

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 31 May 1990

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett) took the Chair at 10.00 am, and read prayers.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS

The Clerk of the Assembly produced the writs for the electoral districts of Fremantle and Maylands and announced that Mr James Andrew McGinty had been duly elected as the member for Fremantle and Dr Judith Mary Edwards had been duly elected as the member for Maylands.

The Speaker announced that he was prepared to swear in the members for Fremantle and Maylands.

The members for Fremantle and Maylands made and subscribed the affirmation required by law, and signed the role.

PETITION - GREAT EASTERN HIGHWAY BY-PASS ROAD ROUTE 6

Northam Residents Construction Request

MR TRENORDEN (Avon) [10.07 am]: I present a petition couched in the following terms -

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

We the undersigned request the Parliament of Western Australia to respect the wishes of the people of the town and district of Northam regarding the Great Eastern Highway By-pass Road which is urgently needed. The people of Northam request that route 6 is proceeded with without further delay as this route has already been agreed upon, cost assessments completed and land purchased to carry out this project.

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

The petition bears 445 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 39.]

PETITION - RIGHT TO DIE LEGISLATION

MR STRICKLAND (Scarborough) [10.09 am]: I have a petition couched in the following terms -

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

We, the undersigned request that because the criminal code Law in Western Australia is such that suffering people have no legal right to be allowed or helped to die, no matter what their degree of suffering nor the urgency of their plea for release by death, the Legislative Assembly, in Parliament assembled, should enact legislation that makes the right to be allowed or, if necessary, helped to die a legal option on the request of persons who are suffering more than they wish to bear: and that other persons participating in the fulfilment of such legal options shall not be subject to legal, professional or social action.

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

The petition bears 15 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 40.]

PETITION - PROFESSIONAL FISHERMEN FEES

Berthing Facilities Upgrade

MR NICHOLLS (Mandurah) [10.10 am]: I have a petition couched in the following terms -

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

We, the undersigned believe that the fees levied against us as Professional Fishermen are excessive and that moneys raised should be used to maintain or upgrade berthing facilities in all locations where the fees are levied.

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

The petition bears 172 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 41.]

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY - TWELFTH DAY

Motion, as Amended

Debate resumed from 30 May .

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Fremantle.

[Applause.]

MR MCGINTY (Fremantle) [10.13 am]: On Saturday, 26 May the people of Fremantle elected me to be their representative in this Parliament. Although the by-election had both local and Statewide dimensions, it was clear on the doorstep and on the streets of Fremantle that electors were called to pass judgment on the performance of the State Government. The group known as People for Fair and Open Government urged the people of Fremantle to put the Labor candidate last on the ballot paper, as did the Liberal party and most of the so-called independent candidates. The people of Fremantle were asked in the by-election whether they supported the Government or whether they wished to have the blocking of Supply and a further election. On doorsteps and on the street, as well as in the ballot boxes, the message was clear: The people of the area did not want another election. There is no groundswell of popular feeling against the Government. There is no support for the uncertainty and chaos which would flow from the blocking of Supply. In fact, a positive feeling exists in the community that the Premier, Carmen Lawrence, and the State Labor Government are facing up to the unpleasant realities of past mistakes and getting on with the business of governing the State.

The people want a Government that is concerned about what I regard to be traditional Labor values, and they saw the current Government as offering exactly that. By that I mean a Government which is committed to caring for ordinary people, and in particular for the more disadvantaged members of our community. They are concerned that there be a Government that has as a priority the creation of jobs to ensure that the wealth in our community is shared among all people, along with a concern for the environment. I digress briefly to note that the original greenies in modern Australia were found in the trade union movement led by Jack Mundey and others in Sydney in the 1960s. By means of "green bans" they worked to preserve the heritage and environment of that city. The green movement has been taken over in recent times by people who are not part of the trade union movement.

Traditional Labor values involve a Government concerned about the standard of living, not only regarding wages and salaries, but also in the broader questions relating to the social wage in the provision of health services and education and the various aspects that make up

the standard of living of ordinary people. Overriding all these aspects is the need for a Government to be committed to the concept of social justice to create a more egalitarian society in terms of equity, access and participation. It was clear that if a Statewide poll were to be held in the next few months, the Labor Party would win comfortably because it is seen by people to offer the sort of Government to which I refer.

A traditional Labor value which surfaced throughout the by-election campaign in the seat of Fremantle, and one issue which the people wished their representative in Parliament to espouse, was that of care and concern for ordinary people. I have spent all my adult working life in the trade union movement. In 1978 I became the Secretary of the Miscellaneous Workers Union which was formed by the legendary Fremantle trade union figure, Paddy Troy. The union was formed in 1955 on the waterfront following the deregistration of the former waterfront union; the deregistration was instigated by the then conservative Government. By the process of amalgamation it has now become one of the largest unions in Western Australia. In its short history it has established itself as one of Western Australia's truly great trade unions. Its membership is made up of people who are not of themselves powerful or important. It is made up of cleaners, hospital workers, process workers, child care aides, construction and maintenance workers, teachers' aides and security officers, to name a few. The majority of the union's membership are women, many of whom work on a part-time basis and many of whom come from a non-English speaking background; many of these people work in low skilled and low paid employment. It is these ordinary Western Australians that any Government must have in the forefront of its thinking when considering legislative and administrative action and policy, rather than maintaining a preoccupation with the important and powerful people in our society.

I will refer to a number of groups which fit into this area and deserve the prime attention of this Parliament. I refer first to Aboriginals. Statistics show, and I do not think anyone would seriously doubt it, that per capita income of Aboriginal people is well below that of non-Aboriginal people. The unemployment rate for Aboriginal people is dramatically higher than that for non-Aboriginal people. The incarceration rates are between 10 and 20 times higher for Aboriginal people than for non-Aboriginal people, depending on whether prisons or police lockups are the yardstick, and the incidence of custodial deaths is comparably higher. The life expectancy of an Aboriginal is 22 years less than that of a non-Aboriginal. Numerous statistics exist and each of them indicates that this Government has not achieved in any sense equality for Aboriginal people. All the indicators point to an alienated, dispossessed and oppressed people. I will endeavour, in my term in this Parliament, to provide positive measures to support self determination by Aboriginal people, economic and social self reliance and generally to enhance the welfare of the Aboriginal people of this country. In this context the old Swan Brewery site dispute needs to be reconsidered. In my view it is a social justice issue rather than a simple question of whether one ought to preserve an old building.

I also refer to the plight of migrant workers in this State. In Fremantle many migrant workers are especially vulnerable to exploitation. Special programs are needed for these people, and I pay particular attention to the "English on the Job" program. This battle was fought several years ago and is now established as an industrial right via a number of awards through the Industrial Relations Commission for workers with a non-English speaking background. This program needs to be extended if we are to say, in any sense, that our migrant people in the work force have any sort of equality in terms of access or participation in their employment.

I believe the Government needs to take action to remove discrimination between conditions of employment for its own employees. Government blue collar workers have inferior conditions of employment compared with their white collar counterparts. Many migrants are employed to clean our hospitals, to clean our schools, to provide our water and sewerage services and a range of other Government services. If one has the misfortune of being classified as a blue collar worker, one has to wait three years longer to qualify for long service leave than does a white collar worker. White collar workers receive long service leave after seven years, blue collar workers after 10 years; white collar workers receive 15 sick days per year, blue collar workers receive 10; white collar workers receive 12 public holidays a year, blue collar workers receive only 10. In just about every case the Government's conditions of employment disadvantage the blue collar workers. They should

be the primary concern of this Parliament, not the white collar workers. Any differences which rely solely on class are unacceptable and should be removed. I call upon the Government to remove this discrimination from its own employment and to establish itself as a model employer.

One of the major issues over which the Fremantle by-election was fought was the issue of the environment. On the doorstep and in the polling booth the people of Fremantle continually emphasised their concern for their physical surroundings. They spoke to me of their unique heritage, which is Fremantle, and the need to continue the process that has been set in train to preserve its historic buildings. They also spoke of the need to enhance the quality of their lives generally, and these comments, while made in the context of Fremantle, are applicable throughout the State. Fremantle is both a residential and an industrial commercial area, consequently it is necessary to provide access for trucks to the commercial areas, in particular the Port of Fremantle, but due to inadequate planning over the years we have a hotchpotch of roads in the Fremantle area. Heavy trucks use the streets in residential areas and we must remove them from those areas in order to enhance the amenity of the city itself for the people who live in it.

I am pleased that recently the Government has seen fit to announce the removal from the metropolitan regional planning scheme plans for two highways which would have divided the City of Fremantle and its community - the Roe Freeway extension into South Fremantle along Marine Terrace and the eastern bypass. I believe these decisions will enhance Fremantle significantly as a place for families to live. It is also time that people reconsidered the freeway mentality on which this city has been planned. We have far too many freeways planned for this city, and at least now Fremantle will be able to proceed on the basis that the city and the community will not be divided by traffic attracting freeways throughout the area. Of great benefit to the people of Fremantle will be the freeing up of land within the city as a result of those two decisions. That land can be used to provide much needed services for the community in the form of aged accommodation and it will also open up access to South Beach which would have been effectively and permanently closed to the public had the Roe Freeway extensions proceeded. These decisions will enable planning to proceed with a measure of certainty and enhance Fremantle as a place in which to live. Environmental priorities in Fremantle include the need to act expeditiously and remove the noxious industries from the Coogee strip; to act to remove the visual pollution from the South Fremantle power station; and to remove the noise pollution from trucks running through the residential areas of the City of Fremantle.

On a far broader level, rather than simply looking at the local environment, the people of Fremantle generally approve of the pro-environment stance taken by the State Government. It is clear that people have become far more environmentally aware. I call upon the Government to declare Mt Lesueur a national park and to prohibit the development of an open cut coalmine and privately operated power station in that area. Such action is proposed vandalism and would destroy the many values of that important area to the State and to its future. A change in lifestyles and consumption patterns is necessary if we are to conserve and enhance the environment of this State, this country and this planet. We must leave a place for our children to lead healthy and wholesome lives, and unless strong action is taken that will not occur.

I will conclude my inaugural speech in this Parliament by saying thank you to the people of Fremantle. They have placed in me a trust that I hope I can honour and I shall certainly be working hard to ensure that I do honour that trust. I shall also place on record my thanks to the Labor movement and particularly the trade union movement which has throughout my employment given me great support. It has been superb to be part of a team of people who have worked to enhance the lives and living standards of the work force in this State. That support has continued during this election campaign.

I also express my thanks to the political wing of the Labor movement for giving me the honour of representing it in this Parliament as a Labor Party member. I am proud to be able to represent the people of Fremantle in this Parliament.

[Applause.]

DR EDWARDS (Maylands) [10.30 am]: I am proud and privileged to have been elected to represent the people of Maylands in this House. My win in the Maylands by-election last

Saturday was a magnificent victory for the Australian Labor Party. It was a resounding vote of confidence in the current Labor Government and an affirmation of the competent leadership provided by the Premier.

In the past month, I had the opportunity to meet the people of this electorate in their homes and in their communities. Three messages came through loud and clear: First, the recognition that Labor Governments put people first; and second, Labor Governments are committed to improving the lot of all men and women and to improving family living standards.

In electing me, the people of Maylands have demonstrated that they wish this Government to remain in power. The third message was that the people of Maylands are impressed by our Premier. They admire her strength and resolve evidenced in her first 100 days in office. Their statement is: Give her a go; let her get on with the job.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Dr EDWARDS: I am inspired by how sophisticated the electorate is. We now face thinking voters who recognise that the problems confronting society are complex and that there is no quick fix solution. However, the problems we face are not seen as insurmountable and there is a willingness and a commitment to work together towards achieving solutions.

The people of Maylands are fed up with threats to block Supply. They are annoyed at the possibility of instability, disruption and chaos. They are definitely not interested in returning to the polling booth having been there three times in as many months. On the doorsteps, in the streets and in their homes, they reiterate that they want the Government to be allowed to get on with the job of governing.

The Maylands electorate runs along the Swan River from Maylands to Bassendean and stretches north to include Ashfield and parts of Bayswater, Bedford, Embleton, Inglewood and Morley. Compared with the rest of the metropolitan area, the electorate of Maylands has a greater than average number of households with low incomes. It has more tradespeople and labourers than managers or professionals. The unemployment rate is also high. A significant section of the electorate is aged 55 years and over. Maylands also continues to be a multicultural area and has strong Italian, Dutch, Polish and Vietnamese communities.

In representing the people of Maylands in this Parliament, I will work towards achieving a just and fair society. In measuring this, I am influenced by my background in medicine and my work as a health professional. I know from my background that health and illness do not occur randomly within or between groups of people. Health is a product of the social environment. Throughout history, those who have occupied lower hierarchical positions in the social system experienced more ill-health than those in more privileged positions.

In Australia, there is now overwhelming evidence that people's chances for life or death, health or illness are linked to their socioeconomic status. This determines their access to goods and services such as income maintenance, education, housing, food, transport and a hazard-free environment. Access to these services impinges on their health.

In relation to death, men in the lowest social grouping compared with men in the highest social strata are one and a half times more likely to die from cancer and heart disease, three times more likely to die early from chest disease and accidents and four times more likely to die from brain and nervous system diseases.

In Western Australia, babies born into families of unskilled labourers are twice as likely to die around birth as the children born into families of professional men and managers. People in lower status occupations suffer a higher rate of recent illness, chronic conditions and days of reduced activity than do men in higher status occupations.

Women engaged in "home duties" as their usual major activity consistently report higher rates of disability than do women in the paid work force. There is a similar pattern for disease risk factors such as high blood pressure and high blood fats, obesity and cigarette smoking. These are more common among people with low levels of educational attainment. Less money is spent on fruit and vegetables in lower income households. However, a high level of calorie intake is more common in people in lower socioeconomic groups. Smoking and the consumption of alcohol by men follow a similar pattern.

It is apparent then that disease, ill-health and health vary among different socioeconomic groups. These social inequalities are real and, although factors such as access to services

play a part, that does not explain these differences in health status. It is only when we examine our social structures that we get more insight into this problem.

The differences in health status correspond to three divisions in society. The most important division is between those in the labour market and those out of the labour market. In Australia, the basic cause of poverty is not receiving a labour market income. The greatest poverty, therefore, is among the unemployed, sole parents, pensioners and housewives. In its worst form, it manifests as a 20 per cent increased early death rate among the unemployed regardless of their previous socioeconomic status.

The second division in society is among people who are working. It is between those in a strong labour market position and those in a weak labour market position. A strong position results from the opportunity for educational attainment and credentials, being a member of a powerful union and from labour shortages. If, however, one is a woman, young, old, Aboriginal or from an ethnic background, one's occupational and, therefore, health status is likely to be lower.

It is well known in the Maylands electorate and of concern to me that migrant workers are more likely to be employed in production process working positions. These are generally low paid, have poor prospects for promotion and are hazardous. Work-related illnesses and injury are more common among these workers.

Members will be interested to know that, contrary to popular belief, the greatest stress at work is experienced by low-level, unskilled workers. The common feature is a lack of control over one's work, an inability to influence decisions, and a feeling of uncertainty about the future. The final division though is between those who accumulate wealth, either as personal owners of capital, as executives of corporate power or through kinship and marriage. At a time when at least one in five Australians lives near the Henderson poverty line, the top five per cent of the population own more than the bottom 90 per cent put together. Health then is intimately linked to income and socioeconomic status; that is, social power. While the gap between the rich and poor increases, so will disparities in health status. That has not received a lot of attention in Australia; however, in the United Kingdom and the USA it has been noted that the relatively affluent and educated are becoming healthier while the health status of the poor decreases, remains static or improves at only a slow rate. So, although Australia is one of the healthiest nations in the world, it harbours some inequalities in its health status, as I have outlined.

The part played by the way society is structured has been discussed, but I also wish to comment briefly on the organisation of health and medical services. Health care in Australia has generally been practised on a formal exchange basis; that is, practitioners perform certain services in return for a monetary payment. Historically, doctors have been the main players and have consolidated control over this system, giving rise to what could be called medical dominance. This has resulted in the perpetuation of the idea of health as a commodity. It has also fostered a strong medical entrepreneurial approach with a belief in individualism and a strong fear of Government regulation. Such a medical system is, therefore, oriented towards cure rather than prevention, towards individuals rather than structures, and towards victims rather than systems. In general it is unwilling to see the link between poverty and ill health, and views other methods of service delivery, such as Aboriginal medical services and women's or workers' health centres, as alternative, marginal and on the fringe.

Solutions to the problem of health inequalities must, therefore, examine both the individual's needs and how these can be met, plus the structures contributing to health to see how these can be modified to improve health. Bob Connell has said -

A just society has no inequalities in access to health care nor in exposure to controllable health risks.

From the previous discussion it can be seen that in terms of health Australia is, in fact, on the way to becoming a just society. Social justice is helping to redress this balance. This means four things: Equity, access, protection of rights and participation. Social justice implies that there is a fair and equal distribution of economic resources - equity; that there is equal access for all people to services that promote and maintain health; that the basic political, civil and legal rights are protected and expanded; and that people are encouraged to participate in the decisions which affect them and determine their health.

The Australian Labor Party, Labor Governments and the union movement have been at the forefront, demanding and working for equity, access, protection of rights and participation. These sections of the community have fostered the idea and maintained that a social justice health policy incorporates a social view of health; that is, a view that recognises the impact, both direct and indirect, which the physical, socioeconomic and the cultural aspects of the environment have on the health of a community. A social view of health means that we must intervene to change those aspects of the environment which are promoting ill health, rather than simply deal with illness after it appears. A social view of health means that we cannot continue to tell individuals to change their attitudes and lifestyles when, in fact, the environment in which they live or work gives them little chance or encouragement to make such changes. The Labor movement has fostered and developed this approach. Social justice, therefore, looks at both individuals and the society in which they live. It is intimately connected to public policy. A public policy approach encourages the deliberate use of public resources across all Government agencies to maximise good health in the community. Policies in housing, education, agriculture, and technology must be viewed as having a substantial impact on both the environment and the health of the community. This impact must increasingly be questioned. Collaboration across portfolio areas is, therefore, crucial to healthy public policy.

In working towards improving the quality of life for the people of Maylands I will be concentrating on a number of particular areas. I will use a social justice, people-oriented framework as my guide. I will use policies of the Australian Labor Party as my paradigm. The first issue of particular concern to the people of Maylands is the environment. It has been said by David Wheelwright that the struggle for a better relationship between mankind and the environment will be in the 21st century what the freedom of democracy was in the 19th century and the desire for economic growth has been in the 20th century. The protection of the environment in the broadest sense is the duty of each and every one of us. Like this Government, I am committed to working towards a cleaner and safer environment. In representing the people of Maylands I shall be working towards protecting the Swan River and its foreshore, maintaining and preserving the valuable wetlands and bird life, and preventing and resolving industrial pollution, which has been a problem in certain areas of my electorate.

I will also seek to work with local governments in my electorate to ensure that the issue of high density housing is explored and that future housing developments both protect privacy and provide an attractive streetscape. In Maylands there is greater than average use of public transport and a higher than average number of people walk to work. In some ways it could be said that it is ahead in the environmental arena. It is my impression that our communities have, in fact, embraced the notion of environmental hope. It is clearly on the agenda of ordinary people who are no longer prepared to hand over environmental protection to scientists and experts alone, but are demanding community input.

I commend this Government's environmental charter with its emphasis on maintaining life processes and optimising our quality of life. It is important to note also that environmental policies can create jobs. In West Germany, for instance, the number of persons employed in environmental protection work has doubled in the past 12 years to almost 500 000. I do not support the notion that economic development and environmental protection are mutually exclusive, but that rather, with an intelligent and thoughtful approach, economic development and environmental protection can complement and sustain each other.

A second area of great import in the Maylands electorate is crime prevention, and in this area I shall be working to help solve the problems arising from crime faced by the people living in this electorate. I will continue to push for an increased police presence and an expansion of both community policing and Neighbourhood Watch schemes. I will be seeking to make more accessible services to help the victims of crime. It is important to remember, however, that this law and order response has a limited effect on the incidence of crime because crime is largely a function of social, economic and cultural factors which, for the most part, remain unaffected by changes to the criminal justice system. It is worthwhile noting also that those groups in society which are most economically and socially vulnerable are the same groups likely to suffer not only ill health but violence and victimisation. Domestic violence, for example, affects women and children. Homeless and unemployed youths and Aboriginal people are most at risk of not only being victimised but also being criminalised and

imprisoned. These situations are complex, but a significant part of the answer can be found in social justice strategies, particularly in the provision of income and employment, but also in encouraging participation in all our social and political processes. Therefore, I will be exploring the opportunities, particularly for young people, for continuing education, training, retraining and recreation. I will be endeavouring to ensure that all the people of my electorate have the best possible opportunities.

The Australian Labor Party has a long tradition of caring for people and seeking social justice for all. The Australian Labor Party was born out of the union movement. It has nurtured the poor and oppressed in society. The Australian Labor Party and successive Labor Governments have been a major force in enabling women to participate more fully in society. I am proud to be the tenth Labor Party woman in this Parliament. I am grateful for the opportunities I have had which have led me to be able to serve the people of my electorate in this Parliament. I acknowledge my parents' commitment to the best possible education for their children, and the sacrifices they made to achieve this end. I am indebted to their example of always working towards things being better for their children, and suspect that a similar sentiment motivates many of us here today.

In getting acquainted with the people of Maylands, I am heartened by the great mass of people who cherish our State's democratic institutions. My victory in the recent by-election has confirmed their trust and confidence in our Parliament and in this Labor Government. The present menace about the blocking, deferring or defeating of Supply, with its attendant atmosphere of tension, can lead only to short term decisions and political expediency on all sides. It can lead only to a diminishing of business confidence and to increasing cynicism in the community. It is malevolent and unproductive, and contrary to a society which I see as wanting to be optimistic and confident about the future.

In concluding, I will quote from Dr Sidney Sax, an Australian health policy analyst, who has said, "Politics is a strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles." I am clear about whose interests and what principles this Labor Government represents. I look forward to hearing from Opposition members about theirs.

Government members: Hear, hear!

[Applause.]

SUPPLY BILL

Second Reading

DR LAWRENCE (Glendalough - Treasurer) [10.54 am]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This measure seeks the grant of Supply to Her Majesty of \$2 600 million for the services of the year ending 30 June 1991 pending the passage of Appropriation Bills during the Budget session of the next financial year. The Bill seeks an issue of \$2 400 million from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and \$200 million from the General Loan and Capital Works Fund.

This Bill is an integral element of the Westminster system of Government and its purpose is no different from that of the Supply Acts of previous years. It is axiomatic to say that successive State Governments and Parliaments in Western Australia have accepted and understood that the intent of Supply is to give authority for expenditures from the commencement of a new financial year pending the passage of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and General Loan and Capital Works Fund Appropriation Bills.

In May 1978, the then Treasurer expressed that understanding in the second reading of the Audit Act Amendment Bill. He said -

The need for the Government of the day to obtain from Parliament a grant of Supply pending the passage of the Appropriation Bill is an essential feature of the Westminster system of Government which reserves to Parliament the control of expenditure of public moneys.

In this respect a Supply Bill represents a proposal to Parliament for a general appropriation to enable the services of the State to be carried on until specific appropriation contained in the Estimates of expenditure is approved.

The underlying principle behind those comments made 12 years ago remains unchanged today and, as has been longstanding practice, the amounts sought are based on the estimated costs of maintaining services and works at existing levels. No provision has been made for new initiatives or new major programs. These must await the introduction of the 1990-91 Budget.

Having covered the purpose of the Bill, I would like to comment briefly on the current year's budgetary position and the financial outlook for 1990-91. As members will recall, the 1989-90 Budget presented to Parliament on 31 August 1989 provided for a balanced Budget with expenditure and revenue estimated at \$4 824.3 million. Not surprisingly, in a Budget of this magnitude, there will be significant variations to some of the revenue and expenditure Estimates. Indeed, the midyear Treasury review revealed that, although a downturn in some revenues was foreshadowed and taken into account in framing the Budget, the impact of subdued economic conditions on our revenue collections will be greater than first expected. In particular, lower than anticipated activity is now projected to lead to a shortfall of over \$50 million in estimated stamp duty collections.

It was against this background that all departments and agencies were asked to exercise expenditure discipline so as to assist the Government in meeting its budgetary target. Expenditure transactions are being closely monitored to ensure that identified savings are realised. Notwithstanding the measures that have been taken, the latest revenue and expenditure trends suggest that it will not be easy to achieve our goal of a balanced Budget. That goal will be extremely difficult to attain if the Acts Amendment (Gold Banking Corporation) Bill is not passed by both Houses in the current financial year. Enactment is necessary for the State to receive \$25 million from Gold Corporation, as was allowed for in the 1989-90 Estimates approved by Parliament. In respect of 1990-91, the Government is faced with a daunting task in formulating a balanced Budget. The outlook for some of our revenues remains subdued and the Commonwealth is likely to take a hard line at the June Premiers' Conference and Loan Council meetings in respect of both recurrent and capital allocations to the States.

Mr Speaker, along with the Commonwealth Government, the Western Australian Government recognises that it must play an important part in addressing the economic problems facing the nation so as to ensure soundly based and sustainable economic growth. Every opportunity must be taken to contain public sector demands on the economy but at the same time regard must be given to the different circumstances facing individual States. The Western Australian economy has generally grown at a faster rate than any other in the nation over the last decade and our population is growing at nearly double the national average. Clearly, however, there is a need to ensure that the maximum possible cost savings are generated through increased productivity in the State public sector and by ensuring that necessary Government services and programs are delivered at the lowest practical cost. To assist in this process the Government has now introduced a Cabinet Expenditure Review Committee to review all departmental expenditure on a program basis. The committee comprises me, as chairperson, the Deputy Premier and Minister for Finance and Economic Development, the Attorney General, the Minister for Planning, the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Health. As a result of its activities, I anticipate the abolition of some programs which are no longer necessary and the scaling back of others which are underperforming. However, essential services will not be cut but rather, we will be looking at ways of reducing the overall cost of Government without our adversely impacting on the public.

I cannot complete the second reading speech for this Bill without referring to the special circumstances in which we find ourselves. Both the new members referred today to the threat which the Opposition seeks to hold over the heads of the people of Western Australia in an unprincipled and illegitimate grasp for power.

Several members interjected.

Dr LAWRENCE: The Opposition suggests to the people of Western Australia that the ordinary appropriation of funds should be subject to its bargaining and blackmail. I will not succumb to those threats.

Several members interjected.

Dr LAWRENCE: Under no circumstances will the Government accede to the Opposition's linking those matters which it seeks to link. The people of Western Australia will very strongly repudiate the Opposition, as they did in the recent by-elections, if it proceeds on its course to block Supply.

Several members interjected.

Dr LAWRENCE: However, I take heart from the fact that in recent days, despite its huff and bluff, the Opposition has started to crumble and, as a matter of principle, it should re-examine its position. It is clear that the people of Western Australia do not want the Liberal Party to represent them. Members opposite should understand the legitimate process of the Westminster system of government and should set aside their lustful ambitions for power.

Several members interjected.

Dr LAWRENCE: They should set aside their efforts to stoke the cynicism in the community which will provoke instability, ruin the business community and undermine the fabric of democracy in this State.

Several members interjected.

Dr LAWRENCE: Suggestions by the Opposition that there is some connection between an early election -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I apologise for interrupting. The method of interjections being used at the moment by some members in the House is inappropriate. I have said before that if a member, regardless of who it is, is speaking and not accepting interjections, they should not take place, at least not while that member is speaking. When a pause is made during the delivery of a speech and a member wants to interject, that will not be inappropriate on most occasions. However, it is inappropriate to rudely interrupt in a manner in which the member who is speaking cannot be heard.

Dr LAWRENCE: It is clear to the members of this Parliament and the people of Western Australia that the motives of the Opposition are far from clean. Indeed, some members of the Opposition are taking a position in which to protect themselves. In so doing, they threaten Western Australians with the blocking of Supply. They also threaten democracy in this State by their attempts to cause an early election which has clearly been repudiated by the people. Those members want to cause chaos and disruption and will further bring into disrepute the reputation of this Parliament. To allay any misunderstanding by the Opposition, I reiterate that the Government will not succumb to these threats. The people of Western Australia want the Government to get on with its job; they want a stable society, not one which the Opposition seeks to undermine.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr MacKinnon (Leader of the Opposition).

PENSIONERS (RATES REBATES AND DEFERMENTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Withdrawn

On motion by Mr Taylor (Minister for Finance and Economic Development), resolved -

That the Bill be withdrawn.

TREASURER'S ADVANCE AUTHORISATION BILL

Second Reading

DR LAWRENCE (Glendalough - Treasurer) [11.07 am]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill authorises the Treasurer to make withdrawals from the public bank account to provide advances for authorised purposes chargeable to the Treasurer's Advance Account within the monetary limit available for the financial year commencing 1 July 1990. The monetary limit specified within clause 4 of the Bill represents

an authorisation for the Treasurer to withdraw up to \$180 million for the financing of advances in the 1990-91 financial year. This represents a reduction of \$70 million over the 1989-90 authorisation specified in section 4 of the Treasurer's Advance Authorization Act. The reduction is made possible by proposed improvements in the appropriation process which will be announced in the near future and by reduction of potential funding requirements in other areas.

The purposes for which advances may be made are set out within clause 5 of the Bill and remain unchanged from those authorised in previous years. Where payments are made in respect of a new item or for supplementation of an existing item of expenditure in the Consolidated Revenue Fund or General Loan and Capital Works Fund, those payments will be chargeable against the appropriate fund pending parliamentary appropriation in the next financial year. Members will be aware that a number of activities, such as the Building Management Authority's capital projects and works and sales accounts and suspense stores for printing and supply services, are initially financed by way of the Treasurer's Advance which is subsequently recouped from the department or statutory authority on whose behalf the work or service was performed. Advances provided for other purposes are repayable by the recipient.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr MacKinnon (Leader of the Opposition).

WADC LIQUIDATION BILL

Second Reading

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Minister for Finance and Economic Development) [11.08 am]:
I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill gives effect to the Government's previously announced decision to wind up the Western Australian Development Corporation in an orderly manner, to transfer EventsCorp and LandCorp to other Government agencies and to repeal the Western Australian Development Corporation Act. It is an element of the Government's commitment to withdraw from speculative business activities. WADC was previously structured into three broad divisions -

- LandCorp, with Government property asset management responsibilities;
- EventsCorp, with responsibility for events promotion; and
- a projects and investments division.

During 1989, the then Premier determined that WADC should wind up its projects and investment division and similar activities. Since that time, various of WADC's assets have been disposed of. However, it has not yet been possible to sell all of these assets and WADC is still engaged in a number of ventures with company, partnership and joint venture interests. The major involvements are -

- the Perth Underwater World joint venture at Hillarys;
- Underwater World Sentosa Pty Ltd; and
- the Port Kennedy project which is directed at developing an international standard tourist resort.

There are a number of smaller involvements and understandably the things which WADC is currently left with are those which have been hardest for WADC to dispose of or to extricate itself from. The Bill provides a vehicle to disengage WADC and the State from these activities. It repeals the WADC Act and establishes a WADC liquidator as a body corporate to which the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act will apply. The WADC liquidator will comprise two Treasury officers appointed by the Minister for Finance and Economic Development. The Bill transfers all the WADC assets and liabilities to the WADC liquidator and charges the liquidator with disposing of the assets, discharging liabilities and paying the net proceeds to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

All of the liabilities are to be met in full and the Consolidated Revenue Fund is permanently appropriated to the extent necessary to discharge any remaining liabilities when the

liquidator goes out of being. The liquidator is given the necessary statutory powers to continue to manage and operate the assets transferred from WADC in order that they may be disposed of in an orderly fashion. The liquidator is to transfer the operations of EventsCorp and LandCorp to other public authorities. It is intended that EventsCorp be transferred to the Tourism Commission shortly after the Bill comes into operation. The liquidator would continue to discharge the current LandCorp business for a period until appropriate legislation can be enacted to empower another statutory authority to perform the LandCorp functions. The liquidator will use its powers under the Act to establish an advisory committee to assist it in the administration of LandCorp during this interim period.

It will be necessary for members of the liquidator and other persons delegated by the liquidator to act as directors of companies in which WADC now has shares. There is the possibility that a conflict could arise between their duties as directors of these companies and their duties under the WADC Liquidation Act. The Bill provides that in such an event their duties as a director of the company are to prevail. This step has been taken to reassure those dealing with the companies that the relevant Companies Code requirements are not overridden by this legislation. It also clarifies to the members of the liquidator, and those delegated by the liquidator as directors, that their actions as directors of these companies are not to breach Companies Code requirements.

The Bill also provides for the repeal of the WADC Liquidation Act after the liquidator certifies it has discharged its functions. It is expected that the liquidator may need to continue in existence for up to two or three years to collect vendor finance already extended by WADC in order to discharge liabilities without recourse to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. That Bill includes a three year sunset review clause in the event that the liquidation has not been completed within that time.

The WADC Liquidation Bill provides the vehicle for the orderly winding up of WADC's affairs. There is a clean break between WADC and the liquidator, and the liquidator is provided with the powers necessary to wind up WADC's involvement in the variety of major and minor matters from which WADC has not yet been able to disengage itself. The Government is committed to WADC ceasing operations and its affairs being wound up. It is aiming to honour its commitment for this to occur from 30 June and is treating this Bill as a top priority to meet this deadline. This Bill will be proclaimed to come into operation from 1 July 1990 or, if the Bill has not been passed by both Houses by 30 June, the earliest possible date thereafter.

It is most desirable for all parties that there be no uncertainties as to the situation from 1 July and I am giving consideration to how this can be achieved if the Bill has not passed both Houses by 30 June. In all fairness I must say that I am considering restructuring the membership of the WADC board from 1 July by appointing a board of public servants based on the proposed membership of the liquidator and the advisory committee which will be established for the interim operation of LandCorp under the liquidator. Similarly, EventsCorp would come under administration by the Tourism Commission pending its formal transfer after the liquidator comes into being.

I appreciate that it would be preferable not to have an interim structure between the existing WADC board and the WADC liquidator for what could be a week or two. However, we are committed to there being a clean break on 30 June and I am prepared to put the interim arrangements into place even if only for those few days.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Court (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

ACTS AMENDMENT (GOLD BANKING CORPORATION) BILL

Second Reading

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Minister for Finance and Economic Development) [11.14 am]:
I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purposes of this Bill are: To remove Gold Corporation's legislative powers to engage in banking activities, consequent upon the transfer to the Rural and Industries Bank of the

corporation's banking activities; to provide for greater control over the corporation's financial activities and to alter its capital provisions; and to ensure full accountability to Parliament for the corporation's activities, in line with the spirit of the recommendations of the Burt Commission on Accountability.

History of Gold Corporation: The Gold Banking Corporation Act was passed by this Parliament in 1987 and amended in 1988. It was proclaimed on 30 June 1988, thereby establishing the organisation known as Gold Corporation. However, Gold Corporation's history goes back considerably further than June 1988. It was formed from an amalgamation and expansion of the activities of the Western Australian Mint and GoldCorp Australia.

The Western Australian Mint was the statutory name for the Perth Mint, established as a British Government agency in 1899 and then as a statutory authority of the Western Australian Government in 1970. It was established to refine gold and mint legal tender coins.

GoldCorp Australia was established in 1986 as a division of the Western Australian Development Corporation -

to manage the Western Australian Mint;

to modernise gold refining facilities available to the expanding Australian gold industry; and

to manufacture and market internationally Australian legal tender precious metal coins, initially the Australian Nugget gold coin.

Also, during the course of the explosive growth in the Australian gold industry during the 1980s, most of which occurred in Western Australia, it became apparent there was a need for a specialist financial institution to work with the gold industry in Australia and to develop closer links with international gold markets on behalf of the producers, especially small to medium size producers who have played such a major role in the gold rushes of the 1980s.

It was decided it was logical to develop such an institution together with the other State Government agencies already involved with the gold industry, namely the Western Australian Mint and GoldCorp Australia. The purposes were to enable fully vertically integrated services to be offered to the industry and to take advantage of the links those two organisations already had with international gold markets. To this end, the Gold Banking Corporation Act was drafted and passed - with the support of all three parties - by this Parliament. The Act established a new financial institution, to be known as the Gold Banking Corporation or Gold Bank, with the structure of a State bank, but with the Western Australian Mint and GoldCorp Australia as subsidiaries, and carrying out the functions for which they had originally been established.

The 1988 amendments to the Act created the interim name of Gold Corporation for the organisation, to be used instead of Gold Banking Corporation or Gold Bank while discussions continued with the Reserve Bank of Australia about the State bank status of the new entity. From the formal proclamation of the new Act on 30 June 1988, the new vertically integrated organisation proved popular with gold producers. Its corporate banking, bullion banking and treasury services were in strong demand, partly because of the vertically integrated services which were offered and partly because of the strength of the specialist financial team which had been assembled.

In its first year, the corporate banking division wrote business of almost \$300 million. However, this success created problems. It was plain that if the gold banking activities continued to grow at the rate they were achieving in 1988-89, they would quickly outstrip the capacity of the corporation's balance sheet to support them. In addition, the focus that was necessary on the banking business because of its rapid growth meant that the corporation's top management had insufficient time to devote to the business of the WA Mint and GoldCorp Australia, which was also growing. Consequently, with the concurrence of the then Premier, the corporation and the R & I Bank entered into discussions about the future of the corporation's gold banking operations. The outcome was that these operations were transferred to the bank at net asset value, effective from 1 July 1989, although the arrangements were not completed until September. What was the gold banking operation of the corporation is now the division of the R & I Bank known as R & I Gold Bank.

The upshot was that the objective of having a financial institution specialising in the gold industry was maintained, but proper attention could also be given to the demands of the WA Mint and GoldCorp Australia. Some of the elements of a vertically integrated operation have been sacrificed but, where necessary and desirable, Gold Corporation and R & I Gold Bank continue to cooperate.

It would be churlish if I did not acknowledge that the outcome that has been achieved is largely in line with what was suggested by members of the Opposition, most notably the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, at the time the 1988 amendments to the Act were debated. At that time the Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggested that the new gold banking activities might be carried out more conveniently under the umbrella of the R & I Bank, and he has been proved correct. In large part, these amendments flow from that outcome.

Mr Court: I was going to write that speech. You have taken all the wind out of my sails. This is an historic achievement. This is the first time I have been mentioned in one of your second reading speeches.

Mr TAYLOR: It is probably the last.

Mr Court: You will not be making them any more.

Mr TAYLOR: I think there is a chance I shall be making them for another 10 years.

Gold Corporation's activities are now confined to those associated with the processing of precious metals, the provision of bullion services and the manufacture and marketing of value-added precious metals products, predominantly Australian legal tender coinage. Through the WA Mint, the corporation is Australia's largest gold refiner and also refines gold from several other nations. It operates two new gold refineries, one at Kalgoorlie and the other adjacent to the Perth international airport. Its metallurgical processing activities include the operation of a carbon stripping plant at Kalgoorlie and involvement in custom crushing and gold tailings treatment operations.

GoldCorp Australia now produces and markets internationally Australian legal tender coins in gold, silver and platinum. In just over three years since the first of these coins - the Australian Nugget gold coin - was marketed, total sales of coins in the three metals exceeded \$750 million, of which close to 90 per cent has been earned overseas. In the first quarter of 1990, the Australian Nugget had a world market share of 21 per cent, and it is the number three gold bullion coin in the world in terms of sales. The original objective was to achieve a 10 per cent share in three years. The Australian Koala platinum coin is number one in the world with a market share of more than 50 per cent, albeit in a market that at present is depressed and small relative to gold. Orders for the new Australian Kookaburra silver coin, released in April, exceeded 1.5 million, when only 300 000 were produced. Original projections were that it would take three to five years for the coin program to begin breaking even, but GoldCorp Australia has returned modest profits in two of its three financial years to date. This has been achieved despite the heavy start-up costs of getting new products established internationally and the worst precious metals investment environment for many years. As all the coins produced by GoldCorp Australia are legal tender under Australia's Currency Act, they can, of course, be produced only by a Government Mint.

I turn now to the purposes of the Bill.

Banking amendments: The first category of amendments included in this Bill arises from the decision to transfer gold banking activities to the Rural & Industries Bank. The name Gold Corporation, adopted in 1988 as a transitional title pending the adoption of Gold Banking Corporation or Gold Bank, is to become the permanent name of the organisation as a whole. No change is to be made to the names of the subsidiaries, the Western Australian Mint and GoldCorp Australia. The corporation's banking powers are to be removed, except insofar as limited authority is necessary to continue the Mint's traditional activities and to operate in precious metals and foreign exchange in support of the coin programs. For example, since private ownership of gold has been permitted in Australia, the Mint has maintained metals accounts for clients and has traded precious metals for clients who do not wish to do so themselves, including some refining clients. It has also issued what amount to certificates of deposit for precious metals, and has offered safe custody facilities. As these activities are an integral part of traditional Perth Mint activities, it is necessary to continue legislative authority for them. In relation to the coin side of the corporation's activities, transactions are

conducted in quantities of metal or in US dollars, or a combination of both. Metal transactions may be on a purchase, swap or lease basis. Consequently, the corporation must have the power to conduct such transactions, including dealing in foreign currency.

In broad terms, references to banking activities are to be removed from the Act, with the qualifications I have just made. This means that section 12, dealing with banking business, is to be repealed, while section 11, dealing with the powers of Gold Corporation, is proposed to be extensively amended. The main thrust of the amendments is to narrow the focus of the corporation's activities from an organisation with the wide powers needed by a bank to one with only those powers necessary to carry out its functions in support of the precious metals industry. Part V of the Act dealing with the financial instrument that was to be known as the Australian Gold Note is repealed because the issuing of such an instrument would probably be appropriate only for a banking organisation and it is considered that the R & I Bank already has sufficient power under its Statute should it wish to issue such an instrument.

Financial provisions: It follows from the transfer of the corporation's banking activities that it can operate with a much simpler financial structure, has lesser capital needs, and should be under more conventional financial control by Government. The proposed amendments to part IV of the Act give effect to these objectives. When Gold Corporation was established, the Government subscribed \$25 million as capital and, in return, received shares. Without full-scale banking activities, the corporation clearly does not need capital of this magnitude, though it must have some capital in order to operate. Consequently, the corporation is to repay the \$25 million subscribed by the Government in 1987-88. To meet its capital needs, the corporation is to receive \$10 million, comprising the release of the WA Mint from a loan of \$5 million made in 1986-87 to assist with the financing of the two new gold refineries, and \$5 million appropriated in the Appropriation (General Loan and Capital Works Fund) Act 1989. In return, the Treasurer will again receive shares. This Bill authorises those arrangements. The corporation's board recommended that a shareholding structure be maintained, though shares can be issued only with the approval of the Treasurer and only to the Treasurer or a statutory authority. It should be emphasised that neither the corporation nor the Government has under contemplation any plans of any nature for the issuing of shares other than those to the Treasurer, as provided for in clause 16 of this Bill.

The Burt Commission on Accountability noted that the existing section 16 of the Act appears to authorise shareholdings in the corporation by statutory authorities whose own Statutes do not authorise them to hold shares. The commission recommended that this be rectified and the proposed changes to section 16 do so. Section 19 of the Act, dealing with the establishment of Gold Bank reserves, also drew criticism from the Burt Commission as being an inappropriate means of achieving the desired end. It is proposed to repeal this section. Section 21 of the Act currently gives the board of Gold Corporation the sole right to determine what, if any, dividend is to be paid each year. There is no precedent elsewhere in Government for this approach and it is considered more appropriate that the approach adopted for the R & I Bank be applied also to Gold Corporation; namely, that each year the board makes a recommendation to the Treasurer on what dividend, if any, should be paid and the Treasurer makes the final determination, taking into account the recommendation.

The open-ended guarantee provided to the corporation under the existing section 22 of the Act is clearly now inappropriate for the corporation because of the transfer of banking activities, but some form of guarantee is necessary because of the nature of the corporation's remaining activities. For example, the corporation will dispatch coins to a bank or bullion dealer only after the necessary funds have been cleared to its account, but this means the purchasers are exposed to the corporation for up to two or three days while coins are freighted to them. They require therefore, a guarantee of the corporation's obligations from its owner as a condition of doing business, bearing in mind that the corporation's major competitors are other Government Mints, such as the Royal Canadian Mint, the US Mint and the Royal Mint of the UK. Equally, in relation to the processing activities of the WA Mint, gold producers, having lodged their metal, are exposed to the organisation for the period while their metal is undergoing processing, which can be for several days, or more, and require comfort about the security of their metal. In reality, there is little risk for the State because metal lodged for processing is always in the Mint's system and, in the case of the coin business, all the corporation's precious metals transactions are back-to-back; that is, as soon as a coin order is received, an equivalent amount of metal is immediately purchased at

the same price. Full insurance cover is maintained on metal in the corporation's charge. Other provisions in this Bill tighten controls over the borrowings and investments of the corporation and its subsidiaries, requiring them to be approved by the Treasurer, something which the Act at present does not require.

Burt Commission provisions: I have already alluded to two provisions included in this Bill to give effect to recommendations of the Burt Commission and the Government's commitment to implement them. There are several others. The commission recommended that the corporation be brought within the ambit of the Financial Administration and Audit Act and that the Under Treasurer or his nominee be included on the corporation's board ex officio. This Bill gives effect to those recommendations. In fact, the Under Treasurer was appointed to the corporation's board last July under the existing section 5(2)(b). The Burt Commission also pondered the difficulties of providing for ministerial intervention and control in the affairs of the corporation when it was setting out to be a banking organisation, and noted the very limited powers of ministerial intervention in the affairs of the R & I Bank. In essence, the commission concluded it would be inappropriate to propose wide-ranging powers of ministerial intervention in the affairs of a State bank. The commission concluded that the corporation be required to comply with ministerial directions only as to prudential requirements, with such being no less rigid than those of the Reserve Bank, and as to the scope of its operations.

However, with the transfer of the corporation's banking activities and in line with the Government's commitment to greater accountability, the Government has decided that a wider-ranging form of ministerial authority is desirable. Consequently, this Bill proposes the form of ministerial authority laid down in the Acts Amendment (Accountability) Act 1989. This entitles the Minister to require any document or information required under any Act or by Parliament and any information he or she needs on the corporation's business. It also empowers the Minister to give directions to the corporation, but requires that such directions must be in writing and must be reproduced in full in the corporation's annual report to Parliament. This requirement protects the corporation and its directors from having to take responsibility for ministerial directions that they believe to be unwise commercially.

In summary, this legislation provides for the continuation on a sound and accountable basis of a 91-year old Government undertaking in a manner that should ensure its longevity and its continued service to the precious metals industry which is so important to this State. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Court (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

EXPLOSIVES AND DANGEROUS GOODS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR CARR (Geraldton - Minister for Mines) [11.30 am]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to amend the Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act, which relates to safety matters concerning explosives and dangerous goods. Key elements of the proposed amendments include a definition of "pipeline" to support the licensing requirement and control of pipelines carrying dangerous goods. Provisions for the licensing of premises used to store dangerous goods are to be strengthened to provide for the examination of safety features in the design stage of new plant and buildings. The proposed new provisions will enable the Minister to give such directions in emergency situations as are necessary to minimise danger to persons, property or the environment. Protection from liability will also be provided for persons who render assistance in good faith in an emergency or accident involving explosives or dangerous goods.

The administrative procedures associated with the authorisation and classification of explosives and dangerous goods will be simplified by provision for ministerial approval rather than approval by the Governor through Executive Council. A redefinition of the title "chief inspector" is provided to make it consistent with Public Service appointments and acting arrangements. The adoption of codes of practice will also be simplified, as will the prosecution of offenders by allowing evidence to be presented by affidavit in some circumstances. The definition of the term "chief inspector" will be amended in section 7 of

the principal Act so that the effect given to the administration of the explosives and dangerous goods division and the appointment of officers generally will be more in accordance with the preferred procedure of the Public Service Commission. Section 9 of the Act will be amended to allow the appointment of persons - including the chief inspector - under the Public Service Act rather than by reference to Executive Council.

The definition of pipeline will be included in section 7 of the principal Act so that effect may be given to additional provisions proposed by division 2B - pipelines - which incorporates sections 46D, E, F, G and H. Petroleum products, flammable liquids and gases are controlled by legislation administered by the State Energy Commission and the Department of Mines. In addition, extensive pipeline systems are being constructed for other dangerous goods such as corrosives, liquid petroleum gas, ammonia and chlorides. Since 1969 conveyance of flammable liquids and oils by pipeline has been controlled under the flammable liquids regulations 1967, by authority of the principal Act, which is the subject of this Bill. Following a recent review of the regulations, advice from the Crown Law Department is that the regulations relating to pipeline licensing may be ultra vires. These amendments will give force to the provisions of the regulations and will allow the issue of licences for the control of pipelines conveying dangerous goods in addition to controls already prescribed for flammable liquids. The proposed amendments will not affect pipelines already covered by existing legislation. The proposed amendment to section 63 of the Act specifies those pipelines covered by existing legislation.

The authorisation of explosions is a constant and ongoing function, which is brought about by the industry's development of new and more efficient products. The need to define the composition, quality and character of explosives and to identify those explosives which may be freely manufactured, imported, transported, stored, sold or used in Western Australia is an important element in the control of such substances. Authorisation is currently carried out by the Governor through Order in Executive Council. This is an area dealing with technical matters and it is believed that submissions to Executive Council unnecessarily consume Council's time. The proposed amendments to subsections 14(1) to (5) delete reference to the Governor and replace it with reference to the Minister. This will allow the responsible Minister to authorise explosives and will reduce unnecessary Executive Council involvement. The proposals are not considered to be detrimental to public safety, and are consistent with current trends in other States.

Section 42 of the Act deals with dangerous goods in a manner similar to the authorisation of explosives. The proposed amendments to section 42 deal with the unnecessary involvement of the Governor through Executive Council in the declaration and classification of dangerous goods. As this is also an area of technical application in respect of the administration of the Act, the proposed amendments will allow the responsible Minister to publish an order in the *Government Gazette* in relation to such matters. This streamlining of administrative technical matters will have no detrimental effect on public safety.

The current provisions of section 45 relate to the issue of licences and the imposition of conditions subsequent to the issue of any licence. The proposed amendments to section 45 take into account the steps in design and construction of larger chemical process plants where it is essential that total hazard control plans be developed during the design, construction and commissioning phase prior to the actual storage of dangerous goods. In order to authorise such requirements prior to the issue of a licence to store dangerous goods, sections 45 and 45A, B and C put in place a procedure to be followed before the storage of dangerous goods is commenced, and make provision for the preparation and implementation of appropriate hazard control plans and training to be given to occupants and employees in respect of such plans. Section 51 is amended to give legal requirement to comply with a lawful order given under section 45C.

Currently subsections 48(3), 56(2) and 62(2)(R) of the Act provide for penalties not exceeding \$2 000 or, if the offence is a continuing offence, not exceeding \$200 for each day during which the offence continues. With increasing concern being expressed for public safety in matters concerning dangerous goods, it is considered that current penalty provisions in the Act are inadequate. The proposed amendments to these subsections will increase the penalty for breaches of the Act to a sum not exceeding \$50 000 for each offence or a sum not exceeding \$5 000 per day if the offence is a continuing one.

Currently subsection 62(2)(T) of the Act provides authority for such regulations as are deemed necessary to protect persons and property from destruction or damage resulting from an explosion. Not all dangerous goods endanger public safety by explosion. The failure of a tank of highly toxic liquid or gas need not necessarily be deemed to be an explosion, nor is public safety ensured by regulations which are reactive rather than pro-active. Proposed new section 54A will rectify this by allowing the Minister in emergency situations involving explosives and dangerous goods to give such directions as are necessary to minimise danger to persons, property or the environment; by providing the Minister with authority to specify terms and conditions under which directions to control hazards may be given; by limiting the period of such emergencies to 14 days; by allowing costs incurred to be recovered from the person who caused an emergency situation; by allowing a direction purported to be signed by the Minister to be submitted in legal proceedings as evidence of that direction, and by introducing a penalty of \$50 000 or six months' imprisonment, or both, for the failure to comply with directions given by the Minister in such emergency situations.

Mr Court: It is getting expensive these days.

Mr CARR: We are dealing with public safety and we cannot afford to treat this matter lightly.

The Act does not provide for the protection of persons who render assistance in good faith at the scene of an accident involving explosives or dangerous goods, and who could incur legal liability should any unforeseen consequences arise. Proposed new section 54A will address this deficiency by ensuring that a person who in good faith and without any fee or reward assists in an emergency involving explosives or dangerous goods is not liable in any legal proceedings for any reasonable act done by that person. The exemption does not apply to a person whose act was wholly or partly the cause of the incident involving explosives and dangerous goods. The exemption also applies to any State department or instrumentality notwithstanding that payment may be due in connection with the services rendered by that State department or instrumentality.

There is no provision in the Act to allow a written declaration on oath to be presented as evidence. The result is that the time of the court is excessively consumed and the inspectorate assisting in the administration of the Act spend time in court which otherwise could be spent ensuring that safety requirements are being maintained. The amendments by the addition of proposed sections 61A and B address this deficiency and provide -

In proposed section 61A, that a summons served on a defendant may be accompanied by copies of affidavits of evidence and also by a notice of advice to the defendant of the procedure to be followed should he wish to appear or not to appear in court.

In proposed section 61B, that particulars of alleged prior convictions may accompany any summons issued under affidavit evidence. The document detailing these particulars shall be endorsed to advise the defendant of the consequences should he be convicted of the offence alleged in the complaint. It shall also be accompanied by details of the procedures relating to the submission of evidence of alleged prior convictions so as to give adequate protection to the defendant in the submission of those details to the court.

Section 62(4) of the Act authorises the Minister to approve codes of practice and standards which may then be prescribed by regulations as the manner in which things shall be done. However, it is not clear in section 62(4) the extent to which such codes or standards approved by the Minister may be adopted by the regulations. The proposal to amend section 62 by adding three subsections, (4)(a), (4)(b) and (4)(c), will clarify and provide a more effective use of codes or standards or requirements referred to in codes so adopted by allowing -

in proposed subsection (4)(a), that the regulations may adopt a code, standard or requirement of a code -

in full or in part;

as amended by the regulations;

as amended from time to time;

in order that any matter or thing in the adopted code shall conform to the

requirements specified in the adopted code as amended from time to time; and,

may contain such transitional provisions as are considered necessary or convenient;

in proposed subsection (4)(b), that copies of every code, standard or requirement specified in the adopted code shall be freely available for public inspection and that such copies may be made available for sale from the office of the chief inspector; and

in proposed subsection (4)(c), that in legal proceedings a copy of any code, standard or requirement referred to in a code so adopted by the regulations and certified by the chief inspector - or an inspector so authorised - to be a true copy of that code, shall be evidence of the code, standard or requirement referred to in the adopted code.

Section 62(5) of the Act currently authorises the chief inspector to allow exemptions from the provisions of the regulations. Recent advice on the operation of the Act and its regulations indicates that existing section 62(5) prevents the notification of exemptions within the text of any regulations. It is desirable that ongoing and general exemptions be brought to the public's attention by publishing them as a provision of the regulations. The proposed amendment clarifies the position in relation to this anomaly while still permitting the chief inspector to grant specific exemption where circumstances dictate their necessity.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Court (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

MEDICAL AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR WILSON (Dianella - Minister for Health) [11.43 am]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill provides for three amendments to the Medical Act 1894. The amendments aim to rectify deficiencies in the current legislation. The first amendment will enable the Medical Board to review the registration status of those medical practitioners affected by the Medical Amendment Act 1979 and if the board is satisfied grant full registration.

The 1979 amendment to section 11 of the Medical Act provided that those doctors who held limited registration at the time of the amendment could obtain full registration without the need for any further qualifications or exams. This did not take into account an agreement between the Mental Health Department, as it was then known, and a practitioner who was given to understand that full registration would be granted once he or she had completed five years' practice under auxiliary registration which commenced shortly after the 1979 amendment. This amendment will give effect to this agreement by extending the period to within six months of the 1979 amendment's coming into operation.

The second amendment will enable a doctor appointed from overseas and who otherwise would not be eligible to register in Western Australia, who is engaged in teaching and research, to be registered to undertake clinical practice associated with his or her appointment to a teaching or research institution. This amendment is required to alleviate the difficulties the faculty of medicine is experiencing in attracting distinguished personnel to teaching positions because the provisions of the current Act do not allow practitioners appointed or engaged in teaching and research to exercise a right of clinical practice unless they have registrable qualifications in Western Australia. Registration will be granted with the approval of the Minister given on the recommendation of the board.

The final amendment clarifies the extent of liability for bodies corporate. The current provisions provide that all members of a body corporate are jointly and severally liable legally if a member of the body corporate is sued. This amendment continues to extend legal liability for medical negligence beyond the body corporate but limits its extent to the body corporate, and medical practitioners who are members of the body corporate and who are registered as medical practitioners only.

The Government has consulted with representatives from the medical profession and

involved them in the development of these amendments. There is support within the profession for these amendments. The Government in introducing these amendments has addressed some significant deficiencies in the current Medical Act which will alleviate difficulties for both the profession and individual practitioners.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Hassell.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR D.L. SMITH (Mitchell - Minister for Justice) [11.47 am]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is twofold: Firstly, it will enable the implementation of structural changes within the Registrar General's Office, which were recommended as a result of a functional review report, by providing for the appointment of a second deputy registrar general. Under new management proposals, one deputy registrar general will be responsible for financial and administrative matters within the Registrar General's Office while a second deputy registrar general will have responsibility for the operational or functional areas of the office. Both will report to the Registrar General. An existing position has been abolished to enable the creation of this new position. The new management structure, in conjunction with mid level management changes and a reorganisation of work methods, addresses the deficiencies identified by the functional review committee. The Bill also provides for future appointments of the Registrar General and deputy registrars general to be made under the Public Service Act in lieu of by the Governor, thus bringing these appointments into line with most other public service appointments.

The second purpose of the Bill is to provide the means by which the Registrar General may register the births of people born in this State whose births have not previously been registered. Under the existing registration system, which is set out in the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act, it is necessary for the parent of a child born in the State to furnish to a district registrar, within 60 days of the date of birth, the information required for registration. If the birth is not registered within 12 months of the date of birth, the birth cannot be registered without the written authority of the Registrar General. While the Registrar General is required to register every birth, it is clear that at present he can register it only if he has sufficient evidence of the required particulars. Those particulars include the name, date of birth, place of birth, sex of the child, particulars relating to the parents, and a witness to the birth. Where that information is not provided by the parents, or the occupier of the place where the birth takes place, difficulties arise as to the sufficiency of the evidence as to those particulars.

We have become increasingly aware of people, particularly those now over 30 years of age, who are being put to inconvenience and embarrassment when unable to produce a birth certificate. These people are not able to produce a birth certificate because, in most instances, their births have not been registered and because it is not possible now to obtain sufficient information to satisfy present registration requirements. The Bill gives temporary provision to overcome the problem of a person who is unable to obtain the evidence of a parent or the occupier of the place in which his birth took place by enabling such person to supply necessary particulars of his own birth and for these details to be verified by evidence sufficient to satisfy the Registrar General of the authenticity of such information. The Bill also includes some ancillary provisions as to the action required of the Registrar General to establish that the birth has not previously been registered in this State or another State or Territory of the Commonwealth. Registration under the proposed new provisions will be only on the written authority of the Registrar General. Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Registrar General will have the right of appeal to the Minister for Justice. It is proposed that the special provisions will operate for a period of only two years following the coming into effect of the amendment.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Hassell.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY - TWELFTH DAY

Motion, as Amended

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [11.51 am]: I take this opportunity to congratulate the Premier on her elevation to office. I acknowledge that this is an historic occasion, the Premier being the first woman to hold such office. Having said that, from a political point of view I must also comment that I trust the Premier's term in office will be one of the shortest terms served by any Premier. I also congratulate the members for Fremantle and Maylands on their election to office. No doubt those members will find their roles as members of Parliament very interesting, and I trust very rewarding. I hope that both new members will understand the requirements placed on them as members of Parliament and the obligations they have to Parliament. It is important that current members - the longer serving members - should indicate to the new members the responsibilities they have taken up. Of course members have a political responsibility but they also have a far wider responsibility to uphold the decorum of this House.

The induction of new members of Parliament brings to mind a matter I wish to draw to the attention of the Standing Orders Committee and perhaps the Speaker can take some action in this regard. I have always held the view that when members of Parliament are elected to this place and sworn in, some documentation of acknowledgment of the occasion should become part of the ceremony. This document would become a personal possession of a member and could be passed down to future generations. Justices of the peace are acknowledged in this way and members of Parliament should be acknowledged also. The Government also should take on board the idea that people who represent local government should receive similar recognition.

Another matter relates to the recognition of Parliament as a total entity. When a member of Parliament - either a sitting member or a past member - passes away, provision should be made for the flag to be flown at half-mast within the precincts of Parliament House. Recently I attended the funeral of the late Colin Jamieson, a member with whom I had some heated debates in this place. Colin was a person for whom I had a high regard, not only because of his dedication to his electorate but also because of his service to the State.

Mr MacKinnon: And to the Parliament.

Mr BLAIKIE: Yes, more importantly to the Parliament. On the occasion of Colin Jamieson's funeral I became aware that the flag at Parliament House was flying in the usual way. Parliament should acknowledge the passing of any member by lowering the flag; in that way we will, at least in some part, show the respect for members.

I refer now to the appointment of Sir Francis Burt as Governor of Western Australia. On behalf of the people of my electorate I extend congratulations to the Government on that appointment. Sir Francis Burt has had a most distinguished career in Western Australia. He is an outstanding jurist; I have no doubt he will serve the State with great honour and distinction. At the same time, I must pay tribute to the late Professor Gordon Stanley Reid and his wife, Ruth, for their great service to this State while holding such high office. One can best describe the Reids as people who possessed great zeal and devotion to their responsibilities. They conducted themselves with great dignity and had a great affection for Western Australia and its people. The appointment of the Professor Gordon Reid to such high office was also a credit to the Government. I acknowledge the contribution he made to Western Australia, and record my deepest sympathy at his passing.

I am reminded of another concern relating to the policies of *The West Australian* which reveal a lack of respect for the office of Governor. In the past the Vice Regal notices were placed on the editorial page. I do not know why this policy has changed. Members may have noticed that lately the Vice Regal notices have had to compete with the fruit and vegetable market or the section covering the employment of seamen at Fremantle. For example, on 25 May the Vice Regal notices appeared on the lift-out section at page 20 which covered an article on history. A subsequent edition of *The West Australian* placed the Vice Regal notices under a section devoted to shipping, just above the section relating to the employment of seamen, cooks and stewards. On 19 May the notices finished up on page 164 under the television changes. That is not good enough. It demeans the position of Governor

which is a very important one in Western Australia. One should look at how the other major daily newspapers in Australia treat Vice Regal notices. The *Adelaide Advertiser* has the Vice Regal notices on the editorial page with the letters and the editorial opinion. The *Age* in Melbourne has a tradition of having the notices on the editorial page, as do the *Canberra Times*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and others. I will be asking the management of *The West Australian* for some explanation as to why this change has taken place. The Vice Regal notices should be moved back to the editorial page. I ask Government and Opposition members to join me in asking the same question, for this is a matter of importance. This small change can affect the way the office of Governor is viewed or the esteem in which it is held. For the Governor of the day to compete with the fruit and vegetable report is frankly demeaning and does not recognise his status. I ask members to support me in having this change effected.

The electorate of Vasse is a dynamic area with all the benefits of growth and the problems of financial constraints imposed by the Government. We have the problem of cut backs in the Busselton Hospital operating theatre which has been stopped from operating one day a week due to a budget overrun of \$50 000. The hospital's total budget is in excess of \$4 million and it is ludicrous for the Government to have cut back this hospital's services when the Government has promised \$3 million plus in the recent by-election to the Fremantle Hospital. Our area has a problem with a lack of money being spent on schools which are virtually bursting at the seams. The Busselton High School will have 1 500 students by 1994; the school was built to accommodate 400 students, so this school is in desperate need of a major rebuilding program and another high school should be planned. The Dunsborough Primary School caters for 200 students and is also in need of a rebuilding program. The Cowaramup school is in need of a rebuilding program, as is the Margaret River Primary School, which is grossly overcrowded. The Margaret River High School is to be upgraded from a three year school to a five year school and it is also in need of a rebuilding program. I repeat that this area of the State is dynamic and continues to show positive growth. The Government has an obligation to ensure that the level of services keeps pace with the growth in the community.

A great concern exists about lawlessness and the community has requested the Minister for Police to provide a 24-hour police station in Busselton. The level of services provided by the Government is not commensurate with the growth of the region. Geographe Bay is a major focus of the Busselton and Dunsborough areas, and suitable future development of the area depends upon careful planning. It is essential to get on with the job to ensure that adequate and satisfactory planning is carried out. A general sense of frustration is being felt over the delays in the planning processes. The local shire has criticised the State Planning Commission and the general planning process relating to the Dunsborough area, in particular the Dunsborough structure plan. It behoves the Government to take action because the community is waiting for the Government to put its seal of approval on, or amend, the document so that that part of the community can grow and develop. The Government has the plan and it should release it as soon as possible. Once this is done, there will be further substantial growth and development. The Government has an obligation to expedite the process because until the plan is released the local authorities are being put under unfair, undue and unreasonable pressure.

The Dunsborough structure plan includes Curtis Bay, and it is said this area has been earmarked for development. This plan has been a bit like the Secret Harbour plan, because although a number of things are being said about it - there is talk about a marina or a harbour - the public generally do not know what is proposed for Curtis Bay. I issue a challenge to the authorities: If Curtis Bay, along with Dunsborough, is to be developed, expressions of interest should be called for from within Australia and overseas to ensure that the best type of development available for the area takes place, and that the area does not lose its attractiveness; any development must enhance what is already there. To date many comments have been made and some development plans drawn up, but as far as the community is concerned it is virtually a secret. This area is C class land but it should be converted to an A class reserve before any development is to take place. The Government should open the door, cut away the veil of secrecy and make its intentions known relating to this pristine area of land. The Government should invite proposals widely rather than opt for one or two preferred developers as it has done elsewhere.

Geographe Bay is under tremendous pressure. Historically, the professional fishing industry has a right to the area. Going back to the 1800s, the first people in the area were the sealers and whalers, and over the years the professional fishermen have run into difficulties because of pressure imposed by expanding tourist use and growing recreational fisheries; these are growing at a rate of knots because of the developments in the region to which I have referred, and the demand will increase greatly in the future. I indicated to the professional fishermen eight or nine years ago that their future would be limited and that is now occurring; their livelihoods are becoming limited.

A major conflict that exists in the bay and which is causing widespread concern between residents and the professional fishermen is over the use of trawlers. I presented a petition containing 9 700 signatures on the opening day of the parliamentary session. If the people who drew up that petition had taken the trouble to send it around this State they would have had little difficulty obtaining 100 000 signatures from people who do not want to see trawling occur in Geographe Bay. The Government has indicated by way of an answer to a question asked by me, and which answer took months to provide, that eight boats were trawling in Geographe Bay. I believe that there should be no extension of licences for trawling and that the existing operators should be phased out with substantial compensation payments. The bay should then be declared trawler-free, subject to review every three or four years. Already a survey is being carried out by the Fisheries Department and the Environmental Protection Authority but the level of their work and the delays are causing widespread exasperation for the locals.

The Government must come forward with a fairer and more reasoned management plan. It has to indicate clearly that it is prepared to buy the trawlers out of the bay for a substantial commercial fee and, at the end of the day, to declare Geographe Bay a recreational fishing area. The emphasis on the bay has changed over 200 years and it will continue to change significantly. As the bay is used more for recreational fishing, there will be a need for the Government to consider parts of Geographe Bay for inclusion in a marine park. Such is the level of support for that within the area that the time is now right to consider which areas of the bay should be included in a marine park or reserve. Pressure should be taken off the pristine areas of the bay and off the areas that could be used for recreational fishing. This survey should include the area from Naturaliste to Leeuwin.

When I was in America in February this year, I was shown the effects of an oil spill at Huntington Beach following an accident when the anchor of the oil tanker was pulled through the bottom of the tanker. It was a fairly minor oil spillage by world standards but significant for the effects it had on Huntington Beach. A total of 1.76 million litres of oil was involved in the spillage from the tanker the *American Trader* which was carrying 12.6 million litres of crude oil. The amount of that spill is small when compared with the spill from the *Exxon Valdez* which ran aground in Alaskan waters last year. The *Exxon Valdez* was carrying 50 million litres of crude oil or 30 times the amount being carried by the *American Trader*. Huntington Beach is in the greater Los Angeles area which has a population of 20 million people. The spill cost tens of millions of dollars to clean up. At one stage, 20 skimmer boats were at sea trying to clean up the spill. It happened in midwinter and fortunately there was a favourable offshore breeze which kept most of the oil offshore. However, in spite of that, 14 miles of beach suffered from the oil spill.

From time to time in Western Australia, and certainly in Geographe Bay - I have no doubt the same applies to Princess Royal Harbour at Albany and to other areas - ships wait at anchor to move into harbour. It is a frightening thought when one considers the Huntington Beach example. What could happen in Busselton if a tanker ruptured, either by the anchor being pulled through its bottom as occurred at Huntington Beach or by some other accident, and oil spilled and damage occurred in that area? The Busselton area has a population of only 10 000 people in a State with 1.25 million people. Who would foot the bill for the clean up? The number of people living in that area is small and a major oil spill of that kind would be catastrophic. We would not have the resources to clean it up.

Mr Pearce: We would expect to receive assistance from the Commonwealth Government if a disaster of that kind occurred.

Mr BLAICKIE: I propose that this Government and the Federal Government take action to make ship owners carry antipollution insurance so that, in the event of a spill, they are

responsible for the clean up. That is being investigated in other countries. The difficulties that we would face in Western Australia resulting from an oil spill would be insurmountable. This Government would not have the money to spend on the clean up. It is essential that legislation be put in place at either a Federal or a State level, as is presently happening in America, to oblige shipowners to carry antipollution insurance. I hope that the time will never come when we are faced with a disaster of that kind. However, one never knows what will happen. It is far better to have preventive measures in place so that owners are obliged to clean up if a disaster occurs. We all know that in the end the consumer will pay, but it is far better that consumers from around the world pay than a small community or State with limited resources. I have already indicated the concern in my electorate over the Government's lack of performance and the fact that it has cut back seriously on services. It is important to identify the fact that the Government has misled the House time and time again. The Premier is now misleading the people of Western Australia by her advertisement.

Amendment to Motion, as Amended

Mr BLAICKIE: I move an amendment -

That the following words be added to the motion, as amended -

But we regret to inform Your Excellency that the Government persists in its refusal to hold an adequate Royal Commission into Government dealings of all kinds and is attempting to mislead the public both generally and specifically by wrongly suggesting -

- (a) That the McCusker Inquiry is investigating all the issues of WA Inc which it is not.
- (b) That families will not be affected financially by the huge losses incurred.
- (c) That action to force an election will result in division and disruption whereas in fact it will allow the people to decide the issue of whether or not a Royal Commission is held.

and this House affirms its commitment to an acceptable and adequate Royal Commission into all affairs collectively known as WA Inc to allow confidence to be restored in the governing of Western Australia.

MR MacKINNON (Jandakot - Leader of the Opposition) [12.23 pm]: I support the amendment moved by the member for Vasse. The Premier's comments in a television advertisement last night were the most misleading that I have heard since the departure from this Parliament of the former Premier and his deputy. The Premier's comments today in support of the Supply Bill are also misleading. The Opposition sees this Government, both inside and outside the Parliament, as desperately attempting to avoid at all costs a disclosure of the truth. That is the only interpretation that can be placed on the actions of the Government in the unprecedented step of buying television time and full page advertisements in the newspaper. These advertisements are factually incorrect and are an attempt to divert attention from the real issues and to avoid a Royal Commission. The Premier and the Government know that the bulk of Western Australians want a special Royal Commission along the lines of the Fitzgerald Inquiry in Queensland to ascertain the truth.

In an advertisement in *The West Australian* on 31 May the Premier stated that when she became Premier she promised to restore trust, openness and confidence in Government. How accurate is that commitment when compared with the rest of her statement? The Premier then said -

That confidence has been shaken because of mistakes of the past; mistakes which I believe we should acknowledge and learn from, to prevent them happening again.

What mistakes, Premier? What mistakes do we have to learn from? What mistakes have been identified or admitted to? A former Premier and Deputy Premier have been knifed in the back by the current Premier and deposed from this Parliament. They said that they would take full responsibility and they have gone. This Government does not believe in the principle of Cabinet responsibility. If the Opposition does not know what mistakes have been made, how can it learn from them? I would think it would be pretty difficult. The very first point made by the Premier is factually wrong. If the Opposition does not know what the

mistakes of the past are, how can it learn from them? That is why we should have a Royal Commission: To identify the mistakes of the Government. The Government has stoutly resisted any process which would identify its mistakes and the Opposition cannot identify the mistakes it should learn from. The Premier's comments are akin to saying, "We know that you are a murderer but you will learn from that mistake. We will make sure you do not participate in those activities again. We will not punish you or have a trial to ascertain the truth; we will let you off"! What nonsense! It is clearly identified by the public at large as nonsense. The Premier then went on to say -

People guilty of wrong-doing must be brought to justice.

I agree with that statement. How is the Opposition going to find out who are the guilty people if the Government will not support a Royal Commission? How will the Opposition have the guilty people brought to justice if no inquiry is undertaken into WA Inc? WA Inc has been defined by the Auditor General, yet the Premier fails to acknowledge it even exists. We have to identify who is guilty.

Dr Lawrence: Doesn't that happen afterwards, or are you presuming guilt?

Mr MacKINNON: I am not presuming anything.

Dr Lawrence: The matter of guilt or innocence is determined by the courts.

Mr MacKINNON: How will we find out who is guilty? The Premier is trying to get me to acknowledge - which I do not - that the loss of \$850 million of the State's money is nobody's fault, that it just happened. The Premier's first comment was that the Government should acknowledge and learn from those mistakes and get on with the future. What mistakes? I agree that the guilty must be brought to justice, and the Premier made that comment herself in saying, "People guilty of wrong-doing must be brought to justice." The Premier is right when she says that the guilty should be brought before the courts.

It is interesting to note that the Premier has changed her tune in relation to the excuses she makes for not appointing a Royal Commission. She said a couple of weeks ago that the key reason for not appointing a Royal Commission was that it would prejudice court cases. I refer once more to the opinion, tabled in this House by the Opposition, from Mr Terry O'Connor, QC, who categorically refuted that assertion. The Premier has not had the gumption to table in this Parliament the opinion on which she relies. I put it to members that if she did so, it would confirm what the Opposition is saying. That is why she will not table the opinion. So much for the Premier's saying that she is committed to the truth, when she is not prepared to table that opinion. The Premier said -

A long and costly Royal Commission is easy to call for, but it may prevent charges being laid and convictions obtained.

What a load of rubbish. She continued -

That's why a Royal Commission should not be held at this stage. Already 208 charges have been laid by one investigator, a Queen's Counsel, and that investigation is still not over.

I would have thought that was a compelling argument for a Royal Commission to be set up. Mr McCusker is conducting an inquiry investigating only one aspect of the matrix which makes up WA Inc; his inquiry is looking not at the Government but at business dealings and corporate affairs breaches. That inquiry is not yet finished and already 208 charges have been laid. Is that not a compelling reason for a Royal Commission to be set up to establish what happened in the other areas of WA Inc? That is the third justification, coming from the Premier's own comments last night when she militated in favour of the Royal Commission. She is the best advocate for the Royal Commission and I thank her for that. The Premier also said -

Like you, I am committed to revealing the truth.

The \$64 000 question I ask the Minister is: How is she committed to revealing the truth? People ask whether there is a way for a Royal Commission to be set up without going through the steps the Opposition is now proposing in the Parliament. They are now presented with a classic example of my point. The Premier makes no response, and the former Premiers Burke and Dowding behaved in exactly the same way. Where is the

Premier's commitment to revealing the truth? She gives the impression that some form of inquiry will be held after the McCusker inquiry. Is that the case? There is a deathly silence from the Premier. Will another inquiry be held? If so, when?

Mr Lewis: The Premier is so open.

Dr Lawrence: I am doing the Leader of the Opposition the courtesy of listening to his comments.

Mr MacKINNON: The Premier said that she is committed to revealing the truth; however, she is not prepared to tell this Parliament or the people how or when. The Opposition has been pressing the Government to tell the truth for 18 months and it always receives the same answer - deathly silence or lies. What is the Premier trying to hide? Who is the Premier trying to protect? Is she trying to protect the former Premier, Brian Burke, who is now Australia's Ambassador to Ireland and who was responsible for putting her in this job? Is that the person she is trying to protect? I argue very strongly that that is probably the major reason the Premier resists the Opposition's call for a Royal Commission. We know who pulled the strings to appoint the current Premier and we know who is still pulling the strings - it is Brian Burke. We know why this Premier is hamstrung and unable to respond as she should if she believed what she said.

What poppycock it is when the Premier says that members on this side of the House are proposing to take action to protect themselves. What are we protecting ourselves from? I fail to understand the logic of that argument. The only people trying to protect themselves are Government members and the people who support the Premier.

The fifth point of this statement is -

The very real costs of past mistakes must be faced,

Can the Premier tell me when an account will be given of the full cost of the past mistakes? She has told us what the first instalment will be for the petrochemical project. When will the rest be identified? When will a definitive report be made about the Superannuation Board, the State Government Insurance Commission and the potential losses in St George's Terrace? When will an account be given of the dealings involving the Midland abattoirs, the Anchorage and the total matrix - the myriad deals that make up WA Inc? As the Premier appeared on Statewide television saying that the very real costs of past mistakes must be faced, one would expect those costs to be identified in the first place. That is the next argument in favour of a Royal Commission which was put forward by the Premier. Those costs should be identified not by the Government, nor by the Opposition, but by an independent Royal Commission.

On the sixth point deceit enters the debate. The Premier said -

but I assure you that these costs will not affect families. Taxes and charges will be kept below the inflation rate -

She does not say that selected taxes and charges will be kept below the inflation rate, although that is the reality of the situation. Her statement continued -

and services such as education, health and crime prevention will be maintained.

If they are to be maintained at the current level, that is bad enough because they have been cut back significantly already. I am sure the member for Cottesloe will agree that the current level of health services in this State is abysmal. These health services have been cut across the length and breadth of the State as a result of the losses from WA Inc. The Premier's statement is nonsense. These costs have already affected families. We know that \$62.5 million was allocated to WA Government Holdings Ltd in this year's Budget; that money could have given families in this State some relief from the increases in taxes and charges. The fuel tax could have been maintained at its former level and families would not have been affected by an increase in that area. The children in Western Australia are being affected as a result of the second-class education system this Government is delivering because of the lack of funds. Families in this State are being affected over and over again.

I refer to the newspaper article yesterday about a man who could not get his prostate problem solved. Bob Hawke received treatment for his problem, although other people in our community are not able to. The man I refer to was able to get the medical attention he

needed only after he received some publicity for his case in the Press. The Premier has the gall to stand before the people of Western Australia and say that things will change and that there will be accountability, honesty and integrity from the Government. At the same time she has said that families will not be affected. However, families have been affected and they will be affected for the next four years when the annual instalments of \$50 million must be made in order to pay this Government's debt. Every family in Western Australia will be affected, and well the Government knows it. The Premier also said -

Positive and constructive policies are needed,

The Opposition agrees with that. These policies must address issues such as energy; they must not be indecisive - as we have seen from the Government - but positive. They must address the development of industry in the north of the State; they must address planning for the future of this city, which this Government has been politicising for months; and they must involve environmental considerations and honesty with the electorate, rather than the doctoring of reports to suit the Government instead of reflecting the real situation.

In her statement the Premier made great play of the fact that a Royal Commission would be a long and costly exercise. The Premier is the last person who should talk about costs in respect of Royal Commissions. Were there an election this year, and were the Opposition elected to Government, the very first thing we would do is appoint a special Royal Commission. The second thing we would do is to pay for it by demolishing the old Swan Brewery so that the people of this State will no longer have to spend \$20 million on a project they do not want, as the member for Fremantle indicated to us today in his maiden speech. I congratulate the member for Fremantle and the member for Maylands on their electoral victory. We will continue to work just as hard to get rid of them, but they should be proud of their achievement.

It is absolute hypocrisy for the Premier to talk about its being a costly Royal Commission when she is prepared to pursue the building of an edifice on the banks of the Swan River which no-one wants. That costly and wasteful exercise is costing \$60 000 a month in maintenance charges. The Premier is willing to continue with what everyone in this State knows is a disastrous investment but she does not want a Royal Commission. The answer is to knock over the brewery and put the money which that will save the State into something that will be productive for the future: A special Royal Commission to wash away the stains of the past. The Premier does not seem to realise that until she agrees to hold that inquiry the WA Inc stain will remain and this State's reputation will be discoloured across the length and breadth of this nation and around the world because of the actions of the Premier, her colleagues and former colleagues. The only way to wash out the stain that is presently imprinted on the coat of Western Australia is to have a good public rinsing in a Royal Commission. That Royal Commission must provide the proper protection where it is needed. Independent legal opinion has confirmed that our proposed legislation will achieve that purpose. That Royal Commission must be able to hear evidence from whomever it needs to. It must be able to ask any person about what has happened, and release a public report which will bring to book those people who need to be brought to book. The truth will eventually come out, but the best way for the truth to come out is through a special Royal Commission. The talk we have heard about blackmail is a load of rubbish. All we want is a commitment by the Government to hold a Royal Commission and to face up to the truth; until we get that commitment, people will continue to ask the questions that I have been asking day after day: What is it that the Premier has to hide, and whom is she trying to protect?

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe) [12.43 pm]: It is important to recognise the realities of the situation which now confronts this State because of the actions of the Liberal and National Parties and the stance taken by the Government. The Leader of the Opposition, on behalf of the Liberal Party and with the support of the National Party, has said to the Government that it should establish an acceptable Royal Commission with an acceptable commissioner to inquire into WA Inc in its widest ramifications or the Liberal and National Parties will block or defer the passage of Bills to provide money for the Government to carry on its activities. The Government will be forced to resign; there will be an election; and the Liberal and National Parties, if elected to Government, will then establish such a Royal Commission. That proposition has been put fairly and squarely to the Government, not after a few months of haggling about a Royal Commission, but after six and a half years of trying to expose and have stopped the corruption of Government in the State.

What has been put to the Government by the Leader of the Opposition has been answered by the Premier's saying there will be no Royal Commission now; it is not unthinkable to have a Royal Commission but she is prepared to consider it only if the threat to Supply is removed and when McCusker has reported on Rothwells. The Premier has had months of the clearest demands being made for a Royal Commission, under no threat to Supply, and she has refused to act. The Premier has had the opportunity of responding to detailed questions about what kind of Royal Commission she would contemplate; she has refused to answer those questions. It is unlikely that the McCusker report will be made public because it will involve consideration of many issues of public prosecutions. The Government, led by the Premier, is saying to us and to the public that it will not have a Royal Commission but will think about having a Royal Commission when McCusker has reported. The reality is that we will then be asked to take on trust the Premier's assessment of the McCusker report and whether it justifies the holding of a Royal Commission.

Mr McCusker has said on public record on more than one occasion that he is inquiring only into Rothwells. He is not inquiring into the fabric and matrix of WA Inc. He is not dealing with the political issues which have been raised over a period of six and a half years about the propriety of Government. The Premier came into this House yesterday and spoke about morality, yet Mr McCusker is looking only at legality in relation to Rothwells. He is not looking at legality or morality in relation to the myriad things involved in WA Inc. The whole structure of the petrochemical deal, the involvement of payments out of the State Energy Commission, the back to back deals involving that cesspool of corruption, Spedleys Ltd, which has now been revealed in the public inquiry, the back to back deals involving credit unions, and the moneys which have been shuffled around between Government instrumentalities to deal with the Government's political desperation, are issues to be examined by a Royal Commission and are not only legal but ethical and moral.

They are issues of propriety; issues which were laid down as requiring attention by the Burt Commission on Accountability set up by the Government itself. This is the man who is now the Governor of the State; the man who will be confronted with the results of the Government's intransigence over a Royal Commission. In his report that man spelt out the issues which have to be considered by a Royal Commission.

There is not much room to move between the political parties as at today. The Government says there will not be a Royal Commission; the Opposition says there will be, or there will be an election and a Royal Commission appointed by the new Government after the election - assuming the new Government wins.

Mr Pearce: The new Government will win, but it will not be yours.

Mr HASSELL: Assuming that the Liberal and National Parties win.

Mr Pearce: That is not an assumption I would make with any safety, after last Saturday.

Mr HASSELL: I am confident that the Liberal and National Parties will win an election forced upon a Government which refuses to have a Royal Commission.

Mr Donovan: Forced on the people.

Mr HASSELL: Members opposite should remember the slogan, "Let the people decide". We will let the people decide whether there should be a Royal Commission, but if the Government comes to its senses there will be a Royal Commission without an election. If an election is held, however, it will be a risk for the Government and a risk for us. The stakes are high. The Leader of the Opposition, on behalf of the Liberal Party and with the support of the National Party, has nailed his colours and our colours to the mast and said that is where we stand. If we should follow through in the face of the Government's intransigence, and there is an election and we lose, the costs will be high. The fact that any election would be a great risk to the Opposition is an indication of the underlying morality of the stance we have taken. That morality is founded on the Opposition's continuing work, over the past six and a half years, of trying to expose and bring to an end the corruption in this State. The fact is that we have so often offended people previously regarded as our political friends because we were not prepared to allow the Government to go unquestioned in its dealings with business, and we have proved to be right over and over again.

Mr Pearce: When you offended one of those people, who led a deputation of your backbenchers to see him and apologise?

Mr MacKinnon: No apologies.

Mr Pearce: Who became leader?

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The level of interjection is too high.

Mr Pearce: It is true and you know it.

Mr HASSELL: Perhaps the Leader of the House would like to stand up in this debate -

Mr Pearce: I shall be up later on; don't worry about that.

Mr HASSELL: The Leader of the House will defend the dealings of this Government with Mr Connell and his cronies, will he?

Mr Pearce: You defended the dealings of the Opposition with Mr Connell and his cronies. I never led a deputation to apologise for my leader's comments.

Mr HASSELL: If the Leader of the House would like to defend the dealings of the Government, of which he and the Premier were a part, over the petrochemical project and over the various rescues of Rothwells, over the \$15 million paid into Spedleys, over the Fremantle Gas and Coke deal, over the Argyle diamond deal, over the Chinese restaurant deal concerned with the Labor Party's premises -

Mr P.J. Smith: What about the \$3 billion gas pipeline?

Mr HASSELL: Would members opposite stand up in this debate and defend the payments made and admitted to have been made by the former Chairman of the State Superannuation Board? He was appointed by Brian Burke personally to that office and he received payments. It was not denied. Were they ethical? Were they moral? Were they right? Would members like to defend those payments? What we have said a thousand times in this House is, what these people are doing is immoral and wrong. We have not argued the legalities; the Government has argued the legalities. The Government has said that what has been done has been lawful, but Government members cannot defend the propriety of what was done because it was not proper; it was not decent.

Dr Gallop: That is your view.

Mr HASSELL: It was the view of the Auditor General. It was the view of the Commission on Accountability. Is the Minister rejecting those views? The fact is that for the whole period that this Government has been in office it has corrupted the processes of Government; it has corrupted the decencies and the activities of Ministers; it has been involved in disgraceful and disgusting deals, and it ought to be exposed and thrown out of office.

Several members interjected.

Mr HASSELL: I want to make it clear -

Several members interjected.

Mr HASSELL: I want to make it clear -

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member's voice is certainly heard, almost too well, but I think one of the reasons for that is the strength of the interjections from the other side.

Mr HASSELL: I do not come to this present impasse between the Government and the Opposition in any way defensively or apologetically. I do not come here apologising, because we want the truth exposed and we want justice done.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm

[Questions without notice taken.]

Mr HASSELL: The actions being taken by the Liberal and National Parties to force the Government to hold a Royal Commission into the wide ramifications of WA Inc are not only completely lawful, but also are totally moral and ethical. The issues which relate to the Government's dealings have been the subject of numerous debates in this House in recent years and go back to the very beginnings of this Government; that is, 1983. This Opposition

has been fighting to have the corruption exposed, to have it stopped and to get the Government to follow proper procedures and to act ethically. The Government's constant cry in each case has been, "What was done was lawful."

The SPEAKER: Order! The level of background conversation is far too high.

Mr HASSELL: Only yesterday, for the first time in all those years, did we hear the Premier in this Labor Government refer to morality. What a weak case it was when the Premier could say only that the Government had a moral right to govern, when its moral right to govern is founded on the grossest immorality in the way in which the business of Government has been conducted all these years. I could go back through those dealings, but they have been cited numerous times and I will not do it again. The Government has an option, an option about which the Premier will have to make up her mind. Either a Royal Commission is put in place with satisfactory terms of reference and a satisfactory commissioner, or it is likely that the Government will be forced to have an election because the Supply Bill will be deferred or stopped.

Mr Pearce: Has there been a change since this morning? You said earlier we were going to have an election, but now it is only likely!

Mr HASSELL: As far as I am concerned there is no change. The Government has been given a clear statement of the Opposition's position: Have a Royal Commission or have an election and we will appoint a Royal Commission after that election.

Mr Pearce: This morning it was if you win, but now you are more confident that you will win.

Mr HASSELL: I have already explained the position in relation to that.

We have a Legislative Council which has been elected to office under a proportional representation system which was put in place by this Government. There can be no question as to the legality of its powers to stop any Bill and there can be no question of the legitimacy of the composition of the Legislative Council, of its representative nature and of the right of members to vote as they see fit in the best interests of the State and to stop legislation which enables a Government, tainted in every way, to continue in office, intransigent in its refusal to have the corruption exposed, to have the dealings examined and, in particular, to find out where the money has gone and whether any of it can be retrieved.

As is said in the amendment before the House, the Premier has tried to mislead the public by suggesting that the McCusker inquiry is dealing with the issue. The McCusker inquiry is not dealing with one tenth of the issues which need to be examined. It is dealing with legalities: it is not dealing with proprieties; it is not dealing with decency; it is not dealing with the ethics of what occurred; it is not dealing with the Ministers and ex-Ministers involved in what occurred; it is not examining the way in which the parliamentary processes were corrupted; it is not examining the way in which the Government conducted business; it is not examining the way in which the Government continues to conduct business; it is not trying to find out where the money went and whether it can be recovered in toto - it deals with only the smallest part of the deal. I support the amendment.

DR LAWRENCE (Glendalough - Premier) [2.35 pm]: As I said earlier, during question time, we have been subjected to the same debate again and again. What is important is that the House realise in relation to this amendment, as in relation to previous motions, that I am not resisting a Royal Commission or any form of inquiry. What I am resisting is blackmail of the State of Western Australia, blackmail of the Government of Western Australia, and blackmail of the people of Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! In the debate that I have heard on this amendment to the motion the Premier listened in virtual silence. Not one minute has expired since the Premier commenced her speech and we have had a barrage of interjections; it is not appropriate.

Dr LAWRENCE: What the Government and I are resisting is unprecedented chaos and disruption being threatened by the Opposition. What I am resisting is the political instability which would ensue and, indeed, I believe exists even now.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! If members persist in taking absolutely no notice of me I will take action against them.

Dr LAWRENCE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. What I am resisting is the threat of frequent elections and constitutional uncertainty. The Government is resisting what can be described only as a very cynical grab for power by the Opposition - a desperate Opposition which had no policies to put before the people. That is the reason we have had this same debate - not just for the past year, or the past two years, but for the past seven years. We are resisting the creation of a precedent by which the Legislative Council would determine the Government of this State and the direction of the Government of the State. We are resisting a position where one member in that gerrymandered House could determine the fate of the State, determine the fate of the Government and insist on the people taking a particular form of action. We are the Government and we are formed in the Assembly by the Constitution and by precedent and the decisions of Government are the decisions of the Assembly. The Government and I are not prepared to concede that the Opposition has a right to destabilise the community every time its wishes are thwarted. We do not recognise that the Opposition, especially the Opposition in the upper House, has that right, nor indeed do the people of Western Australia.

What the amendment before the House does not do - and I am sure there are good reasons it does not - is to expose the Opposition's position. It is written simply in terms of regretting to inform the Governor about the Government's failure to hold a Royal Commission. What it does not say is that the Opposition is threatening the people of this State. Members opposite are quite simply using what in any other arena would be described as stand over tactics - do what we want or else! The Opposition was very reticent during the by-elections about the question of Supply. We heard mumblings and rumblings from members opposite about the possibility of Supply being blocked. Indeed, as I said yesterday, the member for Cottesloe started talking about it a week after the last general election. The Opposition has not pushed that line very hard and it has not necessarily had to deliver the goods. We all know the Liberal Party Opposition in this House last year was very macho indeed. Members of that party stood in this place and said, "We are going to block Supply," knowing they were protected by the principled stand then taken by the National Party.

Members of the Liberal Party knew they would never have to act on that very tough position. They knew they would never have to face the people on that question. They knew they would never be brought to account. The same tactic was used by Sir Charles Court in 1979, knowing that it would not succeed. Things have changed since then, however, and the two Opposition parties are vying with one another, particularly for seats in country electorates. We all know what happened in the bush before the Federal election. We all know that the National Party was criticised severely by the Liberal Party for the position it had taken in relation to Supply. The National Party's position was quite deliberately and systematically undermined. A member of my family played a role in that.

Mr Lewis: Was he wrong?

Dr LAWRENCE: Yes, he was. During the latter part of last year and during the Federal election campaign he went around with members opposite and tried quite deliberately to reduce the National Party to a rump. He succeeded pretty well, if the Federal election result is any indication. Members opposite, and the National Party members in particular, are now being galvanised into action. They are using what I would call macho politics; they are saying to the people of Western Australia, "We are not the wimps. We are the ones who are now taking this strong stance."

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr LAWRENCE: At least the Leader of the National Party is clear. He has said that his three members - all three of them - in the upper House will stand up, when the question is asked, and vote to reject Supply. What will the Liberal Opposition members do?

Mr MacKinnon: We are saying let us have a Royal Commission.

Dr LAWRENCE: They are saying they will vote to reject Supply, yet the first time the question was put to the Leader of the Opposition in the public arena by a journalist with a bit of oomph, he said, "Maybe we will defer Supply." So we are seeing clearly that the

Opposition is falling apart on this question; but whatever is its position, whether reject or defer -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is nearly the end of the week, and I really hesitate to say this; in fact, I will not. I will just advise members that the next time I stand up, this is what I will say. If I call for order and any member decides to ignore that call, the next time I stand up will be the final warning to that member and I will take action against him or her for next time. So that is a three stage thing: This is the first stage, because members have been forewarned; the second stage is the warning; the third stage is action.

Point of Order

Mr COURT: Mr Speaker, the previous speakers from this side who have spoken in this debate were attacked by Ministers who were interjecting at the top of their voices, and nothing was done about it. For example, the Minister for Education was on the point of having a physical problem. Those members had to accept that barrage of interjections, but it seems that when the Premier is speaking we are not allowed to interject.

The SPEAKER: First, the member would be aware that I was out of the Chair in the hour before the luncheon suspension. The member would be equally aware that I make no exceptions for anyone in this place; whether they be on one side of the House or the other, male or female, I always rule in exactly the same way. I hesitate to reflect on other people who may take the Chair from me when, on the odd occasion, I am away, and I will not reflect on them because members know, as I know, that each person in this Chair has a different style. I hope my style will not change and will not favour one person more than another. I do not intend to be any different from anyone else and, as I have said on probably hundreds of occasions, as far as I am concerned even though interjections are disorderly and are not allowed under Standing Orders, I like them to occur. However, I will not allow interjections to occur when a member does not want to accept them, and who indicates that either at the beginning of the speech or by not accepting them and talking to me; nor will I allow interjections which loudly go over the top of the person who is speaking. In other words, if members want to interject in a way which I think is acceptable, they will wait until the person stops speaking, pauses for breath, or otherwise, before interjecting, and will interject then only in a relatively orderly way. I do not think that is unreasonable or unfair to anybody, and that is the way we ought to handle it.

Debate (on amendment to motion, as amended) Resumed

Dr LAWRENCE: Prior to the interruption, I was suggesting that the Opposition members had not only varied their position on this question but before the by-elections were very reticent about expressing a point of view that indicated clearly what they would do. It was certainly there as a threat. The Opposition certainly wanted it to be one of the issues on which the election campaign was fought; and the results show that it was, and that the people of Western Australia who were required to go to the polls very clearly rejected the Opposition. Opposition members were reticent about it then because they know it is unpopular, deeply divisive, and that the people resent frequent elections and politically motivated actions such as this, particularly those actions which are so unprincipled.

However, after the by-elections, in what can only be seen as a very desperate attempt to shore up his power, the Leader of the Opposition, not even giving his members time to react to the Opposition's conspicuous failure in the by-elections, raised the stakes; and that, in my view, is one of the most irresponsible things the Leader of the Opposition has ever done. He showed no thought then, and shows no thought now, for the community, the economy, or the people of Western Australia. He has thought only about his own political survival. By any measure the conservatives were rejected in those by-elections.

Mr Kierath: You are the third Premier, and the Leader of the Opposition is still there.

Dr LAWRENCE: That shows the Opposition's lack of imagination.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Riverton will get his turn.

Mr Court: The Premier took a pause to breathe, so we moved then.

Dr LAWRENCE: Do Opposition members want me to slow down for them?

Mr Kierath: Just give us the odd pause every now and again.

Dr LAWRENCE: All right. It has never before been a problem for me, but if members Opposite insist, I will slow down.

Mr Lewis: Have you been having voice training?

Dr LAWRENCE: Not at all.

The SPEAKER: Order! Let us get on with it.

Mr Kierath: Last year we noticed that you had dyed your hair and changed your glasses.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr LAWRENCE: Members opposite, for reasons known only to them, but about which we might speculate, will always attempt to trivialise members of Parliament, the Premier and others in this House. I return now to the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr MacKinnon: I did not move it. I seconded it.

Dr LAWRENCE: My apologies. In his speech the member for Cottesloe made it clear that he believes the reasons for a Royal Commission go back fundamentally to the existence of a Labor Government. The member for Cottesloe has never been satisfied to sit on the Opposition benches. The member for Cottesloe denies the right of this Government to sit here. He and members opposite want a Royal Commission, such as they describe, to go back to 1983. The member for Cottesloe has accused the Government, in a very general sense, of wrongdoing since that time. The member has put that view many times in this House, but he has not specified the allegations about wrongdoing. Many of the dealings that he wants to refer to have not been enunciated in any detail. There is always innuendo about corruption and dishonesty, but the specific details are rarely referred to.

It has been the note of the member for Cottesloe, and the Leader of the Opposition - who, indeed, has been there for a very long time - that this Government is not legitimate. However, since 1983, the time from which the Opposition wants this Government to be investigated, we have been re-elected on two occasions. Members opposite seem unable to get that through their heads. The by-elections last weekend are the most recent example of the people's repudiation of members opposite, their program, and what they represent. They have been rebuffed roundly by the people of Western Australia on so many occasions that I do not understand how they have the gall to come into this place and make the propositions they do.

I turn briefly to the question of a Royal Commission. The only question that is seriously before this House of which I am aware, although it has not yet come into the Parliament -

Mr Kierath: Why don't we have a contest in two marginal seats and see who wins?

The SPEAKER: Order! Could I suggest to the member for Riverton that it might be a very good opportunity for him to have a cup of tea or something like that.

Dr LAWRENCE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Members opposite have come in here and told us in dramatic terms, frequently, repetitively, and I might say boringly, why we should have a Royal Commission. They have talked about a special Royal Commission, and the Leader of the Opposition has put before the Press in this State - and I presume will put before the Parliament - a Bill for a special Royal Commission. That Bill should, in some way, be seen as a measure of the Opposition's seriousness. It has not been brought into the House yet, but it has been in the public domain for some time and the Leader of the Opposition has talked about it to the Press. He has a 10 point plan and has underlined the Bill, so one can only presume that that is what the Opposition regards as a serious proposition. That is what members opposite insist, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has done on at least two occasions in this House, should be the nature of any inquiry into some of these matters.

If we take that and examine it further, can we really give the Opposition any credibility on its special Royal Commission Bill as a measure of its seriousness? Firstly, if one is proposing a Royal Commission or inquiry of any kind the first step is to identify precisely those matters into which an inquiry is warranted. The question is, does the Bill the Opposition plans to bring to this place do that - does it identify precisely what needs to be examined? The short answer to that is no, absolutely not. It fails that test completely. When I first saw the Bill the

Opposition leader proposes to bring into this House - and I am sorry that I have only a faxed copy of it here - I thought the responsible thing for the Premier to do was to seek advice from the law officers of this State about the nature of the Bill. Is it a Bill that any Parliament could seriously enact? Is it a Bill this House could vote for under any circumstances? The short answer - and I will go into some of the reasons why - is no; and that, in my view, is a measure of the seriousness of members opposite.

The preamble and the specific terms of reference referred to in the Bill make allegations of wrongdoing, and refer to the financial dealings of the Burke Government and its successors, and of WA Inc. If one is serious about setting up a Royal Commission by a special Act of Parliament, one does have to detail matters with adequate particularity, for two reasons. Firstly, as a matter of principle - and I am sure members of the Opposition would agree - it is highly undesirable to have an inquisitorial proceeding with such wide coercive powers as a Royal Commission has, which is uncertain in its scope. That is a matter of principle that the Opposition should have addressed. However, a more practical problem with the lack of particularity is that individuals are not slow to challenge any exercise of power likely to affect them adversely, and if the terms of reference are vague and imprecise that will only encourage lengthy litigation on the application on those terms of reference. Point No 1: The Opposition is not serious.

The second major flaw in the Bill is that members opposite expect the House to take seriously the proposition that the Leader of the National Party and the Leader of the Liberal Party could, by majority, determine who that commissioner shall be. We are the Government, we exercise the majority in this House, and that proposition is, frankly, laughable.

The third major flaw in this Bill, which we are supposed to take seriously and discuss in this House, is that it seeks to protect the privilege of members of Parliament by reference to article 9 of the Bill of Rights. That Bill of Rights protects members of this House from appearing before commissions of that kind while the House is sitting - that is its simplest interpretation - and some members opposite have suggested that some existing members of the House should appear. I presume some of them might want to appear before such a commission, given that they want to set it up. They could not do that while the House was sitting; so any time line for the commission would be stretched out very long indeed and we would be in considerable conflict with its operations.

It is more important to remind members opposite - and again, I do not know what legal advice they have obtained on this, but perhaps it was not as substantial as it should have been - that on occasions article 9, to which the Leader of the Opposition specifically refers in his Bill, has been used to prevent a member being asked any question touching on any matter that has been the subject of debate in this House. So, by doing that, the Opposition is actually inviting its Royal Commission to prevent members of this House and the other place from answering questions on any matter that has been the subject of a debate, or motion, or reference in this House. That applies equally to papers.

Mr MacKinnon: Where is your authority for saying that?

Dr LAWRENCE: I have told the House; this is advice from the Crown Solicitor's office.

Mr MacKinnon: Table it.

Mr Court: Give us the advice.

Dr LAWRENCE: I am giving the Opposition the advice. The records of the Parliament are important. Members opposite know that it is a longstanding convention that Governments do not table their legal advice, but I am doing the Opposition the courtesy, in advance of its Bill coming into this House, of measuring the seriousness of the Opposition's proposition. So, on that matter the Bill fails.

The Opposition's Bill proposes Executive privilege and Cabinet secrecy would not be grounds for anyone resisting the commission's powers. Apart from very imprecise terminology - there is no such thing as Cabinet secrecy - what the Opposition's Bill would actually do is to prevent the Crown or any part of the Cabinet or Government from resisting putting material before that commission. Its privilege would be severely curtailed, but the individual's protection or a company's protection and immunity would remain untrammelled. The net effect of the Opposition's Bill would be to put the State's interests in

jeopardy. There is no doubt about that, and the Leader of the Opposition should seek legal advice on these questions. He has told us in this place that this Bill is the only Bill he will consider and that he is deadly serious about this legislation. On many occasions members opposite have said that is all they will consider. The imprecision in the definition of Executive privilege is another serious flaw.

One final flaw, before I conclude - and there are many others - is that the Bill effectively means that individuals can appear before that commission; they would rush to, because the Opposition's Bill provides them with immunity from prosecution. There is no reason given for that, beyond the interests of the commissioner to find out.

Mr MacKinnon: That is what Fitzgerald did.

Dr LAWRENCE: No, he did not, but we can discuss that at another time.

Individuals who might appear before the commission established under the Opposition's Bill would, at any stage during proceedings, be able to claim immunity, and for any reason. That would mean that the very purpose that I think should underlie any investigation - that of getting to the truth and punishing wrongdoers - would be entirely thwarted.

This motion is typical of many we have seen in this House in that it fails to mention the critical element which is part of the Opposition's agenda; that is, "Do what we want or we will bring the State to its knees".

MR COWAN (Merredin - Leader of the National Party) [2.59 pm]: I want to make it very clear that the National Party supports this amendment to the motion, as amended. If members look at the three parts of the amendment they will find it easy to see why. Firstly, the McCusker inquiry does not cover as many aspects of the Government's failed business dealings as we would like it to. That is by McCusker's own admission. Very clearly a need exists for a Royal Commission to be established to investigate those aspects which are not likely to be covered by Mr McCusker in his investigation. There has been a lot of debate on this matter, and I do not want to traverse what has already been said, but I make it clear that the National Party has not changed its position. Our position is very simple: A Royal Commission, or no legislation. Of course, the question of who is responsible can be claimed and counterclaimed, but the fact is that if the Government chooses not to have a Royal Commission there will be consequences.

The Government will claim that the Opposition is responsible for all sorts of constitutional crises when those consequences occur, but the truth of the matter is that the Government is responsible. The conditions have been laid down very clearly for the Government, and the decision it must make is whether to have a Royal Commission. I wonder why the Government is running away from that demand. It cannot be that the Government fears there will be any difficulty with a Royal Commission for the simple reason that the litigation which will occur as a consequence of the McCusker inquiry will keep WA Inc in the forefront of public opinion for a long time. No doubt the Bond group intends to recover some money from the SGIC, which is a Government agency, or from the Government itself, and that action will keep WA Inc issues before the public for a long time. In addition, constant and recurring appropriations in the Budget will keep the issue before this Parliament for a long time. The Government can be sure that either the Press, the courts or Parliament will maintain pressure on this Government to deal with its failed business dealings. It might be more appropriate for this Government to accept that a great number of avenues exist for publicity to be given to its failures. The Government must accept that a Royal Commission will be the best answer and will close the case once and for all.

I have said publicly, and I repeat, that I acknowledge that although the Opposition's opinion from an eminent QC in this State said that a Royal Commission would not necessarily be in contempt of court, no reference - Mr Hassell might correct me if I am wrong - has been made to prejudice. The matter of prejudice is quite different from that of contempt. I acknowledge that a Royal Commission might cross into areas where charges have been laid in relation to the McCusker inquiry, which might be prejudicial to those same charges. I do not say they would automatically prejudice a case but the question would be raised. Some care needs to be taken to ensure that does not occur.

Mr Hassell: That is provided for in the Bill.

Mr COWAN: That is so, but some discretionary power would need to be given to the Royal

Commissioner. Everyone acknowledges that point, but that does not mean there should not be a Royal Commission. Part B talks about families who will be financially affected. Of course families will be affected as a result of the sums of money that have been lost and this will be highlighted when we see any appropriations in future Budgets to cover the loss of the Government's business failings. Last year the appropriations were in excess of \$100 million and that money has to be found somewhere. Governments do not generate money; they take money from other people and redirect it. Appropriations to cover the losses of the Government's business failings, whether it is a payment to WA Government Holdings, to Bond Corporation, to the SGIC or the State Superannuation Board, must be borne by the taxpayers of Western Australia. The majority of Western Australian taxpayers happen to be family members.

Finally, I have some reservations about the Premier's comment that the Opposition's action to force an election will result in division and destruction. The Opposition has charted its course and the solution rests with the Government, which has a very clear choice. In my view the Government's choice is very easy for the simple reason that it has nothing to fear from the publicity. I have already indicated that there will be plenty of publicity in relation to WA Inc from charges laid as a result of the McCusker inquiry and from the actions of Bond Corporation when it seeks to get its money back, and there will be plenty of occasions for members of Parliament to raise the issue when the Government appropriates money to cover its losses. For those reasons I find it very easy to support this amendment.

MR PEARCE (Armadale - Leader of the House) [3.08 pm]: I do not know how many times the Opposition has to raise this issue in the House to understand the response which the Government has given quite clearly and succinctly.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Here is a perfect example of what I spoke of previously. Some members feel that what I said was not a fact, but as I indicated before, there must be an even-handed approach from the Chair to ensure that every member is treated fairly. During the time the Premier was on her feet a substantial number of interjections commenced before a minute had transpired. I said then that that sort of interjection was unacceptable and a point of order was taken which in some way implied that justice is not being dispensed fairly. I went to pains to indicate that as far as I am concerned it is. The speech immediately following was made by the Leader of the National Party and not one single interjection was made, yet the minute a member of the Government stood up and before the clock had time to tick over one minute Opposition members interjected. It is not appropriate if justice is to be given to all members. Opposition members must accept that when they make mistakes the Speaker will take action against them and this has been a perfect example of how one side is behaving differently from the other side, yet each side wants to be treated fairly. If Opposition members want to be treated fairly then they must act similarly.

Mr Bradshaw: The Leader of the House asked a question and under those circumstances it is reasonable to interject.

Mr PEARCE: That certainly raised the intellectual tone of the debate dramatically.

The Government has made it clear that it does not oppose the principle of establishing a further inquiry or a series of inquiries -

Mr Lewis: A Royal Commission?

Mr PEARCE: Yes, if a Royal Commission is appropriate. The Premier has said on many occasions, inside and outside this House, that a range of inquiries are taking place at present.

This amendment to the Address-in-Reply was seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, yet it was not spoken to by the mover. That is a practice I have not seen before this session. I have been involved in the moving of amendments to the Address-in-Reply in Opposition. So, I can understand the frustration that makes the Opposition gnash its teeth. I know why the member for Cottesloe is so desperate that his whole life now has become focused on the need to move from the opposite side of the House to this side of the House. I do not believe that people's lives should be bound up with that sort of personal ambition, especially when the overflow from that personal ambition acts to the detriment of the best interests of, or without any concern for, the people of Western Australia. I understand how awful it is to be in Opposition for any length of time, but when moving amendments to the Address-in-Reply

the mover of the amendment usually spoke to them a little. The mover would spend at least half of his speech laying down an argument for the proposition being put to the House. However, members opposite pop up and speak about cats, dogs, chickens or bean soup and in the last 30 seconds of their speech they rush through moving an amendment to the Address-in-Reply which has no relevance to what they have been talking about. When the Leader of the Opposition seconded this motion - he was really the first speaker to it - he used the tactic he often uses; that is, he does not argue with the arguments the Government proposes, he argues with his own arguments. I am not surprised that he does that because his arguments are easy to deal with - I have discovered that over the years, as have many other members. Point (a) of the amendment states that the Government has wrongly suggested -

That the McCusker Inquiry is investigating all the issues of WA Inc which it is not.

A nice piece of prose from the member for Vasse. The Government has never suggested that the McCusker inquiry is investigating all of the issues of WA Inc. Mr McCusker is investigating one of the central areas of the so-called WA Inc as it relates to the Rothwells business; that is the centre of a whole series of events about which members opposite complain, and about which the Government has been prepared to concede that wrong decisions were made which have had a deleterious effect generally on the State. Our argument has always been that those decisions were made with the best of information at the time and with the best will to try to bring about the best solutions. We concede that mistakes have been made, and a former Premier, a former Deputy Premier and a former Minister have paid for that effectively with their positions by accepting the responsibilities that go with making mistakes of that kind.

Mr Shave: They said that they had done nothing wrong!

Mr PEARCE: Well, they have done nothing wrong in a sense.

Mr Shave: Then why did you knife your former Premier?

Mr PEARCE: If it ever happens that the member for Melville should ever get into Government and become a Minister - heaven help us - he will find that as with any other group, decisions have to be made. Big decisions must be made under pressure when one is in Government. One collects as much information as one can, discusses the issues and makes the best possible decision one is capable of making at the time. In the vast majority of cases the decision will turn out to be right and in the best interests of the people. However, there will always be times when decisions are made on wrong presumptions or on wrong information. As far as the Government is concerned, Rothwells is one such example.

I point out to members opposite that their Governments have not been exempt from that because when in 1983 I first became a Minister in the Burke Cabinet, in the first week of the Government two briefings were held which totalled 11 or 12 hours regarding the North West Shelf pipeline proposition which had been bequeathed to us by the former Government. Of the many things shown to us at that briefing, a number of assumptions were made regarding what would happen in the future. One of the key assumptions which underlay the financing of that pipeline into the next century was the presumption that interest rates would not rise past 11 per cent. That turned out to be disastrously wrong and had a huge impact, not only on the State Energy Commission but also on the finances of this State. If the current State Government had not been able to negotiate itself out of the deal made on that occasion, a real financial disaster would have occurred. I would have thought members opposite would argue that at the time that decision was made, that presumption may have been a fair one. It is easy to look back with 20/20 hindsight and say that it was a wrong decision and it did not work out as well as expected. That argument is the one which the Government would attribute to Rothwells and related matters.

However, in view of the information which has come out since, I do not doubt that people were involved in the Rothwells business - many of them intimately; I refer to private people and not the Government or the Cabinet making decisions - who were doing things they should not have been doing. It would seem that these people were presenting information which was designed to mislead.

Mr Lewis: Is that Lloyd and Edwards?

Mr PEARCE: I am not naming any names because people are, or will be, before the courts regarding these matters, so I must be careful in what I say. These are the issues Mr

McCusker is investigating and Rothwells is central to the areas about which members opposite are complaining. But that is not an inquiry which covers the whole ambit, and the Government does not pretend that it does. However, many other things are happening which are inquiring into the whole ambit, not the least of which is the Opposition stacked upper House Select Committee designed to look at the whole ambit of the business. This committee is making an inquiry of its own and I understand that it is running up hundreds of thousands of dollars in bills in seeking advice from QCs and accountants. I also understand that an unauthorised bill approaching \$100 000 has been run up by the committee regarding one accounting firm - indeed, unauthorised not only by the Government or the Parliament, but also by the committee. So, that upper House committee has been given a wide ambit of investigation -

Mr Kierath: Those are very serious allegations.

Mr PEARCE: The member will see whether those claims are true. Members opposite will discover that the committee has taken unto itself the resources to enable it to conduct such a wide inquiry. Also, a range of matters before the court are also involved. Members opposite seem to believe that there is something different about an inquiry and a court case when finding out what is the truth. When some person turns up for a court case on matters relating to these issues and the whole of the petrochemical project is before the courts in the shape of legal action taken by the Bond Corporation in which it is suing the State for half a billion dollars, that person will have to raise his hand and swear to tell the truth. These people will be questioned by very expensive lawyers and all the arguments will be aired before the courts. That is why what the Leader of the National Party had to say is quite true. I am amazed that the Leader of the National Party could not see that the truth of his own argument undercut his conclusions. The Government realises that Mr McCusker will report in a couple of months; the Government realises that Bond Corporation's legal action will lay the whole petrochemical business before the courts, presumably in a few months' time; the Government realises that the upper House committee will continue to dribble out its reports of witnesses untested and this will be done without the approval of the entire committee, in order to gain political advantage at key points; nevertheless, the Government believes that it is not an appropriate point to add a Royal Commission to the whole gamut of inquiries. Once Mr McCusker has reported in the key and central area, about which members opposite complain, these issues will be clear and he will chart out the course of action which he believes should be followed from his investigations, and that might be an appropriate time to make a judgment as to whether we should have a Royal Commission. I cannot understand why members opposite find it difficult to accommodate themselves to Mr McCusker's timetable. Members opposite would know that Mr McCusker is due to report in the first few days of August; members opposite would know that the Government effectively has Supply until the end of August - we do not need to be talking about the blocking of Supply or Royal Commissions until August because the Opposition cannot do anything about it until that time. If we wait until then we can make a judgment with the benefit of Mr McCusker's report.

Mr Cowan: You can say yes now and we will start working on the terms of reference and they will be completed after the McCusker inquiry has concluded.

Mr PEARCE: Why do members opposite not wait to see what Mr McCusker has to say before they leap to judgment? The point I am putting to members opposite is that it is not a matter of the Government's agreeing to a Royal Commission now and waiting to have it in August. The Government wants to wait to see what Mr McCusker has to say before it decides whether to agree to a Royal Commission. The timetable which the Government believes is the proper one - it is waiting for the information from Mr McCusker - does not upset the Opposition's timetable because it will still have the capacity, if it has the nerve to block Supply after Mr McCusker has reported.

Mr Cowan: We have the nerve.

Mr PEARCE: I wonder about that because Opposition members did not have the nerve to try the bean soup last night. I tested our party's loyalties to that and the Labor Party and the National Party were as one in their attitude to Mr Pike's Senate bean soup, and I am told that only a couple of Liberal members were prepared to chance their nerve.

Mr Kierath: I tried it.

Mr PEARCE: I am not surprised. I was ruled out when I made that very point earlier about the member for Riverton in terms of the dining room. I am amazed he should bring that point forward at this time.

There is nothing wrong with the Opposition's waiting for Mr McCusker's report before it leaps to judgment. The reason it leapt to judgment at the time it did was the embarrassment faced by the Leader of the Opposition at the by-election results last Saturday. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition told me earlier that I would have got the gong on "Hey Hey It's Saturday", but I advise members that there was a special Western Australian edition of "Hey Hey It's Saturday" last Saturday and the Opposition got the gong in no uncertain terms. At 6.00 pm last Saturday the gong was sounded on the Leader of the Opposition and he knew it. That is the reason he was up before breakfast on Sunday getting his crew together. Before 7.30 am last Sunday he was holding a meeting to lock his members into the blocking of Supply.

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: He will not wait for Mr McCusker's report; he could not wait for the party meeting before he locked his own colleagues, without consultation, into the blocking of Supply. It is unfortunate that the Liberal Party has been able to build up an attitude in the bush; a small number of the Liberal leadership, not the entire Parliamentary Liberal Party, have locked in not only their own party but also, by virtue of their meeting, the National Party. It does not say much for the claim of independence of the National Party because it is now in a position which it is led along like the tail of a brown dog in the dining room or elsewhere and whenever the Liberal leader sneezes the tail wags. The National Party may as well amalgamate with the Liberal Party if it is going to be like that because the Liberal Party has it in a position where it must do what it is told. If the National Party is happy with that position it is fine by the Government because the Government has worked for a long time on the basis that there is only one party opposite. Members of the National Party and most of the members of the Liberal Party know that they could have waited for the McCusker report before they came to a decision; a decision which the Leader of the Opposition made before they were told. Most members opposite would have heard about that decision on the television news on Sunday night for the first time. It is the truth and not all Opposition members liked it. It is well known around the traps that there are at least two members in the other place, not counting the President who has made his position very clear and that he will not vote in favour of blocking Supply -

Point of Order

Mr SHAVE: Is it proper for a member in this place to quote out of context in this House a statement by the Presiding Officer in the Legislative Council?

The SPEAKER: I think the member is referring to the Standing Order which refers to debates in the other House.

Mr SHAVE: No, I am not. The President of the Legislative Council made a statement in the other House and the Minister is taking that statement out of context.

The SPEAKER: If in fact he is, and I will not be the arbiter of that, the member for Melville will have the opportunity at a later stage in this debate or at some other time to put that right. In respect of the Standing Order referring to members not referring to debates in the other House, which is the only Standing Order under which I can really answer his question, had the statement not been published it may well be that the member's point of order was well taken. However, I know that it was reported in *The West Australian* this morning and it could well be that the Leader of the House is referring to that article. Far be it from me or anyone in this House to stop him from doing that.

Mr SHAVE: Mr Speaker, on another point of order -

The SPEAKER: It had better be another point of order because I will not allow my ruling to be canvassed.

Debate (on amendment to motion, as amended) Resumed

Mr PEARCE: I am not surprised that members opposite are nervous about that and they do not want too much repetition of it. They know as well as I do that there are at least two members in the other place who are not very happy about the idea of blocking Supply. We will see how well the Opposition's nerve holds because we will have plenty of opportunity

for it to be tested. As the Premier said, this Government is not about to be blackmailed on these issues.

Mr Kierath: The word is coerced.

Mr PEARCE: The Government will not be coerced on these issues either. It was elected to govern for four years less than 18 months ago and it will govern for four years and that is that. The issue of a Royal Commission is something else again and it is something which the Premier, clearly, has not ruled out and it is something the Government has not ruled out. The Government has said consistently that that is the case and it has laid down the timetable involved in reaching that decision. The Government will not be involved in the type of personal, self-seeking expeditiousness of the kind which characterised the Leader of the Opposition's rush to block Supply in order to move quickly before his own supply is blocked by his colleagues.

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: I have never forgotten a cartoon -

Mr Court: Can you give one of our members an opportunity to speak before 3.30 pm?

Mr PEARCE: No, the deal was that we have an equal number of speakers. The Government has had two - the Premier and me - and the Opposition has already had three speakers. We have not had half the time the Opposition has had. Should the Opposition want to carry on with this debate I will leave that decision to it. An arrangement was made and it was broken by the member for Cottesloe who took the call before the Premier. A deal is a deal. The deal I had with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was that we would have one for one and we would have an equal amount of time. Immediately after the Leader of the Opposition spoke -

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: I am not saying that at all. The Opposition approached me with a proposition that we curtail the debate in order to allow the National Party to move a matter of public importance. I did not mind curtailing the Government speakers provided we had an equal number of speakers to the Opposition. When I sit down the Speaker will look for another speaker and if the member for Darling Range stands he is quite within his rights to speak. I certainly will not move to gag the debate. As Leader of the House it is not my responsibility to sort out members opposite.

Mr Blaikie: You change courses very quickly.

Mr PEARCE: Not at all. It was an arrangement which was made.

Mr Blaikie: The member for Darling Range wants to take part in the debate.

Mr PEARCE: The Opposition has to make an allowance for the member for Darling Range - he sits on the opposite side of the House to the Government. He is not a member of the Government and we are certainly not proposing to count him as one of our members when we are working out these arrangements. If the member for Cottesloe had not sought the call when he did we might have been in a more relaxed state by 3.30 pm.

I will restate, as firmly as I can, the Government's position.

Several members interjected.

Mr Fred Tubby: Is it true you are retiring at the next election and that is what you are worried about?

Mr Kierath: He knows his days are numbered.

Mr PEARCE: Having been one of the members who has been around this place for a relatively long time and having started with a margin of 0.9 per cent and watched it grow to 16 per cent I must say that three per cent seems quite a healthy margin to me. It does not worry me whether I contest an election in September or in 1993. I expect to be back in this House after the next election, whenever it is held. It is not a question of whether one is confident about winning an election. That should not be a deciding factor about when an election is called. If the Labor Party called an election every time it could win one, an election would be held every Saturday of the year to reconfirm the Government's mandate. Constitutional stability requires that Governments serve their term. One of the factors that has marked constitutional stability in this State, as distinct from in the Federal arena, is that

every Government has served its full term. A Government in this State has never called an election to suit its own electoral convenience; all parties have played a part in that and it is an important principle to preserve. Governments should not call for elections to suit themselves and Oppositions should not try to do so either. The real reason the Opposition parties will not hold their nerve until the end of August is that they will not win an election if one is held this year, and that will become increasingly clear as the days go by.

MR THOMPSON (Darling Range) [3.31 pm]: One of the criticisms I had of the operations of the Liberal Party before I left it was that too few people were given the opportunity to speak in this place. I made the point on a number of occasions that the contribution from Opposition members in the recent history of debate in this place had been controlled and dominated by three or four people, with the balance of members sitting on the benches as cannon fodder. I believe that is totally inappropriate and I was critical of that arrangement. I made it clear the other night that I have an interest in the subject under discussion and yet an arrangement was made between the Opposition and the Government to curtail debate at 3.30 this afternoon, without any discussion with me or any suggestion that I have a right to speak in the debate. The Standing Orders of this Parliament determine the rights of individuals in this place and I will exercise my rights under those Standing Orders to express views on those issues in which I have an interest.

Mr Fred Tubby interjected.

Mr THOMPSON: The member for Roleystone can say what he likes and be as objectionable and insulting as he likes. He must face the fact that I will be heard in this place; he may not like what he hears, but I have a right to be heard.

Mr Court: Sometimes people may think that the debate is long, boring and tedious but it is important that everyone has the right to speak. The Opposition fully supports that.

Mr THOMPSON: That is fair enough, but I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in future not to enter into deals with the other side of the House without taking into account the fact that I may want to speak in the debate. I understand an arrangement has been made for the National Party to move a matter of public importance and I do not want to detract from its opportunity to do so. However, in the circumstances I shall take some time to address the House.

I believe a Royal Commission should be set up to inquire into WA Inc. The Opposition and other people in the community have the right to call for that Royal Commission. My voice will join with the voices of people on this side of the House and others in the community calling for the appointment of a Royal Commission. The community feeling is that only through a Royal Commission can the matters relating to WA Inc be cleared up. I have faith in the inquiries initiated by the Government and I believe many of the issues that concern the community will be addressed by those inquiries. However, I am sure that there is a genuine desire in the community for a Royal Commission to be appointed.

If the Government appointed a Royal Commission today, that would not satisfy the Opposition. It would find some other reason for criticising the Government because the Opposition's intention - I think this is an accurate assumption on my part - is to move from this side of the House to the other side of the House. The Opposition is not prepared to accept the decision of the electorate. The Opposition fluffed the 1989 election because only the Liberal Party could have lost that election.

Mr Kierath: You played a part.

Mr THOMPSON: I was part of that team, but a fortnight before the election I pleaded with the shadow Cabinet and the strategy group which met in the party room to adopt a different approach in the campaign. I suggest that if they had listened to me, I would today be a Minister of the Crown. The people who have control of the party at present are not prepared to listen to people who have been around for a year or two, but they are prepared to go down the path of negativity. The Opposition is perceived as a negative group by the community and will continue to be because it does nothing positive.

Mr Fred Tubby: What are you doing that is so positive?

Mr THOMPSON: I am doing a number of positive things and always have done. I have sponsored a number of positive initiatives which appear on the Notice Paper, but I have not

had an opportunity to pursue them because the big three or four Opposition members have occupied the time available grizzling about negative issues.

Mr Blaikie: That is absolute rubbish.

Mr THOMPSON: I invite the member to read the votes and proceedings of this House. I took a number of positive initiatives with the support of the party room, but I did not have the opportunity to raise them in Parliament because on private members' days those items were always superseded by some grizzling, carping criticism the Opposition wanted to press. That is how the Opposition is perceived in the community.

Mr Blaikie: The Premier announced today that she would introduce Standing Committees of the Parliament to review the Appropriation Bills, and that was initiated by me.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): I remind the House of the terms of the amendment being debated. The debate has strayed more than somewhat from that amendment and, in the interests of time, to which the member alluded at the commencement of his remarks, it would be preferable to remain with the amendment before the Chair.

Mr THOMPSON: I was talking about the desirability of the appointment of a Royal Commission. I support the establishment of such a commission but I do not believe the Opposition has the right to use its numbers in the Legislative Council to blackmail the Government into doing something it does not want to do. What has been the situation most of the time when a conservative Government has been in office? No such threat has ever been presented to the Government. I suggest that if ever a conservative Government, duly elected by the people, were stood over by a hostile upper House, we would hear as much argument from that Government as is heard from the present Labor Government.

Philosophically I am opposed to members opposite and I want to see a conservative Government on that side of the House. However, I am not prepared to support a push that in my view prostitutes the principle under which the parliamentary democracy of this State has operated in the 100 years of responsible government in this State. It is a totally inappropriate use of the power of the upper House for the Opposition to carry out the action it is apparently contemplating. We heard the Leader of the Opposition, his Deputy and one or two others speak about what will happen in the upper House. I have been in this place for a long time, and one thing I have found out about the conservatives in that House is that they are a fiercely independent bunch. In the time I have been here they have distinguished themselves as people who have put the interests of the State ahead of the party. I shall be very surprised if, when the crunch comes, those members who occupy that very privileged position in the Legislative Council tarnish their record and bring that upper House into disrepute by voting to force the Government to an election over this issue.

Mr Lewis: Do they not have a responsibility to the State for what has gone on?

Several members interjected.

Mr THOMPSON: Let me put this to my friend who is new to this place and still wet behind the ears. There was a time when I occupied that Chair and when there was a Labor Party in Opposition which was as vehement and vigorous in its condemnation of something the then Government had done. It wanted a Royal Commission into all the affairs concerned with the North West Shelf project. I happened to support what the Government had done, but the members who occupied the Opposition benches on that occasion had the same sort of feelings about that Government as this Opposition has about the present Government. However, the conservatives had the numbers in the upper House -

Several members interjected.

Mr THOMPSON: The Government people did not have the numbers. Members who sit on this side of the House should take into account the fact that if a Royal Commission is appointed into the affairs of Government, its terms of reference may apply not only to the period of office of the Labor Party; I would not be at all surprised if the terms of reference of a Royal Commission, when it is appointed, go a little deeper. Members sitting opposite were convinced that misdeeds were done in the arrangements entered into in regard to a number of things in the life of the conservative Government, and they might, while they have the opportunity, look at those questions.

Mr Fred Tubby: There is something else they might like to look at, if you want me to mention it.

Mr Pearce: Go ahead.

Mr Fred Tubby: I do not think I should.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): Order! I ask the House again, as I did a little while ago, to try to confine the debate to the terms of the amendment. I said before that members are aware that the National Party intends to move a motion of public importance. I have no wish to inhibit the remarks of the member on his feet, but I ask him to confine his remarks to the terms of the amendment.

Mr THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. The call for a Royal Commission is a legitimate one. The suggested use of the power of the Legislative Council is not a legitimate use of that power. I remind the conservatives in this House that my experience has shown that while the leadership of the party on frequent occasions in the past has indicated a direction that the party should go, in many cases in the Legislative Council that direction was not followed. I can point to a number of pieces of legislation which have passed through this Parliament when the view of the leadership - and I suggest the majority of the Liberal Party - was that it should not. For instance, the legislation under which Western Australian Development Corporation was set up was vigorously opposed in the party room and did not have the support of the majority of members, but it ultimately succeeded because members in the Legislative Council decided that it should. The conservatives overwhelmingly voted against random breath testing, but it is on the Statute book today because members in the upper House decided to exercise their independence and vote in that way. So when the Leader of the Opposition goes gung ho about what will happen in the Legislative Council, he should pay some regard to the long history - not only recent history - of the performance of those members in the Legislative Council.

I could not get over the strength of the call for a blocking of Supply made on Sunday morning by the Leader of the Opposition after the by-elections; not only a call for it but a statement that it was going to occur. I suggest to him that that was a statement he had no authority to make. I would be very surprised, knowing my colleagues, if they accept it. A high percentage would resent the Leader of the Opposition taking it upon himself to do what he did. When the crunch comes, they will go the other way.

Dr Alexander: It is a pity more of them are not listening now.

Several members interjected.

Mr THOMPSON: Since October there have probably been six meetings. I have not been there, but I was there for 18 years before and I happen to know the calibre of some of the members who sit in the upper House. I can tell members here, without canvassing their views, that many members in the Parliamentary Liberal Party do not support the present thrust.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (20)

Mr Bradshaw	Mr Grayden	Mr Mensaros	Mr Trenorden
Mr Clarko	Mr House	Mr Nicholls	Mr Fred Tubby
Mr Court	Mr Kierath	Mr Omodei	Mr Watt
Mr Cowan	Mr Lewis	Mr Shave	Mr Wiese
Mrs Edwardes	Mr MacKinnon	Mr Strickland	Mr Blaikie (Teller)

Noes (28)

Dr Alexander	Mr Donovan	Mr Marlborough	Mr Taylor
Mrs Beggs	Dr Edwards	Mr McGinty	Mr Thomas
Mr Bridge	Mr Graham	Mr Pearce	Mr Thompson
Mrs Buchanan	Mr Grill	Mr Read	Mr Troy
Mr Carr	Mr Kobelke	Mr Ripper	Dr Watson
Mr Catania	Dr Lawrence	Mr D.L. Smith	Mr Wilson
Mr Cunningham	Mr Leahy	Mr P.J. Smith	Mrs Watkins (Teller)

Pairs

Mr Minson
Mr McNee
Mr Hassell

Mrs Henderson
Mr Gordon Hill
Dr Gallop

Amendment thus negatived.

Motion, as Amended

Question (motion, as amended) put and passed; the Address-in-Reply, as amended, thus adopted.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE - WOOL INDUSTRY

Wool Floor Price Reduction

MR PEARCE (Armadale - Leader of the House) [3.51 pm]: Mr Speaker, I understand you have received a letter from the National Party with regard to a matter of public importance. With your concurrence, Sir, I wish to draw your attention to the fact that there has been an arrangement behind the Chair which suggests that you may seek to take it now. Given the fact that there is an agreement that the House will rise at 4.30 pm, the suggestion was made that the Government and the Opposition split the time remaining before 4.30 pm to deal with that issue. I make it clear that, in that splitting of time, any allowance of time to be made for independent members to speak would come off the time allotted to members opposite.

The SPEAKER: In view of the time and the agreement made behind the Chair I will be brief in what I have to say; nonetheless, I must say it.

In reality this matter of public importance does not fall within the guidelines afforded in the Standing Orders which would allow me to let it go ahead immediately today, and I suggest some work be done behind the Chair over the next few days which will bring about a Sessional Order or some such thing which will facilitate this sort of matter of public importance in the future. I am sure that will happen.

Mr Pearce: It has already been done.

The SPEAKER: Having said that, I advise members that earlier today I received a letter from the deputy leader of the National Party relating to the reduction in the floor price of wool by the Federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy. The letter indicates that it is in accordance with Standing Order No 82A; it is not in accordance with that Standing Order, but the rest of the letter is fine.

In accordance with the rule of the House previously expressed, if five members are prepared to stand in support of this motion I will allow it to go ahead.

[Five members rose in their places.]

The SPEAKER: I strongly suspect from what is being indicated to me that 36 minutes remain. That time will be evenly shared by those members on my left and those on my right.

Motion

MR HOUSE (Stirling) [3.54 pm]: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I accept your criticism of my letter and the way in which it was couched, but I point out to the House that I had no choice as no Clerks were here at 8.00 am today to ensure that the letter conformed to the Standing Orders. I am sure you will put that right as time goes by. I move -

That this House -

- (1) Condemns absolutely the Federal Government decision to override both the interests and the commercial judgment of the wool industry by using its political power to force a reduction in the floor price of wool.
- (2) Warns that Mr Kerin's decision will cut the incomes of wool growers and others in the wool industry, and that this will flow on to the broader community in the form of higher unemployment and bankruptcies.
- (3) Holds the Federal Government responsible for -
 - (a) waterfront inefficiencies;
 - (b) the artificially high value of the Australian dollar; and

(c) dismally slow tariff reform,

all of which are major factors contributing to the current crisis of the wool industry.

I have very limited time in which to speak and I wish to say a number of things. This decision by Mr Kerin is perhaps the single most important economic decision that has been made by a Government in recent history and it will impact on the lives of every Australian - not just on the lives and incomes of wool growers but on every person in this country - because as this country moves further into recession this decision will be seen to be the folly that it actually is.

The wool industry has a great future. The reserve price acquisition scheme, as it has always been known, was born out of a crisis 17 years ago, and since that day the wool industry has taxed itself and controlled itself, and has not needed the intervention of a Government or a Minister to tell it what to do. We have run the industry very well and successfully and it has been of great benefit to this country. The reserve price scheme has benefited every citizen of Australia.

The decision made by the Federal Minister and the Federal Cabinet yesterday means we no longer have a reserve price scheme. It is no good saying that it is 700¢; that is not the case. We do not have a reserve price scheme and this Federal Government and the Federal Minister stand condemned for that, because any wool grower in this country who now feels he can fall back on the reserve price acquisition scheme has another think coming. Every buyer in this country will wait a little longer until another gutless Minister makes another gutless decision and drops the price again. Everyone ought to understand that there is now no floor price scheme. Heaven alone knows why Mr Kerin ignored the advice of the industry, the wool growers, the consumers and the buying houses all around the world. The only people supporting the Minister's decision were some of the economists in the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics, and they have been wrong so many times before that I am surprised a man of Mr Kerin's standing did not take a little less notice of them.

Because we now have no reserve price plan and no stability in the wool industry, wool growers will go bankrupt. We will have no buyers - no buyer will ever buy with confidence again. The buying houses that have had wool in store have had a reduction in the value of their stockpile, which destroys their confidence. Wool growers who borrowed money against their own assets have now had those assets reduced by a Minister's decision. In fact, he has reduced our equity by about 25 per cent with one decision. We made commercial decisions to buy on a commercial market against an asset and that Minister has taken away from us that commercial decision and that commercial availability, and in one fell swoop has destroyed our industry and confidence in it. I would like the Minister to explain to wool growers in this country why he has done that, because he has not yet given us a satisfactory explanation. We pay for all of the industry costs, we tax ourselves to make sure this scheme runs properly, and we employ our own people. We have never asked for Government assistance; we have never asked for Government interference, but that is what we have got.

Why does Mr Kerin not leave us alone? Why did he interfere? Why does a politician tell us what will happen to the wool industry? Mr Kerin should explain to the woolgrowers in Australia; indeed, he should explain the effects of his decision to every person in Australia. I will remind him in 12 months' time, and again in two years' time, that the minor recession being experienced in the cities at the moment will spread throughout the country. As woolgrowers' income falls and finally disappears - as it surely will - everyone will lose. Their buying power will be lost and therefore the balance of trade will be affected. Every man, woman and child in this country will suffer as a result of the decision made by the Federal Government yesterday. The confidence of not only the woolgrowers in this country but also the buyers, the warehousing people and millions of consumers, has been shaken. We deserve an explanation.

An interesting letter appeared in *The Australian* on Tuesday this week written by Michael Lonergan. Mr Lonergan stated that he worked for 14 years for the Industries Assistance Commission as a senior economist. He decided to leave the commission and he bought a farming property with the intention of growing wool. He writes his letter in support of woolgrowers in this country and to admit how wrong were his economic theories. He

realises how wrong he was to advise the commission about industrial and economic matters. Now that he has entered the cold hard world and witnessed the cost of production and other costs which affect the price of wool, he realises his economic training was useless without the practical knowledge which he has gained since leaving the commission. Mr Lonergan's letter should be circulated as widely as possible to every economist who advises Government to make the stupid decisions such as that made by Mr Kerin and the Federal Cabinet yesterday. I assume the decision was made yesterday, because the Minister is not too clear about that.

The decision was based on bad advice but it is not too late to save the wool industry; it is not too late to overturn the decision. If Mr Kerin were to stand up and admit his mistake, and stick by the woolgrowers on the reserve price plan, he would return some feeling of confidence to the industry. Woolgrowers would know where they stand. Mr Kerin has no guarantee that wool will sell at 700¢, 500¢ or even 100¢ a kilogram. I guarantee that the wool buyers will wait for the price to drop again. The Government makes these decisions, but what about reforming the waterfront which costs us a fortune? The Government should address interest rates and tariff protection, both of which cost the country a fortune. The community has the perception that agriculture is subsidised. I challenge any member to tell me where this occurs. Agriculture is not subsidised; it stands on its own two feet. Growers are proud that that is so. We want to be left alone to make our own decisions. If Mr Kerin wants to interfere he should do so in the areas where he has some control; he should address high interest rates, the waterfront, tariffs and so on. Why has Mr Kerin not addressed those areas? He should answer that question. When he does so, we will debate with him whether he should interfere with the wool industry. I say that he should not interfere.

I thank the Government and the Opposition for allowing the National Party to debate the issue on very short notice.

MR WIESE (Wagin) [4.05 pm]: My colleague, the member for Stirling, has covered the problems faced by the wool industry very well. Mr Kerin should answer these questions quickly and carefully. The Federal Minister should be made aware of the costs borne by the industry as a result of a Federal Government decision which has been made to prop up an economic situation. These costs should not be imposed on the woolgrower; they should be imposed on the whole of Australian industry, otherwise woolgrowers will suffer badly.

I will outline some of those costs and members can ask why the decision was made. I will also outline the losses incurred by the Australian wool industry. The wool stockpile has been devalued by \$500 million - and that represents an immediate loss to the industry. If the Government wants to put a price on the value of the wool growing on sheep presently - which wool will reach the market in the next 12 months - that amounts to \$1 billion, and represents a \$1 billion loss to the woolgrowers over the next 12 months. Over the next five years that loss will be \$5 billion. The 180 million sheep running around Australia have been devalued by \$5 a head - another \$900 million loss to the Australian wool growers. All these losses will occur within the next year or two. An estimate by an economist over the last couple of days places a value of \$8.5 billion on the farmlands on which the stock run; that will be a further devaluation as a result of the decision made by Mr Kerin.

What will be the cost to the grain and cattle industries when the woolgrowers enter those industries? How can we put a value on that? It will be enormous. What will be the cost to rural towns and the individuals in those towns? Again, the cost will be enormous. I defy anyone to put a value on that. These figures amount to \$14.5 billion and represent a direct and tangible loss to the woolgrowers of Australia as a result of the decision made by Mr Kerin. I put together those figures in 10 minutes; an expert would probably come up with a higher figure. Did Mr Kerin consider the loss to the Taxation Department as a result of his decision? I suggest billions of dollars will be lost as a result of the non payment of taxes by woolgrowers this year. What effect will that have on the Federal Budget? After considering in detail the costs involved members will ask themselves why Mr Kerin made the decision. He must have known that the decision would impact badly on woolgrowers and the wool industry. It was a black day when that decision was made and the whole of Australia will wear the results of that decision for a long time.

MR BRIDGE (Kimberley - Minister for Agriculture) [4.10 pm]: The motion highlights the concern in the community relating to the wool industry of Australia. This is an issue which

all of us would very much wish had not been an issue for debate; however, the Commonwealth Government decision on the floor price has been made and it was ratified by Federal Cabinet yesterday. The Commonwealth Government has advised the industry that it is prepared to implement its decision which is contrary to the broad consensus of opinion on this issue.

Mr Shave: Do you support what they have done?

Mr BRIDGE: I do not support the proposition; I point out that that view is from one of the most uninformed people in Australia on this issue.

Mr Lewis: You are the Minister for Agriculture!

Mr BRIDGE: I am not a woolgrower.

Mr Lewis: You are the Government's spokesman on agriculture.

Mr BRIDGE: I never attempt to be a jack of all trades and a master of none, as Opposition members do.

Mr Lewis: But you know a little about agriculture?

Mr BRIDGE: Does the member want to hear my argument on this motion?

Mr Lewis: Do not make excuses.

Mr BRIDGE: I am not making excuses. I supported the original stand on the 870¢ price by the industry and I have indicated that in a letter to Kerin; however, members opposite just bleat in this House and do sweet nothing outside. I am prepared to signal my position publicly in supporting the industry, but that does not mean that I should state in Parliament that I am an expert on the wool industry. I will quote the letter sent to the Federal Minister shortly for the smart alec members opposite.

The Government is gravely concerned about the impact this decision will have on the industry in Western Australia. I am supported by the Premier, my ministerial colleagues and Government backbenchers in sharing the concerns that the Opposition raises in this motion; however, it is difficult to know what we can do to further resist this move when dealing with the situation in Western Australia. In the immediate future I will talk to the industry in this State and come to some arrangement as to what sort of structure we can establish to examine the impact of the Commonwealth Government's decision. If the Government is capable of lessening that burden by way of a direct arrangement, or a number of indirect arrangements, that will be done. At this stage I am not sure how we will do this but I am prepared to talk to the National Party, the Liberal Party and the industry generally to see whether a strategy could be devised to deal with the problem.

Irrespective of what we say in the House today the decision has been made.

Mr Lewis: No, this motion would take a message to Canberra stating that the Parliament does not agree with the decision.

Mr BRIDGE: We are talking about a decision which has already been made and which will have considerable impact on the industry.

Mr Kierath: So, would it not be nice if we could send a message of support from all of us?

Mr BRIDGE: A message has already been sent to the Commonwealth in the form of a letter from which I quote -

Dear John

I write to you about the apparent impasse over the very important matters of the wool floor price and the wool tax ceiling.

There has been somewhat lengthy debate over the appropriate strategies which might best deal with the current situation and future market developments confronting wool from the Australian Industry's and governments viewpoints.

I understand the peak industry body, the Wool Council of Australia, has now formally resolved to support the Australian Wool Corporation's position to maintain the 870¢/kg reserve with a 25% wool tax ceiling. This position has a broad body of support among wool growers in Western Australia.

With the Australian wool industry's position formally resolved, it would be in the interests of all parties if there could be an early announcement of the Commonwealth's decision on the wool floor price. This would help to remove the uncertainties which currently exist and to restore order and stability to wool marketing and the wool industry.

This letter is designed to convince the Commonwealth of our position. The motion criticises the Federal Minister substantially regarding his handling of this matter. I am not prepared to support that approach. I must try to find a way to develop a formula in consultation with interested groups as to how Government can help these groups in meeting this considerable pain. I suggest that the Liberal and National Parties consider the value of establishing a task force in Western Australia operating under the three dimensional concept which is now generally recognised by industry groups around Western Australia. This would give the industry groups a link to Government.

Mr Court: So you are going to talk about it.

Mr BRIDGE: I am offering the chance to do so. We must discover how the Government can help these people.

Mr House: What happened with that deputation to Kerin regarding the import of pig meat?

Mr BRIDGE: That did not proceed as I or the member would have wished.

Mr House: Did it go?

Mr BRIDGE: No, it did not go and that is what I meant in my earlier comment. However, I remind the member that on two occasions before today in this Parliament the Government supported motions put forward by the National Party. On both occasions the motions had a measure of criticism of the Federal Government enshrined in them. The first motion concerned the wheat industry and the Government did not back off from that issue as members would know - the Government's position was known nationally. Also, the Government supported the proposition for a delegation to meet Mr Kerin to discuss the importation of pig meat. Perhaps we did not get a favourable response to either of those moves, but it indicates that the Government has supported the Western Australian rural sector because it knows how important that sector is. We have supported and recognised the value of localised industry in the bush. The whole process of my ministerial administration is deeply attuned to the need to take care of people in such places, to have compassion and to put realistic measures in place to assist the orderly process to safeguard the industry.

One of the fundamental charters of any Government, Federal or State, is the responsibility to ensure that an infrastructure is in place to allow industries to operate and develop. We do not support the motion in the way it stands, nevertheless we recognise the intent of the motion regarding the position of the industry in Western Australia. The situation requires the Government to pay considerable attention to the industry where we see that as appropriate and where the industry sees a joint arrangement with the Government as beneficial.

MR OMODEI (Warren) [4.20 pm]: This is an important motion and a very strong message, along the lines it outlines, should be sent from this Parliament to the Federal Minister for Primary Industries. The motion quite clearly condemns the Federal Government's decision to override the industry's decision.

Mr Taylor: What does the Federal Liberal Party say?

Mr OMODEI: I am referring to this motion and not to the Federal Liberal Party's view on this matter. I know what the Federal Liberal Party has said and if the Deputy Premier wants to speak to the motion he can do so later. I am referring to the floor price for wool; a measure which has maintained stability in the wool industry for many years. The Minister for Agriculture, in his usual amicable way, will hold a meeting with interested parties to talk about the Federal Government's decision. The fact is that in the same way as this Government did not have the guts to go to the Federal Minister about his decision on pig meat, it does not have the guts to go to him on this issue.

We need to look closely at this situation and I will reiterate some of the concerns of the member for Wagin. As a result of the Federal Government's decision there will a devaluation of the wool stockpile by some \$400 million. More than \$1 billion of this financial year's woolclip will be lost and it will affect not only the industry, but also the

nation. The Federal Government's decision will have a reverse multiplier affect in country areas and will cause great hardship. We need to consider the buyers of Australian wool and those people who have lost funds as a result of the Government's decision. I refer members to some of the comments made by the Australian Wool Corporation. It has stated that some buyers, including the Italians and Germans, are of the opinion that a reduction in the floor price of wool would be a disaster. In that context an article in *The Australian Financial Review* of 11 May states -

"It would destroy confidence in the AWC's capacity to stabilise wool prices and this would surely induce many processors to go out of wool," the company said.
"Reducing the floor price would not in our opinion produce an increased demand for wool."

Members are aware of the competition between wool and synthetic materials and, as a result, wool is a very highly priced commodity. We must ensure that the floor price system, let alone the floor price, stays in place. The Minister for Primary Industries has acted irresponsibly in reducing the floor price. As I understand it, the wool industry in this State was in favour of maintaining the floor price at 870¢. It is something which this Parliament has supported previously and it should continue to support it.

The problem is that the Minister for Primary Industries kowtows to the Federal Treasurer who does not have the guts to confront problems such as the inefficiency of the waterfront and the inflated Australian dollar. It is quite simple for these two people to focus their attention on rural Australia by placing a burden on it instead of making hard economic decisions. If the Federal Treasurer, along with the Minister for Primary Industries, were to address the issues of high interest rates, waterfront reform and the inflated Australian dollar wool sales would flow across the nation. Rural Australia knows this and it knows the Federal Minister is placing the onus on agricultural Australia instead of making hard decisions. I believe that decision will come back to haunt the Minister for Primary Industries.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (22)			
Mr Bradshaw	Mr House	Mr Omodei	Dr Turnbull
Mr Clarko	Mr Kierath	Mr Shave	Mr Watt
Mr Court	Mr Lewis	Mr Strickland	Mr Wiese
Mr Cowan	Mr MacKinnon	Mr Thompson	Mr Blaikie (<i>Teller</i>)
Mrs Edwardes	Mr Mensaros	Mr Trenorden	
Mr Grayden	Mr Nicholls	Mr Fred Tubby	
Noes (27)			
Dr Alexander	Mr Donovan	Mr Marlborough	Mr Taylor
Mrs Beggs	Dr Edwards	Mr McGinty	Mr Thomas
Mr Bridge	Mr Graham	Mr Pearce	Mr Troy
Mrs Buchanan	Mr Grill	Mr Read	Dr Watson
Mr Carr	Mr Kobelke	Mr Ripper	Mr Wilson
Mr Catania	Dr Lawrence	Mr D.L. Smith	Mrs Watkins (<i>Teller</i>)
Mr Cunningham	Mr Leahy	Mr P.J. Smith	
Pairs			
Mr Minson		Mrs Henderson	
Mr McNee		Mr Gordon Hill	
Mr Hassell		Dr Gallop	

Question thus negatived.

House adjourned at 4.28 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

ROTHWELLS LTD - LLOYD, MR TONY
Petrochemical Deal - Liquidation Effects Advice

370. Mr COURT to the Deputy Premier:

When was the Government informed by Mr Tony Lloyd that the Government would be worse off if Rothwells were to go into liquidation after the petrochemical deal was settled?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

This question is not understood.

ROTHWELLS LTD - SPEDLEY SECURITIES LTD
Provisional Liquidation Rescue Attempts - Government Support

372. Mr COURT to the Deputy Premier:

(1) Did the Government assure Spedley Securities that it would support attempts to get Rothwells out of provisional liquidation two weeks after the collapse of Rothwells in November 1988?

(2) If yes, why was this assurance given?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

The Government told Spedleys that it would support any reasonable attempt which did not involve the injection of new Government funds.

SOUTH WEST - MAJOR PROJECTS

521. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for South West:

(1) What major projects are currently being investigated or feasibility studies carried out for the south west?

(2) Where are these projects planned to be located?

Mr D.L. SMITH replied:

(1) Projects in the early stage of their development are kept confidential by the proponent. However, projects which are past that stage and which are the subject of study include a mini steel mill, alumina refinery expansions at Worsley and Wagerup, mineral sands at Beenup, synthetic rutile at Capel, expansion of the silicon smelter at Kemerton including Silicon intermediates and graphite at Munglinup. In addition, a newsprint pulping and de-inking project and a wood pulping project are being investigated.

(2) Most projects are tied to existing projects or resources and are therefore fixed in location. Those that are not fixed are being directed towards existing industrial estates such as Kemerton and the one being developed at Kemerton.

JUVENILE CRIME - PREMIER'S PROGRAM

595. Mr HASSELL to the Premier:

(1) What are precise details of the Premier's program for juvenile crime?

(2) When will each item be implemented?

(3) When will the announced committee first meet?

(4) Will all its reports be made public?

(5) How often will it report?

(6) To whom?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

(1) (i) The introduction of an official police cautioning system.

(ii) The establishment of a joint Ministerial Advisory Committee on

Young Offenders chaired by Justice Walsh, which will begin an immediate review of the juvenile justice system and make recommendations to Government.

(iii) Programs for recidivist offenders:

- (a) Linking Offenders with Effect of their Crime
Community Service or Probation orders which require offenders to work in a situation where they recognise the possible impact of their crime, e.g. a hospital, in the manufacture of equipment for people with accident related disabilities or in the repair of vandalised property or equipment.
- (b) Adoption and Extension of the Pilot Station Programme
The current pilot programme will be ongoing and will be extended to include the Goldfields and the Kimberley regions. Consideration is also being given to opportunities which might be available in other industries.
- (c) Mentor Scheme - Support for Offenders in the Community
This Scheme will involve the participation of members of service clubs such as Rotary and will provide guidance to young offenders by promoting school attendance, involvement in employment, training and teaching positive use of leisure time.
- (d) Bush Camp
The proposal for young offenders to be in bush training camps as part of a diversionary programme will be referred to the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Young Offenders to recommend how such a scheme may be implemented.
- (e) Post Strict Custody Options
A work release programme will introduce young offenders to a work routine, which, if it is breached, will result in the young person returning to detention.
- (f) Local Offender Programme
The current Local Offender Programme will be maintained and will be expanded with new programmes in targeted metropolitan and country areas. The development of new programmes will be preceded by consultation with Aboriginal people in the metropolitan area, in response to their requests to take more responsibilities through participation in developing and implementing new initiatives.
- (g) Juveniles in Institutions
New programmes to improve detainees skills and education involving Aboriginal groups, Department of Employment and Training and the Ministry of Education will be introduced.

- (2) 2.1 The police cautioning system will begin immediately upon the proclamation of enabling legislation.
- 2.2 The joint Ministerial Advisory Committee is currently being established.
- 2.3 Summary of Implementation for Programmes for Recidivist Offenders
 - (i) Programmes (b), (f) and (g) have commenced and are undergoing further development for expansion.
 - (ii) Programmes (a), (c) and (e) - negotiations will begin immediately with the relevant organisations and agencies to implement.

- (3) Justice Walsh will convene a meeting convenient to his timetable following the appointment of the two community members.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) At least once a year or as considered necessary by Justice Walsh.
- (6) To the Attorney General, Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Police on an interim basis. The Advisory Committee will recommend to the Government, proposals for its future operation.

POLICE - EMPLOYMENT

599. Mr TUBBY to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

Further to question 313 of 1990, if on 1 July 1988 there were 3 242 police employed on active and administrative duties and that number had increased to 3 777 by 3 May 1990, from where did the additional 148 officers come if only 674 had been recruited and 287 had resigned or retired in the same period?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

I am advised that in providing an answer to question 313, a recruit course was not taken into consideration which resulted in the anomaly in the calculation.

GOLDFIELDS-ESPERANCE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION - MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

608. Mr COWAN to the Premier:

Which of the Premier's Ministers does the Premier propose will be accountable to the Parliament for the Goldfields-Esperance Development Corporation -

- (a) the Minister for Goldfields; or
- (b) the Minister for Regional Development?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

The Minister for Goldfields.

JUVENILES - STATE WARDS *Abuse Reports*

631. Mr NICHOLLS to the Minister for Community Services:

Further to question 342(3) of 1990 -

- (a) how many reports of abuse have been received in respect of juveniles who are under the protection of this State, for -
 - (i) 1985;
 - (ii) 1986;
 - (iii) 1987;
 - (iv) 1988;
 - (v) 1989;
 - (vi) to date in 1990;
- (b) what was the age and sex of the juvenile in (a) above?

Mr D.L. SMITH replied:

- (a) (i)-iv) This information is not readily available for the period prior to July 1989.
The Department for Community Services Child Protection Information System recorded the following for children who were wards at the time of the notification.
- (v) 1 July 1989 to 31 December 1989 - 9 notifications involving 7 children of which 3 reports were substantiated.

(vi) 1 January 1990 to 30 March 1990 - 1 notification involving 1 child which was not substantiated.

(b) The age and sex of the 8 children are displayed in the following table:

Age (yrs)	Male	Female
3	1	0
4	0	1
5	1	0
9	0	1
11	0	1
14	1	0
15	0	1
16	0	1

Abuse in this context includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

RAILWAY ENABLING BILL - LAND PURCHASE, MANDURAH-ROCKINGHAM *Railway Stations*

645. Mr NICHOLLS to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will the proposed railway enabling Bill which will allow land to be purchased between Rockingham and Mandurah for a railway reserve allow the Government to purchase land for a railway station in Mandurah and Rockingham?
- (2) What is the estimated cost of the project which would see a rapid transit rail link between Mandurah and Fremantle, in today's dollars?
- (3) Will the proposed Bill in (1) above allow land to be purchased between Mandurah and Pinjarra?
- (4) Will the Bill in (1) above be introduced into Parliament this calendar year?
- (5) Will funding be allocated for land purchase in the coming Budget?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) Yes. However, this will also depend on a Government decision on whether to proceed with a passenger rail link to Mandurah and Rockingham.
- (2) Approximately \$110 million, excluding the cost of rolling stock.
- (3)-(4) No.
- (5) No decisions have been made at this stage.

GREAT AUSTRALIAN LEATHER COMPANY - TRADING HOURS EXTENSION PERMIT

659. Mr TUBBY to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Did the Great Australian Leather Company recently apply for an extended trading hour permit?
- (2) On what basis was this permit originally granted?
- (3) Was this permit revoked at a later stage?
- (4) If it was revoked, what was the reason for this action?
- (5) After losing its original permit did this company reapply and gain a further extension to its trading hours?
- (6) If it did, on what basis was the permit issued the second time?
- (7) Is this company a Western Australian operation or is it based in the Eastern States?

Mrs HENDERSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Compliance with the ownership and employee provisions of the Act and subject to inspection.
- (3) Yes, it was revoked on inspection.
- (4) Non compliance with employee provisions of the Act.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) The company adjusted its arrangements to comply with the legislation and this was confirmed by subsequent inspections.
- (7) It is based in New South Wales.

JUVENILE OFFENDERS - HIGH SPEED CHASE

Belmont-Bakers Hill, 18 May 1990

681. Mr HASSELL to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) What was the age of the offender caught after a high speed chase from Belmont to Bakers Hill on 18 May 1990?
- (2) Of what race was the offender?
- (3) What charges have been laid against the offender?
- (4) Have any of the others involved been apprehended yet?
- (5) If so, what ages and race are they and what charges have been laid against them?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) 15 years of age.
- (2) Caucasian.
- (3)
 - (a) No Motor Driver's Licence.
 - (b) Reckless Driving.
 - (c) Excess 0.08%.
 - (d) Stealing a Motor Vehicle.
- (4) Yes, two juvenile males.
- (5) Both 15 years of age and are Caucasian.
One charged with Stealing a Motor Vehicle.
The other charged with

(1)	Attempted Breaking and Entering
(2)	Break, Enter and Steal.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES SUPERANNUATION BOARD - OVERSEAS INVESTMENTS

685. Mr HASSELL to the Treasurer:

- (1) What overseas investments has the Government Employees Superannuation Board made?
- (2) What is the present status of the company or companies in which any such investment was made?
- (3) When were any such investments made?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Ancillary to the sale of INF Ltd, the Government Employees Superannuation Board acquired shares in Photo Bioreactors Ltd, an unlisted public company based in the United Kingdom.
- (2) The company is still in the development stage of algae production.
- (3) November 1987.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - PUBLIC SERVANTS

687. Mr TUBBY to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) What was the total number of public servants (i.e. personnel other than police officers) in the Police Department on 30 June 1988?
- (2) What is the total at the current time?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Public Servants 1026.76 FTEs, wages 89.62 FTEs Total 1116.38 FTEs.
- (2) Public Servants 1064.86 FTEs, wages 85.90 FTEs Total 1150.76 FTEs.

ROADS - BROOKTON HIGHWAY, EAST OF CHEVIN ROAD

Upgrading

688. Mr TUBBY to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Are funds to be allocated for the upgrading of the Brookton Highway east of Chevin Road, Roleystone in the coming budget?
- (2) If yes, when will this work commence?
- (3) If no, when does the Main Roads Department intend allocating funds for the upgrading of this dangerous section of highway?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

(1)-(3)

The Main Roads Department's 1990/91 Budget and Programme of Works are still to be finalised and approved by Government. While the Government recognises the desirability of upgrading Brookton Highway there are also many other worthwhile projects throughout the State competing for road funds. The Brookton Highway project is large and costly and will need to be undertaken over a period of some years.

TRANSPERTH - FERRY CONSTRUCTION

Perth-Fremantle Service

690. Mr CLARKO to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is a boat under construction for Transperth to subsequently operate as a commuter service between Perth and Fremantle?
- (2) If yes, what are the specific details concerning the construction and proposed operation of the vessel?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

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

DAWESVILLE CUT - SPOIL

699. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the estimated quantity of spoil from the proposed Dawesville cut?
- (2) How much area is required for the deposition of the spoil?
- (3) Where is the spoil proposed to be placed?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) \$ 390 000 cubic metres.
- (2) 124 hectares.
- (3) Areas for spoil disposal were identified in the Peel Inlet - Harvey Estuary Management Strategy - Stage 2 ERMP which was made available for public review in 1988. Briefly, it is proposed to place the spoil on low lying land in the following areas:

South of the Channel between Old Coast Road and the Indian Ocean.

North of the Channel between Queen Parade and Harvey Estuary.

Nominated reclamation areas in Harvey Estuary both north and south of the Channel.

Other land areas at Mandurah as a result of commercial quarrying operations.

DAWESVILLE CUT - SOIL COMPOSITION

Boreholes

700. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the general soil composition of the area through which the Dawesville cut will be made?
- (2) How many boreholes have been made and how many cores studied to answer (1) above?
- (3) Is a report of such study available?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) Sand, silt, clay, gravel and limestone rock.
- (2) 27 boreholes.
49 cone penetration tests.
22 vibrocore holes.
128 probes.
1 open pit.
- (3) Geotechnical investigations for the Dawesville Channel Project are summarised in a report by Dames and Moore (14804-001-71). An assessment of construction methods and costs was made by Maunsell and Partners using the available geotechnical data. An interpretation of the geological history of the Dawesville area was made by Peter J. Woods and Associates. The three reports were publicly available during the Peel Inlet - Harvey Estuary - Stage 2 ERMP public review period. Copies of the reports are held by the Department of Marine and Harbours.

DAWESVILLE CUT - TIDE LEVEL AND SILTING RECORDINGS

701. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What recordings and for how long a period of time have been taken simultaneously of -
 - (a) tide levels;
 - (b) siltings;at the two sea-sides of the peninsula at the east and west end of the proposed Dawesville cut?
- (2) Are these recordings available for public perusal?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) (a) Tide levels in the ocean at Dawesville are known to be similar to those at Fremantle and Bunbury where records have been kept for at least 60 years. Measurements taken in Wambro Sound confirm these relationships.

Tide levels in the Harvey Estuary at Dawesville were first recorded in October to November 1977. Further recordings were taken in December 1984 to February 1985. Permanent tide recorders were established in Peel Inlet in December 1984 and Harvey Estuary in December 1989.
- (b) An assessment of littoral sediment movements associated with the Dawesville Channel project has been made by the Department of Marine and Harbours in its Engineering Investigations Report DMH 5/88. This assessment was based on studies carried out by consultants.

Copies of the relevant reports are held by the Department of Marine and Harbours and were publicly available during the Peel Inlet - Harvey Estuary - Stage 2 ERMP public review period.

- (2) All tide recordings associated with the Dawesville Channel project can be sighted by arrangement with the Survey and Cartographic Services Branch, Department of Marine and Harbours.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES LEGISLATION - MINISTER FOR FUEL AND ENERGY SUPPORT

703. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

In view of the recently reported danger of strike action threatened by State Energy Commission of Western Australia maintenance workers for changing their roster and overtime provisions, would the Minister support essential services legislation on the lines as it was enacted by the Labor Government in New South Wales some four decades ago?

Mr CARR replied:

The Government believes that essential services legislation is likely to have an overall detrimental effect on industrial relations in the State. It is the Government's view that such legislation mitigates against negotiation, consultation and communication between management and unions, and sets an atmosphere of distrust in the industrial arena.

Essential services legislation would undermine the authority and integrity of the Industrial Relations Commission which has the appropriate powers to deal with disputes, as is evidenced by the resolution of the dispute in question.

The Government is firmly committed to a consultative and conciliatory approach to labour relations. The success of this Government's approach is readily illustrated by industrial dispute statistics. Working days lost per 1 000 employees for the seven years 1983-1990 show a reduction of 48 per cent when compared to the figures for 1976-82. This marked improvement in workplace industrial relations has been achieved without recourse to essential services legislation.

WESTRAIL - BUNBURY-PERTH SCHEDULED TRAIN STOPS *Reduction*

704. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Does Westrail intend to reduce the number of scheduled train stops between Bunbury and Perth?
- (2) If so, what reduction is proposed?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

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

WESTRAIL - MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT *Training Allocations*

709. Mr COURT to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Under the current award arrangements how much money must -
 - (a) Westrail allocate to training activities;
 - (b) the Main Road Department allocate to training activities?
- (2) Who is responsible for administering this training?
- (3) What has been the increase in the training allocation to these bodies on an annual basis over the past five years?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) (a)-(b)
Funds allocated to training are based on needs and under current award arrangements there is no mandatory amount of money required for these activities.
- (2) Westrail's training officers under the guidance of the Training and Development Manager.
The Director Management Services, Main Roads Department.
- (3) This information is not readily available. However I will provide the member with the details in writing as soon as possible.

SCHOOLS - CHEQUES
High and Primary School Students

711. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What was the total value of the cheques sent to each high and primary school student this year in line with the \$100 to \$50 amounts respectively given by the Government?
- (2) Is this to be an annual payment?
- (3) What was the total administrative cost to collect and log each name and to post the cheques?

Dr GALLOP replied:

- (1) As at 10 May 1990 - \$19 326 150.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The exercise has not been finalised as all relevant accounts have not yet been received by the Ministry of Education. It is envisaged that the total cost will be within the vicinity of \$278 000.

BUS STATIONS - PERTH CITY JUNCTION CONSTRUCTION

716. Mr HASSELL to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When will the bus station on the south side of the city be completed?
- (2) When was it originally scheduled to be completed?
- (3) What are the causes of the delay?
- (4) What cost overruns have been incurred?
- (5) Are workers on the site being paid for a 36-hour week?
- (6) What special site agreement applies in relation to the bus station construction site?
- (7) What total number of days of stoppages of an industrial nature have occurred at the site?
- (8) How many variations to agreements made before construction began have been assented to under the impetus of stoppages and threats of industrial action?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

As the member is no doubt aware the Building Management Authority is managing the project on behalf of Transperth. I am advised by the Minister for Works:

- (1) Recent advice is that Perth City Bus Junction will be completed by the end of this year.
- (2) The contract was originally scheduled for completion on 5 February 1990.
- (3) The delays have been caused by inclement weather, industrial action

and other on-site matters including delays occasioned by default of a major subcontractor.

- (4) To date, no cost overrun has been incurred.
- (5) The Building Management Authority understands that there is no 36 hour week agreement with workers on this site.
- (6) The Bus Junction Site agreement was ratified by Commissioner Beech near the start of construction. It is understood that a productivity agreement exists between the unions and the contractor.
- (7) To date, the sum of stoppages of an industrial nature have been identified as 52 days.
- (8) There were no pre-construction agreements.

BURSWOOD CASINO - FOREIGN OWNERSHIP *Genting International*

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

- (1) Has the Minister observed a report in *The West Australian* on 19 May 1990 stating that the State Government "has allowed a complex financial arrangement between partners Dallas Dempster and Genting International which could result in the Malaysian group gaining control of over 60 percent of the Burswood Casino"?
- (2) Is the report correct?
- (3) Upon what basis has the Government allowed the statutory limit of 40 percent foreign ownership to be breached?
- (4) Has the Government changed the policy which applied at the time it presented the legislation to Parliament?
- (5) Has the Government sought or received legal advice as to the lawfulness of the arrangements it has approved, or whether it has statutory authority to approve such arrangements?
- (6) If not, why was legal advice not sought given that the arrangements approved clearly breach the intention of Parliament expressed through legislation?
- (7) If advice was obtained, will the Minister make that advice public?
- (8) If advice was obtained, precisely what questions were raised for advice?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The report does not represent the current situation.
- (3) An offer by Genting to underwrite a rights issue to raise funds to complete the project and protect the interest of investors was accepted. Genting was required to buy any entitlements not taken up by unit-holders and, accordingly, required permission to own them. The provisions of the Casino (Burswood Island) Agreement Act give the Minister power to approve such an arrangement.
- (4) No.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) Not applicable.
- (7) Advice is that the provisions of the Casino (Burswood Island) Agreement Act give the Minister power to approve the arrangements.
- (8) The question raised was: Do the provisions of the Casino (Burswood Island) Agreement Act give the Minister power to approve the arrangements?

RAILWAYS - NORTHERN SUBURBS
Progress

718. Mr HASSELL to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the progress of the Northern Suburbs Railway?
- (2) What financial commitment has been made to the project in the current financial year?
- (3) What is the anticipated date on which construction will commence?
- (4) When will the northern suburbs railway be completed?
- (5) What are the Government's precise proposals in relation to a southern passenger railway to Mandurah?
- (6) What schedule of construction and completion applies in relation to those proposals?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) Progress on the Northern Suburbs Transit System is as follows:
 - (a) Planning work for the system was undertaken in 1989 in order to complete the Master Plan.
 - (b) Engineering and Architectural design consultancy packages have been awarded for most of the works.
 - (c) Design work has commenced on the early programme items including earthworks, bridging and stations.
 - (d) Facilities at Claisebrook and Perth have required modification to accommodate the needs of the Northern Suburbs Transit System. Some of these works have been completed; some are in progress.
 - (e) An order has been placed for the provision of railcars for the Northern Suburbs Transit System.
 - (f) A deviation of the Fremantle railway adjacent to Market Street, Perth has been constructed to clear the site for construction of a tunnel under the Fremantle railway and Roe Street.
- (2) The 1989-90 funding allocation is \$10.343 million.
- (3) Construction has commenced.
- (4) The scheduled completion of the northern suburbs transit system is December 1993.
- (5) The Government gave a commitment last year that the feasibility of a passenger railway to Mandurah would be examined. The engineering feasibility has been established. An economic feasibility study is in progress to determine appropriate timing for the introduction of services. A more detailed route planning study is then required including public discussion and environmental assessment.
- (6) None at this stage.

BOOKMAKERS - TURNOVER TAX

720. Mr CLARKO to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

What would be the estimated total bookmakers' turnover tax in 1990-91 if the rates were -

- (a) 2.5 percent;
- (b) 2.0 percent?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (a) \$5.33 million.
- (b) \$4.27 million.

LOGGING - SHANNON NATIONAL PARK

721. Mr P.J. SMITH to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Was commercial logging authorized to be carried out within the Shannon National Park?
- (2) If not, why was it carried out and under whose direction?
- (3) How many trees were felled?
- (4) Why were neither the tree stumps nor the fallen logs marked with the feller's registered brand in accordance with Department of Conservation and Land Management regulations?
- (5) To what companies and for what purpose were the logs delivered?
- (6) How many remaining logs at the landings have been disposed of?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) It occurred as the result of an honest error by a CALM officer in the demarcation of the park boundary. The purpose of the operation was to improve the safety of fire boundaries adjacent to the national park.
- (3) Approximately 86.
- (4) The feller had temporarily lost his brand, and had been authorised to use chalk.
- (5) This cannot be determined exactly for the trees felled in error in the national park. However, the logs taken from this general area at the time were delivered to Franey and Thompson's Mill at Albany - first and second grade jarrah sawlogs - Whittakers Mill at Denmark - first and second grade karri sawlogs - and the Diamond Mill - chiplogs.
- (6) Some trunks and pieces of trunks or branches with no commercial value have been heaped and burnt. No count was made of this material.

TORTOISES - UPPER SWAN AREA

Protective Fence

731. Mr GRAYDEN to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) What is the origin of the protective fence which has recently been erected to safeguard the colony of Western Swamp Turtles in the Upper Swan area?
- (2) Who was responsible for the siting of the fence?
- (3) As the fenced area appears to be south of the main habitat of the turtles why was that particular site selected?
- (4) Is it intended to fence the remaining area of Ellen Brook and Twin Swamps and if not, why not?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The fence was jointly funded by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service - purchase of materials - and the Department of Conservation and Land Management - design and construction.
- (2) Scientists from the Department of Conservation and Land Management were responsible for the siting of the fence.
- (3) The fence encloses the habitat of the Western Swamp Tortoise based on -
CALM research on the biology and hydrogeological requirements of the animal; supported by
field observations.
- (4) No, because the site fenced at Ellen Brook is the only location where the Western Swamp Tortoise is known to occur.

POWER STATIONS - NEW BASELOAD POWER STATION
Electricity Generation Fuel Cost

741. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

What is the estimated alternative fuel cost per megawatt of electricity generated in the proposed new baseload coal fired power stations -

- (a) at Collie;
- (b) at Mt Lesueur?

Mr CARR replied:

Assuming the question is related to the fuel component cost of electricity generated from the proposed new baseload power station, costs would normally be measured in cents per kilowatt hour sent out.

SECWA has called bids for a "build, own and operate" power station at both Collie and Hill River.

Bids are due on 16 July 1990. Until information contained in the bids is examined fuel costs cannot be known. Therefore, SECWA is not in a position to provide the information at this stage.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

SWAN BREWERY SITE - REDEVELOPMENT
Social Justice Issue

106. Mr MacKINNON to the Premier:

- (1) Does the Premier agree with the member for Fremantle that the old Swan Brewery redevelopment is more of a social justice issue than a heritage issue?
- (2) Given the member's comments in support of the brewery's demolition, will she now suspend plans to redevelop the brewery, stop all court actions implemented by the Government over the brewery and make the site an extension of Kings Park?
- (3) If not, why not?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

(1)-(3)

I am disappointed in the Leader of the Opposition because, as he well knows, it is contrary to the conventions of the House to comment upon, or raise questions about, a maiden speech of a member.

Several members interjected.

Dr LAWRENCE: I know that he has no respect for the conventions of this Parliament.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr LAWRENCE: Nonetheless, the member for Fremantle is a man of strong views which I am sure he will present in this Parliament, as he has presented them in the past on many occasions.

There is a serious question on the Swan Brewery, despite what the Leader of the Opposition was attempting to say this morning. It is now a matter of court dispute but there is a very important principle underlying the Swan Brewery problem; that is, we have an unfortunate clash between European heritage and Aboriginal heritage. We have had a great deal of publicity associated with this building and in the course of attempting to ensure that Aboriginal interests are protected we cannot assume that European heritage matters should be set aside.

Members opposite have always taken an opportunistic view of this matter. Because they thought the opinion polls showed more people wanted the brewery knocked down than wanted it left standing, they have developed their policy on that basis. I notice now that that is the way they are running this whole argument about Royal Commissions and Supply. It is a question of how many people are saying in the opinion polls which proposition they prefer, although they are very selective in the way they report it. The Leader of the Opposition has quite often trumpeted that 83 per cent of people are alleged to want a Royal Commission; the Leader of the National Party has done the same thing, but when pressed about the number of people who want Supply to be blocked he suddenly loses his tongue.

APPROPRIATION BILLS - GREATER SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION

107. Dr EDWARDS to the Premier:

Can the Premier outline any steps which the Government has under consideration to enable Parliament to be given greater scrutiny of the Appropriation Bills?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

I have today, after discussion in Cabinet, proposed a new Estimates Committee system for the Parliament. We have had discussions in this House before which indicate that it is a much more effective way of enabling members of Parliament to go through the detail of the Budget - the spending and revenue requirements of Government departments and agencies - without taking up all the time of this House, and would result in a more effective analysis of Budget proposals to be reported back to Parliament.

We hope to initiate this system in the Legislative Assembly for this year's Budget, with the agreement of the Opposition, and I think it is important, too, that we invite the Legislative Council to take part; because it would be seen as very inefficient by the people of Western Australia if we were to have two Estimates Committees, one in the lower House and one in the upper House. If we had joint sittings, Ministers could appear quite freely before that joint committee and the Parliament would be better served in relation to Budgets than by any other matter.

BARRACK SILICON - LOG REJECTS

108. Dr TURNBULL to the Minister for the Environment:

Can the Minister verify which logs that have been purchased from the Department of Conservation and Land Management and which do not reach standards set by the Barrack Silicon mill are being returned to the forest and that some of them are being burnt?

Mr PEARCE replied:

I am not aware of any suggestion that timber is removed from the forest, taken to Barrack Silicon and, if that company rejects it, taken back to the forest and burnt. Most of the timber provided for Barrack Silicon is for charcoal making purposes and I am certainly not aware of anything other than the acceptance of that timber by that company. However, I am prepared to look into the claims made by the member if she can substantiate them to any degree, to see if a better practice can be put in place.

COOGEE STRIP - GOVERNMENT CLEAN UP ACTION

109. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Finance and Economic Development:

The Minister would be aware of my comment in my inaugural speech to Parliament today calling on the Government to clean up the Coogee strip. Could he please advise of any action that has been or will be taken in this matter?

Mr Kierath: Inaugural speech! Who called it that?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr TAYLOR replied:

The member is allowed to call it that; it was his speech. Not only that, but it was an indication of what we can expect from the member for Fremantle. He raised today in his inaugural speech, as he called it, the issue of cleaning up the Coogee strip, and I am very pleased to tell him that, as of today, we announced that a biotechnology park at Coogee has moved a step closer, with the approval by the Government of the establishment of a bioprocessing product development centre as the core for that new development of a biotechnology park at Coogee.

In relation to this issue the Government has approved the appointment of an officer from my department to the position of project director in order to establish the centre; the Government has also allocated a budget of \$65 000 towards the facility. One of the first jobs of the project director will be the formation of an industry-led board, on which the principal animal processors in Western Australia will have representation. As the member for Fremantle will be pleased to learn, this is a major step forward in the clean up of what has long been a problem area on the metropolitan coastline. The biotechnology park will provide a safe, clean solution to the area's problems.

Several members interjected.

Mr TAYLOR: If it were taken from the policy of the Opposition, the Opposition must have borrowed it from the Government in the first place because the Government has been working on this issue for some time. In fact, a feasibility study that has been under way for the past 12 months concluded that the concept was viable and could also expect to attract industry support.

For the information of members opposite, who may not know what it is, bioprocessing product development is involved with the processing of low value by-products from the animal processing industry - there are a few low value by-products from the animal industry on the other side - which can be turned into value-added products such as cholesterol, heparin recovery, blood serum and gland processing, tallow products, leather tanning and so on. Planning is now at the stage where industry can become directly involved. The Government will provide the land, buildings and experienced officers necessary to help make the venture a success. I am sure the member for Fremantle can look forward to being intimately involved in the years ahead with the establishment of that biotechnology park at Coogee.

SWAN BREWERY SITE - PREMIER BURKE'S STATEMENT

110. Mr HASSELL to the Premier:

I do not know of any convention, even suggested convention, that it is improper to refer to things said by previous Premiers.

- (1) Is the Premier aware of a statement made by the then Premier on 20 June 1985 concerning the Government's acquisition of the old Swan Brewery site?
- (2) Is the Premier aware that her predecessor said then, "The State Government wants to preserve the old Swan Brewery site on Riverside Drive for public use"; that he also said the Government was keen to preserve the old brewery site because it was uniquely positioned adjacent to King's Park and the Swan River, and that the preservation of the site would also allow attention to be paid to the serious traffic hazard in Riverside Drive at the site of the old brewery?

Mrs Beggs: That has already been done.

Mr HASSELL: I had not noticed.

- (3) Is the Premier prepared to honour the commitments made by the former Premier, Mr Brian Burke, who is now the Ambassador to Ireland, in relation

to the old Swan Brewery site, following the extensive use of taxpayers' money to acquire the site, presumably under conditions laid down by former Premier Burke?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

(1)-(3)

The quotes provided by the member for Cortesloe clearly indicate a perverse interpretation. However, if at the time Mr Burke - and not having read the statement to which the member referred I cannot vouch for its accuracy - hinted in his statement that the building might be demolished, he was entitled to do so. The fact is that Cabinet has decided - and on a number of occasions since has renewed its decision - that the building should certainly be available for public use and should complement the river forefront and King's Park, and that should be done in such a way that the interest of the public is served. I do not see any conflict and I am surprised at the member's question.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE - DINING ROOM MEALS

Environmental Assessment

111. Mrs WATKINS to the Minister for the Environment:

Can the Minister indicate whether the meals in the parliamentary dining room are subject to environmental assessment?

Mr Kierath: You are joking.

The SPEAKER: Order! Under normal circumstances I am not sure whether the Minister for the Environment has any control whatsoever over the parliamentary dining room. In fact I am absolutely certain of it, because I know who does. However, I am fascinated by the question and am interested to hear at least part of the answer.

Mr PEARCE replied:

In all due deference to you, Mr Speaker, the Environmental Protection Act overrides all other legislation. Environmental protection can be applied to most areas. However, it has never been thought necessary to carry out an environmental assessment of meals in the dining room in the past due to the high standard of meals which were presented by hardworking staff. The dining room has such a high standard that a brown dog could go in there with impunity; such a suggestion has been made to me since the election of the member for Riverton. Following the presentation in the menu of a course yesterday entitled "Mr Pike's Senate Bean Soup" a number of members approached me asking whether this sort of thing should not be looked at more closely. This morning I carried out a brief investigation into this matter.

Mr Kierath: Did you do an environmental impact study on it?

Mr PEARCE: Yes, I did. I checked on the impact of this sort of meal being available on the menu.

Point of Order

Mr MacKINNON: I did not take a point of order earlier because I was also interested to hear the answer. However, this trivial question clearly represents a blatant abuse of question time. The Minister for the Environment has absolutely no power in this area. The Standing Orders clearly indicate that Ministers should answer only those questions that relate to their ministerial responsibility. Parliament House does not fall within the responsibility of the Minister for the Environment. I request that the question be ruled out of order and this House get on with answering serious questions.

The SPEAKER: It would appear that I have made a mistake. However, I am absolutely certain the Minister has drawn his answer to a conclusion.

Questions without Notice Resumed

WORLD SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIP - ACCOMMODATION
The Travel Professionals

112. Mr CLARKO to the Premier:

I would have preferred to address this question to the Minister for Sport and Recreation. However, due to his absence and because the people in the accommodation industry in Perth find this a matter of concern, I address this question to the Premier as she has the ability to find the answers.

- (1) Is it true that The Travel Professionals, the official accommodation group to the World Swimming Championship to be held in Perth in 1990, has advised various sporting groups which will be attending the swimming championships, as well as hotels and other accommodation outlets, that if bookings are made directly with the hotels and not through The Travel Professionals, the swimmers and managers intending to compete in the swimming championship will be denied the usual free tickets to the swimming championship?

Mrs Beggs: In 1991.

Mr CLARKO: The Minister has corrected me; that the championship will be held in 1991, and not 1990. In essence madame President -

Government members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: The words Premier and President are synonyms and I thought Government members would have known that. The situation is that The Travel Professionals was appointed as the official group to carry out accommodation bookings for these championships. It has now taken the remarkable step of advising people in the accommodation industry that if direct arrangements are made between competitors - say the Australian diving team for instance - and hotels, without making arrangements through The Travel Professionals, those people will not be given free tickets to the swimming events, as is usually the case.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member cannot have it both ways. If you have a question to ask, ask it and you will receive an answer. As the Minister has indicated, the member is making a statement.

Mr CLARKO: I ask the Minister to check on these matters.

- (2) If the answer to (1) is yes, will the Minister redress the situation?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

(1)-(2)

The answer clearly is yes, and if yes, yes.

AUSTRALIAN TRAINING GUARANTEE - PROGRESS

113. Mr P.J. SMITH to the Minister for Productivity and Labour Relations:

Has the Minister any further information on the progress of the Commonwealth Training Guarantee?

Mr TROY replied:

A draft Bill for the Australian Training Guarantee is in the Senate of the Federal Parliament having passed through the House of Representatives last week. It is expected that the Senate will pass the further amendments to the Bill by the end of next week.

The Australian Training Guarantee is a measure targeted at improving the efforts of firms which do not currently invest in training or alternatively invest very little. The ATG levy will initially be one per cent of payroll of those businesses with a ceiling of \$200 000. The majority of Western Australian small businesses will not be affected by that. While the State Government supported the ATG in principle it had some reservations. We indicated our

reservations to the Federal Government for its consideration. The proposed building construction industry training fund in Western Australia will be exempt from that provision. In addition we have expressed concern that national companies operating in Western Australia and raising their payroll provisions within this State may be given the opportunity to pay that levy elsewhere, and we will lose that revenue. This is another area which needs close examination by the Federal Government.

Some weeks ago I had the opportunity to reinforce these points at the Ministers for Labour conference where most States supported Western Australia's view in these areas.

Skills formation must be recognised as crucial to promoting sustained economic growth in this State and until such time as all partners - that is, Government, industry and the individual - accept responsibility for investment in training, this nation and indeed this State will find itself falling further behind its economic competitors.

ROADS - FEDERAL FUNDING

114. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Transport:

Has there been any resolution of the apparent impasse between the State and Federal Governments over the conditions which the Federal Government has placed on the allocation of additional road funding for Western Australia?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

As the Leader of the National Party would know, although I am Minister for Transport I do not have direct responsibility for road safety matters. Those matters come within the jurisdiction of the Minister for Police.

As I represented Western Australia at the ATAC meeting, I am happy to report to the House. At this stage the difficulties with the Federal Government over the 10 point road safety package have not been resolved. However, I am confident that discussions between the Minister for Police and the Federal Minister for Land Transport, Hon Bob Brown, and me will be fruitful. I will state our position and attempt to ensure that the best interests of Western Australia are catered for. No doubt the 0.05 versus the 0.08 question is one which will require serious consideration.

Several members interjected.

Mr Cowan: This is blackmail. The Minister should make the same claim about this Government.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs BEGGS: One could always say there is an element of coercion on the part of the Federal Government in regard to these issues. However, we in this State should not denigrate in any way the efforts of the Federal Government to bring about a reduction in the national road toll. We may have some differences of opinion -

Mr Hassell: It sounds like you are lining up to climb down to do what they tell you.

Mrs BEGGS: I do not intend to climb down from anything. Unlike the member for Cottesloe, I always take a strong and honest position.

The whole package contains 10 points relating to road safety and we, as a Government are concerned about some of those points.

Mr Hassell: They want a 100 kilometre an hour speed limit.

Mrs BEGGS: That is correct, for heavy vehicles.

Mr Hassell: And for ordinary vehicles.

Mrs BEGGS: No, that is an area under discussion.

The Federal Government has conveyed to us its concern about the national road toll and it strongly believes a 0.05 blood alcohol limit is not negotiable.

Prior to and after the ATAC meeting I had discussions with the Federal Minister for Land Transport who advised me that he would be prepared to have further discussions. I am sure that we will be able to come to some resolution before 30 June because the funding package will be implemented on 1 July. On the one hand we do not want conditions imposed on our State that we may not think are in the best interests of reducing the Western Australian road toll, but on the other hand we have an obligation to look at the effects a \$12.5 million allocation may have in repairing some of our roads.

SCHOOLS - ASBESTOS

"Expert Committee on Asbestos Cement Products in Schools"

115. Dr WATSON to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Could he advise the House when the final report from the "Expert Committee on Asbestos Cement Products in Schools" will be presented?
- (2) What management plans have been devised to address the issue of asbestos in schools?

Dr GALLOP replied:

(1)-(2)

Members would be aware that this expert group was established by the Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances and that it submitted an interim report in December 1989. This important committee, chaired by Dr Bruce Armstrong, will present its final report by the end of June. As a result of the interim report issued by the expert committee the Ministry of Education has established its own group to look at asbestos management plans through the school system. Representatives of the Ministry of Education, relevant trade unions and other Government departments are involved in that working party. The working party has begun its work but it will be greatly assisted in ranking the schools in an appropriate order when the final report of the expert group is released by the end of June.

WA INC - ROYAL COMMISSION

McCusker Report

116. Mr COURT to the Premier:

Is she planning to appoint a Royal Commission into WA Inc immediately following the report of Mr McCusker, and, if not, why not?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

That sounds rather like a back down. The Opposition has stated its position very clearly through the media, yet the strength of the position seems to depend upon whether a by-election is coming up, or upon who is speaking at the time as to whether it is the Leader of the Opposition or the Leader of the National Party.

Mr Kierath: Will this be a cosy chat?

Dr LAWRENCE: If the member likes.

I indicate that I have not changed my position from the first time I was asked an almost identical question on my first day as Premier in this House. I said to members opposite at the time that a number of matters need to be determined, including the outcome of the McCusker inquiry. We will have this debate again in a few moments for the twentieth or thirtieth time; however, it is clear to me, and to the people of Western Australia, that as long as the Opposition threatens to block Supply the same answer will be given.