instead of making arbitrary decisions, and simply telling a community that its school would close next month, he would get Hon John Halden to fly around Western Australia, ask people what they thought and prepare a report, which he then made available to Hon Kay Hallahan. Let us say that the report was produced in 1991. I know Hon John Halden is not a politician who would put aside a document for the sake of a forthcoming state election. He would say that the proposal in his document was good for education and that we should do it. Had he been the Minister he would have implemented the report. However, Hon Kay Hallahan, perhaps being a little more politically aware than Hon John Halden, said that the former government could not deal with the document because it was dynamite. The report sat on the shelf and gathered dust. Along came the election and nothing was done.

A backlog has been built up over the years and we have an exacerbated situation in the underutilisation of assets. It is a pity that Hon John Halden was unable to convince Hon Kay Hallahan to commence work on school renewals.

Hon John Halden: I wasn't in Cabinet.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I understand that. However, I am told that Hon John Halden has influence. Is that not correct? I know he won the leadership of the Opposition in this place by only one vote; although after the silly question today about how much the State Government Insurance Commission cost the taxpayers, Hon Mark Nevill would be further behind than he was last time. However, that is beside the point. Hon John Halden has influence and I suspect that he was as unhappy as everybody else that Hon Kay Hallahan did not do anything about his proposal.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: You have had the report for 18 months, longer than Kay Hallahan had it. What have you done about it?

Hon N.F. MOORE: Let me now turn to the next part of the history of this matter. The last government put the whole issue on the back burner for reasons best known to it; however, I can only speculate that it had something to do with the election. Since I



became the Minister bureaucrats within the department have been considering the size of schools on an ongoing basis. I can show any member who is interested lists of schools which have been prepared for various Ministers going back to the dim, dark days. I think the last was for Dr Gallop. I do not know what Hon Kay Hallahan did with hers. It may have been burnt, or perhaps not even produced for reasons best known to Hon John Halden. When Carmen Lawrence was the Minister for Education a list was prepared which included Leederville Primary School. Interestingly, she did nothing about that even though it had been ascertained that the value of the land on which the Leederville school sat was worth about \$1.5m; it was a nice little asset if the government wanted to get rid of it.

Hon I.D. MacLean: I suppose we are lucky that it wasn't sold.

Hon N.F. MOORE: That was one of the options.

Apart from considering the number of schools which should close, the government at that time considered the value of all the school properties. It had a long list of underutilised schools for consideration for closure or amalgamation and what they were all worth. It was all part of the attempt to get some money back into the coffers to make up for all the money it had blown. When I became the Minister I inherited a bureaucracy which continues as a matter of course to consider how many students attend the schools and whether the schools fit the requirements of, for example, the Education Act, which states that a viable school must have more than eight children and that the Minister can close a school with fewer than that number.

The people involved prepared a number of computer models to ascertain the best way to assess a school's viability. In the process of working out those models somebody leaked one of the printouts which had a list of 64 schools. I know who leaked that list because *The West Australian* newspaper leaks like everything else. Regrettably, that list was printed on the front page of *The West Australian*. I asked the editor not to print it because, as I said, and as Hon John Halden quoted in the editorial, some of the schools would close and some would not; however, I could not say which because nobody had had a good look at them. The list was simply an assessment of numbers of children in schools with no other considerations taken into account. It was a straight bean counting exercise. When I said that the list had no credibility at the time I was referring to the fact that although it was a document from the Education Department, the names of the schools on it could not be considered to be schools which might or might not close simply because they were identified merely on the basis of numbers, and no other considerations. When I asked the editor not to run the story I told him I would give him a list of schools for closure when one had been decided which he could run on the front page of the newspaper if he wished. However, he unfortunately ran it as a hit list.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan interjected.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I am going through the decision making process so that members understand absolutely where the Government is at.

That hit list, as it was described, created considerable concern in the community. It caused me considerable concern as well. I knew that some of them would never be considered for closure, because I knew them intimately.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: You mean they were in your electorate?

Hon N.F. MOORE: One in particular was. It is called Mt Margaret. It is located in an Aboriginal community about 30 kilometres from Laverton. They could have gone on a bus but had I closed that school those children would not have gone to school. The same applies to East Kalgoorlie. I knew that when we looked at these schools in detail as we would have done next, some of them would be wiped off; they would not be considered because there were reasons for not considering them. Others might have been put on the list because they were not viable or did not qualify under the numbers that were used for that list.

The use of the term "hit list" was very significant in beating up community concern. As a result, it was necessary for me to try to work out a way in which we could handle the

problem and a way in which we could put in place a process, bearing in mind that the school renewal policy had been written and we had some concerns about it. We wanted to put in place a process about which there was a degree of certainty so that people knew where they stood and then we could decide eventually which schools we could consider in a proper programmed way allowing for maximum consultation. I had a draft rationalisation policy prepared which took many ideas from the school renewal policy. In fact, many of the processes recommended in the school rationalisation policy are similar to those in the school renewal policy. That was then put out for public consultation for about four months. I might add that I was criticised for giving only four months even though Mr Halden's school renewal policy was put out for only one month's consultation. However, as I said, that did not matter much because it was canned.

When all of the submissions were received on our draft policy, we developed a policy document on rationalisation of schools which came out in May 1994.

Hon John Halden: How many schools did you visit to discuss it with them before that document was produced?

Hon N.F. MOORE: I do not know. I have been to hundreds of schools and I have talked about hundreds of different issues at those schools.

Hon John Halden: I would have gone to at least 100 schools to talk about my document.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I think that is wonderful.

Hon John Halden: Having had that consultation while the report was being written, I do not think it was unreasonable to allow one month.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order! The Leader of the Opposition will have a chance to respond in this debate.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I think the Leader of the Opposition has made a good point to which I need to respond by saying that the only reason I mentioned the one month is because I was criticised by him for not giving enough time in respect of the other document. We have to be consistent. I think it is terrific that the Leader of the Opposition went to so many schools, got so many views from people, and came to those conclusions. What that says is that he and I agree on the basic situation that should apply.

Hon John Halden: But not on the process.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Interestingly, the honourable member and I agree with most of what is in the school renewal policy.

Hon John Halden: We agreed with this before. This is all old history. You got the process wrong.

Hon N.F. MOORE: It is very reassuring for the honourable member to tell me that he had all of this consultation and he spoke with all of those people. I am reassured that my views, because they are similar to his, are based on consultation.

We received approximately 500 submissions on our draft policy which were all taken into account. That is why I took until May 1994 to finally produce this version. I have explained already how I came to the decision with regard to parents. I was pleased that Hon John Halden supported and agreed with that. I am disappointed that Hon Alannah MacTiernan does not.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: Are you going to allow patients to make decisions about closures of hospitals and public servants to make decisions about the abolition of jobs?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon N.F. MOORE: If the member thinks I have made the wrong decision about schools, she should tell the parents that. She should tell them that she does not believe they should have the final say. It is okay by me if she tells them that I have it wrong.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: If you let the parents that want new schools make the decision as well, there will be equity.

Hon N.F. MOORE: The parents who want new schools do have a significant say in what happens. One of the reasons that the school at Clarkson will be built in 1997 is that we will have enough time to involve the whole community in the sort of school it gets. There has been significant community consultation about the Ballajura school, which opens next year or the year after. There is a lot of consultation about new schools and a lot of parent involvement. In fact, I congratulate the former government for starting that. The Ballajura school was announced by the former government. It set up a terrific consultation process so that parents would be involved in the architecture, the layout and the structure of the school. That is what happens now.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: That is all wonderful, but it is not the issue.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon N.F. MOORE: If Hon Alannah MacTiernan wants to tell these people that the Labor Party does not support the Government on allowing parent decision making, that is fine and Mr Halden will either take her to task or agree with her.

Hon John Halden: She is entitled to her opinion and I am entitled to mine. When we develop policy, we all agree.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Therefore, what the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting is that this is not policy yet, that it is just his view and her view.

Hon John Halden: You have my policy, it is the school renewal policy.

Hon N.F. MOORE: The school renewal policy does not contain a parent vote.

Hon John Halden: You also have my opinion in front of you and it is still my opinion. You are the party of free choice and free spirits.

Hon N.F. MOORE: It is a bit difficult to know where members opposite stand on this. It is important that the public knows that they have no idea where they have come from or where they are going to. I should rephrase that. We know where they have come from, but we do not know where they are going. Hon Max Evans has told us where they came from with that simple figure of \$160m that members opposite lost. Think about how many schools we could have for \$160m. We could have 16 high schools for that or 32 primary schools. That is what members opposite blew.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The interjections are out of order. I remind Hon Alannah MacTiernan again that she cannot interject.

Hon N.F. MOORE: We could have had all of those facilities for that money. We could have brought every school in Western Australia up to a reasonable level of maintenance.

Hon John Halden: Who is the person who has cut funding in real terms to primary and secondary education?

Hon N.F. MOORE: Absolute rubbish.

Hon John Halden: Rubbish nothing.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Members on the other side do not know what they stand for. That is their problem. I guess that is understandable because they went through a period of being in government and messing it up and they are now trying to reassess where they are going.

This document called "A policy document on the rationalisation of schools" was determined in May 1994 and is the Government's policy in respect of school rationalisation. The bottom line of all this is now, because the parents will have the final say in the matter, we will determine which schools satisfy the criteria for assessment and then we will put in place a process of community consultation about the options and alternatives available to those parents at those schools and they will vote on their future. Every school in Western Australia has been assessed on the selection criteria which is the first stage of the process under which the student classroom ratio has been considered and schools have been identified as those which have excess capacity. I understand that West

Midland referred to by the Leader of the Opposition has two permanent classrooms and three temporary classrooms. The policy applies only to permanent classrooms.

Hon John Halden: No, Minister, obviously you have not been there.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I have a note that that is the case.

Hon John Halden: What school in the metropolitan area has only two permanent classrooms? It has four permanent classrooms and two transportables.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I will check that. However, the information provided to me today suggests it has two permanent classrooms and three temporaries. Because the policy applies to permanent classrooms only, West Midland did not come under that criteria. Secondly, if there is a declining enrolment trend of more than 20 per cent over the last five years, they are identified under that criteria. The third criteria is the cost per student. Because the Leader of the Opposition and I have disagreed about these figures, I am happy to show him a graph which indicates that, in relation to the cost of operating schools, the graph is very flat but takes off like a rocket when a school gets to a certain size.

We have worked out the figures. It is fair and reasonable. It is above the average but not way up at the top of the graph like some are. I will be happy to explain it in detail to the member.

Hon John Halden: I have seen the graphs.

Hon N.F. MOORE: The figures we have used in the model are different from the commonwealth figures, as they have taken into account the cost of running head office, the superannuation scheme and everything else.

Every school in the state has been judged against the three criteria. Any school which exhibits one or more of the criteria has not been included in the review process. For example, the exclusion criteria may be an expected upturn in enrolments; excessive bus travel to alternative schools; unsafe routes to alternative schools crossing busy roads or rivers; no cost savings or a lack of accommodation in nearby schools. Every school which exhibited one or more of the inclusion selection criteria was considered in relation to the excluded criteria. We then know which schools need to be considered further. The school was to be identified and then notified and we would then undertake the consultation and look at available options. We would then say to the parents, "Those are the options, you vote and make the final decision."

Currently, we have identified schools which exhibit one or more of the selection criteria, we have considered those regarding the exclusion criteria, and we have identified some schools which would come through that process. However, something arose from that process which I did not anticipate - I do not mind acknowledging this: Some schools within suburbs or regions of the state containing four or five schools came right through the process and need further review. If any one of those schools was closed, the others around it, although it was identified on the process on the basis that it did close, would not close simply because the students from the closed school would move to another school which changed the situation at the other schools.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: Is that not what you were arguing for at Leederville?

Hon N.F. MOORE: It was not. When we identified the schools we found most of them were in a category and involved a cluster of schools. We decided in the policy that we would go to each school and go through the situation in isolation. However, that is useless and counterproductive because one cannot look at each school in isolation. In order to satisfy the requirements of the region it is necessary to look at the schools collectively. Since this became evident relatively recently, we decided to work out a way to deal with regional clusters. That is happening at the present time. I will be making an announcement about that as soon as we have decided how we will go through the stage 3 process of identifying, notifying and consulting those clusters of schools.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: Say you have a cluster of five schools and the parents at each school decide not to close the schools. You have no capacity to improve the performance of the schools.

Hon N.F. MOORE: The member is right. Let me set a scenario to which the member may respond: If five schools are in an area which are all costing too much and are half empty due to declining populations, and if I announce that the five schools satisfy the criteria in accordance with the stage 3 system, people will say that I want to close the schools down even though they will make the decision. If we follow the stage 3 system, we will go to the schools and talk to each separately. The policy presumes that the school will be identified as an individual entity. That is misleading. If it were found that one of the five schools identified in this process was to close and the students went to the other four schools, the other four schools might become viable. The five schools must be dealt with together, not separately. That is the situation across Western Australia and we must confront that changed situation. It is pointless in going through the school community consultation process as outlined in the document without going through the schools in clusters.

I was asked whether that situation applied to the schools in the Helena electorate. I have asked the ministry to find out for me the situation, and I am advised that no cluster of schools fit into that category, and no individual school meets the closure category.

Hon John Halden: What about West Midland?

Hon N.F. MOORE: Regarding the performance classroom ratio of students to classrooms, West Midland is above the basic line. Also, it has a projected population growth of 6.7 per cent. Therefore, it is excluded from the process. The cost per student is less than the amount which was regarded to be the high point.

Hon John Halden: What about Midland? You clustered Midland and West Midland originally.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Midland does not need to be looked at because there is nowhere in the immediate vicinity to place the children. Students at Midland will not be shifted anywhere else because they would have to travel too far. I have from the department a summary of the situation at schools in the Helena electorate, and I can categorically state that no schools will fall into the closure category. I have not announced the whole situation because I am working out how we can handle and assess the cluster situation. We want a good solution for everybody without some schools being named on the front page of the newspaper on some so-called hit list; that prevents people looking at the positive perspectives of this situation. This process will take time and a number of options are being considered. When that is done and I have decided what to do, with the agreement of my colleagues, I will make an announcement.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: When will you decide that?

Hon N.F. MOORE: When the process is concluded. If I work it out between now and Monday, I will let the member know on Monday. It may be a week on Monday or a month on Monday. For the reasons outlined by Hon John Halden, I am as keen as anyone to get this matter bedded down and sorted out. It is causing concern in the community. I want to deal with it as sensitively as possible. I acknowledge that because the previous government shelved the School Renewal report and did not discuss it prior to the last election, I face this position. I am anxious for the issue to proceed.

I am able to advise that no Helena electorate school meets the closure criteria. The Premier asked me whether any schools fitted the criteria, partly because of the incredible scare campaign during the Glendalough by-election when the Labor Party, with the assistance of colleagues, beat up the school closure issue. I attended a meeting into which Liz Schubert rushed in a great flurry and placed a statutory declaration in front of me saying that I should resign if any school closed and said, "Sign this!" It was theatrical stuff, in front of hundreds of people who had been brought along. It was a bit like the gladiators in ancient Rome - let us chomp up the Minister tonight!

Hon Sam Piantadosi: Are you saying it was rent a crowd?

Hon N.F. MOORE: There was no question about rent a crowd because I think it started off as a Labor Party meeting, which expanded. There were a lot of people there from a lot of schools, and interestingly some people asked some intelligent questions, and I was

able to give them some cause for relief about their concerns. I actually enjoyed the meeting, as it turned out, because it gave me an opportunity to tell those people about the Government's policy, and those sensible people who were there at the time were quite impressed. Unlike Hon Alannah MacTiernan, they were impressed with our decision to allow parents to make the decisions. That is what took the rug from underneath those people who -

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: Let the parents at Singleton decide whether they should get a new primary school. If that is really the ethic, it should apply not just to those people who already have schools in their communities.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order!

Hon N.F. MOORE: It is terrific that Hon Alannah MacTiernan is continuing with this line. I hope that if members of the Press are reporting this, they will put on the front page of the newspaper that Hon Alannah MacTiernan wants the Minister to have a hit list: A Labor MLC, who supports the legalisation of marijuana, also believes that parents should not make the decision to close schools. We could also have a graphic of Hon Alannah MacTiernan standing in front of a blackboard, with a duster in her hand, wiping out schools -

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: Smoking a joint at the same time, perhaps!

Hon N.F. MOORE: - and suggesting that should be made compulsory for school children. That is the sort of headline I hope we will see tomorrow. Hon Alannah MacTiernan is saying that parents are not capable of making decisions about their children's education and the quality thereof. I have faith in the capacity of the parents of Western Australia to make the right decisions about their schools. I believe that if we are allowed by the media to proceed with the process of rationalisation in the way in which it is intended, in a positive environment, where parents know at the end of the day that they will make the decisions, we will get some very good outcomes.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: You have not revealed how the cluster system will work.

Hon N.F. MOORE: That is because I do not know yet. That is why I have not announced anything.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: The decision will be made by parents in other schools.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order! I suggest Hon Alannah MacTiernan read *Hansard* tomorrow and she will realise how many times she has interjected, which is far too many.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I believe parents will grab hold of this opportunity - if they are not seen to be threatened - knowing that the Government has already said, as the Treasurer has announced, that any money that is saved by virtue of any school rationalisation will go into the education system. It is not a cost cutting exercise in any way. That is stated in the document itself. One of the good things about school renewal is that it looks at all of the nine different models, and I will be asking the departmental people to go to schools with those models and to say, "Mr Halden thinks these are good models, and so do I; how about looking at them from the point of view of your school?"

Hon John Halden: When you tell us what schools, we will know that.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I will, as soon as I can. The Leader of the Opposition was not here when I explained the problem that I have about clusters.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: We are fascinated to know how you will deal with that.

Hon N.F. MOORE: So am I, and if the member has an idea, let me know.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: The smaller schools will be closed down.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Not necessarily. This is another one of the difficulties I am facing. Let me give a scenario. Say we have five schools in a district, four of which are underutilised, cost too much or have a declining population, and one of which is overcrowded. I understand that there are a couple of scenarios like that. The ones that

are overcrowded would not be identified under the process that we are using. It might be that we could say, "That school is overcrowded, it does not have very good facilities, it is very old and it will cost a lot of money to maintain. We will close down that school and the children will go to the other four schools because they are perhaps newer or have better resources"; so rather than have one school which is chock-a-block and four which are half full, we might finish up with four schools which are each three-quarters full. Those are the options at which we have to look, and I think that is what Hon John Halden envisaged when he talked about the different models and options that were available for parents to consider. That makes a lot of sense to me.

Hon John Halden: Under my proposal, people would not have had to wait as long as they have had to wait under yours.

Hon N.F. MOORE: Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition is smarter than me. I am happy to acknowledge that that may be a possibility.

Hon John Halden: That is the first concession I have had from this Government for a long time!

Hon N.F. MOORE: Because of the way in which this issue has been beaten up into some sort of crescendo, not just by the media but also by the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues, and by other people who have a vested interest, it has become a political issue of some sensitivity. The Leader of the Opposition did not have to deal with this issue when in government because no-one gave him a hard time about school renewal. He did nothing with it, so he never had to bother about the implementation of it or about what might have happened had he tried to implement it. I am in the situation where I have to do something about the problems which the Leader of the Opposition has identified, but I will do it in my time and in the sensitive way in which I want to do it. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to accuse me of being political, I put this scenario to him: The longer I put this off, the more difficult it becomes in regard to the next state election, which is the prize - not the by-election. If I were being political, I would have done it last year and just closed down all of those schools. I am trying to do this properly and to get it right, and I am prepared to accept the political consequences of its getting closer and closer to the next state election, because I believe the process which we have identified is a good process and will result in a better quality education for the children of Western Australia. That is why we will make public the situation just as soon as we have identified a process which will enable us to look at those schools which I have mentioned already. It was possible for me to advise the Premier in respect of Helena, because it is not that sort of suburb. I have looked at the schools individually, and they do not satisfy the closure criteria.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: Will you clarify that?

Hon N.F. MOORE: I have gone through it about seven times. I do not propose to stay here all night. We have put in place a policy in respect of school rationalisation. We are working through it in a way which acknowledges the sensitivity of the issue and takes into account the real and genuine concerns that people have about some ogre of a Minister trying to close down their schools. I have not been able to get the message through to parents, regrettably, that they will make the final decisions. One of the reasons that I want to get this matter off the agenda - not off the agenda, but moving quickly -

Hon John Halden: That was a Freudian slip!

Hon N.F. MOORE: I meant off the agenda in the sense that there is concern around the place. One of the reasons that I want to get this matter moving more quickly than it is, is that as soon as the process is put in place, as soon as parents make a decision, people will know that the process will apply and they will not only have to take my word for it. I acknowledge that from a purely political point of view it would have been better, and in my interests, to have done it six or twelve months ago, or to do it now, because it becomes politically less viable for me the longer it takes. However, I am taking as much time as is necessary to get the right result. That is the fair way to go in this matter.

I ask Hon John Halden whether he will treat this issue in the way in which he envisaged

it should be treated in his document entitled "School Renewal". In a quite sensitive and quite competent way, he prepared a document which said, "This is how you deal with this problem." I do not agree with all of it, but I believe the general thrust is right and his conclusions are generally correct. We are trying to put in place a similar process of identification, of rationalisation; but we have added something which "School Renewal" did not have; that is, the parents will make the decision at the end of the day. Putting in that provision enhances what Hon John Halden had in mind. The decisions will be made on the basis of quality of education and not on some other extraneous criteria.

I thank Hon John Halden for raising the matter today. This is the sort of issue that needs to be conducted in a mature way. As mature people we need to acknowledge that there is a problem and that we need to deal with it. If Hon John Halden wants to make political mileage out of it for the sake of a by-election, so be it. That is what politics is all about. However, some time down the track I hope we can deal with this and other sensitive issues regarding education, which is a very vital and fundamental concern of all Western Australians, in a way that is mature and which acknowledges that it needs to be treated in that fashion. It is a terrible shame when education becomes a political football. In response to a question in this House, Hon Kay Hallahan said that she hoped desperately that school closure or school renewal would not become a political football. She said, "It is made for it; but I hope it will not happen in that way." I suggest that the Opposition take advice from her.

**HON JOHN HALDEN** (South Metropolitan - Leader of the Opposition) [5.51 pm]: I know that I am required to withdraw this motion; however, I will make a couple of brief comments. In his opening remarks the Minister for Education could not help but shoot the messenger. He had to make a personal attack on Liz Schubert because she dared to intervene in both the West Leederville process and in the initial announcement about school closures.

I understand this topic reasonably well. If the Minister wants to go down this path, there is a solution open to him: Do not attempt to resolve this problem at the macro level. It should be resolved at the micro level. He has given himself the solution; that is, the schools happen to be in user clusters, and he should use them as a pilot project. However, in this process the Minister has dilly-dallied and quite clearly the political processes of the time have dictated where and when this policy and the appropriate announcements will be made. The Minister and the Government have a requirement to advise people. If the Premier can advise us that no school in Helena is on the hit list - I know that word offends the Minister; I am sorry I used it - he can also advise other schools that are not on the hit list for the same reasons. One of the problems is that this matter has been dominated by this Government by political and not educational considerations.

Hon N.F. Moore: You are right about that.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am glad the Minister agrees.

Hon N.F. Moore: That is the pity of it all.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am trying to say in all seriousness that I understand the problems and I have already proffered a solution to how it could be managed. However, the issue today was compounded by the worst politicisation of this issue imaginable. Hon Kay Hallahan was correct. Now the Minister has placed himself in a situation where this issue is entwined in politics. Yet he says to us, "Untwine it; it is your responsibility." No it is not. It is the Minister's responsibility to provide the next step in the process.

Hon N.F. Moore: I have said that I will, but not at the moment.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: One would hope not in 1/57th lots.

Hon N.F. Moore: If you were not going to use it in the by-election, you would not have said anything.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I did not make a statement in terms of Helena.

Hon N.F. Moore: Yes, you did.



Hon JOHN HALDEN: I do not know how many times I have heard about the independence of the Liberal Party and what a wonderful virtue it is. Hon Alannah MacTiernan is allowed to have any opinion she chooses as a member of the Opposition. When the Opposition decides on a policy about this matter - we will not be doing it now for obvious reasons; it would not be a contemporary policy in 1997 - it will be based on the view of the Opposition and the Australian Labor Party. Hon Alannah MacTiernan came to me before this debate and asked whether she could put her personal view. My response was that she was entitled to do that and I would not stop her. To now have the guardians of individual virtue criticising members on this side, because we are the socialists and the collectivists, for daring to be individuals and express a view, is the absolute height of hypocrisy and ranks No 2 on today's list.

Hon N.F. Moore: Just say you have not got a policy on it. Just say your party has no policy.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I have a policy.

Hon N.F. Moore: But is it the party's policy?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is well known. At this point, bearing in mind the time, I know the requirement in regard to motions of this nature and rather than have the House adjourn until 25 December - that might suit a lot of people - I seek leave to withdraw the motion standing in my name.

[Motion, by leave, withdrawn.]

#### **MOTION - STANDING ORDER No 72, URGENCY MOTIONS, AMENDMENT**

**HON GEORGE CASH** (North Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [5.57 pm]: I move -

That Standing Order No 72 be amended by adding the following words -

The whole debate, exclusive of a maximum 5 minute reply, shall not exceed 1 hour. The mover may speak for not more than 15 minutes and each subsequent speaker for not more than 10 minutes. Debate on a motion under this standing order may not be adjourned to a subsequent sitting day and lapses at the expiry of the time provided for in this order.

I apologise to the House firstly for the rushed way in which this motion has been introduced. However, it is a matter that I have been attempting to introduce for some time. I realise that I have only a few minutes available within which to speak. As members will be aware, Standing Order No 72 provides facility for urgency motions to be moved on each sitting day. As members would also be aware, urgency motions take precedence over motions with the exception of, say, condolence motions, motions of privilege and those involving personal explanations.

The Notice Paper shows a number of outstanding urgency motions that will require to be dealt with and unless we amend Standing Order No 72, it is clear to me that the urgency motions will continue to queue on the Notice Paper. That, in itself, causes an unsatisfactory position whereby other notices of motions on most important topics are unable to be dealt with in a reasonable time.

I should just say that the wording of this motion will allow a more orderly use of urgency motions. It is critical that members should have that facility available to them at any time. The fact that the motion is limiting the time will not cause any great distress to members, in my view. They will still be able to put forward their view. Of course, it is possible also to entertain another motion which would suspend standing orders to enable other motions to be moved without notice if that were the desire of the House.

This matter has been discussed with the Leader of the Opposition. I understand the Opposition has been supportive of this for the same number of weeks that the Government has. It has just been a case of getting it dealt with by the House. I commend the motion to the House.

**HON JOHN HALDEN** (South Metropolitan - Leader of the Opposition) [6.00 pm]: As the Leader of the House said, we have spoken about this matter. Clearly, on previous occasions urgency motions have not allowed the Government the opportunity to respond. That is not an equitable arrangement. Probably in some respects that has curtailed others from being involved in the debate. I clearly understand that 15 minutes will be a new phenomenon in this House and may be a significant problem for those who are a little more verbose than others! However, in specific and general terms, this is an amendment we should take an opportunity to experience. Of course, the House has an opportunity to modify it at any point. I thank the Leader of the House for moving along these lines. I hope that in the near future some of our sessions about which we have been talking will come to fruition in the way this one has. The Opposition supports the motion.

Question put and passed

### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - ORDINARY

**HON GEORGE CASH** (North Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [6.01 pm]: I move -

That the House do now adjourn.

#### *Adjournment Debate - Schools, Closure*

**HON SAM PIANTADOSI** (North Metropolitan) [6.02 pm]: As I indicated to Hon Bruce Donaldson, there is an area of concern for the people of the North Metropolitan Region. I am glad to see the conservative representatives of that area are here and taking an interest. The concern of the people in that region is that approximately 20 per cent of the schools earmarked for closure are in the north metropolitan area.

Hon N.F. Moore: There are no schools marked for closure.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot interjected.

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: I am glad to see my colleagues in North Metropolitan are taking an interest. They in turn can have their say on the matter.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot interjected.

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: Hon Ross Lightfoot should get up and have his say rather than make snide remarks at me as he did at Hon Alannah MacTiernan. The biggest concern is in the Nollamara area, where there are approximately five schools. Although a school has not been named, the implication is that one of the Nollamara schools will close. I know the Minister would like parent participation in this debate. Which of the five schools in the Nollamara area will he want parents to participate in closing? Perhaps the Minister is running short of parents who would like to participate and is trying to cast a wider net to catch them.

The Minister should come clean and inform the House which school may be closed. Although I appreciate the problem whereby six classrooms in one school are not being utilised, the Minister should consider that, as is the case in many older suburbs, a number of the inner suburbs are being redeveloped with multi-lot residential units. As a result, young families are going back into those areas. Nollamara is one of those inner suburbs. Many considerations must be taken into account. For the sake of all the parents in that area the Minister should come clean about the Nollamara issue and nominate the school if it is his intention to close one. It is disappointing that the other representatives of North Metropolitan Region do not take an interest in the fact that 20 per cent of the schools in their area are being closed. They are silently closing ranks by supporting the Minister and are not interested in what happens to the constituents of the North Metropolitan Region.

**HON N.F. MOORE** (Mining and Pastoral - Minister for Education) [6.05 pm]: There is no list of schools for closure. In due course, schools will be given consideration and parents will be given an opportunity to assess whether they might want them to stay open or whether they will take some other option. However, fundamental to the Government's

policy is the fact that the parents of any particular school will make the decision about their school. The suggestion he is making that somehow I am trying to get other people to vote for someone else's school is absolute nonsense. I have said no government school will close unless the parents of that school agree.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: Come clean.

Hon N.F. MOORE: That is coming clean if that is the way he wants to put it. I have no intention of making school closures on my behalf; that will happen only if parents want it.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 6.08 pm*

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# QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

## SCHOOLS - RATIONALISATION

### *Draft Reports Sent to Minister*

332. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Prior to the release of the Government's policy on the rationalisation of schools were any drafts sent to the Minister from the department?
- (2) If yes, how many?
- (3) When were they sent to the Minister?
- (4) What was the significant difference to the final report?
- (5) Who was primarily responsible for writing the final report?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Four draft copies.
- (3) 2 May 1994  
6 May 1994 (am)  
6 May 1994 (am)  
11 May 1994
- (4) There was no significant difference; most changes were of an editorial nature.
- (5) The Education Department with substantial input from the school rationalisation unit, communications and public relations branch and the departmental corporate executive.

## EDUCATION - "ENSURING A QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS", PRINTER

342. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Who printed the document "Ensuring a Quality Education For All Students in Western Australian Government Schools"?
- (2) Was the job sent to tender?
- (3) If not why not?
- (4) Who were the unsuccessful tenders and what were their bids?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) Park Print.
- (2) No.
- (3) Where it is anticipated that costs will be less than \$10 000, three quotes must be called for. This requirement was complied with.
- (4) Not applicable.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - STAFFING LEVELS

345. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Education:

What are the current staffing levels - including teachers, support staff, cleaners, gardeners, administrative and clerical staff - in each of the following sectors of the Education Department -

- (a) preschools;
- (b) preprimary, primary;

- (c) secondary;
- (d) education support centres; and
- (e) support services?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

The following figures relate to the full time equivalent of staff and include relief teachers -

- (a) 234
- (b) 11 539
- (c) 9 876
- (d) 849
- (e) 1 556.

**GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES - BODIES  
ADMINISTERED; ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE; POSITIONS**

457. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Education:

With respect to the Minister's department and to each of the bodies administered within that department -

- (1) What are the bodies administered within the department?
- (2) What is the current organisational structure of his department and those bodies?
- (3) What are the senior executive service positions within his department and those bodies?
- (4) What are the other senior positions within his department and those bodies?
- (5) What are the policy adviser positions within his department and those bodies?
- (6) What are the public relations positions within his department and those bodies?
- (7) With respect to each of the above mentioned positions -

- (a) who holds those positions;
- (b) what is their period of service within the Public Service or in employment by the Government or contracted to the Government;
- (c) what were their previous positions held within the Public Service or in employment by the Government or contracted to the Government and the dates for which they were held;
- (d) what was their experience immediately prior to entering the Public Service or contracting with Government; and
- (e) are they presently on contract and what is the date of expiry of that contract?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

(1)-(7) The information sought would require considerable research and I am not prepared to allocate resources for this purpose. If the member has a specific question on the matter I will be pleased to respond.

**GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES - BODIES  
ADMINISTERED; ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE; POSITIONS**

459. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Employment and Training:

With respect to the Minister's department and to each of the bodies administered within that department -

- (1) What are the bodies administered within the department?
- (2) What is the current organisational structure of his department and those bodies?
- (3) What are the senior executive service positions within his department and those bodies?
- (4) What are the other senior positions within his department and those bodies?
- (5) What are the policy adviser positions within his department and those bodies?
- (6) What are the public relations positions within his department and those bodies?
- (7) With respect to each of the above mentioned positions -
  - (a) who holds those positions;
  - (b) what is their period of service within the Public Service or in employment by the Government or contracted to the Government;
  - (c) what were their previous positions held within the Public Service or in employment by the Government or contracted to the Government and the dates for which they were held;
  - (d) what was their experience immediately prior to entering the Public Service or contracting with Government; and
  - (e) are they presently on contract and what is the date of expiry of that contract?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1)-(7) The information sought would require considerable research and I am not prepared to allocate resources for this purpose. If the member has a specific question on the matter I will be pleased to respond.

**CASTLEDARE ORPHANAGE - JEANES REPORT**  
*Deputy Director of Education's Letter to Director*

484. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Did the Deputy Director of Education write a memorandum to the Director of Education about the report made on Castledare Orphanage by District Inspector Jeanes, the memorandum appearing as folio 15 on SAWA Education Department File ACC 1497 77/50, dated 28 July 1949?
- (2) Did the deputy director note that -
  - (a) two classrooms at Castledare had 576 square feet of area for the 72 children therein where the area should have been 792 square feet;
  - (b) the infants room was 288 square feet in area which, for the 42 children therein should have been 462 square feet; and
  - (c) there was a lack of skilled teaching for children in the lower and infant grades?
- (3) Did the deputy director say that the school authority responsible for Castledare ought to be required to employ a skilled teacher for infants,

saying that the position was so serious that transport from Perth for a skilled infants teacher should be arranged if local accommodation was impossible?

- (4) Did District Superintendent H. Jeanes, in a memorandum dated 27 July 1951 and numbered as folios 86 and 87 of that file, tell the Director of Education about retardation of pupils attending Church Schools at Castledare, Clontarf and Bindoon?
- (5) Did Superintendent Jeanes say that inspection reports on those schools for 1949 and 1950 had been accompanied by a special statement relating to the retardation of children, especially the British migrants?
- (6) Did Superintendent Jeanes say that there had been no strong especial drive to improve the position?
- (7) Did Superintendent Jeanes say that at Castledare infants were still being taught by Brothers whose training did not equip them for that kind of work?
- (8) Did Superintendent Jeanes say that at Clontarf the lowest and weakest grades were still being taught by an untrained layman for whom the work had been far beyond his capabilities?
- (9) Did Superintendent Jeanes say that at Bindoon the staffing had not been of a nature to handle effectively the serious problem of junior grades?
- (10) Did Superintendent Jeanes note that a serious feature of the education of the lower groups in these schools was the narrowness of the curricula, saying that not much outside the three Rs had been attempted?
- (11) Did Superintendent Jeanes say that so long as the infant boys, migrant or otherwise, entering Castledare were taught under the methods then present it had to be anticipated that retardation would persist?
- (12) Did Superintendent Jeanes note that retardation of girls in similar institutions was by no means comparable to that which existed in these institutions?
- (13) Did Superintendent Jeanes note that girls in similar institutions apparently received a full schooling suitable for their ages?
- (14) Did Superintendent Jeanes note that infant work in other Catholic schools in his district compared favourably with infant work done in the State education system?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

(1)-(14) Yes.

**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT - "CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN"  
FILE, TRUMP LETTER TO CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS, 1943**

506. Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Did Mr F.J. Trump, in a letter to the Chief Inspector of Schools dated 5 October 1943, claim that children in a school were being beaten on the buttocks, that letter occurring as Folio 38 in the State Archives of Western Australia Education Department file ACC 1668 AN 45/18, File 1676/58 entitled "Corporal Punishment of Children"?
- (2) If so, will the Minister table a copy of that letter and a copy of the response of the Chief Inspector of Schools?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) Yes; in a letter dated 1 October 1943.
- (2) I table a copy of the letter and the response.

[See paper No 245.]

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT - "CORPORAL PUNISHMENT GENERAL" FILE  
*Punishment Book, Letter to Director of Education, 1944*

507. Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Did the State Secretary of the Country Women's Association of Western Australia (Inc) write to the Director of Education on 22 March 1944 asking to have abolished the practice of keeping a punishment book in a school, that letter occurring as Folio 40 in the State Archives of Western Australia Education Department file ACC 1668, AN 45/18, No 1676/58 entitled "Corporal Punishment General File"?
- (2) If so, will the Minister table a copy of that letter and table a copy of the response of the Director of Education?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I table a copy of the letter and the response.  
 [See paper No 245.]

MEAGHER, DR TIM - CRITICISMS, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
 AUTHORITY BULLETIN 362, REFUTATION

564. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Has the present board of the Environmental Protection Authority written to Dr Tim Meagher to confirm that comments made in Bulletin 362 of the Environmental Protection Authority were not intended to criticise Dr Meagher's professional abilities?
- (2) Did the refutation follow any threat of legal action by Dr Meagher?
- (3) Have any other criticisms been made of Dr Meagher's abilities in minutes from the previous Environmental Protection Authority Board meetings, particularly in regard to Stephenson Avenue (Bold Park) or the Nullaki Peninsula development?
- (4) Has Dr Meagher been shown those Environmental Protection Authority minutes and did those minutes record the voting preference of board members?
- (5) How many of the members of the previous Environmental Protection Authority board, who were involved with the Environmental Protection Authority Bulletin 362, are also involved in the refutation of professional slurs on Dr Meagher?
- (6) Under present board meeting conditions are the votes of board members recorded in the minutes?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

The Minister for the Environment has provided the following reply -

- (1) I understand Dr Meagher wrote to the member personally, as I am advised he did to every parliamentarian in Western Australia, explaining the circumstances to which you refer. I further understand that you kindly replied to Dr Meagher on this matter on 15 June 1994. I table a copy of the letter sent by the Environmental Protection Authority to Dr Meagher on 28 April 1994.  
 [See paper No 246.]
- (2) No. I understand that Dr Meagher chose to retain solicitors to deal with the matter. The EPA in turn sought and obtained the advice of the Crown Solicitor in compiling the response to Dr Meagher.



- (3) I am informed by the DEP that a search of the EPA minutes in relation to Stephenson Avenue (Bold Park) and the Nullaki Peninsula reveals no reference to Dr Meagher.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) None of the members at the time of the publication of Bulletin 362 were members at the time of the issuing of the 28 April letter.
- (6) EPA minutes to the end of 1993 recorded decisions in a collegiate manner. In order to make the Environmental Protection Act process more open and accountable, this Government in late 1993 amended the Environmental Protection Act 1986 to ensure that each authority member shall cast a deliberative vote on any question that is to be decided.

Hence, deliberative votes are now recorded; that is, the number of votes only being recorded, not the way individuals voted.

#### HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - ABORIGINAL HEALTH WORKERS

565. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the Government's announcement last year that 50 extra Aboriginal health workers would be employed by the Health Department of Western Australia. To what position, in which organisation or establishment, and what town has each additional Aboriginal health worker been employed and when did each health worker take up his or her employment and are they still employed?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

The member is referring to the Aboriginal Employment Scheme announced in August 1993. Under this scheme, 50 positions were earmarked for the health industry. This scheme is targeted at attracting more Aborigines into the whole government health work force, not just Aboriginal health workers, as the question implies. The attached table gives details of the 40 positions currently filled or about to be filled.

[See appendix A, pp 3319-3320.]

This initiative is part of an ongoing commitment to increasing Aboriginal representation over the next five years. Therefore, the positions identified in the attached table represent the starting point, and more positions will be created over time.

#### SCHOOLS - CATHOLIC *Grievances of Parents of Students Procedure*

578. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is there a grievance procedure in place for parents of students at Catholic schools?
- (2) If no, will the department consider the appointment of an education ombudsman to handle such complaints?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) Yes. The Catholic Education Office has procedures in place to deal with the grievances of parents of students attending Catholic schools.
- (2) Not applicable.

**SCHOOLS - STUDENTS**  
*Interschool Movement Tracking System*

579. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is there a centralised computing system for school students to track interschool movement?
- (2) If no, why not?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) There is an adequate facility currently available. With interschool student movement, it is the responsibility of the incoming school to send a formalised transfer note to the exiting school. If the exiting school has not received a transfer note within two weeks, school welfare officer involvement will be instituted and central office notified. The student name will then be placed on the "Student/s Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown" list, which is regularly entered in "The Education Circular" for distribution to all schools and enables "tracking" to occur.

**SCHOOLS - ALBANY, REGULAR PASSENGER TRANSPORT SERVICE**  
*Little Grove Primary Students, Exemption Reversal*

592. Hon BOB THOMAS to the Minister for Education:

The regular passenger transport service is to commence in Albany on 1 August 1994 and includes the area known as Little Grove.

- (1) Why are primary students from Little Grove to now be included in the regular passenger transport service when the 1992 model was modified to exempt them until a primary school was built in that suburb?
- (2) Was the decision to reverse the 1992 exemption made at the ministerial level or at the officer level and endorsed by the Minister?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) To provide equitable treatment of students throughout the built up areas of Albany.
- (2) This was an executive level decision, endorsed by the Minister after all options were taken into consideration.

**SCHOOLS - METROPOLITAN SECONDARY**  
*Support Programs for Children with Learning Difficulties; First Steps Program*

593. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Which metropolitan secondary schools have support programs for children with specific learning difficulties, such as those diagnosed with attention deficit disorder or dyslexia?
- (2) When the First Steps program is introduced to a primary school, are the existing reading support staff or special education teachers automatically removed?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) There are 47 reading resource teachers and 35 low achiever program teachers who have been appointed to metropolitan secondary schools to assist students with learning difficulties and their teachers. Most secondary schools have one or both of these teachers on their staff.
- (2) As the First Steps program offers professional development in the areas of literacy and numeracy, it has no implication on the employment of any

support or special education staff. Schools decide to participate in components of this professional development according to priorities identified within the school development plan. Reading support staff or special education teachers are an integral part of the staffing formula within a school or education support unit and are able to attend these professional development sessions.

**YEAR OF THE FAMILY - COMMUNITY GRANTS, APPROVAL**

657. Hon BOB THOMAS to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Community Development:

- (1) How many applications were received for Year of the Family community grants?
- (2) How many were approved?
- (3) Which organisations received funding under this grants program and what amount did they receive?
- (4) What was the total budget for the community grants program?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

The Minister for Community Development has provided the following reply -

- (1) 579.
- (2) 57.
- (3) [See paper No 244.]
- (4) \$200 000.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**SCHOOLS - CLOSURES**

347. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Education:

With regard to the Premier's announcement today that no schools will close in the electorate of Helena -

- (1) Does this mean that the Premier has seen the list of schools to be reviewed?
- (2) If yes, can the Minister please explain why parents in other electorates throughout Western Australia have not been informed?
- (3) If no, how can the Premier make such a statement if the list has not yet been compiled?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

(1)-(3)

I will be happy to provide that information when I have had a chance to respond to the speech made by the Leader of the Opposition over the past hour and a half.

**ROAD TRAINS - TRIALS, BEDFORDALE HILL, ARMADALE**

348. Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When will the road train trials begin through the City of Armadale down the Bedforddale hill?
- (2) Has the Minister seen any advice or reports on alternative routes to the Bedforddale hill through Armadale?
- (3) Will the trial be monitored and what is the projected cost of such monitoring?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1) In discussions with the three councils involved, a commitment was given to them that the trials would begin when the fertiliser season began next season. That could be about October, but will depend on when the companies providing fertiliser enter into contracts with purchasers.
- (2) There are no other options because that is the only road which services the route between Kwinana and Albany Highway. As I have mentioned before, 6 000 vehicles a year currently carry that fertiliser. If the option is taken up by carriers it will reduce the number of vehicle movements to 4 400. They are called "double B combinations" and are 25 metres long - the same length as is currently being used. They were put on the road by the previous government without any consultation with the local council. Agreement was made between the State and Federal Government Departments of Transport. I find it amazing that the Labor Party is grandstanding with a smear and fear campaign about road trains.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: It is not coming from the community; it is all manufactured by the Labor Party!

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Members opposite have continually tried to create a campaign of fear in the community about heavier vehicles being on the road. The tragedy is that, as demonstrated by Hon Nick Griffiths, members opposite do not have a clue about one combination of truck or another. It is typical that they did not know that the previous government allowed 25 m vehicles on that road.

Hon T.G. Butler: That is not true.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Let the Minister answer the question.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The 25 m vehicles proposed will probably not even be called road trains in the near future because of their short length. In fact, they are not called road trains in many places. Members opposite are creating a farce and stirring up the issue.

- (3) The monitoring will be done by the Department of Transport and the Police Department as part of normal operations involving something new. No direct cost will be involved because no additional personnel will be required; it will involve those people who undertake that sort of work from time to time. Monitoring is currently taking place in Midland. However, the significant difference is that the vehicles there are 36.5 m and are genuine road trains.

The only other option that could be used in the future, if there were a change to the road configuration, would be through the Serpentine-Jarrahdale road. Some people in the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale consider it to be an alternative route provided it is upgraded, which could not take place unless we received an increased allocation from the Federal Government.

Just this week fuel excise was increased again which added \$160m to the funds of the Federal Government, none of which will come back to road funding. This year, the \$150m allocated is almost the same figure as that allocated 10 years ago. To provide the same amount in real terms, the figure should be increased to \$236m. That is the kind of shortfall that has occurred over that time. If we had that funding -

Hon John Halden: We could have road trains everywhere!

The PRESIDENT: Order! Let the Minister answer the question. I suggest the Minister stick to the question and get away from the other issue.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The member asked about alternative routes and I said that at this stage there were none.

Hon John Halden: Thank you, Minister. Sit down.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The Leader of the Opposition is not interested in the answer. It is similar to what happened in the previous debate. My answer might be factual and true, but he does not want to know about it. As I said, the only alternative route is the Jarrahdale route which requires several millions of dollars worth of upgrading. The Department of Transport is having discussions with that shire and they will continue over a long period. When I asked the City of Armadale whether it would appreciate having an extra lane put in on the Bedforddale route to allow heavy haulage and to give it priority, the council refused. I then asked where it would go.

It cannot just stop. They stated they would like to find another route somewhere else down the Darling Scarp. I invited them to come into the Main Roads Department and to discuss the matter with the maps before them and to outline what they considered to be an alternative proposition.

Hon John Halden: The Minister will be spending a lot of money on road trains.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: It has nothing to do with road trains.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: There are 6 000 vehicles carrying fertiliser now, so what does the member think they should do?

Hon John Halden: Continue going where they are.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: That is the position.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: Can the Minister confirm that the trial will not commence before October?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Yes, because there is no fertiliser to cart. The last of it went out for this season about two weeks ago.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: I would like confirmation that the permits granted will be limited to road trains of 25 metres.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: None of these length vehicles can operate on the heavy haulage route that the current 25 m vehicles use without a permit. The ones to be considered in this permit would be mainly 25 m but some would be 20.5 m because the Main Roads Department trial considered that they would need enough vehicles to give a proper trial; so it would allocate the permits provided the vehicles met the specifications up to 27.5 m. In addition, other conditions apply; that is, time of operation and speed of operation. Some people have not taken that into consideration. That is where the extra safety advantage is achieved over the other heavy haulage vehicles that are using that route and carting fertiliser, because they are the ones going past the schools when children are going in and coming out. With the permit conditions, one can enforce operators if they want to use that length vehicle to operate at times that the community accept is the most safest, unlike the current 6 000 vehicles.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: Are these times now specified and available?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The specifications, times and the other conditions in the case of Midland were negotiated with community groups, the schools and the local government authorities; that is, all people who have an interest in it. A set of times and speeds was agreed upon as a starting point for the permits to be given. If during the trial a request is made to change the times or speed, perhaps to have a longer curfew time when they cannot operate, that will be done to ensure that the trial is successful and that people's interests are protected. The present position allows 6 000 vehicles to travel past the school while the children are going in and

coming out, and nothing can be done because those vehicles are allowed on the road at any time.

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - BELL GROUP  
LIMITED SHARES PURCHASE**

349. Hon TOM HELM to the Minister for Finance:

I ask this question on behalf of Hon Mark Nevill. Some notice of this question has been given.

- (1) How many shares were purchased by the State Government Insurance Office from Bell Group or Bell Resources?
- (2) On what dates were the purchases made?
- (3) What was the purchase price of the shares?
- (4) On what dates were shares sold?
- (5) What was the selling price of the shares?
- (6) What was the total amount made or lost on this transaction.

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The member's question refers to the purchase of shares by SGIO from the Bell Group or Bell Resources. I assume he means the State Government Insurance Commission and refers to the total shares purchased by the SGIC; namely, the Bell Group Limited fully paid shares, in which case I provide the following answers -

- (1) (a) \$70 000.  
(b) \$64 089 346.
- (2) (a) 22 October 1987.  
(b) 29 April 1988.
- (3) (a) \$470 151.90.  
(b) \$160 223 365. Those Bell shares were bought two days after the greatest share crash in history on 27 October 1987.

Hon John Halden: I thought the largest share crash occurred in the 1920s.

Hon MAX EVANS: We might have a debate about that later. I do not think the State Government lost any money in the 1920s. If we are discussing how much was lost by the previous government in the last share crash, it was something like \$160m.

(4)-(6)

DATE OF SALE	NO OF SHARES SOLD	GROSS PROCEEDS FROM SALES
28.11.89	38 000	16 720.00
30.1.90	218 000	109 000.00
26.4.90	566 000	60 060.00
27.4.90	56 747 346	567 473.46
27.4.90	6 590 000	86 960.00
TOTALS	64 159 346	840 213.46

The loss by the previous government in investing in these shares totals \$159 853 303.46 but that figure does not include transaction costs.

**JUSTICE, MINISTRY OF - RANGEVIEW REMAND CENTRE**  
*Perimeter Fence Strengthened with Razor Wire*

350. Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT to the Minister for Health representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Was a decision made after February 1993 to strengthen the outer security fencing with razor wire at the Rangeview Remand Centre?
- (2) If so, why was such a decision taken?
- (3) Was such a decision based on new research or existing contemporary remand centres in other states?
- (4) If it is research, can the Minister provide a copy of the research?
- (5) If the decision is based on remand centres in other states, can the Minister advise which states?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Testing revealed that it was possible to scale the perimeter security fence with the use of escape aids within a time scale which was close to the minimum staff response time.
- (3) The decision was based on tests carried out by officers of the Metropolitan Security Unit.
- (4)-(5)  
Not applicable

**ANGLICARE - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNSELLING GRANT**

351. Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Community Development:

Some notice of this question has been given. In response to the Minister's answer to question on notice 131 will the Minister now advise -

- (1) Why was Anglicare allocated this grant for domestic violence counselling when it had not formally applied?
- (2) Have any other non-government agencies received unsolicited grants for domestic violence counselling?
- (3) If yes, to question (2), what were the names of the organisations and what were the amounts of money allocated?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

I thank the member for notice of the question. The Minister for Community Development has provided the following reply -

- (1) The intent of the one-off grant was to reduce the waiting list for counselling services and Anglicare was viewed to have the ability to deliver a suitable service.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Centrecare - \$50 000 one-off.  
Marriage guidance - \$50 000 one-off.

I will take this opportunity to add to my earlier reply to Hon Alannah MacTiernan's question, because one point I should have mentioned was that if the route goes ahead as part of that trial no road trains will go down Bedforddale Hill. The permits will be allocated to go up only because two lanes go up and only one comes down.

## NATIONAL PARKS - ENTRY FEES

352. Hon DOUG WENN to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for the Environment:

Some notice of my question has been given and it is about the planned introduction of a fee for entry into national parks.

- (1) What is the expected impact of a fee on visitor numbers in national parks?
- (2) What is the expected impact of this fee on business in surrounding towns?
- (3) What is the expected revenue to the Department of Conservation and Land Management from this fee?
- (4) What is the expected cost to CALM for collection and administration of this fee?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. The Minister for the Environment has provided the following reply -

- (1) There is not expected to be an impact on visitor numbers.
- (2) Businesses are likely to benefit through fees raised by CALM being spent in the local economy on the provision of improved facilities and management.
- (3) It is difficult to estimate revenue until there is some indication of visitor preferences for day tickets, or any of the range of variously priced passes available.
- (4) The cost is expected to be minimal and the Government will not allow collection and administration costs to exceed revenue obtained.

## STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - BELL GROUP LIMITED SHARES PURCHASE

353. Hon P.R. LIGHTFOOT to the Minister for Finance:

Is the \$160m mentioned in the addendum to the question asked by Hon Tom Helm on behalf of Hon Mark Nevill the only loss by the State Government Insurance Commission in regard to the Bell Group?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

It is the worst loss incurred by any venture undertaken by the previous government. It bought 150 million convertible notes in Bell Group at a cost of \$140m. It did get a discount of \$10m. It was a complete loss and was of no value whatsoever. If one adds \$160m to \$140m it becomes a \$300m loss incurred by the investment in Bell Group. The capital of the SGIC as at 1 July was \$60m. Therefore, it lost five times the total capital.

## NATIONAL PARKS - ENTRY FEES

354. Hon DOUG WENN to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for the Environment:

Some notice of this question has been given.

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the widespread criticism expressed in the south west media by local business people and tourism operators about the introduction of a \$5 per car entry fee into national parks in the region?
- (2) If yes, in view of these criticisms will he be delaying the introduction of this fee until further consultation has taken place?



Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I thank the member for notice of this question. The Minister for the Environment has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The decision to broaden the number of national parks for which an entry fee would be payable was the subject of very careful consideration by the Government. When elected to government it was a major platform of the coalition parties' policy that the Government would provide better management of the state's Budget and resources. It was clear that the previous government had artificially held down the real costs of government services and thereby inhibited the ability of the public sector to properly perform its functions.

I am confident that the public, local businesses and tour operators recognise that there is a significant cost in the provision of facilities and in the management of the state's natural assets, such as national parks. As the Government has agreed that all of the money raised will be spent on management and facilities in our parks at the local level, there will in fact be a net benefit to local businesses as a result of these fees.

**TRANSPERTH - FERRY SERVICE PRIVATISATION, TENDERS CALLED**

355. Hon TOM HELM to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When will tenders be called for the privatisation of Transperth's ferry service?
- (2) Will the Minister make public all information on the conditions of tender?
- (3) If not, why not.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1)-(3) Expressions of interest have been invited from prospective tenderers. As a consequence of that tenders will be called for that operation. I am not in a position to give the exact date. So far six people have expressed an interest in tendering. The name of the successful tenderer will be made public. The cost component of the successful tenderer's operation will be made public because it will be detailed in the financial documents at the end of each financial year.

**RETAIL TRADING HOURS - DEREGULATION**

356. Hon TOM HELM to the Minister for Fair Trading:

Is the Minister now in a position to allay the concerns of many people in the Western Australian community on the issue of deregulation of retail trading hours?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

No, I am not but I hope to be able to do that shortly.

Hon John Halden: After 11 September?

Hon PETER FOSS: I have returned the draft report to my department because of the unsatisfactory analysis of some of the statistical data.

Hon John Halden: They did not agree with you?

Hon PETER FOSS: They did, but they agreed with me too enthusiastically. I do not believe the data supported it. I always like to be on strong ground when I make a claim. Although I was grateful for their enthusiastic

support for my views I would prefer the report to be supported with somewhat better statistical data than they gave. Therefore, I sent it back for the department either to get a totally different set of data which may be relevant or to make it clear the data is conclusive on that point. The matter will require more statistical data and further analysis. When that is done - and I hope it is shortly - I will be in a position to advise members accordingly.

#### STATE ENERGY COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - FINANCIAL POSITION

357. Hon P.R. LIGHTFOOT to the Minister for Finance:

Will the Minister advise the House of the present position of the State Energy Commission of Western Australia as a result of the question, by way of interjection, asked by Hon Alannah MacTiernan a few moments ago?

#### *Point of Order*

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Surely we are entitled to know what the question is that is being asked.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The member is correct. We should know what the question is.

#### *Questions without Notice Resumed*

Hon P.R. LIGHTFOOT: I thought I said the present financial position of SECWA.

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The annual report of SECWA was tabled in the House today. I am pleased to report that the estimated profit next year - the first year authorities have had to submit their estimated profits - is \$231m after CSOs of \$26m; that is, \$257m. If one adds the depreciation of \$163m, there will be a cash flow of \$394m, less a statutory levy to the Government of \$84m. Therefore, the net cash flow for SECWA is \$310m. On the same basis, last year after the statutory levy of \$84m had been deducted the cash flow was \$282m. In the 1992-93 financial year the profit was \$165m and depreciation of \$149m, less the levy of \$250m. SECWA will have a generated cash flow of \$842m by June 1995. That is a big turnaround. A lot of that has been on the basis of the business it has been doing, and because it has cleaned up many of the work practices. The profits will be much higher next year because the SEC can out-source the contracts. Previously David Parker would not allow it to out-source any contracts. The figures could be even better than that. It is a very good cash flow, and I thank the member for the question.

#### COUNCIL HOUSE - REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

358. Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Has the Minister decided whether to place Council House on the permanent Register of State Heritage Places?
- (2) If yes, what is that decision?
- (3) Was that decision in accordance with advice given by the Heritage Council?
- (4) If no decision has been made, when will such a decision be made?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

I regret I do not have notice of that question, and I ask that it be put on notice.

**CAMARRI, BRUNO - GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT**

359. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Leader of the House:

Some notice has been given of this question.

- (1) Has Mr Bruno Camarri been employed in any capacity by the State Government?
- (2) If yes -
  - (a) for what period was Mr Camarri employed?
  - (b) for what purpose was Mr Camarri employed?
  - (c) what are his conditions of employment?

Hon GEORGE CASH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question, to which the Premier has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2)
  - (a) The firm of Freehill Hollingdale and Page, of which Mr Camarri is a partner, has been retained by the Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet to provide legal advice to the Government on native title issues.
  - (b) See 2(a).
  - (c) The retainer is at normal commercial rates for engagement of legal services.

**ROTTNEST ISLAND - MANAGEMENT PLAN, REVIEW**

360. Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Has the review of the Rottnest Island management plan, required by section 19 of the Rottnest Island Authority Act 1987, been undertaken?
- (2) If not, what steps is the Premier taking to ensure that it is completed?
- (3) If the review has commenced, what steps have been taken to ensure that public participation is part of the review?
- (4) If the review has been completed, when will it be released and what steps, if any, have been taken as a result of the review?

Hon GEORGE CASH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question, to which the Premier has provided the following reply -

Given the short notice of this question, I ask the member to place the question on notice and a reply will be forthcoming as soon as possible.

**ACTS AMENDMENT (PERTH PASSENGER TRANSPORT) BILL - JOB LOSSES**

361. Hon DOUG WENN to the Minister for Transport:

During debate on the Acts Amendment (Perth Passenger Transport) Bill, I asked the Minister how many job losses would be incurred. The Minister failed to respond during the debate. How many jobs will be lost through the enactment of this Bill in the categories of drivers, vehicle maintenance staff, and administration staff?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

No-one can give any indication of any change in staff numbers because it will depend on the successful tenderers and what the Metropolitan Transport Trust does with the administration of the operation.

Hon Doug Wenn: There will be some.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Already a number of people in the MTT have not been replaced, as part of that operation. Also, a redundancy package was offered which some people took advantage of. There are no plans for specific changes. That will come as a consequence of management decisions from time to time.

Hon Peter Foss (Minister for Health) was granted leave to table the answer to question on notice 565. [See paper No 243.]

Hon E.J. Charlton (Minister for Transport) was granted leave to table the answer to question on notice 657. [See paper No 244.]

Hon N.F. Moore (Minister for Education) was granted leave to table documents related to questions on notice 506, 507 and 564. [See papers Nos 245 and 246.]

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## APPENDIX A

**Aboriginal Health Workers**

Health Care Unit	Location	Position	Commencement Date	Currently Employed
<b>Sexual Assault Centre</b>	Perth	Counsellor Project Officer	14/03/94 13/06/94	Yes Yes
<b>Princess Margaret Hospital</b>	Perth	Child's Activity Co-ordinator Health Care Liaison Officer Welfare Assistant Occupational Therapy Assistant	11/04/94 13/06/94 29/07/94 (projected) 29/07/94 (projected)	Yes Yes No No
<b>Health Department of W.A. (Central Office)</b>				
Aboriginal Health Policy and Programs	Perth	Cadet	20/12/93	Yes
Human Resources Branch	Perth	Aboriginal Liaison Officer	14/07/94 (projected)	No
Disease Control Branch	Perth	Project Officer	29/07/94 (projected)	No
<b>East Metro Health Authority</b>				
Royal Perth Hospital	Perth	Orderly	16/03/94	Yes
<b>South Metro Health Authority</b>				
Hilton Community Health Centre	Perth (Hilton)	Men's Health Liaison Officer	27/06/94	Yes
Southwell Child Health Centre	Perth (Hilton)	Child Health Liaison Officer	27/06/94	Yes
Rockingham/Armadale Community Health Centre	Rockingham/ Armadale	Health Promotion Officer	27/06/94	Yes
Gosnells Community Health Centre	Armadale	Women's Health Liaison Officer	unknown	No
Rockingham/Kwinana Community Health Centre	Kwinana	Women's Health Liaison Officer	unknown	No
Fremantle (Multicultural Centre)	Fremantle	Women's Health Liaison Officer	unknown	No
<b>Northern Health Authority</b>				
Kununurra Hospital	Kununurra	Clerical Officer	16/05/94	Yes
Wyndham Hospital	Wyndham	Orderly	01/01/94	Yes
Wyndham Hospital	Wyndham	Gardener	01/01/94	Yes
Halls Creek Hospital	Halls Creek	Clerical Officer	20/06/94	Yes
Derby Regional Office	Derby	Clerical Officer	11/03/94	Yes
Derby Community Mental Health Unit	Derby	Officer	14/08/94 (projected)	No
Derby Regional Hospital	Derby	Clerical Officer	01/03/94	Yes
Broome District Hospital	Broome	Orderly	29/04/94	Yes
Broome District Hospital	Broome	Physiotherapy Assistant	23/05/94	Yes

## APPENDIX A

Health Care Unit	Location	Position	Commencement Date	Currently Employed
<b>Northern Health Authority</b> (continued ...)				
Pilbara Public Health Unit	Port Hedland	Nutritional Officer	31/03/94	Yes
Broome Hospital	Broome	Apprentice	10/06/94	Yes
Kimberley Aboriginal Health Promotion Unit	Broome	Health Promotion Officer	20/06/94	Yes
<b>Western Health Authority</b>				
Geraldton Hospital	Geraldton	Liaison Officer	11/04/94	Yes
Camaron Hospital	Camaron	Liaison Officer	29/07/94 (projected)	No
<b>Southern Health Authority</b>				
Albany Community Health Unit	Albany	Health Worker	07/06/94	Yes
Katanning Community Health Unit	Katanning	Health Worker	30/05/94	Yes
Narrogin Regional Hospital	Narrogin	Liaison Officer	unknown	No
Narrogin Community Health Unit	Narrogin	Health Worker	20/06/94	Yes
Narrogin Community Health Unit	Narrogin	Health Worker (Mental)	20/06/94	Yes
<b>Fremantle Hospital</b>				
	Fremantle	Clerical/Medical Records Officer	20/06/94	Yes
	Fremantle	Patient Support Services Officer	03/06/94	Yes
	Fremantle	Liaison Officer	11/04/94	Yes
<b>King Edward Hospital</b>				
	Perth	Clerical Officer/Receptionist	11/04/94	Yes
	Perth	Liaison Officer	11/04/94	Yes
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>		