

school, unless they are the lucky ones who have been able to go on and gain a higher education. This problem is not an easy one to solve, but I ask that it be looked at and treated as an urgent matter so that we can go on and do something for these people. I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. R. J. L. Williams.

House adjourned at 5.16 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 21st July, 1971

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

THURSDAY SITTINGS

Questions: Procedure

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Toms): Owing to Parliament meeting at 11 a.m. on Thursdays, it has been decided that the closing time for questions on that day shall be 2.15 p.m. and not half an hour after the House sits at 11 a.m. Also, answers to questions will be given at approximately 3 p.m. on Thursdays, or at an appropriate time subsequent to that, depending on who is speaking at the time.

Mr. Nalder: On a point of clarification, does it mean that questions for tomorrow will not be accepted up until the usual hour of 5 p.m. today?

The SPEAKER: On Tuesday and Wednesday the closing time for questions will be half an hour after the House sits. However, the House will be sitting at 11 a.m. on Thursday and it is proposed to accept questions for the following Tuesday until 2.15 p.m. on Thursday.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

THE SPEAKER: I also inform the House that the Public Accounts Committee had its first meeting today. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Bickerton) was elected Chairman and the member for Narrogin (Mr. W. A. Manning) Deputy Chairman.

LIQUOR

Sale of Low Alcohol Beverages: Petition

MR. JONES (Collie) [4.34 p.m.]: I have two petitions. The first reads as follows:—

COLLIE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Petition regarding the sale of low alcohol content beverages

To the Honourable, the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia.

We, the undersigned petitioners express our concern that beverages of low alcohol content are being put on sale in stores and milk bars in W.A.

Makers of beverages containing alcohol are pressing hard to win new markets. They are exploiting a law which permits beverages with less than 2 per cent. alcohol content to be sold in milk bars and stores. The legal limit is used to its furthest point because Shandy drinks contain 1.99 per cent. alcohol.

Your petitioners therefore urge and pray that your House will take this petition into consideration and take whatever action is needed to restrict the sale of the said beverages to licensed premises, and your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

I certify that the petition conforms to the rules of the House; it contains 13 names.

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

LIQUOR

Sale of Low Alcohol Beverages: Petition

MR. JONES (Collie) [4.36 p.m.]: The second petition reads as follows:—

WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION OF W.A.

Petition regarding sale of low alcohol content beverages

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia.

We the undersigned petitioners express our concern that beverages of low alcohol content are being put on sale in stores and milk bars in W.A.

Makers of beverages containing Alcohol are pressing hard to win new markets. They are exploiting a law which permits beverages with less than 2% alcohol content to be sold in milk bars and stores. The legal limit is used to its furthest point because Shandy drinks contains 1.99% alcohol.

Your petitioners therefore pray that your House will take this petition into consideration and take whatever action is needed to restrict the sale of the said beverages as to licensed premises, and your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

I certify that the petition conforms to the rules of the House; it contains 26 names.

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

SUPPLY BILL

Personal Explanation

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Toms) [4.37 p.m.]: The member for East Melville desires to make a personal explanation. Is it the will of the House that he be heard? As there is no dissentient voice, the honourable member may proceed.

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville) [4.38 p.m.]: During the course of the debate on the Supply Bill last night I made a rapid mental calculation that the saving to 28,000 home purchasers at the rate of \$5 per week per purchaser over 50 weeks was \$15,000,000. I am sure most of the astute ex-school teachers on the front bench of the Government will recognise that I made an error. The figure should be \$7,000,000, not \$15,000,000. I trust the House will have regard to this fact when it sees the figure mentioned in the speech.

Mr. Brady: It is \$7,000,000?

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes.

QUESTIONS (44): ON NOTICE

1. GAS

Domestic and Natural: Use

Mr. LAPHAM, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) What is the current British thermal unit rating of—
 - (a) domestic gas currently in supply;
 - (b) natural gas as is proposed to be supplied for domestic use?
- (2) What reduction, if any, will be made in the price of gas to the consumer when the changeover takes place?
- (3) Is it proposed to use a proportion of natural gas and the present domestic gas, or will the metropolitan gas supply be all natural gas?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) In respect of the gas reticulation system of the State Electricity Commission I advise—
 - (a) 512.
 - (b) 1,000 (approximately).
- (2) After the cost of appliance conversion has been met and obsolete manufacturing plant has been written off, it will be possible to effect savings. In the meantime domestic tariff reductions will be marginal.

- (3) After changeover of individual premises, only natural gas will be reticulated.

(Leaflets describing the natural gas conversion programme are being made available to all consumers.)

The leaflet gives a complete explanation of everything associated with the changeover. If any member is interested I will be pleased to hand one to him.

2. LAKE KING-HYDEN EAST ROAD

Works Programme

Mr. W. G. YOUNG, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) What is the future works programme for the Lake King-Hyden East Road?
- (2) Will any sealing or priming be done to this road in the 1971-72 financial year?
- (3) If (2) is "No" what other upgrading to this road will be done in the 1971-72 financial year?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) No firm programme has been adopted for the progressive upgrading of the Hyden East-Lake King section of the Armadale-Ravensthorpe Road.
- (2) Yes. 4.6 miles of gravelling and priming 22 feet wide will be carried out northwards from the new wheat bin at Lake King. In addition, work will be completed to the gravelled stage this year on a 2.7 mile section which has been reconstructed on an improved alignment at Lake Varley.
- (3) Answered by (2).

3. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DISTRICTS

Enrolments and Quotas

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Attorney General:

- (1) What were the respective enrolments for each of the Legislative Assembly Districts at the 30th June, 1971?
- (2) At that date what were the requisite quotas of electors for—
 - (a) the metropolitan area districts;
 - (b) the agricultural, mining, and pastoral districts?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

- (1) The undermentioned were the enrolment figures for each of the Legislative Assembly Districts as at the 28th June, 1971.

Metropolitan Area:

Ascot	14,752
Balcatta	21,805
Belmont	15,382
Canning	23,170
Clontarf	15,792
Cockburn	21,286
Cottesloe	14,501
East Melville	17,089
Florate	14,213
Fremantle	13,202
Karrinyup	16,813
Maylands	13,547
Melville	14,250
Mirrabeeka	20,920
Mount Hawthorn	14,082
Mount Lawley	14,400
Nedlands	13,465
Perth	11,812
South Perth	13,897
Subiaco	13,853
Swan	16,066
Victoria Park	13,757
Wembley	16,673

364,727
Agricultural, Mining and Pastoral Area:

Albany	6,728
Avon	6,204
Blackwood	6,217
Boulder-Dundas	6,854
Bunbury	7,773
Collie	5,876
Dale	13,555
Darling Range	11,117
Geraldton	7,964
Greenough	7,374
Kalgoorlie	6,818
Katanning	6,313
Merredin-Yilgarn	7,833
Moore	8,392
Mount Marshall	6,522
Murray	8,763
Narrogin	6,641
Northam	6,589
Roe	8,847
Stirling	7,489
Toodyay	7,962
Vasse	6,870
Warren	6,846
Wellington	7,158

182,705
North-West-Murchison-Eyre Area

Gascoyne	3,536
Kimberley	3,454
Murchison-Eyre	1,907
Pilbara	6,280

15,177

- (2) On the aggregate enrolment figures for the undermentioned areas as at that date, the quotas calculated in accordance with the statutory provisions of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947-1965, would be—

(a) Metropolitan Area 15,857

(b) Agricultural, Mining and Pastoral Area 7,612

4. This question was postponed until Tuesday, the 27th July.

5. **EDUCATION**

*Boarding-away-from-home Allowance:
Cost of Increase*

Mr. LEWIS, to the Minister for Education:

What would have been the cost of increasing the boarding allowances for school children by \$50 as from the beginning of the school year 1971—

- (a) in the 1970-71 financial year;
(b) in 1971-72?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (a) \$76,000.
(b) \$157,000

6. **TRAFFIC LIGHTS**

Railway Parade-Thomas Street Bridge Intersection

Mr. LEWIS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Are there any proposals for the installation of traffic lights at the intersection of Railway Parade at the Thomas Street bridge?
(2) If not, are there any proposals to alleviate the extreme traffic congestion at peak periods?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) The intersection of Thomas Street-Loftus Street-Railway Road is programmed for provision of traffic control signals in the 1971-72 period. The Perth City Council has been asked to undertake the necessary road works.
(2) Answered by (1).

7. **STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY**

Kalgoorlie-Esperance: Finance

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Has an estimate been made of the cost to connect Kalgoorlie to Esperance via Kambalda by standard gauge rail?
(2) If "Yes" how much is the estimated total cost?
(3) Have Western Mining Corporation Limited and Lefroy Salt Pty. Ltd. agreed to subsidise the cost of such a rail link; if so, to what extent?
(4) Has Western Mining Corporation Limited offered to lend the State Government sufficient funds to finance the balance of the total cost?

- (5) If (4) is "Yes" has the Government accepted the offer and submitted the matter to the Loan Council for approval?
- (6) If (4) is "Yes" and the Government has not accepted the offer, can he say why it has not done so?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) \$18,059,000.
- (3) Western Mining Corporation has agreed to contribute \$9,000,000. Lefroy Salt Pty. Ltd. is providing \$3,400,000 towards the cost of upgrading the present Widgiemooltha-Esperance line. Neither contribution is conditional upon standardisation of the line south of Kambalda.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) and (6). The offer has been referred to the Prime Minister requesting agreement to the State borrowing the amount required from Western Mining Corporation or alternatively for the Commonwealth to make a loan of the required sum to the State.

8. HOUSING

Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement: Renewal

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has the State entered into a new Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement to replace that which expired on the 30th June, 1971?
- (2) If not, what arrangements are being made to ensure that loan funds at concessional interest rates, as provided for in such agreements, will be available during this financial year?
- (3) If no agreement has been entered into, or no arrangements made, how is it proposed to make funds available to building societies, as has been a requirement under past Commonwealth and State housing agreements?
- (4) If some interim arrangement has been made, when is it expected

that an announcement as to the allocation mentioned in (3) can be expected?

Mr. BERTRAM (for Mr. Taylor) replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The Commonwealth, through the States Grants (Housing Assistance) Act 1971, has continued the Housing Agreement Act arrangements into 1971-1972.
- (3) Conditions of the Housing Agreement Act will apply pending finalisation of a new agreement.
- (4) The allocation has been prepared for the approval of the Commonwealth authorities.

9.

HOUSING

Metropolitan Area: Constructions

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many individual houses being built for the State Housing Commission in the metropolitan area have been under construction for periods—
- (a) in excess of six months;
- (b) between five and six months;
- (c) between four and five months;
- (d) between three and four months;
- (e) under three months?
- (2) How many units of accommodation under all schemes have been put to tender during each month of this calendar year?
- (3) How many units under all schemes were completed between the 1st July, 1970, and the 30th June, 1971, and how many units were under construction as at the 30th June, 1971?
- (4) Has any estimate been made of anticipated completions during the current financial year?

Mr. BERTRAM (for Mr. Taylor) replied:

- (1) (a) 329
(b) 228
(c) 143
(d) 91
(e) 73

(2)	Commonwealth-State	State Housing	War Service Homes	Other	Total
January	54	3	4	13	58
February	89	1	2	4	107
March	13	1	1	9	20
April	10	77	4	78	111
May	26	41	3	6	169
June	—	—	—	14	76
July	—	—	—	—	14
	192	123	16	124	455

(3) Completed:

Commonwealth-State	....	2,444
State Housing	....	602
War Service Homes	....	129
Other	....	324
		<hr/> 3,499

Under Construction:

Commonwealth-State	....	1,324
State Housing	....	799
War Service Homes	....	20
Other	....	130
		<hr/> 2,273

(4) 2,400.

10. PRICE CONTROL LEGISLATION

Coverage

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Prices Control:

Since it has been announced that this session of Parliament will be asked to consider legislation relative to "selective" price control, would he advise—

- (a) what goods and services will be subject to price control;
- (b) who will make the selection?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

Until such time as the legislation comes before Parliament it is not desired to make any preliminary announcement.

11. SCHOOL LEAVING AGE

Determination and Exemption

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the legal school leaving age?
- (2) Under what circumstances may a child leave school prior to attaining the legal leaving age?
- (3) Who grants exemption from the legal requirement for compulsory regular attendance?
- (4) In the last statistical year, how many children—
 - (a) between 14 and 15 years of age; and
 - (b) between 15 and 16 years of age,
 have been exempted from compulsory regular attendance at school?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) The end of the year in which the child turns 15.
- (2) Section (4)(a) of the Education Act states—

if the child satisfies the Minister that he is assured of employment and that it is necessary for him to leave school in

order to engage in that employment, and the Minister is of opinion that the employment is suitable for the child and the best interests of the child would be served by his leaving school to engage in that employment.

(3) The Minister for Education.

(4) (a) 587.

(b) 1,785.

12.

SCHOOLS

Grade 1 Enrolments and Class Sizes

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many grade I classes in Government schools have an enrolment of more than 40 pupils?
- (2) What were the average class sizes in Government primary schools for the years 1968, 1969, 1970?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) 47.
- (2) Excluding special classes, special schools and correspondence enrolments, the average class sizes in Government schools were—
 - 1968—36.72.
 - 1969—36.36.
 - 1970—35.61.

13.

HOSPITAL

Provision at Wooroloo

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he received any correspondence from the Mundaring Shire Council requesting that a new hospital be provided at Wooroloo to replace the one taken over by the Prisons Department?
- (2) Did he advise the shire council as reported in the *Swan Express* of the 3rd June, 1971—
 - (a) that he could find no record of any objections to the closure of the old Wooroloo hospital; and
 - (b) that the present small hospital should be adequate for the needs of the district in view of the availability of the Swan District Hospital and other hospitals?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) I did not see the statement in the *Swan Express* of 3rd June, 1971. If it is as stated by the member, it is incorrect.
- (b) Yes.

14. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Kwinana Beach Area: Acquisition of Properties

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) When is it expected finance will be available for the department to continue to purchase properties from those offering to sell in the Kwinana beach industrial area?
- (2) Will the department continue to purchase these properties on a priority basis?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) After completion of General Loan Fund budget.
- (2) Yes, as availability of funds permits.

15. REVENUE AND LOAN BUDGETS

Expenditure: Deferment or Deletion

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Treasurer:

Will he supply brief details of expenditure items (including their value) deferred or deleted from the revenue and loan budget for 1970-71?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

Savings in the revenue Budget were spread over all departments and it is not practical to supply a detailed list of the amounts involved. Expenditure was curtailed under the following headings:—

Recruitment of additional staff and creation of new positions. Overtime.

Incidental expenditures particularly printing publications and travelling.

Maintenance of public buildings and the supply of new furniture and equipment.

Loan works deferred and the savings achieved in 1970-71 were as follows:—

	\$
Police buildings	182,000
Health and hospital buildings	204,000
Other public buildings	255,000
Public Works Water Supplies	73,000
Metropolitan Water Board works	40,000
	<hr/>
	\$754,000

16.

SCHOOLS

Maintenance: Suspension

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

On how many schools has maintenance been stopped by the present Government, and for what reasons?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Day to day essential maintenance is still being carried out. Planned annual maintenance programmes have been deferred pending allocation of funds.

17.

SPRINGBOKS' TOUR

Police Action: Inquiry

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Premier:

- (1) Does the Government intend taking action to institute an official inquiry into police action during the visit of the "Springboks", as suggested by the State Executive of the Australian Labor Party?
- (2) If so, what action is to be taken?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) Consideration is being given to the submission which has been received, but no decision has yet been made by the Government regarding any action to be taken.

Mr. O'Connor: We should commend them.

18.

ROAD TRANSPORT

Wool: Exemption

Mr. GAYFER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it proposed to allow all farmers to cart wool by their own vehicles from farm to store so that costs and labour can be saved?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) The Road and Air Transport Commission Act requires that in considering applications for road transport consideration must first be given to existing services. In circumstances where existing services such as railways are not available road permits would be granted.
- (2) Answered by (1).

19.

ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

Abolition: Tax on Private Motorists

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

Following abolition of road maintenance tax, will he give an undertaking not to tax private

motorists to compensate for damage done by heavy haulage vehicles to Western Australian roads?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

It is not proposed to tax anybody specifically for the purpose of compensating for damage done by heavy haulage vehicles to Western Australian roads.

20. EDUCATION

"Revolt" Publication: Investigation and Action

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is he satisfied that all necessary action has been taken to investigate and act on the publication *Revolt* which was distributed to high schools?
- (2) If not, what further action does he intend to take?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) The position with regard to the publication *Revolt* is being closely watched by the Education Department which is continuing enquiries in collaboration with the C.I.B.

21. TRANSPORT

Nielsen Report: Implementation

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Government to proceed with any of the Nielsen report proposals?
- (2) If so, will he give details?
- (3) In view of the difficulties and traffic congestion being experienced by people north and west of the city, will he press to see that remedial measures are taken?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) and (2) The proposals made in the Nielsen report are still under consideration by a Cabinet sub-committee.
- (3) Various proposals are being investigated with the ultimate objective of overcoming present traffic problems.

22. TRAFFIC

State-wide Control by Police

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) When does he intend to proceed with the police takeover of Western Australian traffic control?
- (2) Are his views of police takeover supported by—
 - (a) the Director-General of Transport;

- (b) the Transport Department;
- (c) the Main Roads Department;
- (d) the Police Department?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) (a) Voluntary "take-over" as provided by section 11AA of the Traffic Act will continue on same basis as at present.
- (b) Legislation to enable compulsory "take-over" is being prepared for submission to Parliament.
- (c) It is expected that the complete "take-over" will take approximately three years.
- (2) (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) Yes.
- (d) Yes.

23. ROAD TRANSPORT

Wool to Albany

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has he obtained results of a circular forwarded out in connection with cartage of wool by road to Albany?
- (2) If so, will he give details?
- (3) If not, will he obtain details and advise this House?
- (4) In view of the importance of this to Albany, both as far as Scandia line operations and employment in the Albany area are concerned, will he treat this matter as urgent?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) Yes—with the exception of Boyup Brook.

- (2) These results were as follows:—

	In respect to the plan as outlined in the Brochure.		In respect to the plan as outlined in the Brochure but with the 10 mile corridor eliminated.	
	For	Against	For	Against
Cranbrook	20	25	46	2
Frankland	44	....	Not applicable	
Tambellup	No vote	....	54	
Kojonup	74	6	Not applicable	
Katanning	No vote	....	18	1
Boyup Brook	Further meeting to be held			

- (3) Answered by (2).

- (4) The proposal for a change in the transport system in the southern part of the State is at present being considered by the Government. A decision will be made as soon as possible.

24. RAILWAY LAND AT MIDLAND

Proceeds of Sale: Use

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Is the deposit on land at Midland sold by the Western Australian Government Railways to Woolworths Limited being held for railway purposes?

- (2) If so, will consideration be given to allocating this, plus the balance due on this land, to standardising the Kalgoorlie-Esperance railway line?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) As the member will recall these funds have been set aside to assist in financing a new Railway administration building.

25. PRIVATE TAXIS

Plates: Alteration

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

Will he agree to alter the private taxi plates, "PT", to "HC" as in other parts of Australia?

Mr. MAY replied:

No. The letters "HC" are currently on vehicle license plates issued by the Hall's Creek Shire Council. Both the Traffic Act and Taxi-cars (Co-ordination and Control) Act refer to "private taxi-cars".

26. PRIVATE TAXIS

Plates: Deferment of Payments

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

In view of the difficulties being experienced by private taxis in the metropolitan area, will he agree to defer payments to the Government on these plates for a further 12 months?

Mr. MAY replied:

If the difficulties mentioned can be supported by some substantial corroborative evidence, consideration will be given to deferment upon individual application.

27. PRIVATE TAXIS

Cost to Owner-drivers

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware approximately how much it costs owner-drivers to purchase and place their private taxis on the road?
- (2) If so, what is the figure?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) The net cost depends upon—

- (a) whether the owner-driver retained his metered taxi-car or sold it at the current rate of \$9,500 (approximately)

or

- (b) whether he placed the "PT" plates on his former metered vehicle and purchased a new or second-hand vehicle for his metered taxi-car.

28. ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

Collections to 30th June, 1971

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What amount of road maintenance tax was collected for the year ended the 30th June, 1971?
- (2) How does this compare with the estimate for that period?
- (3) If the above figures vary by more than \$100,000 what are the reasons?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) \$3,990,144.
- (2) It had been estimated that \$4,100,000 would have been collected during the year 1970-71.
- (3) The reduction could be accounted for by a marked increase in the number of operators who fail to submit returns.

29. UNEMPLOYMENT

Correction of Trend

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

In view of the increased unemployment in this State, what steps does he intend to take to correct the present unsatisfactory trend?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

The number of persons registered for employment in January, February, and March this year under the Government in which the member for Mt. Lawley was a Minister, was the highest for each of these three months for the previous six years.

Mr. O'Connor: That includes the school children you are referring to, does it?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Continuing—

Similar circumstances to those then existing are responsible for the present situation.

The Government is concerned at the position and has appointed a Cabinet subcommittee to give special attention to the situation at Albany. Appropriate steps within the Government's financial capacity will be taken to increase job opportunities.

30. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Tax on People Over 18 Years of Age

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) In view of the Minister's comments in *The West Australian* newspaper on the 20th July, 1971, is it the intention of the Government to place a tax on all people over the age of 18 years?
- (2) Does this mean consideration is being given to including among the over 18 taxpayers pensioners, including age and invalid pensioners, war widows, etc.?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No.

31. MT. WINDARRA AND LAVERTON

Duplication of Public Facilities

Mr. COYNE, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Is it proposed to allow the town of Laverton and a township at Mt. Windarra to develop separately to serve the needs of the people in that area?
- (2) If so, will public utilities, such as hospital, police, education, native welfare, and postal facilities, be duplicated?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The company will develop the new town at its own expense and will be required to provide buildings and equipment for such educational, medical, police, and other public utilities as may be required to cater for its employees.

32. POSEIDON MINE

Transport of Nickel Ore

Mr. COYNE, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

Has a decision been reached on the proposed route for the transport of nickel ore from the Poseidon project to Malcolm?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

Nickel ore will be transported by a new road to be constructed on the shortest practicable route between the mine and the railhead at Malcolm. This route will depend on a ground survey which is currently proceeding.

33. MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

Subsidies to Country Doctors

Mr. LEWIS, to the Minister for Health:

With reference to the scheme under which the Medical Department shares with local authorities to guarantee a minimum annual income of \$10,000 for doctors,

what was the total amount paid by the department and the number of doctors so subsidised, in each of the last three financial years?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

	\$
1968-69 two doctors	1,452.83
1969-70 two doctors	3,481.62
1970-71 two doctors	4,585.91

34. EDUCATION

Teachers' Salaries: Percentage Increase

Mr. LEWIS, to the Minister for Education:

Including all interim increases, what is the range of percentage increases in teachers' salaries from the 1st July, 1967, to the determination of the 1st July, 1970 (including the decisions of the Appeal Tribunal)?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

From 29.14 per cent. to 36.60 per cent.

35. STAMP DUTY ON RECEIPTS

Reimbursement by Commonwealth

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Premier:

- (1) As in his policy speech on the 3rd February, 1971, he said he would press the Commonwealth to make good its undertaking to reimburse the States for money lost under the invalid receipt tax legislation, what action has he taken, and with what result?
- (2) What action will he take to honour his promise to refund receipt tax duty, and when?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) A close examination of relevant papers at the Treasury having revealed that the undertaking given by the Prime Minister committed the Commonwealth Government to re-imburse the States for revenue lost only in the period subsequent to September, 1969, there existed no grounds for an approach to the Commonwealth Government as had been contemplated in connection with reimbursement for the period prior to September, 1969.

- (2) Within a few days of our becoming the Government preparations were commenced to give full effect to the undertaking to refund receipts duty and a plan was formulated.

Unfortunately, owing to the difficult budgetary position with which we are confronted, action has had to be deferred.

36. TOWN PLANNING

Canning Town Council Scheme

Mr. BATEMAN, to the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Has he received an overall plan from the Canning Town Council of the council's town planning scheme?
- (2) If so, when will a decision of the council's scheme be made known, and is it his intention to interview objectors to the scheme?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is expected that a decision will be reached towards the end of August or the beginning of September. It is not the usual practice for the Minister to interview objectors.

37. HOUSING

Mandurah and Pinjarra

Mr. RUNCIMAN, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What is the planning of the State Housing Commission for—
 - (a) Mandurah;
 - (b) Pinjarra,
 for the current financial year?
- (2) Because of the industrialisation of the Pinjarra district, can the commission accelerate its programme for the area?

Mr. BERTRAM (for Mr. Taylor) replied:

- (1) and (2) The commission is conscious of the industrialisation occurring in the Pinjarra area. At this stage, no positive advice has been received of new capital funds to be available to the commission in 1971-1972, and construction programmes cannot be finalised.

38. FERTILISER WORKS

Feasibility Study

Mr. COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Who is undertaking the feasibility study of a fertiliser works in the great southern and/or other inland towns?
- (2) What progress has been made?
- (3) When is a report expected and what areas are under study?
- (4) Is the study based on a co-operative or normal company type of operation?
- (5) What fertilisers are involved in the study?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) No appointment has been made. The company nominated by the previous Government to undertake a study was not acceptable

to the Country Regional Councils Association of W.A. Therefore I did not proceed with the appointment.

An alternative firm has been suggested and negotiations are now in train to determine terms of reference and cost of the proposed study.

- (2) to (5) See answer to (1).

39.

IRON ORE

Temporary Reserves: Negotiations with Holders

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What progress has been made in negotiations,
 - (a) with holders of temporary reserves that have expired or are still current in respect of iron ore deposits in the Murchison and Geraldton regions, such as Mt. Gould, Mt. Hale, Weld Range, Mt. Gibson, and Mt. Jackson; and
 - (b) with holders of deposits like Tallering Peak and Koolanooka already under agreement, the long term future of which could be directly or indirectly tied in with the deposits in (a) above?
- (2) Are these areas being treated separately from the Pilbara negotiations, or as part of an overall iron ore policy?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) Negotiations are continuing satisfactorily in respect of this matter and early resolution of the position is anticipated.
- (2) Similar basic policies to those applicable in the Pilbara will apply to the region in which these areas are situated but with modifications deemed necessary to suit this particular region.

40.

VERMIN

Control: North-West and Murchison

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What progress has been made in the implementation of the vermin control scheme in the north-west and Murchison pastoral areas which was announced on the 11th February, 1971, to operate in the pastoral districts of Ashburton, Carnarvon, Meekatharra, Upper Gascoyne, Wiluna, and Murchison?
- (2) What is the current position with the Pilbara vermin control scheme that was operating previously?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) and (2) Financial conditions in the pastoral areas resulting in reduced contributions by pastoralists will make it impossible for the Pilbara scheme in its present form to continue to the end of the present financial year. These conditions will also preclude the introduction of the North-West and Murchison scheme in the form originally envisaged.

The whole question of vermin control in the pastoral areas is currently under review with the aim of maintaining the best service within available funds until the long term prospects of the industry become clearer.

41. MIDLAND ABATTOIR *Extension of Facilities*

Mr. NALDER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) When was the decision made to extend abattoir facilities at Midland?
- (2) When did the building programme commence?
- (3) Is the building programme proceeding according to schedule?
- (4) What is the estimated cost?
- (5) Has it been necessary to amend the plans?
- (6) If "Yes" to what extent did they vary from the original?
- (7) If "Yes" to (5), what is the estimated increased cost?
- (8) What is the expected increase kill on the mutton chain per week?
- (9) What will be the total number of slaughtermen required for the mutton chains at Midland abattoirs?
- (10) Will the total slaughtering facilities on the mutton chain be only on a seasonal basis?
- (11) Does the board expect to obtain sufficient slaughtermen locally to operate the new mutton chain?
- (12) If not, where does the board expect to recruit them?
- (13) How many will be required?
- (14) For how many months will they be employed?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) November, 1970.
- (2) December, 1970.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) \$2.5 million.
- (5) No.
- (6) and (7) Answered by (5).
- (8) 20,000 sheep per week.
- (9) 160.

- (10) Indications are that with increased stock numbers the mutton chain could be fully used throughout the year.

(11) Not at first.

(12) New Zealand.

(13) 50.

- (14) It is hoped a learner programme now in progress will provide enough additional local slaughtermen for 1972 operations.

42. *This question was postponed.*

43. SPRINGBOKS' TOUR *Use of M.T.T. Buses*

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Did the M.T.T. hire out buses to convey members of the "Springboks" during their stay in Western Australia?
- (2) Is he aware of "stand over" tactics being employed or suggested by union representatives in connection with the M.T.T. operations?

Mr. MAY replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No.

44. HOUSING *Withers Development: Gas Hot Water Units*

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What investigations were carried out by the State Housing Commission before installing gas appliances in the Withers medium development area, Bunbury?
- (2) What are the economics of heating water for domestic use by—
(a) gas;
(b) electricity;
(c) solid fuel?
- (3) Is he aware that the gas accounts received by tenants in this area for the quarter ended June, 1971, are \$30-\$40 plus?
- (4) As this expense is causing concern to some tenants, would he have investigations made and arrange for an immediate visit by the gas home advisory service of both the State Electricity Commission and a local L.P. gas supplier to give helpful hints and advice on the use of these appliances?
- (5) Would he consider requests from tenants to replace gas hot water units with solid fuel or other units?
- (6) If so, what charges, if any, would be expected of the tenants?

Mr. BERTRAM (for Mr. Taylor) replied:

- (1) Analyses were prepared by Government Chemical Laboratories and due to the content of manganese and salt in the water, it was deduced that a solid fuel unit would only have a limited life before corrosion broke the cylinder and in the case of an instantaneous gas unit, the estimated life would be approximately four times that of a solid fuel unit.
- (2) (a) Simulated Natural Gas; 1.33 cents per unit.
(b) Electricity; 2.3 cents per unit.
(c) Solid fuel; 35 cents per lb. Approximate average running cost per week assuming 5 people and using 39 gallons per day:
(a) \$1.48.
(b) \$1.70.
(c) .68 cents.
based on costs applicable as at 25th May, 1970.
- (3) No.
- (4) When officially advised of these matters, the Commission approaches the State Electricity Commission for the assistance of its advisors in helping clients achieve a more economical use of gas appliances. In the past, it is believed consumers have made considerable savings as a result of this assistance.
- (5) No, but the tenant may do so at his own expense.
- (6) Answered by (5).

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Petrochemical Industry: Criticism of Remarks of Minister for National Development

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Industrial Development and Decentralisation:

- (1) Will he give details of his authority for accusing the Commonwealth Minister for National Development (The Hon. Reg. W. Swartz) of trying to sabotage negotiations for a petro-chemical industry—or any other industry for that matter—to come to Western Australia in favour of his home State of Queensland in view of the fact that Mr. Swartz denies the allegation?
- (2) (a) Did he, and/or his colleague (the Minister for Mines), see Mr. Swartz in Tokyo recently?
(b) If so, did he raise this question with him?
(c) If yes, with what result?
(d) If not, why did he refrain?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) A top executive of a firm interested in establishing an industry in Australia.
- (2) (a) Yes.
(b) and (c) No.
(d) So as to avoid possible embarrassment to the executive and firm concerned, and because of assurances given that the firm was still desirous of coming to Western Australia.

Mr. COURT: I think the remarks you made about Mr. Swartz yesterday were quite uncalled for.

Mr. GRAHAM: They were in accordance with fact.

2.

DAYLIGHT SAVING

Necessity for Legislation

Mr. NALDER, to the Premier:

Will it be necessary to introduce legislation in this Parliament if it is decided to adopt daylight saving in Western Australia?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Act No. 16 of 1946, the Daylight Saving Act, provides that daylight saving up to two hours in advance of standard time may be operative in an area having a radius of 35 miles from the General Post Office, Perth. This power can be exercised at any time, but would have application in the area mentioned in the Act. Should it be necessary to introduce daylight saving over the whole State then legislation would be required.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 15th July, on the following motion by Mr. A. R. Tonkin:—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to:—

May it please Your Excellency: We the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

SIR DAVID BRAND (Greenough—Leader of the Opposition) (5.09 p.m.): We have already referred to the fact that you, Mr. Speaker, have been elected to your high office in this House, and that we saw in you someone who would do his very best in this difficult and exacting task.

As I said yesterday, I desired to leave until this moment further words of congratulations and references to any member who has been elevated on the occasion of the new Parliament. Therefore, I offer congratulations to the Chairman of Committees, who, again, I feel sure will carry out his responsibilities impartially, and I am sure he will be a keen student of our Standing Orders and will be able to give decisions that are fair and impartial. He has been a member of this House for many years, and I feel certain that he feels a great degree of pleasure and a sense of achievement in having been elected to this high and exacting office.

To all the other members who have been elevated, and I refer to the Whips who have been appointed, I offer my congratulations.

I think it was said on one occasion when the Leader of the Opposition of the time was referring to the new Premier and the new Ministers that he could not congratulate them politically, but he was prepared to do so personally. Well, I would like the Premier to know that I offer him my congratulations in no sense conditioned, but everyone will understand the reason for not congratulating him politically.

I want to say of the Premier that for all the years I have known him in this House—some 26 years—he has proved to be a very hard working member, and one who has stuck to his point of view, but whether in my opinion he was right or wrong I am not prepared to say. Nevertheless he led his party with enthusiasm. I have no doubt that it is with a great deal of satisfaction that he has achieved the high office of Premier, and I wish him well in every direction other than politically.

Of course, this would go for his Ministers, some of whom have been in Parliament for only three years. I am certain that after they attained the chair of a Minister they felt the demands of their portfolios, and they were able to see matters through the eyes of a Minister of the Crown. I am sure they realise that looking at the task of government from the chair of a Minister they find it is very different from looking at it from the point of view of a back-bencher of the Opposition. However, that is politics. I know that very quickly they will realise that matters are not always as easy of solution as appears from this side of the House.

I wish them all well. For the sake of Western Australia I trust they can achieve growth, expansion, and consolidation of the position of the State. I hope they will take full advantage of the great natural resources which we know exist in Western Australia.

It is fair to say that the Labor Party was elected to office on a policy which we all understand is one of socialism, and this

is a policy which that party has adopted over many, many years. Therefore I believe that the people of Western Australia, in electing the Labor Party to govern, must have known what the party stood for by way of political principle, and that party is justified in going forward with the implementation of the policy which the present Premier enunciated on the 3rd February, 1971.

I would like to congratulate the member for Pilbara, who fought so hard on so many occasions for the appointment of the Public Accounts Committee and other standing committees, such as a public works committee and one or two others.

Mr. Graham: Fought against whom?

Sir DAVID BRAND: He fought for their formation. I am pleased he has been elected as the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. As his views on this committee have been expressed in this House, I am sure that the decisions which he may suggest or influence will be impartial.

Again I refer to the fact that the member for Narrogin also took a very lively interest in the appointment of standing committees, and it is pleasing to see that he has been elected as deputy chairman. I am sure he will keep a close and careful watch on the Public Accounts Committee and its deliberations.

To the new members we offer our congratulations, if I could speak for the party I represent and, maybe, for the other members on this side of the House. A new member, on entering Parliament, inevitably experiences some frustration. If he happens to be a very patient member his frustration is not as strong as that felt by another member who wants to get things done straightaway, or who wants to put the world in order. However, it is pleasing to see the number of young and enthusiastic people who are prepared to take up the cudgels of a political career with all its uncertainties and all its demanding exercises and practices, particularly in these days.

It has already been said that the House is a balanced one. There are 25 members on each side, and one in the Chair—a delicate situation for any Government or any party. It is certainly a delicate situation for you, Mr. Speaker, to handle, as you are the one in the Chair. I think the experience we had on opening day indicated just how closely this House is balanced. I refer to the late arrival of the member for Boulder-Dundas.

The member for Boulder-Dundas comes to this House with quite a reputation, depending on how long one has known him. Nevertheless, he is a conventional sort of fellow with a lot of experience behind him. He represents a goldfields electorate in which he has spent many years and I trust that his parliamentary experience will be a happy and satisfying one. Whilst

the Opposition may fall prey to some of the comments which the member for Boulder-Dundas has to make, I have no doubt that the Premier and his Ministers may also have a feeling of regret from time to time.

Mr. Graham: I think not.

Sir DAVID BRAND: However, we will wait and see. I am sure that whatever he has to say in this House will be worth while.

Mr. Graham: There will be no question about that.

Sir DAVID BRAND: He has gained a lot of experience during a long life, some of it being political.

I now want to return to a topic we discussed at some length last night during the second reading debate on the Supply Bill. I refer to the questions which have arisen, from time to time, because of the extravagant undertakings and commitments to which the present Premier committed us during the election campaign and in the policy speech which he made. Late in the debate the Treasurer made a statement which made me feel that, in fact, he was still confused about some of the information which I had made available regarding the financial position of the State at the time of the election. If I felt guilty, in any way, I would be prepared to admit it. However, I unhesitatingly gave the facts of life—if I can put it that way—regarding the economic position of the State and the financial situation in which we found ourselves, and I gave the reason.

If you will permit me, Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to a statement which I released on the 10th February, bearing in mind that I had delivered my policy speech on the 2nd February and I think the then Leader of the Opposition delivered his speech on the 3rd February, a day later. My statement was as follows:—

Although provision was made in this year's Budget to meet general wage and salary increases, the cost of the 1970 national wage decision and recent awards of the W.A. Industrial Commission, has greatly exceeded this provision with the result that we are faced with a substantial deficit for the current financial year.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: What was the date when you said that?

Sir DAVID BRAND: The 10th February.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That could not be of much help to me if I made my speech on the 3rd February.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Of course, my statement was published in the Press and the present Premier would know what I said. To continue—

Growth in expenditure will have to be slowed down in some areas, but with rising State revenues there is little prospect of a cut-back in essential services.

In any case, if I allow for the fact that the then Leader of the Opposition did not see the statement on the following day, he certainly would have read it at some other time. I repeated some of the facts in further releases to the Press and he could have quickly estimated the position. In no way could he claim he was unaware of the difficult financial situation which we were experiencing. I said—

At this stage it is difficult to forecast the deficit for this year but it could be of the order of five to six million dollars.

Well, as it turned out, it was \$4,300,000, or something of that order.

The Prime Minister realised the predicament in which all the State Treasurers were at the time and was generous to all the States. The fact remains, if the Premier wants to be factual, I claimed that the deficit could be a couple of million dollars more than it actually turned out to be. The Premier must realise that year in, year out, a certain sum of money is made available to the States to assist in their finances. The Commonwealth grant may be made in accordance with a formula but, on the other hand, the Commonwealth has seen fit from time to time to provide some relief after pressure has been exerted by the States.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Did not Prime Minister Gorton tell you that there would be no assistance at all?

Sir DAVID BRAND: He did; that is quite correct.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: On what date?

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is why I made that forecast.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: On what date?

Sir DAVID BRAND: I could not tell the Premier offhand.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: A week after you said that the deficit would be \$6,000,000, your Under-Treasurer told you that it would be \$10,000,000.

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is correct. I received the advice of the Under-Treasurer and others who were helping me; I certainly do not go around making guesses. How could I make an estimate of \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000 without receiving advice on the figure? I do not follow in the Premier's footsteps in this regard.

When I returned from the abortive meeting in Canberra, I must admit that it did not look too bright for us as the deficit appeared to be something more than it actually turned out to be. I further said—

Admittedly, this poses a problem but as the State's revenue grant from the Commonwealth will rise automatically next year under the new formula and because mineral royalties will also increase, I have little doubt that a satisfactory Budget can be brought down without recourse to increased taxation.

I also believe we will be able to finance our election promises which in terms of total cost to the Revenue Budget, amount to less than \$2 million in 1971/72.

In framing its policy, the Government took particular care to ensure that its promises could be financed from existing State resources. We are satisfied that further concessions could only be achieved at the expense of essential services or by increasing State taxation.

I then gave the estimated cost of my Government's undertakings under various headings, such as housing loans, aid to local authorities, aid to pensioners, abolition of royalties for timber on privately owned land, student living-away-from-home allowances, interest subsidy for private school buildings, and teacher trainees for private schools. I then referred to a proposed reduction in charges for electricity which I outlined by saying—

The estimated annual cost of proposals is £575,000. This cost is to be borne by the State Electricity Commission and accordingly will not impact on the State Budget.

I then went on to talk about the metropolitan transport plan and I referred to the fact that some formula would have to be developed, although I gave no firm commitment.

I have no doubt that had our Government remained in office we would have acted as the present Government has acted in respect of this problem: we would have appointed a subcommittee of Cabinet to research, first of all, ways and means of obtaining sufficient money to carry out the plan.

I want to make it abundantly clear that the position of the Treasury when we went out of office was clearly understood and that the Premier, in making further commitments, did so as a gamble. It seemed to me that he completely overlooked that the trend for increased wages and salaries was well under way. It was not simply going to stop at the national decision to increase wages by 6 per cent., nor was it going to stop at the decision of the State tribunal in the number of increases which it had already made. To be quite fair and honest, the Premier well knows that from that time onwards a series of decisions have granted increased salaries and wages throughout Australia which apply in this State.

Surely the Premier must have been aware that the amounts involved were very large and that, to meet the financial demands by the end of the financial year, he would have to take some direct action or, on the other hand, not commit the Government any further financially. What is more, the Premier should have had regard to the financial year to follow. If I understand his statement correctly, he quickly

realised the position from the information already to hand when he estimated the deficit for this financial year at \$35,000,000. For some reason or other—perhaps further information came to hand—he has amended the figure and suggests that it will be only \$30,000,000.

This is a huge sum of money, particularly if he has to fund this at the end of the year. Of course, he will not, for the simple reason that all the decisions made in Canberra, even if they are only on the basis of the existing formula and the new arrangements, will substantially reduce the deficit. Furthermore, it is fair to say that the income from royalties will substantially increase with the development in the production of nickel, iron ore, and other minerals. In answer to a question which I asked yesterday, the Premier clearly showed that the total increase on all royalties will be about \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000.

Although the member for Mt. Lawley has asked a series of questions regarding road maintenance tax, I feel I must say a few words about this matter and leave him to follow up some of the information he has accumulated. As is known, I took a very firm lead in respect of the Government's decision to retain the road maintenance tax. The only reason I did so was that I could find no satisfactory alternative means of raising the \$4,000,000, approximately, which we estimated we would receive in the coming year, although I recognised that the tax was unpopular and that it would not be easily administered.

Private members and, indeed, Ministers pressed for some action, and the Government decided it would set up a committee of inquiry. I am sure the committee made a thorough inquiry into the matter, and its report stated that there were no satisfactory alternatives. I believe that was so. Until such time as we could be satisfied that there were alternative means of raising the money, it seemed to me it would be a gamble to repeal the Act. We made an amendment to the Act which permitted the cartage of stock to be free of this tax, in line with the practice in South Australia and other States.

I, too, had in mind the fact that every State except Tasmania had continued the road maintenance tax. Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria had operated this tax for 10 to 14 years, and, because it was politically unpopular, I was certain that those States would have examined alternative ways and means.

One obvious alternative was to increase car licenses or some other licenses associated with the motor industry or the transport industry; but we were not prepared to do that, because Western Australia is so dependent upon roads—and good roads—and because since 1926, I think, we have

been fortunate enough to receive the benefit of a very generous formula, which it will be recalled was based on sharing the money between the States, having regard to their populations and areas. Western Australia comprises one-third of the whole of the Commonwealth, and we certainly received large sums of money on that account.

Mr. Jamieson: But were not those other States mainly concerned with interstate haulage?

Sir DAVID BRAND: When we applied the road maintenance tax?

Mr. Jamieson: No. Are not the other States to which you referred more concerned with interstate haulage?

Sir DAVID BRAND: They were concerned, but I am sure that in New South Wales, for instance, a tremendous sum of money was raised from road transport. There was a problem concerning the maintenance of roads on the borders of Queensland and New South Wales and of New South Wales and Victoria, and that is why this means was adopted. South Australia finally came into the scheme although it levied the tax on transport of eight tons and over instead of four tons and over, which applied in the other States.

We decided to introduce the tax a year or two after it had come into operation in the other States.

Mr. O'Connor: It was 10 years after New South Wales and Victoria.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It was a few years after South Australia.

Mr. O'Connor: That is correct.

Sir DAVID BRAND: From time to time the Grants Commission drew attention to the fact that Western Australia had a capacity to raise money when it was compared with the other States. There was a taxing capacity in the community, and, because the demand for roads in this vast State was so pressing, it was decided that we would apply a road maintenance tax. It has been a very profitable tax for Western Australia.

I am one of those who do not believe that the cost to individuals and communities far removed from the metropolitan area is as great as it was claimed to be. I think it was claimed that the cost was \$1,000 a head in one area.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: In the Lake Grace-Lake Camm area.

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is ridiculous. One would only have to sit down and work it out to prove it was a guess. I doubt if it was \$500. I recognise that there is a problem for people living outside the metropolitan area, and other built-up areas, in relation to transport costs, which are certainly loaded a little more as a result of the tax; but we continued

the tax because we could not find an alternative that was satisfactory to everyone.

The Premier, in endeavouring to appease the folk who were so vocal—the transport drivers—

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Not for that reason. We believed, from the inception of the tax, that it was an unfair and inequitable tax. We opposed it on its introduction, and we never ceased to oppose it.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Some taxes seem to be unfair, anyway, and this was just another one. As the rest of the mainland States were applying that tax, it seemed it would at least be fair for us to come in.

On one occasion when I went to Canberra to put a case for more money for roads in Western Australia, the then Leader of the Opposition was most critical of a cut in our funds, and he contended that we did not fight hard enough to retain what we had. After the Premier had been to Canberra to seek \$2,000,000 for local Government he admitted the futility of pressing for more money when he said, "It was no use my asking for any more after that experience."

I had been to Canberra many times over the years and I had had the same experience. I felt that when we had made the claim and argued as long as it was worth while arguing we simply had to accept the inevitable. We still finished up with a very generous sum of money for our roads.

Unless the Premier can find a satisfactory alternative means of raising the same sum of money—which I understand is over \$4,000,000 this year—I do not imagine he will receive much of a hearing at the Premier's conference table when pleading for more money for roads, as he inevitably will.

We, in a State with 1,700 miles to its most northern point and with many miles from the coast to the eastern border, must recognise that if we are to have an efficient transport system it will have to be provided over and above the present railway system with good, sound, sealed roads. This is the only reason why we as a Government maintained that there was a strong argument to retain the road maintenance tax.

Many alternatives were suggested, including a tax on petrol which, as we discovered in the years that followed, inevitably would have been ruled out by the High Court. I do not know whether we would have been able to get it on the Statute book before it was challenged by someone or other. So far the Premier has refused to give any indication of what he has in mind for the purpose of raising the \$4,000,000 following the repeal of the road maintenance tax.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It has never been the practice to disclose such things.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Let me finish. I do not blame the Premier for that; I think it is fair enough. I have not been critical on that point other than to say that local authorities and the Main Roads Department, which are so involved in this matter, must have found it difficult to draw up a programme well knowing that a decision had been taken to repeal an Act which brought them in \$4,000,000 without matching money—let us call it that—from the Commonwealth amounting to something like \$2,000,000.

For that matter, it must have been difficult for the Main Roads Department to give any consideration to the aid or the type of grants it would make to the local authorities. If the matching money were received from the Commonwealth, there would be \$6,000,000 hanging in the balance.

I simply cannot believe that the Premier has not something in mind. All I can say is that I hope the individual motorist will not finish up with a substantial increase in his car licence fee or in his driver's licence fee. I must admit that as far as I can ascertain the field for collecting this tax is very limited. It must be recognised that had it not been for the proposed repeal of the Act—I understand from the Governor's Speech legislation is coming forward—we would have had an extra \$4,000,000 available for the construction of roads, which are a vital part of our transport system.

Mr. Graham: Don't you think it would be an idea to wait until the Bill is here before you start debating an airy-fairy subject?

Sir DAVID BRAND: It is not airy-fairy. The Premier made a statement that the Act was to be repealed.

Mr. Graham: But you don't know what, if anything, is going to take its place. You are doing a lot of guessing.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I can only guess.

Mr. Graham: Wouldn't it be better to wait?

Sir DAVID BRAND: I think it is fair enough that we on this side should press the point as to what the Government intends to do, because I am sure that whatever is done it will not be easy; and we do not want to finish up with a situation where the generous amounts which have been available to us in respect of roads in the past are no longer available.

Mr. Jamieson: You wait and see.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes I will. I think I am correct in saying that when the Premier—he was then Leader of the Opposition—went to Morawa and was asked what he intended to do about replacing the road maintenance tax, he gave a fairly broad answer and mentioned royalties. I am sure that iron ore royalties will produce a substantial amount, but I can only

say that if this money is to come out of those royalties, then something else will not be financed as it would have been had the Premier not removed the road maintenance tax.

The front bench laughs at that remark; however, I am merely raising the question. I sincerely hope we have no reason to cry about the decision which has been made. I see the Minister for Health shaking his head, and I am very relieved indeed to know that there is a comfortable road to a satisfactory conclusion in respect of this matter which gave us such a great amount of worry. I hope the overall population will not be asked to pay for damage to roads caused by heavy transport travelling north to serve the large mining interests—interests which the Government always seems to be criticising.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Doesn't the overall population really pay under the road maintenance tax scheme? Isn't it part of the cost of the services rendered?

Sir DAVID BRAND: The Premier is stretching a long bow when he asks the rest of the population to share this burden, because they will not believe him and they will not take that line.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You are guessing again.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The Premier has just put a proposal to me. I am merely saying that his argument will not go down. It seems to me that he is passing the tax on. The suggestion is that it will be passed on, and those to whom it is passed on will not be very happy about it. However, I am very pleased indeed to obtain some assurance that it will not be as painful as, perhaps, we anticipated.

I believe the subject of the extravagant statements made by the Labor Party in its election campaign has been fully canvassed. All I hope is that during the Government's three-year term of office—if it lasts that long—

Mr. Graham: And longer.

Sir DAVID BRAND: That may be. I was only taking the Minister's line. He was 12 years out. However, in any case let us be fair about the fact that some of the promises were based on the anticipation of being honoured in three years' time. They amount to a large sum of money over the three years. Without doubt it would seem that taxation must be increased, not only at present, but also later, to meet some of the promises.

I believe the decision of the Government to increase hospital charges by 50 per cent. went almost unchallenged simply because people expect that things such as hospital charges and water rates must increase when the people themselves receive large increases in wages and salaries. However, the then Leader of the Opposition did not adopt that attitude when we made increases. The Opposition cried out from the

roof tops that they were unfair and unnecessary; that they were taxes, and that sort of business. No doubt these subjects will be taken up by other speakers during the Address-in-Reply, and I will await the outcome.

Mr. Graham: Do you think a Government should give effect to its election promises?

Sir DAVID BRAND: I believe it should, of course.

Mr. Graham: Including its legislative election promises?

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes.

Mr. Graham: Will the Liberal Party prevent that from taking place?

Sir DAVID BRAND: Oh, we will see what sort of legislative programme the Government has.

Mr. Graham: The promised ones, of course.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The promises again will be implemented in many cases by legislation and will depend a great deal on that legislation.

Mr. Graham: I have an idea that the Labor Party will not have as much trouble giving effect to its monetary promises as it will getting its legislative programme through.

Sir DAVID BRAND: As I said before, you are guessing.

Mr. Graham: You are so right! I have been in Parliament a long time.

Mr. O'Connor: Too long!

Mr. Graham: You try to get me out, brother!

Sir DAVID BRAND: In the same situation as that which exists now, and when the coalition Government had a majority in the Upper House on the last occasion the Labor Party was in office, the Government took great delight in introducing some rather controversial matters from time to time in the hope that they would be thrown out by the Upper House.

I express only an opinion, but I warn those on the other side that some of the political chestnuts they produce are such that the Upper House, with a Liberal-Country Party majority, must pull those chestnuts out of the fire for the Labor Party, even though they concern minor or unimportant matters, or, on the other hand, very major issues.

Mr. Davies: We will seek the co-operation of the members of the Upper House.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I am sure the Minister will find the Upper House as co-operative as it has ever been—

Mr. Davies: That says nothing for it.

Mr. Jamleson: What sort of a statement is that?

Sir DAVID BRAND: —and we have had some experience of the Upper House.

Mr. Court: You would get an awful shock if the Upper House gave you some of the things you wanted. I remember when a previous Labor Administration was in office it hoped the Upper House would perform.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Another pre-election promise made by the Premier was the return of the receipts duty tax which covered a certain period of time. The Premier has estimated that this will cost him about \$500,000 a year. What I would like to know is by what means, and by what system, will he refund the money? If it is returned, let us say, to some of the chain stores, which are quite profitable, and the amount refunded is quite substantial, it would seem that the net result would be for those stores to show a profit, which would mean an increase in income tax, and then that money would be returned to the Commonwealth. I do not think that can be denied, neither more nor less.

We have put forward the argument that because the Government cannot return the degree of the tax that we received as a result of the sale of a schooner, a pair of boots, or something of the sort, it did not seem to be practicable for us to commit ourselves to refunding this money which, in each of the instances I have referred to, would be infinitesimal, not forgetting that up to the time I went out of office Victoria had not made any refunds.

Some States, again, had covered a very short period, but all these aspects were thrashed out by the officers and the various Ministers of each State; and, first of all, I believe that the receipts duty tax was a tax which, following the discussions we had with the Commonwealth, was quite valid and legal, and that we acted fairly in all conscience.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Then you do not agree with the High Court decision?

Sir DAVID BRAND: We had to accept the High Court decision. I am speaking of the matter the Premier raised; namely, that we should have been responsible for the repayment of the tax for that brief period. I think it was from September to October.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: But you just said the Act was valid and the High Court said it was invalid.

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is right, and we argue only on that very brief period. However it will be interesting to see what effect the refunding of the tax will have on the individual. I do not think it will have any effect at all and will flow to the people who can well afford to pay the tax. The people who are conducting profitable businesses will receive the refund, and it seems that there are problems no matter in what order the Premier returns this money.

The Leader of the Country Party last night referred to the problem of the rural community, and it is not for me to spend much time on this question because there are more competent speakers with a greater knowledge of this subject than I have, despite the fact that I own a farm, but I do appreciate the very difficult situation faced by the farming community at present.

The promises made by the Labor Party during the election campaign are such that we will look to it to honour those promises. The Minister for Agriculture last night claimed that a start had been made. He referred to some consideration being given to conditional purchase farmers. This decision was made at a Cabinet meeting quite a time before we went out of office. We had regard to the fact that if a farmer wished to quit his property we would help him either to lease it or to sell it.

Mr. H. D. Evans: That has been extended since that time.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Thanks for that. We would not have expected the Minister to stop it because of the change in Government.

Mr. H. D. Evans: It has been extended because of the scope of the Act.

Sir DAVID BRAND: But the principle was already established, and we had already given consideration to conditional purchase farmers who found themselves in such a situation.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Well, we have extended the scope.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Again, with pastoralists, some decision had been made by our Government.

Mr. H. D. Evans: But you did not bring down the legislation that was required.

Sir DAVID BRAND: We simply had to await the sitting of the House to assist them, and we did not say we would meet earlier.

Mr. Jamieson: They had problems last year and the year before that.

Sir David BRAND: I am just talking of the claim by the Minister that some helpful decisions had been made. All I am saying is that they had already been made. I think people are very concerned, right up to this time, with the prospects that face the rural community because of the possibility of a dry year. In particular, the farmers in the wheat and wool areas cannot look very confidently to a good crop this year.

We know that wheat is a hardy plant and on occasions, as a result of late rains, quite payable crops have been produced. Let us hope that on this occasion the rain will come soon. On the other hand, I think it would be timely for the Government to

have regard for some of the difficulties associated with water carting, particularly in relation to those people with dams, because there has been no run-off whatsoever in the areas I have mentioned; namely, those in the eastern wheatbelt.

Therefore, I hope the Minister will come forward, as we did, with generous assistance in regard to water supplies, simply because water is vital to enable many farmers to carry on. The prospects are not bright, and it could be that for the fourth year in succession some parts of our State will suffer a dry season.

This would mean that any promise made by the Premier might well have to be doubled or trebled if we are to keep the farmers on the land. A promise was made that sufficient money would be paid to allow a farmer to leave his farm and be maintained at a reasonable standard of living. I do not know whether the Government has worked out the amount that would be involved in such a promise, or at what level such amount would be paid. It could involve a great deal of money if the amount were to be a reasonable one.

I believe some consideration has been given to the purchase of farms under certain conditions, and this could well be done under the rural reconstruction arrangement. Again let us hope that the decision will be timely and that action will be taken in good time to allow a farmer and his family to leave a property with some dignity—that is if it is our intention to help them at all.

After 12 years in Government it is a little difficult for myself as Leader of the Opposition, and for those who sit on this side of the Chamber, to accept the position. It is, of course, a little strange. Knowing the problems of Government and those associated with finance and leadership, I also find it a little difficult to be too critical of what has happened so far.

I will say, however, that while we are in opposition we will look very closely at what is being achieved, and we will also give close consideration to the decisions that are made in the interests of the State. We will certainly do our very best to keep the Government toeing the line. I say this because there is little doubt that my Ministers worked very hard and achieved a great deal during the 12 years we were in office. I would like to thank them for their loyalty and for the hard work they put in over those years.

During that time there was very little controversy, if any, and it was a great thing to have around me a band of loyal people, accepting challenges and facing up to the predicaments in which a Government finds itself from time to time.

We came in with a very narrow margin, as this Government has done, and on looking back to the earlier years there is little doubt that the Opposition of the day was unrelenting. The election speeches made

in subsequent campaigns criticised us every day and on every occasion, because of the policies we enunciated regarding the welcoming of overseas investment.

We were also criticised for welcoming the development of the iron ore deposits, which at that time were not known to be quite as large as we know them to be today. We were accused of leaving quarries and of selling our heritage. We were also accused of being in love with the Japanese. One could go on and on in this strain without fear of successful contradiction.

Even though there has been a change of Government I must claim credit for my Government for producing income from its minerals at a time when Western Australia and Australia needed this most. There would have been little success in this field had these projects not been developed in the way they were developed, through private enterprise and as a result of investment from overseas companies.

There is no need for me to remind members of the utterances made from time to time by the present Premier and, more importantly, by Mr. Whitlam as Leader of the Federal Opposition at the time.

Mr. Davies: On China?

Sir DAVID BRAND: We can leave him in China; I feel he might wish he were in China. The Minister should ask Professor Arndt about this.

Mr. Davies: Has he joined your side?

Mr. Graham: You ask Billy McMahon.

Sir DAVID BRAND: He might well join our side. The fact remains that Professor Arndt has resigned from the Labor Party; he has had the Labor Party. Mr. Whitlam, however, time and again talked about overseas investment and the fact that we were selling our heritage. He continued to tell us what we should and should not do. Although there were shortcomings, there was reason to be critical only from the political point of view if one accepted the political point of view of the other party. We, however, as a coalition Government, had enunciated a policy supporting private enterprise; and this has paid such tremendous dividends as to place Western Australia, at least financially, in the forefront of all other States. We should be grateful for that.

I must admit there were times when I felt the policy was a little too difficult to implement, but we carried on and made such decisions as those which related to Collie and the huge day labour force for which we were so strongly criticised in this House. In my opinion all these decisions paid dividends and helped to sort out some of the problems which were being experienced by this State.

Therefore, I hope that the present Government, having sent two Ministers to Japan to assure the Japanese they were

following the same line—presumably the same policy as the previous Government—and that they were not socialistic, will revise its platform and scratch out a few words. I do not know whether the Japanese would take very much account of that, because they are interested in confidence in the Government, the belief in the Government's decisions, the honesty of the Government, and the degree to which they can trade profitably with it; and, as far as I am concerned, anyhow, a Government can stand up to that; it is for the Government to establish those things.

I saw something which the Minister for Industrial Development had said in Japan, although he did not seem to agree last night that anything had been said. I have not got the cutting here; I believe other people have it and could read it. This clearly showed that he did make statements, not critical of anyone in particular but simply supporting the line that they did not intend to change direction, right or left, but intended to follow on the lines of the policy which the previous Government had enunciated and which had been implemented.

The Premier announced the other day that he was going to have a feasibility check examination made of a proposed pipeline from Palm Valley in South Australia.

Mr. Jamieson: From the Northern Territory, to be exact.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Well, I hope the Minister for Works will always be as exact as that. He knows his geography better than I do.

Mr. Jamieson: We do not want to pay the royalties to the wrong State.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I do not know whether he is saying this because of what Mr. Dunstan said about certain decisions the other day, but all I wanted to say is that this was also contained in the policy speech we made—no reference to Palm Valley, but reference to Central Australia and the pipeline being developed to carry gas to the West. We had in mind certain mining developments which, without this gas being available, would never be developed, I guess. But there it was. It was forward thinking. There was nothing new about the decision the Premier made the other day.

Included in this policy speech was also a suggestion of a feasibility check and survey of the possibility of bringing a water line from the Ord River down to Southern Cross, or to points somewhere about Kalgoorlie. As members know, this is the greatest source of water available to us, and although such a line could not be envisaged as being constructed for two or three years, it was suggested that from point to point, from town to town, such a line could be established.

Although I do not think the Minister for Works will hold that position for very long, whoever is Minister for Works will see this sort of development taking place and I am sure—

Mr. Jamieson: Wishful thinking goes on and on.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It does not, it just simply stops at the point of saying that it was intended in a long-range programme that we would have such enlightened plans for the future. However, the pipeline from Palm Valley is held up, or held up pending approval by the Executive of the State Labor Party.

Mr. Jamieson: That is not so. You have been misreading things again.

Mr. May: Wishful thinking again.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I cannot help what I read.

Mr. Jamieson: You do not read; you could not read it if you read it that way.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It is not the only decision that is held up. Subject again to the Labor Party, the Pacminex refinery will proceed or otherwise.

Mr. Jamieson: In what way is that held up?

Sir DAVID BRAND: It has also decided, subject to the environmental protection legislation which is proposed, that the pipeline which will run along the foothills of the Darling Range—or as it is proposed by the State Electricity Commission that it should—is to be held up pending such scrutiny.

This brings me to a situation I have not been able to understand. Last year there emerged a public reaction regarding the inroads which development was making in this State into some of our natural assets. This was the attitude of the public right throughout the world. It was a development which seemed to start off in America and spread universally; and today, in Japan, there is great public anxiety regarding the pollution of the air, the water, the atmosphere, and the environment. My Government took action to introduce legislation into this House. We claim it was forward thinking—in fact, when it was introduced it was felt it would lead the rest of the States in regard to this legislation, and although the Premier has stated that we did not take the lead, it is a fact that we sent a senior civil servant throughout Australia to obtain the latest ideas before he reported to the Government, and we formulated legislation based on that report.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Before tea I was referring to the fact that in the last session of Parliament we introduced environmental protection legislation; that it passed through all stages; and that it was ready for proclamation. The fact is that the present Government did not proclaim

that piece of legislation; therefore it is not law today. To be quite fair, the reason given by the Premier was the reason he gave when he opposed the legislation during the session of last year and moved certain amendments which he said were designed to give teeth to the legislation.

Because we wanted some legislation which would work and which was practical, and having regard to the general inquiry which a senior officer had made into the sort of legislation that would be practical and acceptable, we decided it was better to stick to the principle of endeavouring to have the two parties—the developers and the conservationists—get together on matters of principle and so arrive at some satisfactory arrangement.

Mr. Jamieson: The officer you appointed had one look at the legislation before he went out and bought a packet of Aspro!

Sir DAVID BRAND: Did he? He did not say that to us, and I do not think he would be two-faced. However, I have regard for the Minister's comment.

Mr. Court: He knew what type of legislation we were bringing down.

Mr. Jamieson: He knew his hands were tied, like yours.

Mr. Court: That is not a fair comment.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The fact was that we had completed the passage of the legislation, and included in it our own ideas, our principles, and our attitude, in the belief that the legislation would resolve some of the difficulties that would arise from head-on clashes between the two groups.

At that time the then Opposition said the legislation should have teeth; and presumably this statement was made with a view to implementing certain decisions. I understand the legislation which the Government now proposes to bring forward has teeth; and, as was explained by the director, big teeth. What that will achieve I cannot say, and only time will tell. I hope it will resolve the problems which inevitably will arise; that as a result of it we will be able to preserve the natural assets and the natural beauty of this State and this country; that we will be able to prevent pollution of the air to the extent that it can be prevented; and that action will be taken over all the scene to ensure the environment is kept as attractive, as pure, and as effectively protected as possible.

On the other hand, there should not be severe limitation on the development of this State and its natural resources, of which there are many, because if such development is severely limited it will not only prevent the progress of the State but also discourage from coming here the people who are in a position to invest in this State and to develop the natural resources with their know-how. So, it is only reasonable

that a happy medium has to be struck in the interests of the future, the standard of living, and the security of our people.

However, a situation has arisen, and it is an embarrassing situation. I have already referred to the matter of the State Executive of the Labor Party taking action, by way of request or, if it is preferred so to term it, demand, to withhold certain action until the matter or the proposal can be the subject of consideration under the new environmental protection Act.

It was clearly the desire of the State Executive that the question of the power line along the foothills—a very controversial matter both before and after the election—should be the subject of some examination under this new Act with its big teeth. Furthermore, the siting of the Pacminex refinery is also to be the subject of a decision by the environmental organisation. The Premier has undertaken to refer the matter and he stated it publicly. It would seem there are many other proposals which should be the subject of this new legislation, or be the subject of some examination by the council and its director.

Another disturbing factor is that in the final analysis the council or the organisation would have the final say, and the decision would not reach the Minister—whether he be the Minister for Industrial Development or the Minister in charge of environmental protection. I believe that any final and challenging decision of this kind should be the responsibility of the Government; that is what the Government is elected for, and that is what it is expected to do.

It would seem there is a possibility of the council being loaded one way or the other. Although the new proposals, when they are passed through Parliament and become the law, will provide for an appeal tribunal, the fact remains that in the final analysis the decision is made at a level lower than the Executive or the ministerial level.

At the present time there is no protection at all. I think that worth-while proposals concerning developments of all kinds should become the subject of legislation; and it is a great pity the new Government was in such a hurry to repeal legislation which could have been proclaimed. In any case that legislation could have been an interim measure. It will be late in this session before the new legislation will be introduced—in September, as the Premier informed me—and I believe it will require good luck and will require expedition to have that legislation introduced by that time.

It is quite clear that it is a difficult piece of legislation to draw up. I would think the director-general, even if he swallowed a whole packet of Aspros, would find it difficult to draw up a practicable measure which he could administer.

Amendment to Motion

Because we are very disappointed, indeed, with the extravagant promises which were made by the present Premier during the election campaign, in the light of our difficult financial position; and because we are certainly disappointed that there is no protection against development of the wrong kind, I intend to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech. No protection can be provided if certain measures are brought forward, say, in respect of mining—and one such development I am thinking of is at the Fitzgerald River in the Albany region where some development may well be approved in due course, and that development, having regard to the conservation problems, would provide employment.

The matters I have mentioned are of interest to us so we should lose no time in expediting the final decision, whether it be "Yes" or "No." Without the legislation which everyone approves of, and which would provide some satisfaction for those who feel concern about the environment, and about pollution of the air, the water, and the land, we feel it is necessary that I move to add words to the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech. The motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply reads as follows:—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to:—

May it please Your Excellency: We the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

I move the following amendment to the motion:—

That the following words be added to the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech:—

; but we view with concern the Government's indifference to the state of finances when making election promises, and further we regret the Government's failure to proclaim the Physical Environment Protection Act passed last session of the State Parliament. It has thus left the State unnecessarily without special legislation dealing with environmental protection pending the introduction and passing of replacement legislation. This has brought problems for a number of matters affecting the community, the economy and the environment.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta—Deputy Premier) [7.45 p.m.]: If the Leader of the Opposition, and those who sit behind him, expected that the Government would become a little excited on account of this move I can inform them that their No. 1 shot has sadly misfired. As a matter of fact, to me it is somewhat pathetic that after a term of 12 years, and having been succeeded by a new Government that has been in office for a matter of weeks only, the Leader of the Opposition has found it necessary to peruse old bound volumes of *Hansard* to find out what went on previously. Accordingly, because he has a new brigade behind him, he has felt that it is necessary to impress himself, and others, by taking some sort of dramatic step; namely, to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech.

I would submit that the Opposition is singularly barren of ideas. I suggest that I could have thought up something a little more substantial than what is contained in the verbiage which was read out as an amendment by the Leader of the Opposition. The first part of the amendment reads as follows:—

We view with concern the Government's indifference to the state of finances when making Election promises

The time for the Leader of the Opposition—as he now is—to complain was during the election campaign. Complain he did, and he got his reply: the people bundled him out of office and put the Labor Party in power. It is no use crying over spilt milk. The public were informed of this fact last night, and again this evening. We had the Leader of the Opposition, and his deputy, telling us of the extravagant and rash promises which were made by the Labor Party, and the impossibility of fulfilling them. Extracts were quoted from the newspapers which were published at the time of the election campaign.

I will leave the verdict to the judges; the judges, of course, being the electors of Western Australia. The previous Government lost three political seats, and we have been the Government for a period of some four months only. I ask: Was it ever anticipated that a programme involving financial considerations or legislative action would be consummated within a matter of a few weeks? A Government is elected for a period of three years and it outlines a programme that it seeks to implement over that time.

I suggest that if this Government falls down on any of its undertakings or promises it will not be of its own making. There will be no bad faith on the part of the Labor Government; any breakdown will be because of the Liberal Party dominated Legislative Council which pays no heed to the will of the electors. I repeat: If the Government's programme,

as outlined by my leader in his policy speech, is not given effect to it will result from the actions of those who sit opposite us.

Mr. O'Neil: Did the Labor Party have those thoughts before it made its promises?

Mr. GRAHAM: I refer to those who came second on the 20th February, last.

Mr. O'Neil: Did you make promises because you thought you would not have to carry them out?

Mr. GRAHAM: The promises were made by my leader. The Government has every intention of carrying them out.

Sir David Brand: You should have, of course.

Mr. GRAHAM: I agree with the Leader of the Opposition and, if he has such respect for the promises made by the leader of a new Government, he should counsel his supporters in another place particularly, but here too, let me add, to give consideration to those ideals and allow the Labor Government to give effect to what was endorsed by the people at the recent elections.

Sir David Brand: I have respect for the promises made. I am concerned only at the way they will be carried out. However, the respect shown by the then Leader of the Opposition to me, as Premier, earlier on was not in accordance with what the Deputy Premier is now talking about.

Mr. GRAHAM: I notice that the Premier is now seeking to get away from the situation of 1971 and the amendment he has moved. He wants to hark back 12 years. I realise I have called the Leader of the Opposition the Premier. I am sorry if I gave him an honour to which he is not entitled at the present moment.

There is no need for me to argue about the finances of the State, because they were paraded before the people and it is the people who have given their verdict. However, I say from my place, as I am afraid I have said on a few too many occasions and have incurred some displeasure from you, Mr. Speaker: What about the serious document that was placed in the hands of the Premier of the day on the 18th February, 1971?

Sir David Brand: That is right.

Mr. GRAHAM: The document indicated the financial situation existing in this State at the time, but not a word of it was given to the people of Western Australia.

Sir David Brand: I read out today the statement which was made on the 10th February. That document was handed to me on the 19th February.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am speaking of the report which tells us, the new Government, that the situation was so critical that it would not be possible for a contract for a

single house to be let between that date, the 18th February, and the new financial year commencing on the 1st July, 1971.

Sir David Brand: I was perfectly frank with the public.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Premier of the day was so frank that he balked at the issue. This was only a couple of days before polling day and he did not tell the people of Western Australia the substance of the report submitted to him by the Under-Treasurer.

Mr. Court: He could not have been franker in his statements to the electorate right up to a statement on the 15th February.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is anxious to evade the issue.

Mr. Court: I am not.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am speaking of an important State document which was placed in the hands of the Premier of the State two days before polling day.

Mr. Court: Last night it was stated that it was the eve of the election, the 19th February.

Mr. GRAHAM: Let me humbly apologise to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for whatever satisfaction he might derive from it. I now have the document in my hands and I see that it is dated the 19th February, 1971.

Mr. Court: What would you have done with it?

Mr. GRAHAM: This would have made delightful reading on election day!

Mr. Court: What do you do with a document received on the 19th February, if there is an election the next day?

Mr. GRAHAM: If the Government was proud of its performance and prowess in managing the financial affairs of the State, it would have welcomed the opportunity to have its thoughts endorsed by submitting a report from a responsible public official who could not be accused of being tainted in any way with political bias. Accordingly, the electorate could have been impressed. No! The situation was so grim that the Premier of the day and his Government decided that discretion was the better part of valour and, consequently this became a secret document, available to the new Government some 10 days later.

Sir David Brand: It was nothing of the sort.

Mr. GRAHAM: It was available 10 days later when the previous Government went out of office. That is the position regarding the finances of the State. The amendment to the motion continues—

... and further we regret the Government's failure to proclaim the Physical Environment Protection Act passed last Session of the State Parliament.

This must be something of tremendous urgency and importance.

Sir David Brand: According to many people it is.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am speaking from the point of view of the Liberal Party and the Country Party. Western Australia has been in existence for a period of 141 years and for almost 12 years immediately prior to the introduction of the legislation—the toothless old hag—nothing was done by the previous Government. However, following its demise, this becomes priority No. 1, and some concern is being expressed. In the words of the Leader of the Opposition—

It has thus left the State unnecessarily without special legislation dealing with environmental protection pending the introduction and passing of replacement legislation.

I hazard a guess, as we did when the Bill was being debated, that, legislation or no legislation, it would make no difference. I now come to the humorous part of the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I suppose it was meant to be the sting in the tail as the words come last. The amendment says—

This has brought problems for a number of matters affecting the community, the economy, and the environment.

Sir David Brand: Has it not?

Mr. GRAHAM: Did the Leader of the Opposition outline any of them? What problem has been created because this legislation has not been in force?

Sir David Brand: Perhaps the Deputy Premier would like to refer to the decision of the State A.L.P. Executive which thought that it was important enough to request, or demand, the Government to hold up certain proposals until they could be subject to the environmental protection Act.

Mr. GRAHAM: Many people have been saying this.

Sir David Brand: Doesn't that indicate that it is important?

Mr. GRAHAM: Nobody is talking about its importance.

Sir David Brand: You are.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Leader of the Opposition is trying to make us believe, through his amendment, that this has brought problems.

Sir David Brand: There must be some problems.

Mr. GRAHAM: I notice there was the matter of the P.E.R.T.S. plan dealing with transport which sat in the Minister's office untouched for some months. There was the document concerning the corridor plan. It, too, lay on the table of a certain Minister for a number of months and nothing

was done about it. There were proposals in respect of high tension mains, pylons, and the rest of it. Nothing was done.

Mr. O'Connor: Did the Deputy Premier say that the P.E.R.T.S. plan lay on the Minister's table for some months? You are talking rubbish.

Mr. GRAHAM: The member for Mt. Lawley has become very verbose by way of interjection since he has moved to the other side of the House. He is entitled to, of course. I was inclined a little that way myself. I invite the member for Mt. Lawley to put the question on the notice paper and ask me the date when the P.E.R.T.S. report was completed.

Mr. Jamieson: And made available to him.

Mr. O'Connor: I will do that.

Mr. GRAHAM: I invite whoever was responsible for the corridor plan, so-called, to ask me a question as to when that was made available to the Government. I would like somebody to ask a question unofficially as to why the Government of the day made no moves whatsoever and threw the proposal into the too-hard basket.

Sir David Brand: That is not correct.

Mr. O'Connor: Why has the Deputy Premier changed his mind on this? Would you answer questions on pre-election promises you made to individuals in this regard if I asked you?

Mr. GRAHAM: Ask me.

Mr. O'Connor: I will, by way of questions.

Mr. GRAHAM: I will be delighted to answer them.

Mr. Court: The Speaker might disallow them.

Mr. O'Neil: The Deputy Premier was not responsible for his actions before the election.

Mr. GRAHAM: I can tell the member for Mt. Lawley that I made no promises whatsoever to any person during the elections. Somewhat naturally, I subscribe to the promises and undertakings that were made by my leader.

Mr. O'Connor: Are you saying that on one evening when a number of other people, including myself, were present you made no promises?

Mr. GRAHAM: I made no promises whatsoever. The member for Mt. Lawley can suggest what he likes. He can ask me personally, in the House, or in correspondence, whatever way he likes. The point I am making at the moment, however, is that the previous Government fiddled whilst Rome burnt but now that there has been a change of Government it is expected that the new Government shall perform miracles in a few months.

I know of no industrial establishment or any activity which has been undertaken in recent times which would have been offensive to the inoffensive legislation on environmental protection introduced by the late Government. I pause for a moment for somebody on the other side of the House to indicate one.

Mr. Bickerton: You have got them!

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course they cannot. Yet we are told that problems have been created to such an extent that it requires Her Majesty's Opposition to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply. The whole thing is, of course, fatuous.

It is not my desire to debate or discuss, here and now, the merits of the Pacminex legislation. A Bill will be introduced into this Parliament in due course, and members of this Parliament will make a decision. They will have an opportunity to study the terms of the agreement. The conditions will be explained to them. They will learn—perhaps to their surprise—that there will be greater safeguards and protection in connection with this proposed industrial establishment than there are in any other establishment existing in Western Australia.

Sir David Brand: There should be.

Mr. GRAHAM: It will be subject to every piece of legislation which now exists or is likely to be introduced at any time in the future.

Mr. Court: Have you signed the agreement yet?

Mr. GRAHAM: No, not yet. I am pleased to see the member for Dale in such a happy mood. I have never known a member to laugh, giggle, and guffaw as often as he has in the two days we have been meeting.

If it is any satisfaction to members of the Opposition, the situation is that this Government has nothing to hide—nothing like the document I was handling a few minutes ago. Cabinet has decided to approve the agreement. The final draft is being attended to by the Crown Law Department. The final terms of the agreement will be embodied in legislation which will be submitted to both Houses of Parliament, and members and the world at large will be able to express their opinions about it.

Sir David Brand: So they should be.

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course. Fifteen or 20 minutes ago I had the impression that the Leader of the Opposition thought something terrible had happened in connection with that matter. I am putting it to him that the normal processes will be followed. He tried to make a point about the State Executive of the Labor Party. The State Executive, like so many others, being not fully informed, was not aware of the full facts. It expressed concern with regard to the preservation of the environment

and I should say that is a healthy condition. It is desirable that people should express concern so that the Government and Parliament might take every possible precaution to ensure that Perth does not become a second Tokyo or Los Angeles, or like any other city that has been blighted by pollution of the air, the earth, and the waters.

For that reason the Government is taking action to ensure that there will be a piece of legislation which is worthy of the name and designed to protect the environment; not to be an artificial apparatus such as was pushed through Parliament last session, which nobody could honestly suggest was capable of dealing with the situation if there were some threat to the environment. I want to qualify that by saying that there are other Statutes which play a not insignificant part. There are the Clean Air Act, the Health Act—

Mr. I. W. Manning: We put this to you at the time.

Mr. GRAHAM: Precisely. I am saying there are many other considerations that attend to the matter, but the environmental protection legislation, so called, which was passed in the dying hours of the last Parliament would not have afforded any protection. It was intended merely to stem the rising tide of opposition and concern on the part of the public, in order to make the public believe that the Government was interested and had in fact done something.

Sir David Brand: It would have been an effective piece of legislation.

Mr. GRAHAM: When the new legislation is brought down the Leader of the Opposition will have an opportunity to compare or contrast the two measures. I want to assure him, here and now, that this concern he spoke of, but about which he did precious little in 12 years as Premier—

Sir David Brand: We introduced the Clean Air Act.

Mr. GRAHAM: It is not the intention of the Government to prevent logical and necessary development undertakings in Western Australia. The Government has a sense of proportion and responsibility, and feels that the people of the community are entitled to some protection. The legislation will be drawn for that reason. I suppose the Opposition almost wishes the legislation were such that it would discourage any prospective investors from coming to Western Australia, so that there would be an unsatisfactory, unhealthy economic climate which would place the Government in electoral difficulty as a consequence.

Mr. Davies: It would not be the first time the Opposition wanted that.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so. Twelve years ago messages went around the world, seeking to create disquiet in the minds of

investors for the purpose of damaging the Labor Government of the day, but which, in point of fact, damaged the reputation of Western Australia, for mean political advantage.

I have devoted far more time to this amendment than it warrants. There are only two points in it. Of all the political issues one could conceive, the Leader of the Opposition trots out two—one dealing with a matter that is over and done with because our masters, the people, passed judgment in connection with it; and the other relic of the past is the document prepared by the Under-Treasurer which the Premier of the day did not have the courage to reveal to the public.

Sir David Brand: Do not talk a lot of piffle.

Mr. Court: A lot of twaddle. No Government leader in the political history of this country has been so frank about the financial state during an election campaign as the then Premier was.

Mr. GRAHAM: It might not be a bad idea for me to read the terms of this report, as it is not very long and there is nothing confidential about it. Let me say, here and now, that if I had had a few minutes' notice of the amendment proposed to be moved by the Leader of the Opposition I could perhaps, have marked appropriate portions for quoting. I am not criticising him for not allowing me to have some pre-knowledge of the amendment. However, I think this is a reasonably historic document and I propose to give members the benefit of it. It is addressed to the Hon. The Treasurer on the 19th February, 1971.

Mr. O'Connor: Is that the date it arrived on the Premier's table?

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes, the 19th February. First of all, there is a minute addressed to the new Treasurer and dated the 3rd March, 1971, that being the day when this Government assumed office. The minute reads:—

State Finances

Attached is a minute which I addressed to the former Treasurer on 19 February. I am not aware of any action taken on that minute. . . To date, there has been no action in this State to prune expenditure or to increase taxes and charges.

I pause. The ex-Premier had been telling us of how he was aware of the seriousness of the situation—to the extent that, notwithstanding there was an election campaign, he was so frank as to indicate the situation to the populace at large.

Sir David Brand: He was.

Mr. GRAHAM: He was aware of it; but in the words of the Under-Treasurer, "To date, there has been no action in this State. . ." I think that is typical of the

late Government in quite a number of spheres. I am awaiting an opportunity to give some detail in that respect. When some of the aura and the glamour which was built around the previous Government, by itself, has disappeared, from official documents and records some of the true facts can perhaps be told.

Sir David Brand: We will await that with interest.

Mr. Court: The sooner they are told the better.

Mr. GRAHAM: I continue to read from the Under-Treasurer's minute to the present Treasurer—

If anything, Western Australia is in a worse financial position than any other State.

I make no comment other than this: That is in complete contradistinction to what the Leader of the Opposition told us last night.

Mr. O'Neil: Are you still reading from the minute to the new Treasurer?

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes.

Mr. O'Neil: I merely want to make that perfectly clear.

Mr. GRAHAM: I will obtain the other document presently. I am wondering how much of this document I should read and how much I should not read, because I do not want to weary the House unnecessarily.

Mr. Court: After what the Minister said last night, and you are saying tonight, officers of Government departments will be very sceptical about writing minutes to their Ministers.

Mr. GRAHAM: Is there a suggestion that if anything is said regarding the facts of the situation, and it is not politically palatable to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, those comments should not be disclosed?

Mr. Court: Nothing of the sort; but you know it is good ministerial practice, when making a statement to Parliament, to use your own information and not use that of your officers.

Mr. O'Neil: You want to read it as a factual statement.

Mr. GRAHAM: I have never heard that one before.

Mr. O'Neil: You are making your own comments and interpretations.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will have an opportunity to speak to this debate. I realise the Deputy Premier has unlimited time, but consistent interjections will only delay the debate. I know that members have only 45 minutes in which to speak, but I suggest they keep their interjections and comments till then.

Mr. GRAHAM: I continue to quote—

In addition, Western Australia has a separate problem with State Housing finance as explained in the attached papers. In brief, this situation arises out of the expenditure in 1970/71—

A situation, of course, for which this Government was in no way responsible. To continue—

—of funds accumulated by the Commission over past years.

Mr. O'Neil: Thank you for the hint.

Mr. GRAHAM: The minute continues—

This accumulation of funds permitted a much larger programme in this financial year without the need for a large allocation from State loan funds. As the Commission's programme of 3,200 completions in 1970/71 will exhaust its accumulated funds and, in fact, overdraw these funds—

I repeat: "overdraw these funds."

Sir David Brand: It would not be the first time.

Mr. GRAHAM: To continue—

—by an estimated \$2 million it will be necessary to allocate an additional \$17 million to the Commission in 1971/72 if the present rate of home building is to be maintained.

I can appreciate what members of the Opposition may say, but I am well aware of the chastisement I received I suppose on no fewer than a dozen different occasions for having spent in excess of the budget on the loan funds allocated to me as Minister for Housing. However, I want to say that it was a situation which was corrected by the Government responsible for that action; it was not left as an unhealthy inheritance of the succeeding Government. I see nothing particularly wrong, in emergency circumstances, in the Government taking an unusual course with regard to its finances. But I do not think it is playing the game particularly cleanly to leave a situation of over-spending to the tune of a couple of million dollars to be confronted by a new Government. We most certainly were unaware of this and I think I am correct in saying that no person, speaking on behalf of the Liberal Party or the Country Party, conveyed any of that information to us.

Mr. O'Neil: If you look at past Address-in-Reply and Supply Bill debates you will find that on many occasions it has been suggested that loan funds or Consolidated Revenue be used to overcome the housing situation.

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes, and the then Minister for Housing and those who sat behind him poured cold water over the suggestions and said it could not and should not be done.

Mr. O'Neil: That is a lot of rubbish.

Mr. GRAHAM: On top of that the ex-Minister for Housing overspent to the tune of a couple of million dollars.

Mr. O'Neill: I think you were critical of the fact that the Education Department was given an allocation of \$2,000,000 that was originally allocated to housing.

Mr. GRAHAM: It was allocated to housing and then taken away from it on the grounds that there was a little too much activity in the house building sector of the economy. Yet within about three months of that happening, Western Australia started to slide down to one of the worst housing situations it had struck since the years immediately following the conclusion of the war.

Mr. O'Neill: You have not got a housing problem now.

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course we have.

Mr. O'Neill: I thought you said it had been overcome by overspending.

Mr. GRAHAM: I did not say anything about the situation having been overcome. The charge against the previous Government was that over a period of 12 years it sat on its haunches and did very little. We said repeatedly—without making any allowances for an expanded population, a thriving economy, and all the other things we heard about from the previous Government—that if the Liberal-Country Party Government had only maintained the same rate as that created by the Hawke Labor Government during its six years of office—that is, at the same average annual rate—there would have been no housing crisis because an additional 11,000 or 12,000 commission houses would have been built in Western Australia.

Mr. Rushton: That is not consistent with what your present Minister says. He wants to carry on the Liberal policy.

Mr. GRAHAM: The present Minister is in a predicament because all the reserve funds have been spent. The accumulated reserves have been spent—and overspent by \$2,000,000.

Mr. Rushton: Which you advocated.

Mr. O'Neill: You blamed the past Government for not allocating sufficient loan funds to housing. You can solve that problem now by allocating loan funds to housing rather than to works.

Mr. GRAHAM: For 12 years we had a Government which neglected the situation, and now we hear these caustic criticisms and comments when we have been in Government for a matter of a few weeks. However, let me read from the document signed by the Under-Treasurer and dated the 19th February, 1971, when this State had a Liberal-Country Party Government still in office. The minute is addressed to the Treasurer.

Mr. O'Neill: Did you read all of the first minute?

Mr. GRAHAM: No; but I shall do so if it gives any satisfaction to the honourable member. He was very concerned a few moments ago that I get to the report issued to the previous Government.

Mr. O'Neill: I was simply trying to establish which minute you were reading from, and that it was not a minute to the ex-Premier, but a minute to the new Treasurer.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think the member for East Melville had better try listening to what I say. If he does that he may have some idea of what it is I am quoting from. In each case I have prefaced my remarks by acknowledging the source of the minute. If I may repeat myself, I am now about to quote from the Under-Treasurer's report to the Treasurer, dated the 19th February, 1971, prior to election day.

Mr. O'Neill: That is the day before.

Mr. GRAHAM: I have already said that. I do not know how many times it is necessary to repeat it. This report would have made delightful reading on the morning of polling day and, if the finance was as plentiful as we have been told in the last few hours, the Government would have jumped at the opportunity.

Mr. Rushton: What was your itinerary for that day? Sitting waiting for the report?

Mr. GRAHAM: Before those on the other side of the House have heard one line or one word of this report they are squirming in their seats. The report is headed—

Hon. the Treasurer:

State Finances

We will find the opening words very interesting. I quote—

The current budgetary situation gives rise to concern as the result of the 1970 national wage decision and more particularly because of the very generous increases granted by the W.A. Industrial Commission which flowed from its decisions on the State basic wage case.

2. When the Budget for this financial year was framed a careful forecast was made of the likely movement of wages during the year. As a result, the substantial sum of \$4,450,000 was provided in the Estimates to meet general wage increases. In addition, provisions were made in departmental votes where specific increases could be anticipated. In total, the provision for wage increases was \$10,023,000.

3. However, the wage increases which have been awarded have added the staggering sum of \$17,401,000 to the Government's wages bill for the

current year and there is a further \$2,800,000 expected from applications yet to be heard.

4. The increase in wage costs will therefore exceed the provision in the Budget by over \$10 million.

5. Examination of other budget outlays and also revenues indicates that other movements will be broadly in balance.

6. Consequently, the deficit now expected for 1970/71 is in the order of \$10 million which is due entirely to wage increases in excess of the provisions in the Budget.

7. The Prime Minister has made it abundantly clear that the Commonwealth Government will not assist the States to meet the unexpected rise in wage costs and he has informed all Premiers that they should reduce expenditures to limit the impact of this rise on State Budgets.

Here let me say that the members of this House would of course recall that there was a special meeting of Premiers and Treasurers of the various States with the Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth, in fact, made some additional allocations of money subject to certain conditions which I need not outline. Continuing—

8. It is also clear that the Commonwealth intends to restrain State spending in next financial year which suggests a cut in capital allocations in 1971/72. In this respect, it is to be noted that the Commonwealth has already cut its spending this year by \$75 million but it will not be until July of this year that the Commonwealth will have an opportunity to impose cuts on the States.

9. Also, a large deficit this year will in itself reduce the funds available for capital works in 1971/72 because of the need to use loan funds to clear this deficit.

10. If action is not taken at this stage to contain the deficit for this year, more drastic measures will be needed early next financial year if the State's financial position is not to become completely unmanageable.

Here I pause again, because this is the situation which now confronts this new Government. Continuing—

11. In this respect, it has to be borne in mind that the funding from loan funds of a revenue deficit of \$10m., alone would mean a most severe reduction in the State's capital works programme for next year. On top of this, a Commonwealth cut in capital allocations to the States would clearly result in an impossible situation.

12. I also have to draw your attention to the difficult position which is arising from the stepped-up State

Housing Commission programme. In this respect, I attach a report from Mr. Boylen on the current position. This reveals that either a massive additional allocation of capital funds will be needed by the Commission in 1971/72 if its present level of completions is to be maintained, or there will have to be a drastic reduction in houses built by the Commission.

13. The problem with State Housing finance would have arisen in 1971/72 even if other budgetary problems had not occurred. The combined effect of these developments will create a most difficult financial situation for the State in 1971/72 unless action is taken now to reduce the current level of Government spending.

It is suggested that a general instruction be issued to all departments to limit expenditure from Consolidated Revenue to unavoidable items. In particular it is recommended that:—

- (a) Recruitment of additional staff cease and that no new positions be created until further notice.
- (b) Overtime be cut to a minimum.
- (c) New projects planned but not yet implemented be deferred.
- (d) Incidental expenditures particularly items such as aircraft charter, printing, advertising and publications be pruned to a minimum.
- (e) Maintenance of public buildings be cut-back and that restrictions be placed on supply of new furniture and equipment.

15. In the case of capital expenditures the following steps are proposed:

- (a) Treasury to review this year's capital works programme.
- (b) No tender to be called or any contract let for new works without the approval of the Treasurer.
- (c) No new contracts to be let by the State Housing Commission in this current financial year.

I repeat that on the 19th February, 1971, the Under-Treasurer said—

No new contracts to be let by the State Housing Commission in this current financial year.

In other words, there was to be a hiatus of 4½ months during which time no contracts were to be let for the construction of State Housing Commission dwellings. This never occurred previously in the history of Western Australia.

Mr. O'Neil: That was a recommendation. Did you agree with the recommendation?

Mr. GRAHAM: I cannot answer that, because I do not know of my own knowledge what the new Minister for Housing is doing. What I am pointing out is that the previous Government was aware of the fact that the State's finances were in a parlous state and, so far as the State Housing Commission was concerned, it was not "gone a million" but "gone two million," and for a period of 4½ months not one contract was to be signed for the erection of State Housing Commission dwellings. What about all this poppycock we hear of this State being in a sound financial position at present, with the best conditions of any State of the Commonwealth, and that we, the new Government, inherited a healthy situation!

Although there is some further detail appearing on this minute I do not think there is any need for me to quote any more from it. I apologise for occupying the time of the House, but perhaps I should apologise for wasting the time of the House. I say that advisedly, because no substantial charges have been levied against this Government. There has been no attempt to prove these general allegations. Indeed, I pause and ask all members on the other side of the House to point to one single instance of the environment being destroyed or polluted because their ill-begotten legislation has not received the Governor's assent.

Therefore the two charges set out in this amendment are spurious to the nth degree. In any event, in accordance with custom, of course, we will continue to sit until this House expresses its pleasure, one way or the other, on the amendment that has been submitted by the Leader of the Opposition. I know what those members who sit on this side of the House think of it, and I am certain that, if a free vote were allowed or the matter was decided only on its merits, quite a few members who sit on the left-hand side of the Speaker would, when the division bells ring, be occupying seats and places on this side of the Chamber.

MR. WILLIAMS (Bunbury) [8.30 p.m.]: I rise to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. Before I do so, however, Mr. Speaker, may I congratulate you on attaining the position you have. It is the first time I have spoken since you have taken the Speaker's Chair, and I would like to wish you all success while you are in charge of this House. We all look forward to giving you any assistance that may be necessary.

We have just heard from the Deputy Premier. He told us that we were barren of ideas and added that after 12 years there should be something better than this amendment coming from the Opposition benches. I suggest that we will hear quite a lot of this sort of thing from the Deputy Premier and his followers on future occasions.

During the course of his remarks the Deputy Premier mentioned and read to us portions of the document presented to the then Treasurer on the 19th February, 1971. I rather gather that he did this a little to fill in time because, perhaps, he felt he had not done justice to the amendment and had not taken quite enough time. Accordingly he thought he had better string the matter along and fill in the gaps.

During the course of drawing up the previous Budget the Treasurer had allowed \$4,250,000 for the increase in wages. Apparently this is a fairly generous figure and no doubt the Treasurer and the Treasury officials at the time, having regard for the trend in rising costs, allowed, perhaps, a little more than usual.

During the discussion in this Chamber last night we heard mention of some statements made by the then Premier—the present Leader of the Opposition—on the 15th December, 1970, in connection with the financial situation in this State.

When the then Treasurer made his statement on the 15th December, 1970, I think he was, in fact, being very kind to the present Premier, who was the Leader of the Opposition at the time, and to the public at large, by warning them of the situation that would arise in this State mainly because of the national wage case and the State wage case, the decisions on which had been brought down at about that time.

In *The West Australian* of the 15th December, 1970, we find the following statement made by the then Premier:—

The Premier, Sir David Brand, said yesterday that the national wage decision would add \$2.25 million to the Government wages bill this financial year and about \$4.5 million in a full year.

This came on top of the extra \$10.5 million that the State would have to meet this financial year because of the State basic wage increase and salary rises for the State public service.

The impact on the State budget of all the increases would be about \$12 million in 1970-71 and probably would total more than \$20 million in a full year.

This would create a serious financial problem for the Government.

To my mind that was fair warning; it was a fairly factual warning at the time. Yet we have the present Premier, when speaking during the election campaign, making promises—which I suppose all leaders make during election campaigns—and indicating time and again after having made his original election speech, and after having made his promises, that he would be able to keep those promises.

He stressed this point even after he had been warned of the financial situation on the 15th December, 1970. I have no doubt that the present Premier had that information in his possession. It was certainly printed in the paper and knowing the research he undertakes I am sure he had a copy of this information. Despite that, however, and despite the warnings given during the election campaign that the Labor Party would not be able to keep its promises, the Premier continued saying at that time that he would carry out all his election promises. He said this on several occasions.

On the 10th February, 1971, we find the following:—

Mr. Tonkin made the challenge in reply to a claim by the Premier, Sir David Brand, that Mr. Tonkin would not be able to finance his major election promises.

The Premier said he would be able to keep his election promises and he assured everyone accordingly at that time. Last night, however, we heard quite a bit in this House about the cost of these election promises and this matter was debated fairly fully. In *The West Australian* of the 13th February, 1971, the present Premier, who was the Leader of the Opposition at the time, said—

There would be no increase in State taxes or charges next financial year.

Then at the end of his comments in the course of his election promises he went on to say—

I am confident that, without any increases in taxes, I shall comfortably meet all the promises that I have made.

Having been warned on the 15th December, of the likely situation in the next financial year, and having been told during the election campaign that he would find it difficult to keep his promises, the present Premier continued to repeat his utterances and assured us that he would keep his election promises without increasing charges or taxes. Since then however, we all know that certain charges have been, or will be, increased. I refer, of course, to hospital charges and to the increase in water rates in some cases. I agree that it might have been necessary for hospital charges to be increased but surely no-one in his right mind would make a statement that no charges would be increased, particularly after he had been warned of the position by the Government of the day which, no doubt, would have had a fair knowledge of the subject as a result of advice received from Treasury officials.

Had we remained the Government it is possible we would have found it necessary to increase some of these charges. But we did not hear our leader say during the election campaign that no charges

would be increased. I certainly did not hear him say this, and I am sure he is responsible enough not to have said it—knowing what he had said to the public at large about the financial situation being a serious one.

In referring to the legislation dealing with environmental protection the Deputy Premier asked what industries had suffered because of this legislation not being enacted. What the Deputy Premier said may be true, but we also know that people have been shouting for some time for this type of legislation, and these people include his own supporters. It is quite right that they should clamour for such legislation. The matter has boiled up over a couple of years and our supporters also clamoured for it.

Irrespective of whether the Deputy Premier thought the legislation was good, bad, or indifferent I should have thought that his Government would have at least proclaimed the Act and got something moving in this direction. A director could then have been set up under the Act to make investigations and, if later it was thought that the legislation was not much good, further action could have been taken. Some of the supporters of the Deputy Premier did say last year that the legislation dealing with environmental protection did not have enough teeth, but if the Act had been proclaimed we would, at least, have had a foundation from which to start. At least something would have been done in this direction quite apart from any action that might be taken under the Clean Air Act or one or two other pieces of legislation.

I believe it is fatal that the Government did not proclaim this legislation and give itself extra time to make investigations into all facets concerning the protection of the environment. With those few remarks I support the amendment.

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MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—Treasurer) [8.40 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, one may wonder why at this stage of the debate I have chosen to enter it. Let me assure anyone who thinks that I may be motivated by any drive or instinct of self-preservation that this is not the case, but rather it is the case of one who senses battle and senses it with some delight.

I look at this magnificent white paper, introduced into the debate by the Leader of the Opposition—"The Government's indifference to the state of finances when making electoral promises." It is a statement which means nothing, but if predicated to before the 20th February, 1971, it would certainly be very meaningful.

The Leader of the Opposition, as you will recall, Mr. Speaker, spoke about his disclosure to the electorate as a whole by way of a Press release on the 10th February, when he said he forecast then a deficit of between \$5,000,000 and \$6,000,000. The

Deputy Premier has indicated that the former Premier himself, as late as the 19th February, and no later than that date, was informed by his Under-Treasurer—one who would be expected to know—that the deficit was likely to be \$10,000,000—not \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000—only 10 days before the Premier was forthright enough, so he says, to make an honest and open disclosure to the electorate that \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000 was the deficit the Government was going to face. Some 10 days later his Under-Treasurer warns him that the deficit is likely to be \$10,000,000.

After the former Premier made this disclosure to the electorate as a whole, that the Government of the day in Western Australia was to face a likely deficit in the order of \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000, did he modify any of his election promises? I can find no evidence at all of any modification of any election promise made by the Leader of the Opposition prior to the 10th February, 1971, and he has the audacity and the temerity to speak in the terms of this marvellous white paper about the indifference of the Government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us have a look at another aspect of the Government's indifference. I can recall in 1959 the former Premier, the present Leader of the Opposition, making certain promises and 12 years hence those promises remain unfulfilled.

Sir David Brand: What were they?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Does the Leader of the Opposition recall a certain bridge—an additional bridge over a certain river?

Mr. O'Connor: You were too young to know.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Does the Leader of the Opposition want me to go on?

Sir David Brand: Yes, if you want to make yourself look really silly.

Mr. Court: We can build several bridges, if you just want bridges for fun, I suppose.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The Leader of the Opposition tried to make political capital out of the fact that he made this disclosure to the public on the 10th February, 1971.

Sir David Brand: That is a fact of life.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: And thereafter the Leader of the Opposition continued with his own election promises.

Mr. Rushton: There was a warning in December.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Time, date, and name of newspaper please? I searched in vain for that and all I could see was a reference to an escalation in wages—not one reference to a deficit in the newspapers of that date.

Mr. Graham: The then Treasurer never did a thing about it.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The former Premier made his election promises, let it be known, before, not after, he made this magnanimous disclosure to the electorate. He made

them before, and what did he do? He reiterated them afterwards; he did not modify his—

Sir David Brand: How much were they?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: He has the temerity to ask now in retrospect, for the Premier, the present Leader of the Government, to modify his approach. The Leader of the Opposition cannot have it both ways.

Sir David Brand: If you consider that report magnanimous, it must be to your standards, not mine.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Let us have a look at this glorious white paper, Mr. Speaker. My only comment on it is that it displays a marvellous lack of imagination; a lack of hope, and, if I might say so, a serious lack of responsibility. One would have thought an opposition of such a short duration would have at least been rich in hope, because if it has not got hope, it has not got much else.

Sir David Brand: Amen.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: If this is the best effort that this Opposition can produce, it looks as though its stocks and its spirits are both fairly low. The lack of imagination on the part of the Opposition is not unexpected but the lack of responsibility is serious. Here again this is not necessarily surprising.

Mr. Speaker, I feel this amendment, if it can be so called, is unwarranted. It is unjustified, and as the Opposition may have gathered, it is completely unacceptable.

Sir David Brand: Words, words, words.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [8.47 p.m.]: I rise to support the amendment to the Address-in-Reply.

It is very easy to face remarks from the Treasurer which were far from being positive and convincing as to his belief in his own leader.

It was a most amazing statement in defence of the Premier last night, in view of the fact that the present Premier is the most experienced member of Parliament, the one with the longest period in this House. The Treasurer was defending him in regard to his knowledge of the financial situation of the State, even when the facts were there on the 15th December for him to interpret and to read. An experienced man of his calibre one would hope would have the capacity to understand the position.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Did your leader give an example and modify his own election promises in the light of what occurred on the 15th February?

Mr. RUSHTON: The Leader of the Opposition did not have to do so.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: You are applying double standards; one for your party and one for ours.

Mr. RUSHTON: Just give me a short time to understand the Treasurer's position. We heard from the Deputy Premier a little while ago about a sense of proportion. Let us get an understanding of this sense of proportion. We had, on the 13th February, the present Premier, then the Leader of the Opposition, stating with confidence that he could carry out his promises without increasing taxes. There is no wonder why we strongly support this so-called white paper that the Treasurer sneers at, and no wonder why, since this time, we have had an about-face from the Premier. Every day there has been another change—a change from what he put forward at that time. We might state that it could be considered that deception may have won him the election, but would that be considered appropriate now when one considers he has turned away from those promises?

Mr. T. D. Evans: That would be offensive coming from anybody but you.

Mr. RUSHTON: I am only saying this is a suggestion. Would the public think that was so? Would that be their belief? Would it be reasonable to believe that is what he set up to win the Government benches?

Mr. T. D. Evans: Let the public decide three years hence.

Mr. RUSHTON: This would be very appropriate at the present time, and what does the Treasurer think would be the result? It would be very pleasant to consider, but there we have, on the 2nd July, the Premier warning of more taxes. Through this passage of time of 100-odd days that he has held the Government benches and held the office of Premier, he has been looking in a direction opposite to that in which he promised prior to the election.

We know what happened to the water rates and to the hospital charges. How moderate or considerate were they? It would appear the Premier was playing politics and was preparing the position so that in due course he could say, "What a magician I have been! I have been able to balance the Budget." Against that our leader says factually that there would not have been these disturbances under his Government, and we would have been in a position to make adjustments with moderation.

Because of his extreme promises the Premier has to prepare the ground to enable him to carry on and to meet some of those promises. When one takes those promises into consideration one cannot get from the Premier the actual figure involved, because the amount seems to change from day to day.

Let us look at some of the promises which were made in the policy speech of the now Premier on the 3rd February last.

To run through some of them briefly, firstly we have the appointment of an ombudsman. What would his appointment cost? I suggest something like \$70,000. What would police control of traffic in the country cost—\$500,000? That would be a reasonable amount to suggest if the police were to take over traffic control in the country. In his own words, the cost under education would be \$750,000, but there are all the additional pieces as well. The university tuition fees would cost \$100,000, students' living-away-from-home allowance \$300,000, and allowance for students over 15 years of age \$100,000. Then there is the cost for the kindergartens, to which the Government has promised to give extra consideration. If one were to look at the past Government's record one would find that this Government would have to find more than \$100,000 to be better.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I could not find a record of the former Government to go on.

Mr. RUSHTON: If the Treasurer looked at the last Budget he would see how much was made available to the kindergartens. If the Treasurer does not know where to look, then we are in real bother.

Mr. Jamieson: The previous Treasurer did not know where to look, so this one will get by.

Mr. RUSHTON: The previous Treasurer brought about a very stable and rising economy in this State.

Mr. Jamieson: They forgot to clean the stable out to find out what was on the floor!

Mr. RUSHTON: What will this Government spend on welfare for the aged, as compared with the past Government's record? The provision for free transport services is quoted at \$500,000.

Mr. Graham: What did your leader promise in that respect?

Mr. RUSHTON: I can give the exact figure—\$530,000. That is just one on the list.

Mr. Graham: It was also one on the list of your Government.

Mr. RUSHTON: I cannot get the figure of the present Government. It could be \$500,000, but it might be greater. It might be \$750,000 now.

There are many more items on the list. There is the item of free transport service which the Treasurer estimated at \$500,000. Then we come to compensation payable to victims of violent crimes. What will that amount to? This was another item on which the Premier hedged. In the speech delivered to us on opening day—

Mr. Graham: What are you complaining about? Do you not want these things implemented?

Mr. RUSHTON: I am showing the irresponsibility of this Government which was then the Opposition in putting forward those proposals.

Mr. Graham: If we gave effect to the whole lot what would you do?

Mr. RUSHTON: The State would be bankrupt, and that is the sad part of the story. We want responsibility from the benches opposite; we do not want irresponsibility. We enjoyed responsibility for many years, and we do not want to see a return to the days of 1958 and 1959.

Let us look at the new deal for home buyers. That is not on the list, but the member for East Melville said it would cost \$7,000,000. Would the Treasurer tell us whether or not that is a reasonable estimate?

Mr. Graham: Who is going to be responsible for that?

Mr. RUSHTON: Then there is the item of public health, upgrading of facilities, improved patient care, and equal pay for equal value for nurses. That is a very commendable objective, but the item is not given an amount. I cannot even hazard a guess at what it will cost.

Mr. Graham: Is that being done?

Mr. RUSHTON: I hope it will be done.

Mr. Graham: It is being done.

Mr. RUSHTON: I hope the Government will try. As I said, we do not want the State to go bankrupt on the way. We want reasonable responsibility from the Government. What it amounts to is that these are false promises.

Let us look at the item of road maintenance, which is the next item in the promises of the then Opposition. The cost is something like \$4,000,000, and this loss of revenue has to be replaced. The Government might say it has a mandate from the people to abolish this tax, but it is peculiar that the people who had advocated this so loudly are very worried now. They fear that their economic way of life might be disturbed.

Mr. Jamieson: You are giving them the impression that their economic way of life will be disrupted.

Mr. RUSHTON: If one were to attend any gathering of transport drivers one would find that they are worried stiff. An amount of something like \$4,000,000 is involved.

Then there is the question of probate relief and tax relief. The probate relief measures as put forward in the dossier of the Government look after the so-called rich person. This is an amazing proposal, coming from the protector of the little people—an expression that has been thrust so often down our necks. Who are these little people? What will this cost? It is hard to estimate, but it could cost \$250,000.

Then we have the promise in respect of the primary industries. How can one establish how far this is to extend? Surely the Government cannot put a finger on the exact amount involved! On its figures the amount is something like \$3,000,000. This figure is a lot less than the amount would be if the Government carried out this promise in its entirety.

Then we come to the question of electricity. The statement was made that the State Electricity Commission was established to give a service at the lowest cost and not to make large profits.

We have heard the state of affairs concerning the State Housing Commission and the general cry that there is nothing left in the bin. Yet here we had the previous Opposition urging for more houses to be built and for us to get on with the job. We as a Government did a fantastic job, but we finished up with abuse from the then Opposition.

Let me now turn to the question of uniform charges for electricity. What will that cost—\$500,000? The Minister for Electricity might give us the figure.

Mr. Jamieson: It would cost not nearly as much as the promise made by your leader would have cost.

Mr. RUSHTON: I suggest it would cost \$500,000. Then we come to the receipts tax.

Mr. Jamieson: How much would have been the cost of the promise of your Government on electricity?

Mr. RUSHTON: It would have been \$575,000.

Mr. Jamieson: It was never costed, and you know that to be the case.

Mr. RUSHTON: The cost of the promise made by the now Premier is \$500,000, and our cost would be \$575,000. Let me turn to the next item—receipts stamp duty. How much will be involved—\$5,000,000?

Mr. Court: The statement the Leader of the Opposition read out was prepared by the Treasury.

Mr. Jamieson: There are others.

Mr. RUSHTON: One cannot get all the figures even though they were estimates made by a very conservative estimating Government. To give the present Government the benefit of the doubt, all this would cost \$22,575,000 to implement. This does not include all the promises that have been made, yet members opposite say theirs is not an irresponsible Government.

Let us look at what the then Government's promises were. There is no disputing the fact that they added up to \$2,500,000.

Mr. Davies: Plus.

Mr. RUSHTON: One might wonder why the public has doubts about the future with relation to State finance. It was said somewhat lightheartedly that the present Premier had walked away from the position

of Treasurer because of the promises he had made. However, one begins to doubt the lightheartedness of the remark. It is interesting to hear the word go round not to interject because interjections give food for thought. The Government is not willing to come in and answer some of the points which are raised; it is an interesting scene.

Several members interjected.

Mr. RUSHTON: It is very interesting to note that when charged with being irresponsible the Government does not even respond. That is enough for my contribution on finance. However, it was interesting to see that the Premier could not interpret the financial position after being in this House for 37 years. What a regrettable position.

Let us now refer to the environment, and the charge that the Government has on its hands for not going ahead with our legislation. We need only consider what happened at Penguin Island. The Government was not concerned with that situation, but fortunately the people involved with parks and gardens, and members of the public, cleaned up the mess. People have been urging the Government to take the necessary steps to protect the environment, but when the Government took over it got rid of the existing legislation.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Your Government could have proclaimed the legislation but it did not do so.

Mr. RUSHTON: That is a poor old excuse.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Before your Government went out of office it could have proclaimed the legislation, but it did not do so.

Mr. RUSHTON: Accordingly the Director of Environmental Protection had been appointed but the councils had not been appointed.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Well, why were they not appointed?

Mr. RUSHTON: The council appointments were under consideration; the director had been appointed. The present Government has retained the director and he is preparing new legislation. So we do not need to go any further.

Mr. Jamieson: You cannot go any further.

Mr. RUSHTON: There is no need to do so. Referring to Penguin Island again, we had a very serious situation. However, the Government was inept and had given away the legislation under which it could have done something.

Mr. Jamieson: There was nothing in the legislation which could have helped the situation at Penguin Island. I have that legislation with me and I will quote it in a moment.

Mr. RUSHTON: The Minister will have an opportunity to do so. In previous years there has been a great deal of interest in Warnbro Sound and Long Point. The previous Premier—the present Leader of the Opposition—gave assurances regarding the protection of the area, but what do we get now? With a change of Government the people in the area were naturally interested to find out the attitude of the present Government, but no information is available. I recently asked a question concerning the total acreage involved, but the Government has not made up its mind.

Mr. H. D. Evans: If a direct question is asked we will supply a few statistics on what has been done.

Mr. RUSHTON: I asked a question yesterday.

Mr. Court: The member for Dale received a complete fob-off.

Mr. RUSHTON: The people in the Warnbro Sound and Long Point area were assured of their future, and they certainly do not want the changes which have been implied by the present Government. I am receiving queries every day on the future of the area. When the present Government was in Opposition the people concerned thought the area would be protected, but now the Government will not be factual about the future. It is keeping everybody in doubt, and it will not answer questions. The people in the area, and even Government supporters, are most concerned about their future. I, too, am concerned for those people.

When the environmental protection legislation was introduced the following comments appeared in *The West Australian* of the 4th November, 1970:—

The new Minister of Environmental Protection, Mr. MacKinnon, was strongly criticised in the Legislative Assembly last night by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Tonkin.

He questioned the Minister's attitude towards conservation after reading to the House a newspaper report in which Mr. MacKinnon was quoted as saying that the disadvantages of industry were sometimes out-weighed by the jobs it provided.

The report referred to statements it said were made by Mr. MacKinnon in Bunbury about the Laporte titanium works.

Mr. Tonkin quoted Mr. MacKinnon as saying that despite its disadvantages Laporte had given the people in the region employment.

"Not a very good start for a newly appointed Minister of Conservation," Mr. Tonkin said.

"Forget about the harmful effects of an industry as long as you can get a job."

However, what is the situation now? We have the problem of the S.E.C. power lines. The Brand Government had given an assurance that there would be protection of the environment.

Mr. Jamieson: The pylons have a majestic appearance.

Mr. RUSHTON: The Minister might think that they are majestic but no thought has been given to the interests of the people living in the area. One can almost hear their objections from here.

The member for Darling Range has asked the Premier a series of questions regarding an alternative route for the power lines. Such action would have been taken under the Brand Government.

Mr. Jamieson: It is a pity the member for Darling Range did not read the legislation introduced by the Brand Government.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. RUSHTON: I will quote from a letter which was addressed to the Premier by the member for Darling Range. The section reads as follows:—

May I conclude by asking that—

- (a) the State Electricity Commission be instructed to examine other routes for the power lines and that they report on no fewer than four separate routes;
- (b) the Government allow Parliament to make a choice of the alternative routes;
- (c) no decision be permitted until the new Environmental Protection legislation is enacted and a proper authority set up under that legislation to examine and report on the alternatives.

In answer to that letter part of the Premier's reply reads as follows:—

- (a) It is considered that the foothills route and the escarpment route represent the most westerly and easterly alignments which reasonably could be followed.
- (b) and (c) The State Electricity Commission is charged with the responsibility of providing an economic and reliable supply of electricity. It is inherent that under its Act it must relieve the Government of the detail of running a major public utility.

The Commission is broadly responsible to its Minister and hence the Government. The Act provides for proper procedures in matters of this nature. Any further reference by the Government of the dispute to an area where legislation has yet to be enacted would introduce unwarranted delay.

Now, how does that stand up? Let me put this question to the Treasurer: Is that not a very good reason for the amendment to the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech? Is there not good reason for the concern felt because the Premier wants to duck-shove the responsibility of coming to a decision? The people had an assurance from the previous Government about what was to take place. An environmental protection authority would examine such a situation before it was proceeded with.

The same applied to the alumina works. The executive of the Labor Party has stepped in to save the Government from embarrassment.

Mr. Graham: Where did the assurances come from?

Mr. RUSHTON: That is a very interesting interjection.

Mr. Graham: Where did you get that assurance?

Mr. RUSHTON: Within one hundred days, the Deputy Premier, in an impassioned speech, had to call for unity within the party.

Mr. Graham: Is there anything wrong with that?

Mr. RUSHTON: It was very good, well done, and very necessary too.

Mr. Court: I say to you with emotion!

Mr. RUSHTON: It was most necessary and it is obvious that the channels of communication came apart. It was not good enough for the media to quote some of the points.

Mr. Graham: Do you know the trouble with you? You cannot take an electoral defeat. You are crying. You cannot take it.

Mr. RUSHTON: That is a most interesting interjection.

Sir David Brand: It is a rather amazing interjection, coming from the Deputy Premier.

Mr. RUSHTON: Before I finish, I would like some information on a certain point. A false picture has been given; a false promise hinted at. I am not levelling this at the Premier. However, everybody in my electorate was saying that the Premier promised free transport for school children in the metropolitan area. I was most concerned. Certainly it was devastating for me to stand up against this in my electorate, because our people had acted with responsibility and had not made a promise of that nature. Also, it was believed that there were to be free school books.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Would you please quote the page, verse, and chapter?

Mr. RUSHTON: I am coming to it. I can understand the position in regard to school books.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Do not dodge the issue but get back to free transport for children.

Mr. RUSHTON: On the question of school books—

Mr. T. D. Evans: Page, chapter, and verse.

Mr. RUSHTON: I will quote it all. I can understand the reason for the wrong impression which arose in connection with school books.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You are dodging the issue again.

Mr. Runciman: He will get back to it.

Mr. Court: Old Testament or New?

Mr. RUSHTON: After the policy speech was made it appeared in the Press that school books would be free. People took it literally. Many people in my electorate believed that free books would be supplied.

Mr. Graham: How many people told you that?

Mr. RUSHTON: Students at the teachers college and at the university believed that free books would be available, and so did others in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. It was unfortunate that the media printed it this way. I would say that there was no intention on the part of the present Government to misrepresent the situation at this time. However, this is the impression which people had and every day members on this side of the House were faced with people saying, "This is something which your people are not doing." It could be the reason why the Labor Party is sitting on the Government side of the House.

Mr. Graham: How many people told you that they construed it that way?

Mr. RUSHTON: Hundreds of people who belong to parents and citizens' associations. It was mentioned in every home where the occupants were interested in education.

Mr. Graham: Tommy rot.

Mr. RUSHTON: This was worth hundreds of votes to the Labor Party. It was their good fortune.

Mr. Graham: Not one person has approached me, and I have a much larger electorate than you.

Mr. RUSHTON: You were on the winning side.

Mr. Graham: Then why are they not complaining that they were taken for a ride?

Mr. RUSHTON: What a strange interjection. Labor stood to win by it and we stood to win nothing. I now come back to the question of free transport.

Mr. Graham: I give up.

Mr. W. A. Manning: About time, too.

Mr. RUSHTON: A paper here before me refers to free transport for school children. Would the Treasurer like the quotation?

Mr. T. D. Evans: Page, chapter, verse, and author. I would like the author's name. Is the member for Dale sure that he did not write it?

Mr. RUSHTON: The member for Swan will have a good idea as to who the author was.

Mr. Jamieson: Who authorised it?

Mr. Brady: Why drag me into it? I have been very quiet.

Mr. RUSHTON: It is authorised by A. Reid. The candidate's photograph appears on the document. This gentleman was my Labor opponent at the last election. The document is worded quite strongly. This is why I have been writing to the Premier to ask when he will introduce free transport.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The Premier did not promise that.

Mr. RUSHTON: One of his candidates did.

Mr. Jamieson: Don't come to what some of your disciples promised.

Mr. Graham: There is no obligation upon the Premier.

Mr. RUSHTON: People are still writing to me and asking when free transport will be provided. I know the source of the offer and it is unfortunate that it is false. I have been through the policy speech of the Labor Party and I can say that it does not appear in that document. Nevertheless, I want the position clarified. I do not think there should be any misconception that the present Government is going to give away even more than it has already promised.

Mr. Graham: There is a great deal I want clarified.

Mr. RUSHTON: I shall draw to a close on this point. It is obvious that there is a great deal of concern throughout the State as to what is happening and what will happen as the Government endeavours to carry out its promises. Without trying, I can see an expenditure of \$22,000,000 involved, and even more can be added to that figure.

Mr. Brady: Did you add Mr. Negus's promise to this?

Mr. RUSHTON: I know the member for Swan is a little worried over there, but I suggest he should not go off at a tangent. I have stated the facts which are contained in the Labor policy speech. It is a most interesting booklet although it causes a great deal of worry. I cannot help but feel that people who accepted this in good faith have certainly got the rough end of the stick.

MR. JAMIESON (Belmont—Minister for Works) [9.16 p.m.]: I wish to say a few words on the amendment, because some erroneous statements have been made. Some of the new members may believe

that the statements, particularly those made by the last speaker, are correct. This is not the case.

The member for Dale made much play of oil pollution at Penguin Island. He said that had the legislation been proclaimed something could have been done about this. For the information of members, nothing could have been done about it. If any Minister became concerned he could have referred it to the Minister for Works if it came into his territory. However, I doubt whether Penguin Island comes into the precincts of the Fremantle Harbour. Therefore, no Minister, other than perhaps the Minister for environmental protection appointed under the legislation put through by the previous Government could have called for a report from the committee.

Further, had the Minister for environmental protection called for a report he could not have done anything about an adverse report, had one been received, because there are no penalties under the Act. There was no way of doing anything. He certainly could not have followed up the matter; and it was extremely doubtful who was responsible for the Penguin Island problems. I understand that the Commonwealth is now dealing with the matter of trying to introduce legislation, so far as discharge of oil is concerned, to cover sea lanes in proximity to the coast.

I repeat that there is no provision under the Act referred to by the member for Dale to cover this situation. Similarly, the position deteriorates even further when we consider the possibility of the erection of power lines being subjected to the environmental protection legislation. I should like to read from the legislation, because many members obviously have not read it. In saying this, I include the member for Dale. It is apparent that he has not read the legislation recently because he made some tremendous blunders. It says—

“environmental pollution” means the contamination or the rendering unclean or impure of the air, waters or land or making any of them injurious to public health, harmful for commercial or recreational use, or injurious to animal or plant life;

Further, it says—

“pollutant” means solids, liquids or gases which, if discharged into the air or waters or on to land, will result in injury to human, animal, or plant life or to property or which unreasonably interferes with the enjoyment of life and property;

It is obvious that there is no provision under the Physical Environment Protection Act to deal with power lines. It is quite useless in this connection.

We have heard suggestions that the power lines should not be erected until such time as they can be subjected to the provisions of legislation to protect the environment, which no-one has even seen. How can they know what it will contain? The previous Bill certainly contained no protection whatsoever.

Mr. I. W. Manning: You could prescribe regulations, of course.

Mr. JAMIESON: Regulations could not be prescribed outside of the provisions of the Act; they could only be prescribed within the provisions of the Act, as the honourable member well knows. There is no use trying to put that over.

Mr. Court: You are not suggesting that the power lines could not have been submitted to the physical environment council?

Mr. JAMIESON: Yes, I am. In the previous Government's proposed legislation there is no provision for them to be considered in any way as a pollutant.

Mr. Court: If the Act had been proclaimed the Minister concerned could have referred any matter like this to the council.

Mr. JAMIESON: Only if it was within the definitions, and the definitions were set out very clearly. No matter which is outside the provisions of the Act can be referred, and the honourable member knows that quite well.

These are the provisions that prevailed, and I would say that members who have been contemplating the possibility of using the Physical Environment Protection Act, which was not proclaimed, should be asking themselves why the Government went to all the trouble of finding and appointing a director of environmental protection. As far as we can see, the director who was appointed was a good selection because of his qualifications and credentials. There is no cause for worry in that regard.

However, when the Bill was assented to on the 30th November last, upon appointing the director the Government must have taken some special action—I would assume by way of a minute to the Executive Council—to provide for his salary, because the Act has never been proclaimed. The matter of the director's salary was covered by the very introduction of the legislation and by the Message from the Governor which permitted appropriations to be made in connection with this Bill when it became an Act. There is no reason at all why the Government could not have gone ahead and proclaimed it, but it chose not to do so and it is now bellyaching about it.

The member for Dale has expressed concern. He was on a Liberal Party committee which dealt with this matter and submitted recommendations to the Government. I know that to be so because the recommendations were tabled, and his signature was appended to one of the documents. The only protection the

Government wanted to provide for was to give the Minister of the day a stay period of six months on any project that he thought could be a problem to the environment. That is what the Liberal Party wanted at the time, but it did not get it.

For some reason or other, the Liberal Government framed legislation that was permissive, whatever way one looks at it. The first nine pages of the Bill were devoted to the appointment of a director of environmental protection, a council, and so on. After page nine we begin to reach the working aspects of the Bill. Subclause (1) of clause 23 reads—

A Minister of the Crown under whose administration any of the following matters are being done . . .

Various matters are then set out, and the subclause concludes—

. . . shall, as soon as practicable, refer the matter to the Minister for his consideration and advice.

The Minister referred to is the Minister for Environmental Protection. In subclause (2) it is provided that pursuant to subclause (1)—

. . . the Minister may require the Council to furnish him within such period with such report thereon as the Minister thinks fit and may require the report to be accompanied by the recommendation of the Council with respect to the matter.

That is all the Minister can order. When the report and recommendation were received they had to be forwarded to the Premier, following which the recommendation could be acted upon by the Minister who administered the portfolio which covered the offence that had taken place. How cumbersome can one make legislation?

If an offence had been found to be committed, the penalty was absolutely nil. The only penalties provided in the Bill were for refusal to allow the director or other authorised officers to enter land or premises for the purposes of inspection, for which there was a fine of up to \$200. The only other penalty was a fine of \$500 for disclosure by an employee of any information obtained in the course of his duties, which is an appropriate provision to cover servants associated with that type of inquiry.

Nowhere else in the 14 pages of the Bill is there provision for action to be taken by way of penalty in any shape or form against any individual who offends against the physical environment, as it was termed. That being so, what is the argument in connection with this legislation? The penguins at Penguin Island would not have been any better off. The volunteers who went there did a wonderful job, and I suppose there were as many Labor supporters as Liberal supporters dousing the penguins and cleaning them up.

Mr. Rushton: The Government did not react, did it?

Mr. JAMIESON: Of course it reacted. The Government attempted to find out where the pollution came from. It could not do anything beforehand; nobody knew the pollution would occur. Once it occurred, it was only possible to cope with it under the circumstances prevailing. If a council had been set up, I suppose it could have been transported to the island by launch. Members of the council could have stood there with their hands on their hips, had a look at the birds that had been so badly treated by the pollution, and then gone away and written a report to the Minister who, in turn, could have sent a copy to the Premier while the birds were dying. That is all that could have happened, and I cannot see that that would have been of any advantage.

If the provisions of an Act are made permissive and left to the determination of the Minister of the day, the Minister is set above his principal officer, because he has to determine whether the "may" shall apply at any time. If, in the case of environmental protection, the Minister determines that in his opinion an offence is not sufficiently severe to merit proceeding with the inquiry, he just shelves the matter at that point. There is no provision for anybody to make such inquiry.

As far as the matters of finance are concerned, a number of suggestions have been made. I would like to remind the Leader of the Opposition of some advice he received from the Treasury. As regards electricity charges, he suggested in his policy speech that he would subsidise country electricity charges.

Daily I receive in my office inquiries as to when the Government will carry out its policy of subsidising electricity charges. That demonstrates how well people distinguish between the policies of the parties. We said nothing about this matter. I have looked everywhere, and the only reference to it that I can find is in the policy speech of the then Premier.

Mr. Rushton: Did you say there was nothing in your own policy speech?

Mr. JAMIESON: There was nothing to the effect that we would subsidise country electricity supplies.

Mr. Rushton: You said there would be uniform rates.

Mr. JAMIESON: That will occur in the S.E.C. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. Rushton: When?

Mr. JAMIESON: At an appropriate time.

Mr. Court: Are you going to increase them for uniformity?

Mr. JAMIESON: No, we may have to decrease them in the country to obtain uniformity. That would make the Deputy

Leader of the Opposition laugh. He would be upset to think that we were able to achieve such a step forward on behalf of the people in remote areas who are already heavily subsidised by other consumers. However, we feel they should be further subsidised because of the position that prevails in those areas at the moment. But to carry it as far as the Premier of the day suggested it should be carried was absolutely irresponsible from the point of view of a person who was looking after the State Treasury.

The then Premier would know his advisers had recommended strongly against that course and had suggested there would be all sorts of repercussions. So do not let us get our financial problems mixed up. Daily further problems arise in regard to what the past Premier undertook to do. Strangely enough, a couple of requests came from people who were Ministers in the late Government. They asked when certain things would be done, and those things were not part of our policy; they were part of the policy of the previous Government. It seems to me to be quite amazing when we get this sort of interpretation from people who should know better.

The environmental protection legislation will be introduced this session and, when it is introduced, it will be fit and proper legislation to look after our environment. Of course, it will be up to Parliament to determine whether power lines will be included under the legislation. I might add that as far as power lines are concerned we already have, in the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority a body to protect the environment. As I understand it, that authority looks after environmental protection for the good of the metropolitan area.

I would not like to say whether or not the authority and the environmental protection people will always come up with the right answers. Probably we could contest in our own minds whether or not they will come up with the right answers on many occasions, but possibly time will prove that they do.

Mr. Rushton: The Premier's letter suggests that you want to give away your responsibility. You do not want to face up to it.

Mr. JAMIESON: He did not suggest that at all. The honourable member should be aware of the provisions of the State Electricity Commission Act. I do not want to get into an argument about power line routes at the moment because so many routes have been suggested to me. It has been suggested that the route be via Northam, Toodyay, or some other place. But no doubt if the route was altered the member for Darling Range would come up with a petition just as large. This sort of thing can go on indefinitely. In the ultimate, when all matters have been considered and

assessments made there will no doubt be objections and then I, as Minister, will have to make a decision.

Mr. Thompson: I cannot make objections.

Mr. JAMIESON: Anybody may make objections if he is affected by the route.

Mr. Thompson: Clause 38 stipulates that only a local authority may do so.

Mr. JAMIESON: Anyone whose property is likely to be affected by resumption may lodge an objection. Resumptions would have to be carried out under the Public Works Act and anyone affected would have the right to refer his problems to the Minister for Works. Obviously, no matter which way the power lines go, some resumptions will have to take place. As soon as the route is determined and is published in the *Government Gazette* and the necessary machinery started in motion we will find that objections will start to come into my office. Those objections will be processed and dealt with, as is done in the case of all property acquisitions for Government instrumentalities. I would not like to say which way the power lines will go because people prejudice these things.

Mr. Thompson: At the moment they can prejudice on two routes only.

Mr. JAMIESON: Even if there were half a dozen proposed routes people would still prejudice the situation. The further away we propose to put the power lines, the further away people would like them to be. My understanding of the problem so far is that the S.E.C. selected the eastern route, and the M.R.P.A. was not happy about it. When the final assessment—financially and otherwise—has been made the S.E.C., under the provisions of its charter, will make an initial determination and, no doubt, the Minister will come into it at a later stage. I am sure the members on the other side of the House will see to it that the Minister is involved even if he does not want to be.

I reiterate that the present environmental protection legislation could have been proclaimed by the previous Government, but it was not. Possibly the previous Government had second thoughts about the matter, or it could be that somebody advised it that it would be better to allow the Director of Environmental Protection to have a good look at things and formulate his own ideas. I think that is desirable because we seem to have found a person of worth-while calibre who will be able to put up a proposition which the Parliament will appreciate and which will afford protection to the people.

In this way we can lead the other States in this field. I do not think the legislation should have mighty teeth or that big sticks should be wielded. However, it is necessary to have penal clauses in some Statutes. I refer members to the Fremantle Port Authority Act. If there were

no teeth in that Act, and ships' masters were fined only \$5 for spilling oil in the harbour, they would thumb their noses at the law. Ships' masters are made more responsible as a result of the severe penalty imposed when a spillage takes place, and they take more care. It is not necessary to press charges on every occasion. Sometimes it has been found that there has been no negligence and I have noted that in some cases magistrates have acted sympathetically in cases of contamination of the harbour caused by a malfunction. It is important to apply a penalty to fit the crime.

When the new environmental protection legislation is introduced, it is our responsibility to see that it is well bolstered, both judicially and administratively, in such a way as to make it work to the advantage of the people of Western Australia. I oppose the amendment.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.39 p.m.]: I support my leader and the addendum he has moved to the Address-in-Reply. With regard to the histrionics of the Deputy Premier and some of his supporters, I would say that the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition is a responsible one and one that is most timely. The amendment is in two parts; one dealing with the irresponsibility of the present Government in regard to its election promises when it was in opposition, and the other part, of course, refers to the protection of the environment. I well remember that when I was first approached by the Press about the then Leader of the Opposition's policy speech, I said—and I happen to have it written down here—"It is a speech conceived in desperation in the hope the public will not study it too seriously and make financial and other assessments."

What I said then is even more true today because the people have started to make their assessments—unfortunately, for us, a little too late—and I was very interested in what the Deputy Premier said when he suggested that he was quite prepared to "leave it to the judge". I bet he would not be prepared to "leave it to the judge" today if there were another election because he knows what the decision would be.

Mr. Jamieson: We have to carry a lot of your dirty linen, of course.

Mr. COURT: Nothing of the kind!

Mr. Jamieson: What did you do last year on the water charges and hospital charges? You just let all of these go.

Mr. COURT: The Minister has had 45 minutes in which to speak and I now want to say a few words. We can always tell when we touch the Minister and his colleagues on the quick because they just cannot take it. They are as guilty as guilty men can be. They went into the election promising the world with no thought as

to how it was to be paid for, or how it was to be performed, and now the Government is reaping the harvest. Unfortunately it does not rest there; it is the people who have to suffer.

The public today are literally confused and I think this is the main purpose of the amendment that has been moved by the Leader of the Opposition. Do not blame us or the Press media for the confusion that is in the public mind, because day after day since the election and since the Government took office on the 3rd March there has been a succession of statements made by the Premier and his Ministers—particularly by the Premier—that have caused tremendous confusion.

The Premier started off with his daily Press conferences and one would look for him on the TV news. Some of the stations showed him three times during the one news bulletin. At this time some of our supporters thought it was a bit unfair to us. However, as the position went on they hoped it would not stop, but unfortunately it did. At this time people were getting this publicity poured down their necks through the TV stations every night of the week, and they were fed up.

Sir David Brand: And so were some of the Ministers.

Mr. COURT: A very good interjection by the Leader of the Opposition. However, the problem was that, so far as the public was concerned, there was such a mass of contradictions in the statements that were made that one does not have to be very clever to work out the reason for the public confusion. The post-election deficit that has been mentioned by the Premier was expressed in so many figures that one had to do one's own sums privately to find out what it was likely to be. First of all it was going to be \$35,000,000, then \$30,000,000, then \$12,000,000, and then \$10,000,000. Now he lines up with \$6,000,000, and of course we are all in breathless suspense waiting for the Estimates to be introduced to see all the taxes we will have to pay to meet this bill.

The situation is that stripped of all the nonsense that has been said by those on the other side of the House—and I am amazed the Treasurer repeated the folly that he committed last night—the fact is that the Leader of the Opposition today, the then Premier, went to the electorate with more frankness in regard to the State's finances than any other leader I can recall. Back in December last he stated very clearly that the State's finances were running into problems because of the unprecedented wage and salary increases. This is the key to the problem.

We have to realise that all the election policy speeches, including our own, had to be worked out under unprecedented inflationary tendencies, and, above all, unprecedented wage and salary increases.

They were the problems that we had to face, and now they have become the Government's problems. The Deputy Premier referred to one such problem when speaking of balanced Budgets. He referred to the problem he was faced with when he over-spent his housing finances and nearly sent the building industry bankrupt trying to get the position sorted out again.

The Premier of the day had been through all this before and so he was not a novice or an inexperienced person. He was not a person who had not carried ministerial responsibilities, but in spite of all the warnings that were given he still persisted with his promises. There was another warning given, because we were placed in the unusual situation—much to our embarrassment because of the time involved—of the Premier and his officers having to attend a Premiers' conference in the middle of an election. The situation was so critical at that time that a Premiers' conference had to be held and the Commonwealth Prime Minister was not very helpful to the Premier.

So our Premier had to return to this State in the middle of an election campaign, amidst all the publicity that goes with Loan Council meetings, and had to lay bare to the public—as was his custom—the exact financial situation, and it was not very bright. Had the outlook been brighter we would have made more election promises than we did, but the Government had to keep its promises down to the extent of about \$2,500,000.

I emphasise by the way that these were estimates made by officers of the Treasury and not guesses by Ministers. They were official estimates by the Treasury and we were not prepared to go any further with our promises. We would have loved to go further, but the Premier of the day said, "We have to be responsible in this regard. We are the Government and we know the financial position, and this is as far as we are prepared to go."

So we had these warnings issued to the public, to the Opposition, and to Government members in December, January, and in February. As we got closer to the election we had statements made on the 8th, the 10th, and the 15th February, all of which were directly related to the position of the State's finances and forewarning the Government's supporters, the public, the Press, and the Leader of the Opposition of the situation we could expect.

A statement has been read out tonight under date the 19th February and signed by the Under-Treasurer. Let us be realistic! Imagine any member, as Premier of the State, facing an election on the following day, having someone place a piece of paper in front of him and expecting him to read it there and then! I wonder how many men at such a time would have read that statement on the 19th February. Even if the Premier had read it, the situation

would have been completely unchanged, because the statement said no more and with no greater emphasis than the statements which the Premier had been making. This is the point that seems to be missed in this matter.

Mr. Jamieson: Except that no action had been made to offset the problem; that is the important thing.

Mr. COURT: The Minister is assuming that the previous Government had been completely irresponsible with the finances it had; but at that time the Under-Treasurer and his deputy were the same officers who are now working for the Minister and his Government today. The Under-Treasurer who wrote that minute was the Under-Treasurer for the Brand Government, and we were working within our estimate.

Mr. Davies: You were not.

Mr. COURT: We were working under estimates, and the Minister will find that himself when he is trying to run within his estimate. He will find that escalations will occur and that sometimes a Minister has to go to the Treasury to have some adjustments made in the Estimates. For example, this occurred with the unexpected increases in the wages and salaries, and it also occurs with the extension and contraction of departmental expenditure that one does not anticipate at the time.

In our case we took the unprecedented action of allowing some \$4,000,000 for anticipated wage and salary escalation which, at the time the Budget was presented to this Parliament, was considered to be very conservative or an over-estimate of what was likely to occur. This was done deliberately because it was our policy always to endeavour to have a little up our sleeve to try to achieve the budgetary situation we were telling Parliament we were endeavouring to achieve, because there are always contingencies cropping up along the route.

The Commonwealth and every State Government, whether it be a Liberal-Country Party Government or a Labor Government, has acknowledged that unprecedented expenditure had arisen at the end of 1970 and at the beginning of 1971.

Mr. Davies: You did nothing about it!

Mr. COURT: Of course we did; and it must be appreciated that during the period of the Brand Government the whole of the finances of Western Australia were completely changed in character for the better, because this State achieved buoyancy and was able to do things unheard of when it was under the Commonwealth Grants Commission.

To hear the people on the other side talk, one would believe that if they had their choice they would prefer to go back

under the Grants Commission; that they would go along in a state of mediocrity, tied to the apron strings of the Grants Commission.

Mr. Graham: According to the Under-Treasurer, this State is in a worse financial plight than any other.

Mr. COURT: The Deputy Premier is misquoting him. He was not referring to the overall financial situation of the State at all. The Deputy Premier is emphasising something with a completely wrong emphasis and bias.

Mr. Graham: I read word for word from his minute to the ex-Premier.

Mr. COURT: He said that this State is in a worse financial situation than other States, not in its total finances but in the fact that it has to face up to the potential impost, that in addition to catching the Commonwealth Industrial Commission wage increases, it catches another lot from the State Industrial Commission.

We were castigated by *The West Australian*—and if members opposite had been consistent one would have thought they would have praised us for it—because we altered the industrial arbitration legislation and left ourselves exposed to this situation which must have meant a lot of dollars to the workers of this State. Is the Deputy Premier going to alter that? That was the point the Under-Treasurer was getting at: that we are subject to this extra impost. It does not alter the fact, however, that we are in a stronger position relatively than the other States. This was one of the reasons why our Premier indicated some time ago that if we were not careful we would again finish up under the Grants Commission—not to give us extra money but to take some away.

Mr. Graham: That is why the Under-Treasurer said you did nothing.

Mr. COURT: There was a complete revival of economic activity and the whole of the State's finances were rethought and reshaped. The Deputy Premier should compare them with the other States and see what they are facing at the moment, if he wants to know what a real financial problem is.

To go back to the promises that were made, we have been fair and generous in our attitude to what the Government—then the Opposition—promised the electorate, because we have allowed it to go along with this estimate of \$9,500,000. These promises were plucked out of the air by the then Leader of the Opposition. If one interprets his policy speech literally, the amount could be \$100,000,000. It was, however, a matter of clever words being used.

We merely want to know how the Premier is going to perform all the things that have to be performed this year. There are some matters which would not cause

great hardship to the people if they were not carried out before the end of the Government's term, but there are others like the propositions made to farmers which must be performed this year. With the present dry season the position could be even more critical.

That is why we want the Government to say how it proposes to perform these things. We are asking for some indication as to where it will get the money necessary to go within manageable distance of planning its Budget, so that the State can afford these amounts—bearing in mind that every \$1,000,000 deficit means \$1,000,000 less in loan works that can be carried out.

If members look at our budgetary position they will see it was a pretty good one. In referring to how we faced up to our responsibility and the criticism to which we were subjected, I would point out that at one stage when the present Government was in a corner and not able to say how it would finance its promises, it was said in desperation, "We will get more iron ore royalties."

It is interesting to read a comment quoted from the Deputy Premier as having been made in Tokyo. The comment was to the effect that in any event he would not increase the royalties.

Mr. Graham: That will be explained tomorrow.

Mr. COURT: That is merely in passing. He also explained that the royalties will be fixed—in a phrase with which I do not disagree—on the basis of what the traffic will bear, and based on the economics of the project. The Deputy Premier must admit that his leader said he was going to get \$20,000,000 extra; but he got confused with the figures quoted by the then Minister for Works, and this caused extra confusion in the public mind.

If one looks at the Press coverage immediately after the Government got into office, it is interesting to see how soon the backpedalling started. If members look at *The West Australian* of the 5th April, under the column headed "Government by John Tonkin," they will find a whole column of apologia preparing the public for the fact that the Premier was not going to be able to meet his promises.

I do not know how many members have seen the play "Promises, Promises, Promises," but if ever the Labor Party wants a night out it should go along to that play and listen to what is said.

Mr. Bickerton: There is one man who has had difficulty in meeting his promises.

Mr. COURT: We get your message and we are glad it relates to somebody on your side. Thank goodness, however, we are still able to have some humour injected into this place; though it is often hard to find. The member for Pilbara usually rises to the occasion.

The Minister for Health interjected when matters of health were referred to. No mention was made, however, in the present Government's policy speech that it was going to slap up hospital charges by 50 per cent. The members of the Government will no doubt say that this is the result of somebody else's folly.

Mr. Davies: You are beginning to believe your own propaganda.

Mr. COURT: It is interesting to go back and read the comments at the time the charges were put up, when it was said that this was the first rise since 1966.

Mr. Davies: You believe your own propaganda.

Mr. COURT: I should have thought this was praise indeed. In the matter of education, the greatest praise the Brand Government received for its finance and education programme was from the present Treasurer. I invite the attention of members to the report in *The West Australian* of the 23rd June which refers to "Education targets in doubt" and in which the Treasurer said among other things—

It would be hard to achieve the previous steady upward trend in education expenditure in the near future.

He went on to make some other complimentary remarks about the Brand Government.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is reading something I did not say. I said that a steady upward growth was desirable.

Mr. COURT: We are giving you credit for saying something fair, and we are trying to offset this against the complete unfairness of what was said last night and to-night.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I said we wanted a steady upward growth. Your growth was haphazard.

Mr. COURT: This place has a long memory, as have the people who attend the meetings.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The newspaper has the true report.

Mr. COURT: The Treasurer is disputing it.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I am not.

Mr. COURT: Yes, the Treasurer is.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I am disputing your reading it out of context. Read the lot.

Mr. COURT: The report states—

This dribble of funds—

This is what the Treasurer is talking about. The quote continues—

—would be submerged by rising prices to a point where the State Government would not be able to maintain even the physical volume for construction achieved last year, let alone embark on necessary expansion for existing programmes.

I invite members to look at the report, which, as I have said, appears in *The West Australian* of the 23rd June.

On the question of water, Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting to look at the policy speech of the Labor Party under the heading of, "Water." It is dismissed in a very short sentence on p. 32 of the then Opposition's policy speech, which reads as follows:—

Water Supply

There are many districts in Western Australia which lack adequate water supplies and a number of these experience acute water shortages almost every year.

Labor Governments in Western Australia have by far the best record in the provision of water and we shall carry on the tradition by according this work a high priority.

There is no mention of increases and, of course, the party no sooner gets into office than up go the charges.

Mr. Jamieson: Your history on that is not too good. No wonder your ex-Minister for Works has gone overseas.

Mr. COURT: There are many members who do not remember the 1961-62 election. Some of us recall some of the propaganda. I have some very interesting articles from *The Western Sun* about myself and my leader. I notice that is when they coined the phrase, the Brand-Court Government. It was also the election when they coined the phrase, "Don't get Court and Branded" and they wondered why we did so well because we were getting so much free publicity. The other phrase was, "Dad and Dave." We did not have to do much that election because the Labor Party was footing the bill, complete with brass band and pipes in the Labour Day Procession. Happy days around the town! If only they would revive those days again, Mr. Speaker.

This is one of the Labor pamphlets—

Mr. May: Show the other side.

Mr. COURT: "£1,000,000 Grab"! And what a picture on the other side.

Mr. May: I think I got beaten on that.

Mr. COURT: Yes, the candidate for Canning's picture is on the reverse side.

Mr. May: What are you trying to prove?

Mr. COURT: This went on for hours; it went on for days; it went on for weeks. We had special public meetings—they were stirring up the age pensioners because the water rates were going up and it was said, "This is being used as a taxing medium." This was a trite phrase, using the Water Department as a taxing machine; and, of course, when you get into Government and you have to change things a bit and the rates—but do not let us revive this argument about "rate" or "rates"; because the then Premier and myself carried it on for three sessions, that is he had used the word "rate" or

"rates" on one occasion because it had a great bearing on the amount of water rates people would have to pay in their assessments. I well remember the kerfuffle going on here day in and day out, and all we were doing was what the Act insisted on. No doubt the Government has done this for the same reason, but when they went to the electors they did not talk about putting the water rates up.

Mr. Davies: That was after the board was established.

Mr. COURT: I think it was about the time the whole legislation was recast. We had some shocking anomalies which existed for years and years. I will not deal with the road maintenance tax, but we have before us the experience of waiting to see how much the motorists are going to be slugged for this one way or another; or are we going to see maintenance of the roads go down the drain? The Government will not get any marks for that one but it looks as if it is going to let some people who do most damage to the roads off this type of tax and slug the motorist.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You are still fishing.

Mr. COURT: We are interested because somewhere along the line, if the Labor Party is going to keep up with the road programme and if we are going to get a substantially balanced Budget, somebody has to pay.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to quickly deal with the question of environment. The Deputy Premier, the Minister for Works and others, have tended to make light of this. The reason why this is terribly important can be seen if we take the Labor Party policy speech. I think the Labor Party devoted more to environment than it did to any other single item, because it thought it was the "in" thing. The question of environment starts at page 1 where the importance of it is pointed out, and then it pumps to page 4, if I remember correctly, and then this talk about environment and what the Labor Party is going to do about it goes on for pages. The party does not talk about not proclaiming our Act or anything of that kind; but we will not split straws over that. The fact is this is the "in" thing; this is where sympathies are going to be.

The previous Premier came along and said to Parliament, "We should have environmental protection legislation. We should do it in stages. We propose to bring down a Bill which will be for education, co-operation, and consultation, and this is the way to do it; this is the way to try to win the people of all sections of the community; to try to co-operate in what is a great national matter and a great social question." It is not just a question of trees and smells and polluted waters, it is a much bigger issue, and we set about drafting

something and gave notice to the people and the Parliament that if this legislation required stiffening up it would be stiffened up in the light of experience.

It is not any good getting a sledge hammer to crack a peanut and then having everything strewn all over the place and not knowing where to go next when we could do it the other way, especially when we have the type of legislation the Deputy Premier referred to, dealing with clean air and the like. Also, the Government of the day should not be without the ability to deal with urgent situations outside of the legislative situation.

I do not agree with the Minister for Works about lack of power because section 5 of the Act refers to the fact that it binds the Crown in the right of the State. Section 23 on page 10 states that the Minister of the Crown under whose administration any of the stated matters are being done "shall"—not may—as soon as practicable, refer the matter to the Minister for his consideration and advice. That is the Minister for Environmental Protection. It provides that wherever the planning stages are being prepared for the construction of a development project the nature of which requires the protection of the physical environment to be considered—that is, the moment we build a pipeline; the moment we build a powerline; the moment we build a fence—we are involved.

Mr. Jamieson: Because the environmental protection that is prescribed by definition—

Mr. COURT: I want to say this: When the Act was brought forward it was the intention that Government instrumentalities would be involved, and that would have been the law if the Act had been proclaimed.

Mr. Jamieson: Why was it not proclaimed?

Mr. COURT: I will deal with that in a minute. We intended matters such as those affecting the State Electricity Commission, and roads, to be covered by this sort of legislation and not just that everyone else should be subjected to ever increasing penalties under these laws. Therefore, obviously such matters as pipelines and power lines would have to be referred. It has been said the Minister for Environmental Protection "may" do this and "may" do that. What chance would a person have who did not do his moral duty under this legislation? He would not get anywhere today because of the vigilance of the Press and the public. There only needs to be a puff of smoke, or a fire in the hills, and the Minister for Industrial Development—I am glad it is not me for a while—would get up in the morning and say, "I know I am going to be blamed because there is a bit of smog around. Somebody is doing a bit of burning off around the hills." This

is the way we live today, and the environment in which we live and the very demanding standards laid down by the public.

It was asked: Why did we not proclaim the Act? It was known and it was stated that it would not be proclaimed until a certain time. First of all, we had to get a suitable director. The person whom we selected was considered to be outstanding, but he has since gone down in my estimation if what the Minister for Works has said about him is correct: that he looked at the legislation, took an Aspro, and wanted to resign.

Mr. Jamieson: I did not say he wanted to resign. If you quote me, quote me correctly. I said he took one look at the legislation and got a packet of Aspros.

Mr. COURT: It means the same thing.

Mr. Graham: There is no suggestion of resigning.

Mr. COURT: The Minister implied that he gave up. This person knew what the legislation was and what the policy of the Government was, and he was happy to go along with our approach. In fact, not so long ago he delivered an address saying that all the environmental people who were obsessed would do the cause more harm than good. He went along in a practical way when he was interviewed. We allowed for the fact that he had a space programme contract to complete, and we felt there were some advantages to the State in allowing him to complete the programme before he came here.

In the meantime we proceeded with the selection of the personnel to be appointed to the council. Our great quarrel is this: had this Government gone on and proclaimed the Act—and had we been returned as the Government we would have proclaimed it—it would have available a group of people with the right disciplines to work together, to confer with industry, and to get the experience until better legislation—according to the opinion of members opposite—was presented to Parliament. If my guess is any good this Government will have practically the same disciplines and practically the same people involved in its legislation, except for anything it might introduce by way of “big teeth” under the new legislation, without all the experience they could have gained during the interim period.

I suggest to the Government that there are problems and there are concerns in the community. There is the alumina refinery. If the body provided for under our legislation had been set up the matter would have been forwarded to it for consideration and recommendation. Parliament could then have come forward much sooner with the necessary legislation and the public would have been satisfied, because the matter would at least have gone before an independent authority of

experts who could have hammered out the conditions. The Minister could then say to Parliament, “Here are the conditions which have been laid down. These have been approved by the environmental authority.”

The same thing would have happened in connection with the power line to be established along the foothills. I hazard a guess, whether or not it is strictly an interpretation of law, that the Minister for Works would have forwarded the power line question to the authority and the Town Planning Authority, for their study and consideration. In fact, that legislation would have guaranteed this type of study. I agree that the town planning people have some responsibility in these matters, but the community demands study by some body which is independent; and which has special skills in environmental protection.

Then we have the Warnbro Sound proposal. I am not expressing an opinion whether or not a power station should be established there. I have my own views on the development that could take place there if it was properly planned. Is this not an ideal matter for an approach to be made to the authority, and so ease the minds of the people? It does not matter how earnest, how capable, or how sincere we might be; the people no longer accept our word like they used to. We have to forward these matters to somebody with special disciplines, although in many cases he might not make as sound a decision as the average layman. The fact is we live in an atmosphere that demands this.

Mr. Graham: Who said the matter will not go before the Director of Environmental Protection?

Mr. COURT: I am not saying that, but the public is concerned because of the type of answer which the member for Dale got yesterday; and this gives an impression, maybe unfairly, of indifference just because the area happens to be marked on the map to be used for certain purposes. I accept the Deputy Premier's statement that this matter will go before the environmental authority in due course. However, had the Act been proclaimed it could have been in operation long since, and it would have put everybody's fears at rest.

There is the question of the Fitzgerald River reserve. This is in an area which is hungry for development. We will never know whether that development can proceed until the matter is submitted to the experts for examination. The area has been withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the warden, and he cannot make a decision on it.

Mr. Jamieson: Did the Minister for Lands in your Government take certain action to prohibit the warden from proceeding?

Mr. COURT: We conferred special powers under the Mining Act when amendments were made, as a preliminary step towards environmental protection. That is the point about the position. I am not criticising what the present Government did, because it was in a jam as a result of not proclaiming the Act. That is one of the reasons why we are complaining. The people of Albany want to know what is to happen in this area and in other areas. They know they cannot have these matters studied by the experts with a view to attracting development until legislation is passed by Parliament. Such legislation might be contentious, and this Government might want to table the Bill and let it lie for a whole session.

Had the present Government proclaimed the other legislation, even with any faults which members opposite thought it contained, it would have been in operation. The people concerned would have gained the necessary experience, and the fears of many people would have been allayed.

I come back to the point that the Opposition has a responsibility to highlight the fact that the present Government, when in opposition, was irresponsible towards State finances and in making its election promises; that it has demonstrated since then it has a lot to learn before it can satisfy the Opposition and the public that it knows how to handle the business of the State. There is an air of confusion in the minds of the public. If the Government goes the way it is heading it will face a heavy deficit. Then we have the uncertainty surrounding the environmental protection legislation. I believe the two points covered by the Leader of the Opposition's amendment to the Address-in-Reply are not only very timely but also very pertinent, and I support them.

MR. NALDER (Katanning) [10.13 p.m.]: I welcome the opportunity tonight to make some comments on the subject matter of this amendment. I shall be brief, but I am rather pleased to have this opportunity because it was interesting to listen to what three Ministers opposite said in reply to some of the criticisms that have been levelled by speakers on this side of the House in relation to the promises made by the present Premier.

I understand I am quite in order in making this point: last night when speaking in the debate on the Supply Bill the Minister for Agriculture got up and made what I regarded as an intemperate outburst, using unparliamentary language bordering very much on defamatory accusations against me. That is just the difference between his approach to criticism, which I would say was very close to an hysterical outburst, and the sensible approach of the other Ministers in replying to the criticisms that were raised on the subjects brought forward by members of the Opposition.

It is quite obvious that the Minister for Agriculture has been hit on the raw. Because of what took place last night, and without any approaches being made by me, the points I raised and the complaints I made have been supported by the Leader of the Opposition.

However, this is dealing with a situation covering finance and I do not intend to go back over the ground which I covered last evening, because I believe I made the point. What I have to say this evening touches on environment. It is obvious that the public of Australia—not only the people in Western Australia—have, over the years, taken a very keen interest in this subject. I do not say that the majority of the people, in every aspect, are taking an interest in what is likely to develop in the years ahead. However, I think that common sense prevails in such a situation.

In discussing this matter with the public generally, at meetings which I attend, I find the approach is based on concern for the future. People are not really concerned with the aspect of what is likely to happen immediately, because they believe that the controls which are being considered and the legislation which was introduced last year are a practical approach to the situation and are catering for the concern being expressed. The majority of people, I would say, realise that development must proceed.

We have an obligation to the people of today and the people of tomorrow to make sure that what is done today caters for the future. So on this aspect I would say the public is satisfied with the progress in environmental protection, in its various forms and controls, which is being made not only by the Government, but by local authorities in the best interests of the people. I make the point that progress is being made on a sensible basis.

I criticise the Government on the aspect of not being in a position to be able to cater for what appears to be reasonable development at this stage. The position relating to the Fitzgerald River reserve has already been mentioned by a previous speaker. I believe that common sense prevails in that case. The proposals previously outlined to cater for the situation were reasonable. The member for Albany, during a television interview tonight, pointed out the situation at Albany as far as employment is concerned. I think he said that the position was acute.

With the situation that exists at Albany development is necessary so that people can take advantage of the employment opportunities which become available. It is all very well for the present Government to criticise the previous Government for not bringing the environmental protection legislation into effect. The Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have already

explained quite reasonably why it was not brought into effect. One reason for the delay was the appointment of a director, and the appointment of the people who were to be responsible for carrying out the Act.

Mr. May: It still would not have been proclaimed until March of this year.

Mr. NALDER: That does not matter; it would still have provided for this situation.

Mr. May: But the previous Government would not allow the Fitzgerald River development to go ahead. For some reason the previous Minister for Mines did not allow it to go through.

Mr. NALDER: If the provisions of the legislation had been carried out, it would have been possible for the development to proceed. This delay has been occasioned to the disadvantage of the people living in the southern areas. There is no doubt that if the development had proceeded there would have been jobs available. I recall that the member for Albany, in his television interview, blamed the whole situation on the rural sector.

Mr. Cook: Not the whole of it.

Mr. NALDER: Words to that effect.

Mr. Cook: That was one of the factors.

Mr. NALDER: I am only stating what I understood from the television interview. However, I am making the point that every opportunity has to be taken when development is planned, because we cannot afford to allow time to roll on indefinitely.

Mr. Bertram: Are you saying that we should proceed with the Fitzgerald River reserve development?

Mr. NALDER: I never said that at all. I said that if the Act was proclaimed the registrar could hear the claim. If the proposition was thought to be a fair one then development could take place.

Mr. Bertam: The registrar would not make the final determination?

Mr. NALDER: That is quite right. I am saying that if provision was made for this development to proceed then a number of people could have been employed.

Mr. Bertram: I cannot follow the argument.

Mr. NALDER: The point is that development creates employment.

Mr. Bertram: But that does not start development; that starts the procedure.

Mr. NALDER: That is the situation, and for that reason I rise to support the Leader of the Opposition in his move to criticise the Government for its lack of action. It is important, in the interests of the people of this State, to have this type of legislation in operation.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—23

Mr. Blaikie	Mr. O'Connor
Sir David Brand	Mr. Reid
Mr. Court	Mr. Ridge
Mr. Coyne	Mr. Runciman
Dr. Dadour	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Stephens
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Williams
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. R. L. Young
Mr. McPharlin	Mr. W. G. Young
Mr. Mensaros	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Nalder	(Teller)

Noes—23

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Hartrey
Mr. Bertram	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Jones
Mr. Brady	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Brown	Mr. May
Mr. Burke	Mr. McIver
Mr. Cook	Mr. Moller
Mr. Davies	Mr. Norton
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Sewell
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. A. R. Tonkin
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Harman
Mr. Graham	(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Taylor
Mr. O'Neill	Mr. J. T. Tonkin

The SPEAKER (Mr. Toms): The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Cook.

House adjourned at 10.34 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 22nd July, 1971

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

1.

LAND

Old Boyanup School Site

The Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Leader of the House:

(1) In respect to the Old Boyanup School site, known as Reserve 6319, is this land required for future use by any other Government Department?

(2) If so—

(a) what is the name of the department; and

(b) for what purpose will the site be used?

(3) In the event of the land not being required by any department, will the area be made available for subdivision for housing purposes as desired by the Shire of Capel?