

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 20 December 1989

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

PETITION - CRIME

Child Sex Abuse - New Legislation

Hon Reg Davies presented a petition bearing the signatures of 25 citizens of Western Australia requesting that the Parliament of Western Australia bring in legislation to deal with all cases of sexual and other crimes against children to ensure that sentences imposed on child-sex offenders must reflect the seriousness of the crime committed; that mandatory therapy for child-sex offenders be a condition; and that magistrates have discretion to accept the evidence of a child irrespective of the age of the child.

[See paper No 864.]

PETITION - TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Wanneroo and Prindiville Roads, Wangara - Installation

Hon Reg Davies presented a petition bearing the signatures of 11 citizens of Western Australia requesting that traffic lights be installed at the corner of Wanneroo Road and Prindiville Road, Wangara.

[See paper No 865.]

MOTION - STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION

Government Employees' Superannuation Board - Commercial Dealings Documents Tabling

HON MAX EVANS (North Metropolitan) [2.40 pm]: I move -

That the Leader of the House be required to table the following documents relating to certain dealings between the State Government Insurance Commission and the Government Employees' Superannuation Board and others -

- (1) All warrants, vouchers and associated papers or correspondence including extracts of minutes of SGIC and GESB in respect of the \$55 million interest free loan that is part of the "Heads of Agreement dated 30 December 1988, and mortgage document referring to the loan of \$55 million made by the mortgagees to the mortgagors pursuant to this security shall be interest free until 31 December 1989 - subject to earlier repayment pursuant to item 4 of the schedule of this security - but failing repayment on 31 December 1989 such loan shall bear interest at a rate which is one per cent above the Australian Merchant Bankers bill rate for bills of a 90 day tenure calculated on a daily basis."
- (2) Any correspondence, minutes or other agreements that mention or refer to the advance or loan of about \$50 million by Tipperary Developments, or other Warren Anderson companies, to Rothwells Ltd between May 1988 and January 1989, and that refer to transactions with Warren Anderson, or a company associated with him, arising out of the holding of bills of exchange by Warren Anderson or companies associated with him drawn by Paragon Resources NL which bills were alleged to have been drawn in excess of authority through the agency of Tony Lloyd and to provide a statement giving details of any such deal or transaction and table any documents relating to such deal or transaction.

I move this motion because much more information needs to be produced regarding the commercial dealings of the State Government Insurance Commission and the Government Employees' Superannuation Board. We must get to the bottom of these deals as they may reflect on the financial status of the annual reports of the SGIC and GESB, both of which are yet to be released. Both of these authorities have been involved in major financial deals in

1987-88 which were large in relation to the capital of both of these authorities. Some of the deals may involve large losses which are still to emerge, or they may have been very abnormal deals for these authorities.

The \$55 million interest free loan referred to in the motion should be examined because of the relationship between the SGIC and the GESB. The Superannuation Board sold the Perth Technical College site, now known as Westralia Square, and was granted an interest free loan to buy back the property six months later. We are worried about, and want information regarding, the relationship the board may have had with Warren Anderson and his company, Tipperary Developments, and a loan he made to Rothwells Ltd of \$50 million which was shown as unsecured credit of \$54 million in November 1988. For that reason we are seeking the tabling of these documents so we can be further informed on these matters.

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [2.44 pm]: It might help future proceedings if I indicate that the brief comments I make now apply not only to motion No 1, but also to the other four motions listed on the Notice Paper. The Government has no objection to this motion and will refer it to the State Government Insurance Commission and the Government Employees' Superannuation Board for their prompt attention.

I make additional comments regarding the increasing tendency to lodge inquiries to seek information on a wider and wider basis. I have no complaint about the scope of the current inquiries, but I have to confess at the same time that I really have not studied them all that closely. In principle, if a request for information is made, we have accommodated it in the past and we are happy to extend that principle and send these inquiries to be accommodated now. However, I wish to express some caution in that there may well come a time when the net is cast so wide that it will be difficult to provide a full response. A number of reasons for that difficulty arising have already been experienced to one extent or another with papers previously called for and tabled. Commercial considerations may be involved which do not occur to me on the face of the motion but may occur to the commission or the board; legal considerations may be involved given that the commission, at least, is already engaged in litigation of a very substantial type; and, on a quick reading only of the motions, it occurs to me that it may well be looking for materials which are in the hands of third parties and not available to the commission and the board. Some care needs to be taken in the specification of documents to avoid that sort of situation occurring. Having indicated those three cautionary comments, I repeat that the Government has no objection either to this motion or to the later ones listed.

HON GEORGE CASH (North Metropolitan - Leader of the Opposition) [2.47 pm]: I support the motion moved by Hon Max Evans. I appreciate the comments made by the Leader of the House inasmuch as he has indicated that he will refer the contents of the motion to the relevant parties and invite them to produce the documentation the motion seeks. This is somewhat of a breakthrough in that the Government is clearly becoming more willing to answer questions put to it.

Hon J.M. Berinson: We have done this on each occasion when similar requests were made.

Hon GEORGE CASH: The Government seems more willing now, as obtaining information earlier - I do not want to be too unkind - was like dragging a horse to water.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I believe that you are being extremely unkind!

Hon GEORGE CASH: With Christmas approaching I do not want to be unkind, but I believe the Leader of the House is becoming more willing to provide information. Last Thursday when Mr Evans put the requests to the Leader of the House, the leader invited Mr Evans to put them on notice; therefore, it can be said that some general notice of intention was given.

Hon Mark Nevill: We are only too happy to facilitate your fishing expeditions.

Hon GEORGE CASH: If Hon Mark Nevill says that this is a fishing expedition, he has not been following the proceedings in the House in recent weeks - however, he is entitled to his point of view.

At the moment no date has been fixed for when the documents should be tabled in this House. If the documents cannot be introduced today - I appreciate that there is a difficulty in

doing so with this volume of documents - at least a time should be fixed with which the Leader of the House would have to comply as it would be an order of the House. Even though the Leader of the House has given an undertaking to refer the requests to the relevant authorities, a need still exists for a date to be fixed.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I said that I would refer them for their prompt attention - I have not referred the request to the bodies yet. There is a substantial difference between the motion moved and the indication of the material sought which was provided to me last week. So, I have had to wait on the final motion. You will have to give them reasonable time and I will ask for the information as soon as is possible.

Hon GEORGE CASH: I appreciate those comments by the Leader of the House to the mover of the motion. I suggest that a date be fixed and that that date be 28 December 1989.

Hon J.M. Berinson: That is not possible.

Hon Max Evans: I suggest 5 January.

Hon GEORGE CASH: I want a date fixed so that, if the documentation cannot be produced, the Leader of the House can make a statement to the House about why it cannot be produced. Otherwise, this matter will run on forever and that will cause problems.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I suggest Monday, 8 January 1990.

Amendment to Motion

Hon GEORGE CASH: In view of the comments of both the mover and the Leader of the House, I move -

To add after the word "others" appearing in line 3, the following words -
not later than Monday, 8 January 1990

Hon J.M. Berinson: If there is a difficulty with that, I hope I will be given the opportunity to provide an explanation. I am concerned that some officers may be on leave at that time.

Amendment put and passed.

Motion, as amended, put and passed.

MOTION - STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION ET AL

Commercial Dealings - Documents Tabling

HON MAX EVANS (North Metropolitan) [2.56 pm]: I move -

That the Leader of the House be required to table the following documents relating to certain dealings of the State Government Insurance Commission and others not later than Monday, 8 January 1990 -

All warrants, vouchers and other papers, extracts of minutes and correspondence in respect of the State Government Insurance Commission purchase of the BHP Ltd shares from Mr Robert Holmes a Court or his associated companies in November 1987.

That the Leader of the House be required to table the following documents relating to certain dealings of the State Government Insurance Commission and others not later than Monday, 8 January 1990 -

All warrants, vouchers and other papers, extracts of minutes, and correspondence in respect of the State Government Insurance Commission purchase of 19.9 per cent of the shares in the Bell Group in April/May 1988.

That the Leader of the House be required to table the following documents relating to certain dealings of the State Government Insurance Commission and others not later than Monday, 8 January 1990 -

- (1) All warrants, vouchers and other papers, extracts of minutes in respect of the State Government Insurance Commission purchase of central city properties from Robert Holmes a Court or his associated companies in November 1987.
- (2) Any other agreements, memorandums, minutes or correspondence that refer to the \$50 million loan by Bell Resources Ltd to Rothwells Ltd.

That the Leader of the House be required to table the following documents relating to certain dealings of the State Government Insurance Commission and others not later than Monday, 8 January 1990 -

All warrants, vouchers and associated papers and extracts of minutes and valuation by Solomon Bros of the SGIC in respect of the deal resulting in an investment of \$140 million plus accrued interest as a result of an underwriting agreement entered into by the State Government Insurance Commission for 90 days to sell unlisted subordinated convertible Bell Group Ltd notes with a face value of \$150 million in respect of which negotiations commenced in April 1988.

That the Leader of the House be required to table the following documents relating to certain dealings of the Government Employees' Superannuation Board and others not later than Monday, 8 January 1990 -

- (1) All warrants, vouchers and any associated papers or correspondence, including extracts of minutes of GESB in respect of the purchase from Esjay Shelf Co (No 209) Pty Ltd, a Warren Anderson company, for about \$50 million in respect of the Central Park Development or David Jones site
- (2) Any extracts of minutes, correspondence or other agreements between the GESB and the Rural and Industries Bank in respect of the loan of \$45.5 million made by the bank to Esjay Shelf Co (No 209) Pty Ltd when it purchased the Central Park development site for \$45 million and to subsequently purchase the same site.

I thank the Leader of the House for his cooperation in this matter. By way of explanation for my changing the documents the other night, I toned them down and changed them around because I realised the commercial problems with them. I believe they do not conflict with any legal dispute that the State Government Insurance Commission may have with Bond or the Bell Group. These were standard loan deals in 1987-88 and were not tied up with any legal complication.

Question put and passed.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Committee

Resumed from 19 December. The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon Doug Wenn) in the Chair; Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management) in charge of the Bill.

Schedule 1 -

Progress was reported after vote 16 had been agreed to.

Minister for Labour, and Employment and Training -

Vote put and passed.

Minister for Health -

Division 93: Health -

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: This is the appropriate time to raise a concern the citizens of Ravensthorpe and surrounding districts have regarding the lack of available dental services. Members would realise that this area, being a new land farming district, has a fast growing population, yet the people residing in the district find they are badly serviced in several areas, including dental services. I know members are as concerned about their children's health as they are about their education. I will give members an example of the seriousness of the situation in Ravensthorpe and surrounding districts. Ninety per cent of the children in the Ravensthorpe district have caries, compared with 10 per cent of children so affected in the metropolitan area. We have reached the stage where the ratio in the Ravensthorpe district is nine times worse than that in the metropolitan area and it is time the Government realised that something is wrong.

The water supplies in the city have fluoride added to them and it has made a difference. My three children are over the age of 25 and they have had only two fillings between the three of them. Unfortunately, that is not the case at Ravensthorpe where the population is increasing and the dental service available is declining. Concerned residents have given me a rundown

of the decline in dental services in the Ravensthorpe district. Prior to 1988 the dental van which serviced the town accommodated a dentist, nurse and a secretary-educator, and they attended to one patient at a time. In addition a van was situated at the school from which a dental therapist worked. The situation has changed somewhat and the van which visits the town is smaller and it houses the dentist and nurse and their patient as well as a dental therapist and nurse and their patient. They are all working from the one van. In past years a separate waiting room and office was available, but all the treatment is now undertaken in one caravan with a curtain dividing the two sections.

Previously a dental technician visited the town and this was a necessary service, especially for the low income families who found it difficult to travel to other centres. Lake King and Ravensthorpe are probably the most isolated areas in Western Australia. The towns in the north of the State are generally major centres and sufficient dental services are available. The problem in Ravensthorpe now is that the services of a dental technician are not available. A dentist used to visit Ravensthorpe for between six to eight weeks at six monthly intervals and that was independent of the dental therapy unit. Now that the two services have been combined the unit visits the town at nine monthly intervals for a period of between seven to eight weeks. Previously allowance was made for shift workers, but that provision is no longer made. Appointment reminders were forwarded to patients, but that service is no longer provided. Previously the van was housed near the hospital in order that the dental unit could use the facilities available at the hospital. However, that is no longer the case and the van is housed at the local school. The dental therapy unit no longer visits the town and the only therapist available is the therapist who travels with the dentist. Things are getting worse instead of better and the community is increasing in population.

A solution would be to build a separate room onto the local hospital which could be set up as a dentist's surgery. The local shire council and the hospital board are in full support of that idea, but they are unable to find the necessary finance. The Western Australian Dental Health Services is in full support also, and is willing to provide the services as long as accommodation for the dentist and the surgery can be financed. The local people have asked me to make a plea for this facility because they believe it is the only way to go. Earlier I mentioned that the instance of caries in children at Ravensthorpe is nine times greater than it is in the metropolitan area. What has been achieved Statewide in the area of dental therapy over the past few years is amazing, especially in relation to the reduction of fillings required by children and adults.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Do you know whether there is a program involving the use of fluoride tablets?

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: It is not a matter of putting fluoride into the water scheme as this would not help those living on farms. My wife was insistent that the children took their fluoride tablets every day, but some parents are not as conscientious as she was.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I wonder whether it has been drawn to the attention of the residents that fluoride tablets should be taken by children.

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: That is what health education is all about and the reason that people of the area are asking for more assistance in this area.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It is obviously impossible, given the huge range of health services, to carry details of particular centres. I note under this vote there has been a substantial increase for dental health from \$10.2 million to \$11.5 million which is an increase of 12 per cent. It is clear, on a global basis, that attention is being given to this area. Given that it is not practical to be briefed on the innumerable centres covered by this vote, I really need to leave it on the basis that I will make a point of drawing the comments made by Hon David Wordsworth to the attention of the Minister.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I fully support Hon David Wordsworth's comments. The question of fluoridation of country water supplies and the general effect on dental health is serious; dental health has diminished in recent years with the paucity of educators visiting country areas.

I refer to item 5, Meat Inspection Services - Contribution to Trust Fund Account. What is the basis of the contributions to the trust fund account and what was the balance of that fund at 30 June 1989? If the Minister has a more up to date figure it would be appreciated.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I was hoping there might be some material available to allow me to answer the question. I find that the figures I have relate to revenue and expenditure and not to the balance of the fund. I will take the question on notice and will ensure that the member is provided with the details of the balance of the trust fund direct.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I thank the Minister for his undertaking. The reason for my question is the change which has taken place in the meat inspection service in country abattoirs. For many years there has been dual inspection by the Commonwealth and State inspectors. In many cases the shire health inspectors have undertaken much of the work for the Health Department. I presume this fund reflects the service provided by shires. I understand there is a sizeable amount in the fund due to the changing structure of the health inspection process, in that levies are still imposed on the carcasses at the abattoirs, which levies are a direct cost to the growers. An unpleasant rumour is circulating that because the trust fund account has built up and will not be called on, the funds will be moved to Consolidated Revenue Fund. This is a matter of grave concern to the shires and it will also be to the growers when they realise they are losing track of that money.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I understand there is no proposal to transfer those funds.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer to Anti-Smoking Campaign - Contribution to Trust Fund Account expenditure in 1988-89 of \$2 million. The Quit campaign will receive an allocation of \$2.5 million this year and it is anticipated that an additional \$5 million will be allocated from taxes raised under the provisions of the Tobacco Bill. Will two separate funds be established, one for the Quit campaign and the other for the Health Promotion Foundation, or will the funds be combined?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I believe that it is intended to incorporate the two, and the Quit campaign funds will be part of the allocation in future years to the Health Promotion Foundation. This year the Government is in a rather different position from normal in that it is dealing with absolute figures. The \$7.5 million is based on the proposal that the Quit campaign should go from its base level of \$2 million to \$2.5 million and the initial contribution of the Health Promotion Foundation will be \$5 million. In future years, in accordance with the Bill that has been received from the Legislative Assembly, the amounts will be based on percentages.

Hon MAX EVANS: To my recollection the Tobacco Bill does not mention the two funds being combined in the future.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: There is some guesswork here; the Government has said not less than \$5 million will be allocated this year and not less than \$9 million in following years. The member may be aware that the original proposal in the Tobacco Bill did not involve a percentage of the total tax revenue. When percentages were discussed it was on a basis that considered the total to be provided to the anti-smoking effort, and that combined the Quit campaign and the Health Promotion Foundation. The Government is still in the position of undertaking to provide annually not less than \$9 million and \$2.5 million - a total of \$11.5 million - even if the percentage incorporated in the Bill in the lower House results in a figure lower than that combined figure.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer to Hospital Fund - Contribution to Trust Fund Account for which the expenditure last year was \$475 million, and the estimate for this year is \$815 million. What is the reason for this major increase? The accounts of the Health Department have not yet been tabled in this Parliament, but it has been mentioned in other debates that a change has taken place in the structure and finances of the department. I would like a broad outline of what is happening with this trust fund. Trust funds are becoming a way for the Government to avoid accountability in this Parliament.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I almost hesitate to start my answer by saying that the basic reason for this increase is a change in accounting procedure. The difference involves a huge sum represented by the Commonwealth hospital funding grant, in the order of \$270 million in round figures. In previous years it would have been taken off the total and the amount would have shown up as \$515 million in round figures. However, this year the figure shows total expenditure of \$815 million, but that will be balanced in revenue and is shown on page 21 as a hospital funding grant of \$300.979 million. That amount is added on both sides of the accounts. After allowing for that, the actual expenditure increase is 8.8 per cent.

Hon MAX EVANS: I have before me the trust fund accounts for last year and, unfortunately, it appears the 1989 figures are not tabled in Parliament. That is wrong bearing in mind that we are dealing with a bland figure of \$800 million and we do not know where it has been spent. Questions should be asked about the allocation and appropriation of those funds. What is the basis upon which funds are allocated to hospitals?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Item 4 reflects the State contribution via the Consolidated Revenue Fund towards the operations of the public hospital system, including teaching hospitals. Also included are support costs for the patients assisted travel scheme for remote residents to obtain specialist care, an interest and sinking fund to service hospital loans, and special repairs and equipment for special hospital related repairs and abnormal equipment replacement.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: I ask the Minister to give a little more detail on the allocation of those funds, particularly between country and metropolitan areas. The Minister mentioned teaching hospitals, which are found in the metropolitan area. My interest is in country hospitals. Will any of the slight increase in the overall allocation go to country hospitals, which need increased funds quite badly?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No regional breakdown appears in the Budget figures for hospitals. Hon Max Evans may be able to say whether there is a breakdown of that sort in the annual report.

Hon Max Evans: Not for 1988, and I do not have 1989.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: As Hon Max Evans indicates there is not, I am unable to help Hon Margaret McAleer in relation to this matter.

Hon MAX EVANS: We should be adjourning at this point. We should not be discussing this matter without the detailed accounts of the Health Department before us. We are considering an amount of \$815 million which appears as one line in the Estimates, which is ridiculous. There is an amount of \$459 million for subsidies to boards, hospitals and approved institutions. Hon Margaret McAleer wants to know what is happening to the \$178.1 million from the hospitals' operating trust funds. That is distributed as wages, salaries, payments to visiting officers, payments for support expenses, repairs to equipment and administrative expenses; but there is nothing to say whether that is for city or country hospitals as it is spread over some 50 or 60 hospitals in all. What Hon Margaret McAleer is saying is that we should have more detailed explanations of this expenditure in the country and metropolitan areas. There is an \$815 million Contribution to Trust Fund Account a lot of which will go to the hospitals' operating trust funds but about which there is no detail.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I acknowledge that. However, the same could be said about the education vote of about \$900 million. We simply do not have a geographic breakdown of the kind requested. That may well be because such a breakdown has never been sought before or because if it were provided it would not be helpful. The fact is that, after allowing for all accounting changes, the total health vote has increased by 8.8 per cent across the board. The question is not about the amount of money going to various geographic areas but whether the services provided are adequate.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: If one takes a metropolitan hospital, the Sir Charles Gairdner, and a country hospital, Narrogin, one finds that in both cases inadequate funds are available, that wards have been closed and that they are not fully staffed. I do not believe the eight per cent increase indicated in the Estimates will do anything to make either of those hospitals fully operational.

Hon MAX EVANS: The Minister may be missing my point. Under health there is one line showing \$815 million in total and no breakdown. Under education there is a breakdown into Executive, Policy and Resource Division, Schools Division, Pre-School Centres, Pre-Primary and Primary Education, TAFE and so on. There is a breakdown of where the money has gone and there is not merely a \$651 million payment to the education trust fund that one is not able to analyse. We were able to analyse those different areas and ask questions about where money had gone or is going. But in relation to the health estimates the Minister says, "Trust me with \$815 million." It took me six to nine months to get information on the Technology Development Authority, which we know lost a lot of money. The education amounts are also split between country and metropolitan areas.

However, with health one sum is shown. It is not proper we should be debating this matter with the Minister saying, "Trust me, we have it there." Many funds were set up. The Employment Strategy Fund was set up with \$12.5 million and a whole page of qualifications came from the Auditor General saying, "The Minister will not approve of these." That means that some of the money must have gone to strange places, particularly if the Minister would not approve them. We are talking about an expenditure from the hospital fund of \$475 million which the Minister may not have approved of and may not know where it has gone; it may be in a slush fund. We should not be expected to approve estimates for next year when we do not have full details of where expenditure was made last year, because that is blatantly wrong.

Hon M.S. MONTGOMERY: Item 8, Non-Government Support Program, shows an amount for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. I am sure that members from electorates where the Royal Flying Doctor Service is an essential part of the medical health program are concerned to see a drop of \$120 000 in the allocation for this year. This is one area where the Government should be increasing allocations rather than decreasing them as planes are expensive not only to purchase but also to operate; and the Royal Flying Doctor Service obviously needs them. Why has this cutback occurred?

Another detailed item relates to Senior Citizens Services. Statistics show that we have an ageing population. We will all require the services that fall into this category sooner or later, yet this has also suffered a decrease in its allocation. Where is the Government putting its money? Why is it cutting back on services to these two areas?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: We are not cutting back on services. It is difficult to give a comprehensive answer in relation to the Royal Flying Doctor Service because I do not have detailed information from that service. However, I am advised that it is not unusual for there to be significant fluctuations in the cost of that service from year to year which are dependent upon whether they are due for major engine overhauls. The officers advising on this matter believe that would explain the decrease. However, I will make further inquiries and if that explanation is incorrect I will provide further detailed information to Hon Murray Montgomery.

In relation to the Senior Citizen Services decrease I am advised that during the previous year there was an unusually high level of furnishing subsidies paid to senior citizens' centres which are not expected to be repeated this year.

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: Hon Bill Stretch raised the matter of meat inspections. The Government has indicated that it will be moving to a single health inspection service throughout the State to be uniform with that of export works. I make the plea that that not happen because there is commonsense in having the dual inspection system that we have at present. Overseas inspection standards are set by countries such as Sweden which sets a very high standard on the understanding that, "We do not want your meat, but provided a vet follows it from the time the animal has its throat cut until the meat is packed in boxes we will take it."

I suppose they have good reason because meat takes three months to get to those countries, so if there is a disease factor it will take a long time to manifest itself. At present about 30 abattoirs in country areas kill beasts for the local trade. The inspection process is conducted by a health inspector from the local shire, who is not present all the time but who nevertheless regularly inspects the abattoir. The abattoir owners do not know when an inspector will arrive. In addition to making regular inspections at the end of the day, and branding the stock, the inspectors then follow the progress of the meat through to the butchers' shops and normal trade outlets. However, if we are to put a veterinarian at every country abattoir, and raise the standard so that the head of the beast, the entrails, and everything else, follows the carcass through the whole process, the cost will become completely ridiculous; these small country abattoirs will close down, and we will lose another facility in country towns. It costs \$30 to \$40 to transport a beast from Esperance to Perth. If that beast has to be carted to Perth to be slaughtered in an abattoir to the high standard required for overseas exports, and if the meat is then to be carted back to Esperance in a refrigerated vehicle, the cost will be immense. This is not necessary. At present we have a very good health system; no-one has been poisoned by eating meat prepared under this system. The meat has to last only a week or 10 days. It is thoroughly inspected by the

health inspector, who is not a veterinarian but who has been trained to a high standard. I ask the Minister and the Government not to get carried away with the idea of having a single inspection standard for both export and domestic meat.

I wish to refer now to the continuing saga of what the then Minister for Health, Mr Taylor, did two years ago in Gnowangerup when the local hospital board made a decision to sack the matron. Mr Taylor decided that the matron should be reinstated because the board members did not know what they were doing and had made a wrong decision. The hospital matron came back, and I think that during the last year there have been only three patients in the hospital. Recently her flat was renovated, at a cost of \$400 000. That was very appropriate, because she is the only one there!

About three or four months ago, Mr Taylor went to Gnowangerup and begged the members of the board to resign en masse. He said, "Please let us fix it. We can put in our great and glorious experts from the Health Department." However, the members of the board were very reluctant to resign because there had been an inquiry into the sacking of the matron, which took six months and cost \$750 000. The result of that inquiry was nil. What has now happened is that the doctor is about to leave, which is what the people of Gnowangerup are concerned about. The chemist shop will now also close down because it will not be handling prescriptions. So the town will lose the doctor and the pharmacist, and will end up with a matron with a flat and a hospital with three elderly patients. The Minister for Budget Management should look deeply into this situation and realise how money has been wasted as a result of ministerial interference. The board members made a difficult decision about whether to sack the doctor or the matron. They decided to sack the matron. The Minister interfered in the situation, and it has still not been resolved. The members of the board understand what is going on in the town, and they have to accept the responsibility for their decision. It is not easy for them, and they are not being paid for it, but they are willing to provide a service, and have managed to provide it in the past. I suggest that the sooner the members of the board are asked to come back, the better it will be for the town.

Hon MAX EVANS: I commend the Under Treasurer for having produced a magnificent accounting exercise. I am just making a point for the future, but on page 154 of the Estimates the 1989-90 estimate for Health is a total of \$146 million. From this is deducted salaries allocated to Central Administration, Health Promotion, Protection and Surveillance, Health Delivery Services, and Home and Community Care Program; and we are left with a nil figure. The estimated amount for salaries for Health Promotion, Protection and Surveillance is \$11 million, but if we look at page 155 we see that the total estimate for this item is \$20 million. The details of the item are listed as Communicable Diseases, Health Promotion and Education, Inspection Services, and Other Health Services. There should be a more satisfactory accounting procedure which will split up that estimate into salaries and other ongoing costs.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am advised that next year, with the proposed program management format, the general headings now shown on page 155 will also include such details as full time equivalents on each program.

Hon MAX EVANS: I would love to think I had made that happen, but I will take the Minister's word that it will happen. The total number of persons listed on page 154 is 4 374. However, that does not include all the hospitals which I have on my list. The estimate for item 4 is \$815 million. How many FTEs are tied up in that figure? The 4 374 persons listed are those involved in the administration of the department in relation to child health, Aboriginal health, community health, psychiatric health, dental health and the State Health Laboratories; they have very little to do with looking after sick people in hospitals. I refer also to item 4, Hospital Fund. The people involved in the hospital industry have told me that in order to reduce the number of people in the work force, an increasing number of people are being employed on contract. We know that \$400 million of the estimate of \$815 million is for salaries, and we know that \$146 million is the estimate for 4 374 employees. Another 10 000 employees could be involved. We have no measurement of what is the total number of people employed by the Western Australian Government in the hospital industry in this State, because they all get lost in that amount of \$815 million. Would it be possible to get this information? We should have it. We worry about having one executive director and four administrative directors in an organisation, but there are roughly 10 000 employees who are not accounted for.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The figure I have for FTEs in hospitals is 19 398.

Hon Max Evans: What was it last year?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: That is the number provided for in the 1989-90 Estimates.

Hon Max Evans: What about last year?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I do not have that figure, but I come back to my earlier comment about the intention to move to a program management set of details. That would also provide in future years for the figure I have given to show up in these accounts. Since there has been so much criticism of the format of these accounts, may I say -

Hon Max Evans: I am trying to help.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I accept the member's comments as constructive, but the form of these accounts is actually an improvement on the historical or traditional method.

Hon Tom Stephens: They are the best Budget papers I have seen.

Hon P.G. Pental: They would have to be to make up for the \$700 million.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: They are better than those which have been in place for years and years. I would not want any wrong impression gained. I do not think Mr Evans is attempting to give that impression - that somehow the accounts have been changed from past practice to obscure things. They have not changed enough from past practice, but significant further changes should appear in the accounts next year.

Hon MAX EVANS: I am trying to glean information. A couple of years ago Peter Farrell changed the Capital Works statements to make them far more meaningful. It was virtually impossible to understand them when I entered Parliament.

Referring to the full time equivalents under 1989-90, would that include contract workers or only salaried persons? If it does not include contract workers, why not?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: As far as possible, contract employees are reflected in the full time employment equivalent calculations. The most common example there would be country doctors who come in on a sessional basis and are paid a certain amount. That is done regularly. Their numbers are included under full time equivalent staffing levels. What is not known is whether individual contracts might be let. This might arise, for example, where consultants are brought in to review a hospital system or something of that nature. This would be more in the nature of a one-off contract. That would not show; it would probably show up in Miscellaneous Services or in some other vote. People who are regularly contracted are reflected in the full time equivalent calculations.

Hon MAX EVANS: We have always feared that people are put on contract to improve the statistics of the number of employees.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Do you mean by "improve", showing that there are fewer than there actually are?

Hon MAX EVANS: Yes. I accept the Minister's reply in good faith. I have received many comments about a large number of people going onto a contract basis for many different reasons. Professional people may be put on sessional or contract rates.

The full time equivalent figures for 1989-90 relating to the hospital fund reflects nothing last year. I estimated \$10 000, but we have \$19 000. There has been so much talk about the hospital system not being able to cope, and the numbers going up and down.

While waiting for the answer to that, I now have some sets of accounts showing that the King Edward Memorial Hospital receives a State subsidy of \$37 million. Of the \$42 million receipts by King Edward, \$37 million comes from State subsidies. These hospitals do not raise much money themselves. Interest is \$333 000; inpatient fees are only \$4 million. Less than 10 per cent of the fees for the King Edward Memorial Hospital come from patient fees. That includes the Hospital Benefit Fund and other similar institutions. The subsidisation cost is huge. Could the Minister tell us how the State subsidy in a hospital like that is calculated? Is it based on a capitation fee?

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.00 pm

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I should say at the outset that each hospital submission is closely

scrutinised, both by the Health Department initially and then by Treasury. My understanding is that each hospital is resourced according to the estimated number of patients expected to be treated throughout the year. The average cost of treatment will, of course, vary from one hospital to another and that is taken into account. Thereafter the hospital accepts what is called a resource agreement whereby it agrees to treat a certain number of patients in return for an agreed amount of money. In the course of the scrutiny of the submissions, which I am told are very detailed, particular attention is given to such matters as major one-off expenses and also the effect of award variations, the latter in particular being very significant in the last five or six years, giving rise to substantial and virtually unavoidable increased costs.

Hon MAX EVANS: I understand that the teaching hospitals - King Edward Memorial Hospital, Fremantle Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and Royal Perth Hospital - submit their budgets and are paid accordingly. Is that correct, or are the allocations based on patient numbers?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes, each hospital submits a budget; but I got the impression before the tea suspension that Hon Max Evans was suggesting that whatever the budget was is what is agreed to. Each hospital submits a budget and each of those budgets is carefully scrutinised before a final figure is provided by way of allocation.

Hon MAX EVANS: This is not a criticism but merely a comment: Next year we should examine why the Minister for Health's budget sets out the vote, expenditure and estimate for 1989-90 but the teaching hospitals do not have their estimates for the next year. If their allocations are to come out of the hospital fund, why should we not have access to the estimates for next year when the 1989 accounts come out? They are part of the total vote, after all.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: What is the date of the report to which the member is referring, just taking it as an example?

Hon Max Evans: It was dated 31 August 1989 by the board and probably signed in late October or November by the Auditor General, so their time frame is no tighter than that of any other Government department. The hospitals are separate legal entities which must put submissions to the Treasury for funds. If the hospital fund has to have a budget figure of, say, \$34 million or \$35 million, why should it not be in here so that we know it has been done properly? If everybody else has to do it, why should not they?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I was going to say that I would expect the work done by the hospital on its own accounts would be centred on the position as at 30 June looking backwards, and at that stage it is unlikely that the budget allocation would be known. There would be no point, for example, to a hospital printing its budget submission figures. That is really meaningless and it would have to wait on the outcome of the budget allocations. Those are usually finalised about the end of July or beginning of August. Whether that process really lends itself to incorporation in the one document is something I would have to refer to the experts.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer now to country hospitals. For example, the Tom Price Hospital has its deficit funded from the hospital fund, which is another basis; I thought Princess Margaret Hospital may have been funded on the same basis. Are all hospitals other than teaching hospitals funded in this way, with their deficits being picked up by the State Treasury? If so, how is it paid during the year?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Apparently there is a difference in the funding approach depending on whether the hospitals in question are board hospitals or departmental hospitals. In the first case, as I understand the position, their deficits are met. Their funding still proceeds on the basis I have indicated previously, and they are expected to keep within it.

Hon MAX EVANS: The deficit for the Tom Price Hospital, which is just one of a number of examples I have here, was \$1.18 million. The total revenue raised by that hospital was \$73 000. Fees raised were only \$28 000 and accommodation \$2 700, so virtually only seven per cent of the total costs are covered by fees as part of the income of the hospital. It is interesting that very little money comes from fees, and that the Government is virtually funding roughly 93 per cent of the total cost of hospital expenditure and what comes in from the various hospital benefit funds. I know that hospital benefit fund money goes to the doctors and so on, but not much is going to the hospitals.

Apparently the Health Department's audited accounts have still not been finished. There was

a request for an extension of time on 30 October. That leaves a lot to be desired, because we are dealing with this budget allocation at this late stage. The accounts should have been in even before this matter was debated in another place, because of their sheer nature and size. I probably overdramatised the situation when I said \$815 million was a lot of money. It represents a lot of money to me, but it is only the amount of money lost in the Government's WA Inc dealings, and the Government keeps telling us it is not a lot of money. When we consider that the losses on the Bell shares and convertible notes, Rothwells, WA Government Holdings Ltd and so on amounted to roughly \$800 million, I apologise for saying \$815 million is a lot of money - it is only the amount lost as a result of WA Inc.

Princess Margaret Hospital is also shown as receiving a State subsidy. That subsidy is \$46 million; the hospital's total revenue is only \$3 million and the total expenditure is \$51 million. In other words, its total revenue is only six per cent of the total expenditure of the hospital, and the comparative figure for the Tom Price Hospital was seven per cent. It is interesting that the ratio is about the same. It will not be long before we have totally free medicine, at this rate.

Hon J.M. Berinson: But a major component is coming from the Commonwealth grant for Medicare payments.

Hon MAX EVANS: That is going into the fees they receive.

Hon J.M. Berinson: No, those fees would be fees actually paid.

Hon MAX EVANS: I do not think so. Inpatients' fees are \$2.5 million; the State subsidy is \$46 million, and other revenue recovery, \$604 000. That is about it. Of the \$47 million revenue from other authorities, \$46.1 million comes from the State subsidy. Inpatient/outpatient fees are \$3 million; the Commonwealth subsidy comes about through Medicare and Medibank, and when a fee is rendered it comes back from there. Maybe the Commonwealth subsidy comes through the hospital fund -

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes, that is right.

Hon MAX EVANS: Well, that is part of the \$46 million.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes.

Hon MAX EVANS: The Minister and I are therefore not at cross-purposes. The actual contribution by the patients per se comes to six per cent of the total revenue at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, for example, and seven per cent at a country hospital. In this case that is only \$3 million, but expenditure is very great on those particular ones. In respect of salaries the Government has guaranteed it will provide better presentation next year; I hope I might receive details of the work force available under the hospital fund for 1988-89, even 1987-88 if it is available without too much trouble, because I believe those are meaningful figures. The Government believes it has improved the hospital service, but that is not so when patients cannot be treated properly.

The contribution by the Lotteries Commission has risen from \$39 million to \$48 million. How arbitrary is the payment from the Lotteries Commission? I know the Instant Lottery fund was controlled to a certain degree, but how does the Government decide how much it will get from the Lotteries Commission each year?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am advised that the amount received from the Lotteries Commission represents the amount deemed to be surplus by the commission after its specific and discretionary grants have been disbursed. I am told the amounts have increased because of the continuing success of Lotto which has given rise to the sort of increase we see here. To the extent that those funds come into the direct Consolidated Revenue Fund contribution, they are relieved.

Hon MAX EVANS: Under the Instant Lottery fund the amount was lifted to \$4 million for sport and arts, but it seems to be just fixed. The hospital sector seems to get a consumer price index-linked share of the lotteries cake -

Hon J.M. Berinson: It gets what is left.

Hon MAX EVANS: The other organisations get a fixed amount. I think the financial cake should be cut up proportionately. For example, hospitals receive a 23 per cent increase on 80 per cent of the fund, whereas the other groups get a fixed amount. Why should they not

receive an equivalent increase, which would be about 19 per cent each year? I think that would be far more equitable than having the other organisations stuck with a fixed amount while the large increases keep going into this, which is only a subsidisation of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: That is a matter of policy and involves decisions about the adequacy of funds going to respective areas. In all cases lotteries are not the only source of funds and that applies to sports, arts and hospitals. There are additional contributions from the State in all areas.

Hon GEORGE CASH: In respect of item 6, dealing with the contribution to the trust fund account for the anti-smoking campaign, last year an amount of \$2 million was set aside. This year it is anticipated that \$7.5 million will be set aside. Why has there been this substantial increase? Does it have anything to do with the proposed Health Foundation? I realise the Chamber is not discussing item 66 dealing with miscellaneous expenses, but for the information of members, occupation health, safety and welfare is credited with \$5 million. Is that the same?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I think the Leader of the Opposition may have been out of the Chamber when this matter was discussed before. I indicated that the \$7.5 million represents the total increase from \$2 million to \$2.5 million in the Quit campaign and the minimum amount of \$5 million indicated is to come from the Health Foundation this year.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: I refer to the item dealing with the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The Minister for Budget Management hazarded a guess that some diminution of funds might be due to the servicing of aircraft as they come due. Since last year's Budget was brought down, the Royal Flying Doctor Service from Geraldton has been removed. I hope very much that was not the saving represented here; I fear it may be. Although the RFDS itself went along with the Government and said it was not necessary to have aircraft stationed at Geraldton, nevertheless its loss is still keenly felt in Geraldton. It is still a matter of concern to people in Geraldton that they no longer have the RFDS aircraft stationed there. If aircraft cannot be flown in from Meekatharra or other faraway points, the people of Geraldton are dependent on the private planes of the Geraldton Building Company for flying patients to Perth, which is not a satisfactory situation. What other matters are included in the item, Other Non-Government Support Program?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: A wide range of items are covered under that item. If I could be excused for giving some examples rather than the whole, the item includes the St John Ambulance Association, and the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which has already been mentioned. Under residential services it includes the Cottage Hospice, psychiatric hostels, frail age subsidies and a subsidy to the Anglican Homes. Under health support services, it includes the Family Planning Association and various subsidies to various organisations such as the Child Accident Prevention Foundation, the Cancer Foundation of Western Australia, the Asthma Foundation of Western Australia, the Deaf Society of Western Australia, the Spastic Welfare Association of Western Australia, and the Paraplegic-Quadriplegic Association of Western Australia. There is a very wide range of grants and subsidies.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: I thank the Minister. However, the item for the St John Ambulance Association, for example, is itemised above and I would have thought it should not really be included in this item. What is the amount of money allocated to the Silver Chain Nursing Association? I thought that might have come in under this item.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Hon Margaret McAleer, with her usual thoroughness, has picked up an item which is really under item 7 rather than item 8. I am sorry about that. Silver Chain nursing services come under the Home and Community Care Program under item 7; it has a substantial grant. Last year it was \$25.5 million.

Hon MAX EVANS: The allocation for the Non-Government Support Program item is \$28.462 million, but I cannot see a relevant item in the 1988-89 Estimates. No breakdown is provided for the Home and Community Care Program; nor is the relevant amount of \$40.208 million shown in the annual report of the Health Department. How will those funds be spent?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am not sure. A breakdown must be available but it is not in the papers available to me at the moment. I will ask for that breakdown to be provided to the member.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: Will \$25 million from the \$40 million allocated to Home and Community Care Program go to the Silver Chain Nursing Association?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I was giving the figure for last year; that is, \$25.5 million.

Hon Margaret McAleer: What about this year?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I do not have a breakdown for this year.

Division 94: Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons -

Hon PETER FOSS: The Earlsferry Hostel, situated just over the bridge at Guildford, was severely damaged by fire. Assurances were given that repairs would be undertaken and that work would start last June.

Hon P.G. Pendal: At the intervention of the Opposition.

Hon PETER FOSS: Yes. When one is passing the hostel it does not appear that any work has been commenced, notwithstanding that it is now December.

Hon T.G. Butler: Work has commenced.

Hon PETER FOSS: According to the Bassendean Town Council it has not.

Hon T.G. Butler: I went past the hostel today and work is being done.

Hon PETER FOSS: The work was supposed to start in June but not much has happened. Has money been provided for the repairs or will this be carried forward? Does the Asset Management Task Force have designs on this building?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Repair arrangements would not be reflected in the authority's vote. It might be better if the member were to put a question on notice about this matter. That would be the easiest way to pursue the question. I cannot recall the list of priorities that the Asset Management Task Force has considered; I do not recall this case. There is a wide range of projects which appear on lists from time to time and many are not proceeded with any further. I would not like to say that it has not appeared on a preliminary list. I am as sure as I can be that no current action is being taken in terms of disposal of the building, certainly not by the task force.

Division 95: Western Australian Alcohol and Drug Authority -

Hon GEORGE CASH: In the past I have raised the question of the activities of the Edith Hart Foundation and the Edith Hart Education Centre, now known as the Broome Street Centre. I have advised the Chamber of the many facilities and programs that the centre is able to offer. Indications are that from time to time the WA Alcohol and Drug Authority has tried to find out exactly what initiatives the Broome Street Centre is taking and, for reasons of its own, coming up with programs of remarkable similarity. I am sure that has been a matter of concern for many members of Parliament as well as the Broome Street Centre for a number of years.

I do not detract from the work of the WA Alcohol and Drug Authority but I commend to the Chamber again the activities and programs provided by the Broome Street Centre, in particular the referral program offered in respect of persons who have alcohol related problems. At the same time, our court system is missing out on a golden opportunity to refer people to private organisations like the Broome Street Centre at times rather than referring those people to the type of facility available when the courts exercise their other powers and either fine or sentence convicted persons to a term of imprisonment.

I repeat that the Broome Street Centre has some magnificent programs which, if utilised by the Government, would result in considerable savings. Maybe in the past conflict has occurred between the Alcohol and Drug Authority and the centre, mainly because the Broome Street Centre believes that some Government agencies may have borrowed or even stolen some of its very good ideas, but the fact is that the programs are available at moderate prices. I urge the Minister for Budget Management, in his capacity of Attorney General, to give consideration to the facilities offered by the Broome Street Centre. Some of the lower courts in Western Australia could make great use of those facilities; given the recent passage through this place of the Acts Amendment (Detention of Drunken Persons) Bill, it would seem that these programs could be used even more than previously was the case. Until the Government sets in place the three detoxification centres provided for in that legislation -

Hon J.M. Berinson: Four sobering up centres, not detoxification centres.

Hon GEORGE CASH: Until the centres are provided, all the good work and support offered by this place in respect of that legislation will be negated. This will not necessarily represent a failure for the Parliament; however, the members of the community who are afflicted by diseases associated with the excessive use of alcohol will be deprived.

Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON: I draw attention to the Salaries and Wages allocation of \$306 000 for eight full time positions for Research and Education Services, which is only a little under \$4 000 more than for the previous year. This suggests to me that a reduction in the staff allocation has occurred. I also note under Contingencies that Research and Education Services has been cut by almost half from \$234 776 to \$127 000. Given the emphasis that the Government has put on education and research with other addictive drugs such as nicotine, and given the work of the Drinksafe campaign and the national campaign against drug abuse, why is this item reduced? Does it represent a reduction in the energy applied to public health awareness programs, or does it represent a change in priority away from education on drug and alcohol abuse?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Regarding the Salaries and Wages component, a comparison with last year's figure indicates that staff numbers are the same and the fact that the estimate does not reflect ordinary wage movements is really accounted for by the Provision for Salary and Wage Adjustments item. The honourable member will see that the item is allocated \$142 000, and a component of that has to be brought into account to keep the matter in perspective. Regarding the education and research allocation, it is not that the allocation for this year has been reduced in comparison to last year, but that about \$100 000 of last year's funds was not paid out, and the amount was brought forward.

Vote put and passed.

Postponed Vote : Attorney General, Minister for Budget Management, and Corrective Services -

Division 25: Miscellaneous Services -

Hon MAX EVANS: Regarding item 8, I am interested to know where different bodies in the community gain their funds. The Civil Rehabilitation Council of Western Australia item has been allocated \$320 000. What is the nature of that allocation, and is this body fully funded by the Government or does it operate on a user-pays basis as well?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It is not fully funded, but it is fair to say that a substantial proportion of its funds come from the State. Also, individual programs are run by the Commonwealth and some State authorities; this adds further to its resources. It is a very important service.

Hon Max Evans: Is it a corrective service?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes; it involves the care of and assistance for prisoners mainly in the period immediately after their release. It is also an organisation which helps the families of prisoners while they are in prison; for example, child care facilities are provided at the major prisons. The organisation is also active to a limited extent in emergency relief for families, although that is not its main task. It mainly involves providing some support for the families of prisoners and assisting in such matters as accommodation and employment opportunities for ex-prisoners shortly after release.

Hon MAX EVANS: Between items 17 and 18 is an item called National Goals and Directions which does not have an allocation this year. Why is this so?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It received a once only grant because the organisation was really set up for activities associated with the bicentennial year. From current indications, we will not need to find another \$5 000 for quite a while.

Hon MAX EVANS: Listed after item 18 is the Pensioners' Action Group, which received an allocation of \$20 100 last year. I have received phone calls complaining that this money was set aside to pay salaries to specific persons and this seems to have been changed around. What record does the Minister for Budget Management have about the purposes of that payment?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: From memory, this was the subject of a question and answer which might be worth looking up for greater detail. My notes state that it is a voluntary non-profit

body which represents and promotes the interests of pensioners in Western Australia. In 1988-89 the Government agreed to provide a grant for the group's operation for 12 months subject to review at the end of that period.

Hon MAX EVANS: The Pensioners' Action Group is small compared with the Australian Pensioners' League. Does any subsidy go to the Australian Pensioners' League? I am surprised that a small nonentity organisation such as this one receives a grant; therefore, did the other organisation receive anything?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I have no record of such support through this vote. It is possible that some support is provided for the Australian Pensioners' League, either through the aged housing project or through other avenues in the community welfare vote.

Hon MAX EVANS: Referring to the Refund of Taxes to Trotting and Racing Clubs for Donations to Charitable Organisations item, can the Minister explain the refund of \$90 000? It is a significant amount. I realise that clubs run charity meets, but what is that money for?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The Western Australian Turf Club and the Western Australian Trotting Association each provide special meetings for charitable purposes and the item with which we are dealing represents a refund of taxes that would otherwise have been collected at these meetings. To ensure that the proceeds of special meetings will be available to the many smaller charitable organisations which do not receive annual grants from the Government, Cabinet decided in 1980 that the remission of taxes would not be approved when the beneficiary of the meetings is in receipt of direct State assistance in excess of \$5 000. That general principle has been followed. In line with movements in the consumer price index, the threshold was raised to \$10 000 in September 1988.

Hon MAX EVANS: What is the refund of taxes for? Is the WA Trotting Association required to pay part of its gate receipts in taxation?

Hon J.M. Berinson: It represents betting taxes at the course.

Hon MAX EVANS: That is a different answer from the one the Minister gave earlier.

Hon J.M. Berinson: What did I say before?

Hon MAX EVANS: The Minister referred to charitable organisations and those who qualified and those who did not. Is it a refund of betting taxes on the day?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes.

Hon GEORGE CASH: What is the reason for the substantial reduction in item 21 from an expenditure of \$8 846 last year to an allocation of \$3 000 this year?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The State has undertaken to meet half of the maintenance costs and that is what that figure represents each year. In 1988-89, as a special measure, the Government provided \$8 500 towards restoring and upgrading the memorial to reduce water infiltration.

Hon MAX EVANS: In relation to item 23, there were complaints a couple of years ago from the Royal West Australian Institute for the Blind about losing a grant of \$50 000.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I think the member is confusing it with the institute in Maylands. He is talking about the one in Victoria Park.

Hon MAX EVANS: The institute in item 23 has had its grant reduced from \$40 000 to \$20 000. Is that being picked up elsewhere?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I do not have the full detail of this matter. Submissions and grants each year are based on the needs of the organisation. I think it would be known generally that there has been a remarkable transformation in the position of the institute. In recent years, it has moved from what appeared to be a very serious financial position to one of relative strength. There have been major reorganisations and successful increases in fund raising.

Hon M.S. MONTGOMERY: I am concerned about this group of items under the heading Payments to Local Authorities under the vote for the Minister for Budget Management. However, many of them relate to matters that should come under the Minister for Sport and Recreation. Who controls the funds?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The department administers the funds and also makes recommendations. I should add also that considerable effort has been made in recent years to gradually transfer items from Miscellaneous Services to departments more directly concerned with the area. There are a couple of reasons for that. Firstly, Miscellaneous Services, although appearing under my portfolio, is not under my control. It comes, as its name suggests, for consideration at the end of the day by the Cabinet Budget Committee. The committee is not really well placed to go into the individual details of projects although it has the advantage of screening recommendations made by the Treasury Department. To a large extent, the committee relies also, in particular cases, on the advice of departments. However, that is a fairly cumbersome process and runs the risk of duplication. We have been making an effort over recent years. If the member went back five years he would see that the list has reduced as we have transferred applications from particular organisations or for particular purposes to departments with more direct concern. The sport portfolio is fairly new. Progress with that has been a bit slower than, for example, some of the transfers to the Health Department, Department for Community Services, or Ministry of Education. The process is continuing. I expect these items to be substantially reduced in future years in favour of the transfer to departments with more experience and expertise.

Hon MAX EVANS: When the Minister receives an estimate of \$1.939 million for contributions to community sporting facilities, does he submit a budget for where the money will go or does it involve only the total amount?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: A budget is submitted. This year, for example, the decreased contribution to the fund reflects a cash flow requirement of known commitments against the fund during 1989-90. Details of the Consolidated Revenue Fund allocations are as follows: Funds on hand 1 July 1989, \$743 000; plus 1989-90 CRF allocations of \$1.939 million; less estimated expenditure 1989-90 of \$2.682 million. It balances.

Hon MAX EVANS: I presume the Minister has asked for a total amount of money. Is there a breakdown of the local authorities to which it goes?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The process, as I recall it, relies on the department seeking applications and making a submission for what it expects to be available. We are fairly close to what it expects and what it gets. It is really a matter of the department setting the priority.

Hon M.S. MONTGOMERY: Are any Federal funds involved in this area? If so, where are they shown?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I understand the Commonwealth Government has recently introduced a facilities fund, but the figures with which we are dealing do not reflect anything from that source. These figures are purely from a State source.

Hon M.S. MONTGOMERY: Does it mean the Federal Government will now take over the funding of sporting facilities and the State Government will no longer have responsibility in that area; or will there be a balance? It appears that the State Government is being usurped by the Federal Government in relation to funding.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: There is no risk of ever over providing for the demands in this area. The position with the new Federal initiative is that it will be providing additional funds and, in some respects, under different criteria. The State welcomes it into this field because the demands always substantially outstrip resources in an area like this and additional contributions from the Commonwealth are, of course, welcome.

Hon MAX EVANS: Item 32, Outer Metropolitan Facilities - Contribution to Trust Fund Account is a completely new item. I ask the Minister which department will receive the money and what is the basic use of the funds? Where will we find details of how the money is expended?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: This is a new fund to facilitate the development of multipurpose centres in outer metropolitan areas. My understanding is that a ministerial committee will be dealing with this because it cuts across the work of a number of portfolios. I am sorry further information is not readily available.

Hon MAX EVANS: The amount of money involved is considerable and very little detail is available. May I have an extract of the statement which the Minister read out?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I can provide a copy of the statement, but it is very sparse and I

effectively indicated its content. I am told that administration of this fund is through the Ministry of the Premier and State Administration. It is quite common where ministerial committees are given a role in combining their programs for that to be the case.

Hon MAX EVANS: I am aware that very little information is available. As it will come under the Ministry of the Premier and State Administration, will it mean that next year there will be a trust account under Cabinet to show how the money has been spent? What will the money be used for? Will it be for sport or the aged, or is it a slush fund?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Hon Graham Edwards may be able to assist me and I have asked that he return to the Chamber.

Hon Max Evans: He left when I asked the question.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: A separate trust fund will be created and there will be a requirement for the fund to be reported on in the department's annual report.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: Is it normal to set up a fund of this magnitude? Even in this day and age \$3 million is a lot of money. Presumably a fund is not set up without some idea of the specific projects required. The words used by Mr Evans are about as near to the truth as can be; that is, it would be a slush fund.

A list of the marginal seats where this money is being targeted must be available. We have been told on the piece of paper provided to us by the Minister that \$3 million is for a new item and that it represents the first instalment of a four-year program. The word "instalment" implies there will be four instalments of equal amounts - we are talking about big money. Presumably a fund is not created before any thought is given to how the money will be spent. Documentation must be available to the Government in order to justify the creation of the fund.

The Opposition has been able to find out that the fund will be controlled by the Ministry of the Premier and State Administration. I wonder why that is to be the case when it is clearly for multipurpose centres? Why does the control of the fund not come under the Minister for Sport and Recreation? Given that it is a new ball game, and that it follows on from a trust fund which was established by the previous Government many years ago, why is it necessary to create a new, but allied, trust fund and then endow it with money to the extent that it could total \$12 million over four years? I am asking where the \$12 million will be spent.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Decisions on that will be made from time to time. A forward program is not yet available. I remind members that the establishment of a fund of this kind was a part of the Government's last election program when attention was drawn to the needs of the fast growing outer metropolitan area. It should be understood that the fund is intended to go not only to recreation purposes, though in part it might, but also perhaps to sport and the arts, which come under the general recreation heading. It could easily be directed towards drop-in centres and other community facilities of general benefit. It is a new commitment designed to meet a specific election promise and it is designed to meet undoubted needs in these areas. We shall be much better placed to provide details of the way in which this fund is to be spent after the money is available and applications are called. So far as I am aware applications for this fund have not been called pending the provision of them.

[Questions without notice taken.]

Hon MAX EVANS: With reference to item 32, Outer Metropolitan Facilities, does that refer only to the metropolitan area and exclude the country?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes.

Hon MAX EVANS: Is the Minister saying that no literature had been put out to gain interest in this fund?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes; that is my understanding.

Hon MAX EVANS: That capital will go to local government organisations?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes, and others.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: I refer to item 33. The estimate for subsidies to local government bodies for the operating costs of swimming pools has been \$300 000 for a

number of years. A couple of years ago, I think, the Minister proposed that the subsidy be scrapped altogether. However, in response to the very vociferous objections of local government bodies, he left the sum as it was, but of course every year it diminishes in value, so while anything is better than nothing, it is becoming less useful to local government bodies. It is also very narrowly administered in the sense that if a shire in a country area happens to have within it two large towns at a considerable distance from one another, the shire will not be eligible for assistance to build two swimming pools. This can be very disadvantageous to the people in such a district. I put it to the Minister that to leave the sum at \$300 000 is showing a contempt for the provision of necessary facilities for country people, because swimming pools are a great asset, particularly in inland areas. The operating costs of swimming pools are very high, and I think that in 99.9 per cent of cases swimming pools do not make a profit. The Government should now, and in the future, support swimming pools in country areas. I believe that the new Commonwealth fund may be able to be used to provide for additional swimming pools, but that does not displace the State Government's responsibility to provide swimming pools.

Hon MAX EVANS: How is the sum of \$300 000 allocated in one year to swimming pools?

Hon J.M. Berinson: It is to a maximum of \$300 000.

Hon MAX EVANS: That is paid to the local government body, provided the swimming pool is on local government land. In some country areas the pool has not been on local government land, so the local government body did not receive a grant.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I believe that is the case.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: I know that was the situation in relation to the town of Newdegate, but I believe there are exemptions, and that in the Shire of Chapman Valley a subsidy is received for the pool, which is situated on school premises at Yuna, and which is the only community swimming pool in the shire.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I do not recall any approaches having been made on the basis of this distinction, and I will make sure that it is checked.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: The Shire of Lake Grace is very interested in this type of thing, although it is precluded by already having one swimming pool in the town.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: I refer to item 35. Given my previous deep interest in cemetery boards - which I assure members is a very grave matter - can the Minister tell us why this item is appearing for the first time?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It is a one-off grant towards the crematorium. There have been two or three such applications, but I cannot remember the others.

Hon Max Evans: There was one in Geraldton.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes; that comes to mind. The Government has agreed that it should be provided on a uniform basis.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer to item 36, Curtin University of Technology - Debt Charges, \$434 000. That seems to be a very small amount in terms of the total. Why do we have a small amount of debt charges paid under Miscellaneous Services?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The debt charges relate to loans raised by the university to meet the State's contribution to its capital works program. On 23 June 1986 Cabinet approved a special contribution of \$850 000 over three years to Curtin University for building and equipment for its key centre in resource exploration. The State funds were to enable facilities to be provided for staff and students for a course in petroleum geology.

Hon Max Evans: So it was a one-off item?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer to item 39, Murdoch University - Debt Charges. Is that also a one-off item?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: This is a provision to meet debt charges on Government guaranteed loans raised by the university. The total State contribution for the 1972-73 triennium was \$1 556 833, of which \$356 833 was met from the General Loan and Capital Works Fund in 1972-73. The balance of \$1.2 million was financed from private loans raised by the university. This item provides for the actual debt charges on those loans.

Hon GEORGE CASH: I refer to item 41, Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia. An amount of \$10 million is set aside for this year in respect of that item. First, what is the \$10 million for? Second, is the Government considering selling additional equity in the R & I Bank to finance some capital injections into that organisation? If not, is the Government giving any consideration to the sale of such equity?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The estimate of stamp duty payable by the R & I Bank on the acquisition of the gold banking operations of GoldCorp was \$10 million. However, the assessment by the Stamp Duty Office, assessed on 25 August 1989, and paid on 27 November 1989, was \$15.689 million. The estimate of stamp duty payable by the bank was based on advice given in June 1989 that the value of dutiable assets for stamp duty assessment purposes was \$245 million. The sale was not finalised until 4 August 1989, by which time the value of dutiable assets had increased to \$369.268 million. As would be expected in banking operations, considerable movement took place between June 1989 and 4 August 1989, the date of sale, in cash and deposits. On 4 August 1989 cash on deposit amounted to \$324.854 million. In response to the second part of the question, I have no knowledge of any proposals for the sale of equity in the bank.

Hon MAX EVANS: Will the Government pay the full amount of \$15 million to the R & I Bank?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It was always the intention that the stamp duty payable would be refunded. The \$10 million was based on the estimate of what was to be paid. Now that the higher figure has been paid, there will be a higher refund.

Hon MAX EVANS: The Minister would be aware of the Rural and Industries Bank Act. I know the SGIC is regarded as operating on commercial neutrality. I thought the R & I Bank was supposed to trade in a neutral situation in competition with other banks. Here it is taking another bank on board. This is an arm's length transaction as far as stamp duty is concerned. Why should the R & I Bank have paid this? It would be a normal cost of absorbing a similar bank.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Here we are dealing with a matter which was the subject of specific questions earlier in the session.

Hon Max Evans: The amount was bigger.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The principle is the same, whether the sum is \$10 million or \$15 million. The acquisition of the gold banking functions of Gold Banking Corporation amounts to the transfer of functions between two wholly owned State agencies. This is reflected in the agreed basis for the purchase consideration of the net asset value of the gold banking operation.

Hon MAX EVANS: Some years ago the Government sold the Perth Technical School site to Western Australian Development Corporation for \$1.23 million. Why was there no refund there? Duty was paid when the Government sold a half interest in that site to the State Superannuation Board. The Government might be helping a lame duck here in the form of the R & I Bank, which needs a lot of help.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I regret that sort of statement. The R & I Bank is a highly successful and very efficient operation.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: It was very efficient until you blokes fiddled with it.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Let us stay with the realities. It is a highly successful and efficient operation, and I do not think it should be disparaged in this way. I do not know why some other transactions were not exempted. Since I am not directly involved in the activities of the R & I Bank, I do not know whether its Act has a similar provision to that which applies to the SGIC. I do not know whether the SGIC thought of applying for exemption, or whether its Act would have allowed it. In approaching this question of the purchase of Gold Banking Corporation, the R & I Bank put forward an argument on the basis that what was involved was a transaction between statutory authorities, and that would be reflected better if stamp duty were waived, and the Government waived it. That is all there is to it. Nothing in that process has any bearing on the standing of the R & I Bank. Its standing is of the highest.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: It is no good the Minister's making the sort of remark he has made in this Chamber as though it is to be resented -

Hon J.M. Berinson: I did not say "resented", I said "regretted".

Hon P.G. PENDAL: The Minister went on to use a few other words to suggest that we were getting a little close to the bone as a result of the remarks that I made by way of interjection. Let me remind the Committee that criminal charges are now pending because the processes of the R & I Bank were fiddled with. I shall not canvass those matters here because they will be decided by a court, but senior Government officers were involved. I am not sure that the actions of a Minister of the Crown should not be investigated in that regard. I have said that before, and 12 months after the event suggestions of ministerial involvement in matters relating to the R & I Bank and the fiddling of accounts - because that is what has now been alleged as a result of the charges which have been laid -

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I want to remind members of the Committee that we are dealing with the items under Minister for Budget Management. The R & I Bank comes under the Treasurer. I am allowing some licence to Hon P.G. Pendal, and I trust he will recognise that licence.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: I am also aware that Miscellaneous Services comes under the Minister for Budget Management. I am sure that Committee members are aware of that. My point is nonetheless made. It is no good the Minister's being sensitive when members make valid interjections - or ask pertinent questions, and there is not much point in that because we do not receive the answers, or when we present valid motions, which are rarely more successful - given the history of what has occurred with outside interference in the R & I Bank in the last 12 months. It is no good the Minister's adopting this injured tone as though we ought not to be discussing this matter. Not only are private individuals now the subject of prosecutions, but I am not sure that a senior Minister of this Government ought not to be alongside them.

Withdrawal of Remark

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I object to that statement. The honourable member keeps trying to sneak those innuendoes in, and I ask him to withdraw.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: May I ask on what basis?

The CHAIRMAN: The basis on which I would rule is that this is an item for the Treasurer. At the moment we are discussing the R & I Bank. It has nothing to do with the debate we are about now. I suggest that the honourable member consider my request to withdraw the remark concerning the Minister.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: I accept your request, Mr Chairman, that I withdraw it if you say that I am discussing it under the wrong banner, but I shall reserve those comments for the third reading if the Minister for Budget Management would prefer that. In the end the truth will come out.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: That is not an acceptable basis of withdrawal. The member made very offensive remarks against a member of a limited group of people, namely 17 Ministers. He is not in a position to make that allegation except on a substantive motion, and he has no basis for that either.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a Standing Order which requires a withdrawal.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: In that case, and only for that reason, I withdraw it.

Committee Resumed

Hon MAX EVANS: On item 42, State Energy Commission - Board Services and Registration Fees, why is the Government paying \$500 000 to the State Energy Commission for that sort of thing?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: This reflects the collection of fees under the State Energy Commission Act Regulations. Fees collected under these regulations are paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund in accordance with section 64 of the Constitution Act 1889. As the work of examination and collection of fees is carried out by the SEC, a recoup is made to the commission to cover administrative expenses.

Hon MAX EVANS: Has consideration been given to amending the legislation to save the unnecessary work of collection by the Government and paying the money to the State Energy Commission? If not, why not?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am not aware of consideration having been given to that, but it could well be considered by the committee, in which I hope the Council will participate, that is looking to a review of the Constitution Acts.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer now to the unnumbered item after item 42 relating to the State Engineering Works, which indicates an expenditure of \$12 131 in 1988-89. Has the Government any information about this? It sold the State Engineering Works. Were there any costs relating to cancellation of the contract or claims against that contract? I have heard rumours that the sale may not proceed because of the chemicals in the ground there. Would there be a demand on the Treasury in this regard?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am not aware of that matter. As Hon Max Evans will see, there is no estimate for the current year so I have no indication of any costs this year.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer now to the unnumbered item entitled State Government Insurance Commission which shows an expenditure last year of \$436 037. Does that amount represent the legal fees mentioned before, which were paid last year? If so, to whom was the money paid and what are the details of that payment?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes. That was paid to the State Government Insurance Commission as a recoup of the Government's share of those costs.

Hon Max Evans: Is that in respect of Rothwells, or Whitlam Turnbull?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer now to the unnumbered item appearing after item 44, namely Western Australian Development Corporation - Gold Corporation. The expenditure last year was \$5.55 million. I know a question about this has been answered already but I would like those details to form part of the debate because that amount was an abnormal payment made when the Western Australian Development Corporation was being wound down.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: In accordance with the State Government's decision to wind up certain activities of the WADC it was agreed that the State would purchase five million shares held by WADC in Gold Corporation. This acquisition was agreed to as part of the financial arrangements in winding down WADC and excess proceeds from the liquidation of asset holdings etc will be returned to the State. This item provides for the payment of \$5.55 million to WADC for the five million shares it held. The winding down of WADC is expected to lead to additional revenue of \$17 million in 1989-90. Further revenue is expected in 1990-91 and 1992-93.

Hon MAX EVANS: Item 45, Western Australian Development Corporation - LandCorp, shows a payment to LandCorp last year and a further estimate for this year. LandCorp is part of WADC yet it appears to be making a very large profit. According to the records its profit last year was \$17 million of the total profit of \$19 million made by WADC. Why is the Government paying money to LandCorp? Is it buying back land, or paying for financial advisory services?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Details of the estimate totalling \$860 000 are as follows: East Perth redevelopment project, \$650 000; provision for local authority rates on property being transferred to the Crown, \$200 000; minor contingency expenses, \$10 000.

Hon MAX EVANS: Is the Minister saying the fees paid to LandCorp last year, and the \$860 000 estimated to be spent this year, represent consulting and advisory services rendered by LandCorp?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am not sure whether the member is saying that LandCorp is charging a consultancy fee for its work in developing the East Perth project.

Hon Max Evans: Yes.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am not sure whether it is in the nature of a consultancy fee or a recoup of LandCorp's costs, but I suppose it amounts to the same thing.

Hon MAX EVANS: The Minister for Budget Management did not answer my question. What is the breakdown of the expenditure of \$2.436 million on this item last year?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The breakdown for 1988-89 was management fees paid to WADC, \$2 million; East Perth redevelopment project, \$400 000; R & I Bank bank fees, \$22 000; and

feasibility study of options of transferring the Mt Newman single men's quarters at Cooke Point, \$14 853.

Hon MAX EVANS: The Government seems to be paying a very large management fee to LandCorp, which is really an arm of the Government yet makes a fairly large part of the profit of the WADC. What is the reason for paying that fee?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am not in a position to know the basis of the arrangements between LandCorp and WADC but it will be clear that the decrease this year is mainly attributable to that non-recurring management fee paid last year.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I refer to the unnumbered item appearing below item 45, entitled Western Australian Exim Corporation. With regard to the sales of the Exim properties in the Kimberley, and noting that there is no estimate for Exim Corporation this year, I ask the Minister for Budget Management whether the Government has a financial exposure due to the sale of any of the restructured Exim stations in the Kimberley, either through a contract of sale or sales on terms, a lease, or any other financial obligation?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: There is not an exposure in the sense of anticipated costs. The anticipated result of associated transactions is an additional revenue to the Consolidated Revenue Fund of \$10.5 million in 1989.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I do not fully understand the Minister's answer. I will rephrase the question: In the sale of those properties, did the Government give terms or anything through Exim or to Exim over terms; in other words, is there any exposure in that way?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Do you mean to the Government or to purchasers?

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Did the Government extend any terms to any of the purchasers?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I do not believe I am in a position to give a satisfactory response, especially as different circumstances may apply to different leases. I therefore undertake to provide that information in detail to the member direct.

Hon MAX EVANS: Have all the Exim properties been sold at the present stage?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am advised that all the properties have been sold by Exim, but three of those were sold to the Western Australian Development Corporation, so they are still held within a Government authority. It is the disposal of those properties which I believe will provide part of the estimated revenue to which I referred earlier.

Hon MAX EVANS: By estimated revenue, does the Minister mean from the gross sale?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes.

Hon MAX EVANS: The Minister referred to \$17 million, which will come from the Western Australian Development Corporation. How many sales of these stations have fallen over? Are they giving problems or are they still intact?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: On the advice available to me, no such problems have emerged.

Hon GEORGE CASH: I understand the response of the Minister but in view of comments made in the last fortnight in respect of the obligations of some of the purchasers of those properties, will the Minister undertake to examine that matter further? It is certainly the view of a number of people that at least one purchaser is not able to maintain his obligations under the sale.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am prepared to take that on board and provide the answer in the context of the information I indicated earlier would go to Hon W.N. Stretch.

Hon MAX EVANS: For the record, I would like some explanation of the line items under the heading Subsidies and Concessions. Item 46 deals with the dependent children's rebate and the reimbursement to the State Energy Commission of \$4.3 million. What is the basis of that? How are the claims made and how are they handled?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: This scheme, originally administered by the Department for Community Services, provides a large number of financially disadvantaged families who possess social security benefit cards with a rebate to offset the cost of domestic electricity and gas consumption accounts. Following the tariff increase from 1 June 1989, a comparison of the new and old rebates is as follows -

Dependent Children	Old Rebate ¢ per Day	New Rebate ¢ per Day
One	20.50	32.64
Two	27.33	41.20
Three	34.16	49.76
Four	40.99	56.32
Each additional dependent child	Additional 6.83	Additional 8.0

Hon MAX EVANS: The State Energy Commission passes a credit on those accounts for this money. Does it make a claim on the Government for specific amounts?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes.

Hon MAX EVANS: A lot of administration is involved. Is there an easier way of doing it?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: There is a constant tug of war in relation to the social benefits provided through such utilities as the State Energy Commission, the Water Authority, and the transport authorities, Westrail and Transperth. The argument very often advanced by them is that the social subsidies distort the apparent results of their operations and that it would be better to have a clear picture of the financial transactions of those utilities which related only to their basic operations. This is one case where the Government has agreed to meet the view of the utilities, but there are other cases where that has not been agreed and where the costs are absorbed.

Hon MAX EVANS: All Governments indulge in political interference with statutory authorities; I am not criticising this Government for doing so. However the cost to the SEC of putting through credits for \$4.3 million must be enormous; the SEC would not make much profit out of it.

In respect of the grain freight subsidy reimbursement to Westrail, why was there a subsidy last year and not this year? Was it due to the season? What was its nature?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The Estimates for this year reflect the phasing out of the scheme, which was discontinued from 1 November 1988.

Hon MAX EVANS: Had the scheme been going for a number of years?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer to item 47, Health Care and Health Benefit Card Holders Travel Concessions. A reimbursement was made to the Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust of \$1.554 million last year and \$1.591 million this year. How are these figures arrived at? I can see how the SEC receives its amount; it credits a certain number of people, puts their names down and charges the money to the Government. How are these figures accredited to Transperth?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: This is not subject to the same precise calculations as the SEC, but it is the subject of annual review and negotiation between the Treasury and Transperth.

Hon MAX EVANS: Why is there not a specific line item for judges and members of Parliament to use their Gold Passes? After all, Transperth is losing revenue there. Maybe the Minister for Budget Management should debit our allowance to parliamentary funds. Has that been considered?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I can say only that on a scale of one to 10, that would not rate highly.

Hon MAX EVANS: I am worried about the lack of accountability of the Minister. He is getting weak in his old age.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I can tell the member that I have never used my Gold Pass.

Hon MAX EVANS: I have not used mine either.

Hon J.M. Berinson: There you are, there must be very little cost to Transperth.

Hon MAX EVANS: The passes issued to judges are round in shape and look like one dollar coins. When one judge handed a pass over, the driver tried to give him change for his pass; the judge grabbed it back quickly.

Item 48 deals with reimbursement of pensioners' rates concessions to local authorities. What is the basis of the allowance? Is it a reimbursement of actual credits given by local authorities? Is there any variation between country and metropolitan areas?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The provision is based on the expected claims from local authorities for concessions granted in respect of deferred pensioner rates in the rebate concession scheme. From 1 July 1977 the State introduced a 25 per cent rebate concession scheme to eligible pensioners and this was increased to 50 per cent from 1 July 1980. Concessions for pensioner rates outstanding are calculated at a rate of interest equivalent to the weighted average yield on the longest term bond offered for sale at the last bond tender.

Hon MAX EVANS: Does each local government body submit a claim relating to individuals by name with the interest rate, and does the Government then send a cheque to each body?

Hon J.M. Berinson: I do not believe they are submitted by name. A summary is made of the concessions allowed.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

Hon MAX EVANS: How is the estimate of \$7.433 million arrived at in relation to item 49, Pensioners' Travellers Concession Reimbursement to Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: From 1 October 1959 pensioners were permitted to travel at half rates on MTT services. This concession was extended to a total fare exemption from 1 July 1971. Fares were increased on 11 July 1976 by approximately 33 per cent and as a result pensioners were required to pay a fare equivalent to the increase payable by other adult passengers. On 16 July 1978, further increases were imposed on pensioners travelling further than two sections; fares for journeys of less than two sections remained unchanged at 5¢. Fare schedules were further increased on 1 July 1980, and again in July 1981, 1982 and 1983, accompanied by a revision of zones and fares payable by pensioners.

Hon MAX EVANS: That does not answer my question.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would like some semblance of order from members taking part in the debate. The Hansard staff are having difficulty hearing members, and this is partly because members have been allowed to cross-chat and jump up and down without the call. When the member with the call concludes his or her remarks, I will then call the next speaker. In that way we will assist Hansard and ensure an accurate record of debate on the Appropriation Bill.

Hon MAX EVANS: I accept the Minister's remarks regarding concessions made over the years. However, I asked how the figure of \$7.433 million was arrived at. Does this figure represent an increase over the years or has a survey been carried out? Indeed, has the figure been plucked out of the air? I would like to think that the allocation has some scientific basis.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: Reliance is placed on the records received from Transperth. There is also a schedule of the numbers of zones for the full adult fare, the pensioner fare, and the concession applicable. Within that structure, Transperth indicates the number of concession fares within each category. From that information, Treasury arrives at an estimate of the amount needed for the following year. It is not an estimate without basis.

Hon MAX EVANS: I do not have a pensioner's card and I do not know how one operates with a card to get a free fare. How does Transperth keep track of the concessions? Is a concessional ticket issued to keep track of free rides? Is a survey carried out over a week or a month? When was the last survey carried out?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: I am advised that Transperth carries out surveys but I cannot say when the last survey was carried out to give confirmation to the estimates by Transperth. Maybe when Hon Max Evans turns 60 years of age and is no longer in the full time work force he will be eligible for a Seniors' Card and he can see at first hand how the system works.

Hon MAX EVANS: I thank the Minister for her advice. I am concerned that concessions may be just like Topsy; they will just grow. I do not begrudge Stuart Hicks getting as much money as he can out of Treasury, but if there is no basis for the payments it becomes an

ex gratia payment because people travel for nothing. The more he gets out of Treasury, the more he reduces his deficit and makes himself a better man.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: I will seek further information for the member. I am not sure that any pensioner gets something for nothing. The scale of concessions includes the pensioner fare against the various zones. The concession is significant, and people who have most welcomed the Seniors' Card are those who are not eligible for the pensioner health benefit card. I will seek further information for the member.

Hon MAX EVANS: If there are no free fares, and all fares are concession fares, can those figures be computed?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: That is the information we have before us. I suggest that we double check because I do not want to give the member the wrong information. I have run through the list of concessions but none of them states that the concession is a 100 per cent reduction in fare.

Hon MAX EVANS: Are the same calculations applied to item 50, Pensioners' and Senior Citizens' Travel Concessions - Reimbursement to Westrail?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes, but one other factor is involved. The higher provision reflects an increase in local rail fares and the effect of more accurate costings for pensioner travel following the introduction of a centralised passenger accounting system during 1988-89.

Hon MAX EVANS: The Metropolitan Transport Trust has paid \$49 million to Westrail for running rail services. Is that amount paid for country travel or metropolitan travel?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: That amount relates to non-metropolitan railway transport.

Hon MAX EVANS: What is the basis of the concessions in the item, Rail Freight, Fare and Other Concessions - Reimbursement to Westrail of Cost of Sundry Concessions, which has been allocated \$420 000?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The major single item of concession is for students aged 16 and over; it is estimated that \$323 000 will be involved in that area. Other items include wool consignments, \$70 000; World War I veterans, \$12 000; and ex-service and pensioner organisations, \$15 000.

Hon MAX EVANS: Regarding the item Scholars' Fare Concessions - Reimbursement to Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust, on the basis of the last answer this would appear to be a doubtful accounting exercise.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It is an estimate.

Hon MAX EVANS: Referring to item 54, State Energy Commission of Western Australia - North West Shelf Gas, I understood that the petrochemical deal was established with the allocation from the State Energy Commission from the North West Shelf gas project of \$9 million per year, which was to go to the interest costs on the petrochemical deal because SECWA would benefit from extra gas sold. The allocation has dropped from \$8.9 million to \$1.3 million this year. What will happen now?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: This item does not relate in any way to the petrochemical project. Mr Evans has raised this in a question on notice and I provided him with an answer which stated that the details were complex and that I would provide them in writing - the answer took two or three pages. As Mr Evans would know, I have made two or three arrangements to meet him to give him the answer, yet it is still in my briefcase. I suggest that I give him that letter which will indicate the matters in detail.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: Can the Minister for Budget Management tell the Chamber where the provision exists in the Budget to pay for the operation of the Official Corruption Commission? It must be paid for as executive officers have been appointed. Depending on the answer to the first question, I am interested to know the sort of expenditure involved with the commission since it has been in operation. Why is it that a year after the Act was assented to, and six to nine months after personnel were appointed, no line item in the Budget has been allocated, at least that I can find?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I believe that this commission would come under the Special Acts provision and not require an allocation. Alternatively, it would come under Royal and Other

Commissions of Inquiry within the Premier's vote. I do not have any definite information on that with me, but it is bound to be one of the two.

Hon MAX EVANS: It is fascinating that the item Aboriginal Lands Trust - Remuneration for Mining on Aboriginal Reserves should be allocated \$61 000. Why would the Aboriginal Lands Trust be paid for mining on Aboriginal reserves?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: This item is to provide for the actual rents and royalties derived from Aboriginal reserves for the 12 months ended 31 December 1988 to the Aboriginal Lands Trust.

Hon GEORGE CASH: Can the Minister for Budget Management advise which area the item Acts of Grace Payments, which is allocated \$1.3 million, covers? If it is a lengthy answer - as it was last year - I will be pleased if the Minister would advise me in writing, as he did last year. Does this item include appropriation for the Police Officers Union or the Prison Officers Union regarding Royal Commissions?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The notes for this item extend to nine pages and I will accept the member's invitation to provide a summary in writing.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: The activities of the Asset Management Task Force have been topical throughout the year. A number of intended sales on the part of the Government have been put under the microscope in this place. The sale of the vintage cars at the museum emerged into the public arena as a result of the activities of the Asset Management Task Force -

Hon J.M. Berinson: I do not think so.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: - or a functional review.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes; that is a separate thing.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: Another matter which has come about as a result of the Asset Management Task Force is the intended sale of the turn of the century police station at Cottesloe. This is one of the many assets identified by the Government for disposal. Anyone to whom one speaks about the sale of Government assets finds it hard to believe - on an individual item basis - that the Government needs to rely on that level of revenue to help it balance its books. Looking at the items one by one, it is hardly likely that the Government would say that it is doing so in order to balance the books. Looking at the items collectively, I am told that as many as 50 assets are on the list. Considering the mean price of those assets and multiplying it by 50, one starts to see some fairly large amounts of money. Firstly, is there a list of items that have been sold, and if so, will it be tabled; secondly, is there a list of prospective assets the Government intends to sell?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The figure that has been set as the task force's target for this year is \$55 million, so it is a substantial amount. I believe that only a relatively small number of properties have so far been sold, and I see no difficulty in providing a list of those items. Part of the guidelines under which the task force operates is that all disposal of property should be by open tender or auction or an open process of that kind. I would see no difficulty in making available details of definite decisions.

What Mr Pendal calls a hit list and what others might consider a wish list is really very extensive. A large number of those items are listed as no more than mere possibilities requiring investigation. That investigation goes to all manner of considerations, including the first question as to whether the asset is used or unused and therefore reasonably available for disposal, whether some other arm of Government could put that asset to better use than the use it is currently at, and whether there would be any objections from a zoning or environmental point of view. All of these matters are taken into account. Frankly, I do not think it would be helpful to provide a list of what I have referred to as mere possibilities. However, the other two categories, namely those already sold and those about which some firm decision and action has been taken, should be available. I will certainly look into that and, unless the proposal has some difficulties attached to it which I cannot think of at the moment, I will attempt to proceed on that basis.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: I thank the Minister. I would appreciate getting the list and I accept that, for the time being at least, that is limited to that secondary category to which he referred about definite decisions being made.

Is the Asset Management Task Force in the process of disposing of or seeking to dispose of assets that are not land? Are there other assets of which land is not part of the sale? If so, will the Minister give us some indication of what they might be so that we will be able to understand the extent of the \$55 million that the Government seeks to make in this matter?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: From memory, the only non-land or non-building asset that has been seriously dealt with is the proposal to dispose of the BOCS system. That has been a matter of public discussion. My problem is that I do not know what the end of that story was. I know it was seriously considered, but I do not know whether it was followed through. In any event, it is the only item that I can think of that has any serious consideration and which is neither vacant nor developed land.

Hon MAX EVANS: Will the Minister reconsider a statement that he made about the sale of assets by tender or auction? The land sold to LandCorp for \$39 million was sold under contract by Landbank which made about \$1 million profit. Has he considered any other sales by LandCorp, whether by tender or by public auction?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I do not think the same considerations apply where land might usefully be disposed of to a Government agency. The one that comes most generally to mind is vacant land going to Homeswest. There is a proposal that a block or part of a block should go to Homeswest for the purpose of age pensioner units. I do not know whether there will be a charge for that. If there is a charge in order to maintain the commerciality of the process, I imagine it would be on a Valuer General's valuation. Certainly in a case like that, we would not pitch Homeswest against the market if we decided there was a useful purpose to be served by transferring that asset to another Government agency.

Hon MAX EVANS: A quick way of making money is to sell land to LandCorp. It can borrow the money and pay it back for a quicker realisation of profits. Will the Minister give me an undertaking that the BOCS system is the only thing that has been sold? That is an excellent system. I helped set it up. We did our research in England and in Hong Kong. If it is not making money, it is not charging enough. That will be rectified by the person who buys it putting up the fees. In this quest for assets for money, I want an assurance that there will be no sale and leaseback of items. Victoria did that with the railways, ferries, trams and buses and lost \$650 million. I want an assurance we will not be entering such deals.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No arrangement of that sort would come within the terms of reference of the Asset Management Task Force. I do not want to say that the Government would not find it preferable to lease property or equipment in certain circumstances. I cannot give a blanket -

Hon Max Evans: I said "sale and leaseback".

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I have never come across a proposal for sale and leaseback. Mr Evans is raising a matter of broad principle and policy. I am not in a position to commit the Government to policy decisions of that kind. I am not aware of any such proposal and I will take his views with me. Frankly, I do not think they are needed.

Hon MAX EVANS: But there is a clear distinction between leasing and a sale and leaseback arrangement. The Government might sell the Ministry of Education for \$25 million to bring \$25 million into the CRF.

Hon J.M. Berinson: New South Wales has done a lot of that.

Hon MAX EVANS: It started it.

Hon J.M. Berinson: New South Wales did some strange things with trains. Mr Greiner's Government has disposed of his ministerial office block.

Hon MAX EVANS: In 1986, the Victorian Government raised \$650 million in one year from the sale of trains, trams and ferries. It immediately had a leaseback of \$1 billion and that was from overseas borrowings. The Under Treasurer probably knows what that is worth now.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: A few minutes ago, the Minister said that it would not be appropriate, in the case of a block of land that was ultimately intended to go to Homeswest, to pitch Homeswest against the rest of the market. One could immediately think that would make sense inasmuch as the Government would not want to be jacking up the price of land on the

market if it was ultimately intended for State housing tenants. I do not know whether the Minister is referring to the block of land which I fear he might be. I sincerely hope this Government is not intending to take the land which is currently under the control of the Fremantle Cemetery Board, but which has been leased for many years to the wool industry and which is situated along Leach Highway close to Fremantle. If that land were handed over to Homeswest it would not be lost on the political commentators around the town that the Government would immediately change the complexion of a number of seats by virtue of putting into an inner metropolitan area a huge number of blocks and a huge number of voters who would change the political nature of certain seats.

Hon Garry Kelly: You know that Homeswest does not operate that way.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: Homeswest does not, but it would not be beyond the wit of the Government to do that.

Hon Garry Kelly: What agency would the Government use?

Hon P.G. PENDAL: It would not be beyond the Minister for Housing to let Homeswest know that was what was intended for the land.

Hon Garry Kelly: You are wrong. It is part of Palmyra.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: I will not pursue the matter in this Chamber. I want it on the record and that is the reason I asked questions earlier. It is a very dangerous game to play. Certain members within the Opposition will take a very close interest in any effort to dispose of that land, which would be valued at millions of dollars. Many people are of the opinion that the land should not be disposed of given that it has been vested in the Fremantle Cemetery Board for many years. People believe it should remain vested in the board given that the Government is in the process of looking for cemetery land for the area south of the river. It may not be on the Government's agenda, but I, as one member who represents the South Metropolitan Region, am advising the Government that it can expect a lot of trouble should this form part of its agenda.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It may comfort some members and be a matter of great annoyance to others if I say that the only proposal that I had in mind in my reference to Homeswest was a proposal to build 31 aged pensioner flats in the electorate of Cortesloe. I know Mr Hassell is holding on by his fingertips to that electorate, but in spite of that I do not think 31 units would be likely to affect the balance.

Hon MAX EVANS: I want to put the record straight. From my old home in West Perth I could see the Herb Graham flats - which were built for the purpose of swinging the vote in the then West Perth seat - and the Wandana flats in Subiaco. It has happened before and history often repeats itself.

Hon PETER FOSS: Will the Minister to explain the reason for the Crime Research Unit item, and whether the operation of it has ceased?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It has not ceased, it has only just started. The amount of \$3.8 million was allocated by way of endowment to the University of Western Australia to set up what is referred to as a crime research unit, which encompasses a crime statistics unit as they are called in other States. The unit is headed by Professor Harding and the endowment was on the basis that it would be sufficient to fund the work of the unit for a minimum of 15 years. So far the unit has produced one report, but it is in its very early stages. Nonetheless, it is a very important element in an Australia-wide attempt to develop proper statistics and a better understanding of the background to crime.

Hon GEORGE CASH: Item 66 has an appropriation of \$5 million. As it is a new item will the Minister explain its purpose and the reason it appears in the Budget?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare is in the early stage of its activities and the Government was faced with a very fragmented series of submissions coming from various departments on the basis of occupational health requirements. This was the first time these requirements had been submitted in Budget bids and the Budget process was, frankly, not up to the task of reviewing those submissions in time for the Budget to be presented on time. The Government was also not in a position to adjudicate on the priorities that should be implemented among the very wide range of matters being brought forward. Therefore, this year the Government adopted a process which is

analogous to that of the information technology service to which I referred earlier. The Government has allocated a global figure of \$5 million against which the claims from various departments can be considered more fully than would otherwise have been possible.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: I refer to the Natural Disaster Payments and Other Relief Measures which comes after item 65 and advise that we have already debated matters dealing with the national disaster fund. In this case it is simply an expenditure attributed to last financial year and nothing has been estimated for this financial year. I understand the Minister's explanation is that the Government does not set aside money for disasters it does not know will happen. I ask the Minister to explain what items were funded from the \$3.5 million actually expended last financial year.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I would like to be able to say that the reason there is no provision this financial year for natural disasters is that the Government is expecting a particularly good year in view of the election result. However, that is not the reason.

In past years the allocation for natural disasters has been found to be totally irrelevant to actual experience. This is one of those areas in which demands simply have to be met. Where disaster declarations are made - it does not really matter whether the Government provides for them - they have to be met by way of a supplementary provision. The Government has, therefore, changed from making notional allocations which are not based on anything to retrospectively seeking authority to meet obligations through supplementary votes. If I understand Miss McAleer correctly, she has asked for details of last year's expenditure. In general our notes are predicated on the current year's estimates and I do not have the details of the way in which last year's funds were allocated.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: Some of that money was probably spent in this financial year, although it is included in last year's expenditure. For example, the Government funded a natural disaster when the north eastern wheatbelt area was flooded during the winter.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Is the member asking whether payments have been made since 1 July this year?

Hon Margaret McAleer: Yes.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Some may have been made, but these are not available in the Budget figures for precisely the reason I have indicated; that is, the Government does not attempt to make forward projections, but meets the obligations as they are accepted.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: When the flooding through winter rains occurred in the north eastern wheatbelt in June the Minister for Budget Management made a submission to Cabinet to provide recompense, presumably to local government authorities for the roads, as well as for farmers. I do not know how the extra money was allocated for the roads but local authorities were funded by up to 75 per cent to repair and restore roads to their former condition. An allocation was also made for farmers who suffered severe damage, mainly to fences and soil. The farmers were pushed back to Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation and they were classed as eligible farmers or applicants, which meant eligibility was reduced to those marginal cases who were not quite broke but were in such a bad financial state that nobody else would finance them. Should these people be included in the natural disaster funding, or has consideration been given to the practice which formerly obtained of making grants to people who suffer serious losses? In this case very few applications were made for the money allocated because it was not worth the farmers' while since they were unlikely to be classed as eligible.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I do not have any knowledge of the circumstances to which Miss McAleer is referring; they certainly do not appear in the papers provided to support this item.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: I am not surprised the Minister does not have any knowledge of those circumstances. Although he made the submission to Cabinet referring to damage caused, all representations were made either to the Main Roads Department, which sent engineers to interview local authorities, or through Mr Bridge as Minister for Agriculture. Many people applying thought that relief would be provided through the Minister for Agriculture. However, that representation was siphoned through the Minister for Agriculture to the Minister for Budget Management. I am not sure, but there appears to have been an awful gap.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I cannot take this discussion further. If Miss McAleer puts her inquiry into some definite form, I will attempt to respond to it appropriately.

Hon BARRY HOUSE: I refer to item 67 relating to the relocation of the Metropolitan Markets. The new markets are a vast improvement on the old markets in West Perth. However, following a recent explosion at the markets, it was brought to my notice that the construction of the extensive area under cover appeared to contravene the local authority's by-law in that it did not contain a safety sprinkler system. Will the Minister advise why that system was not included in the original construction, and whether it will be considered in future?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I have no knowledge of or connection with that matter and it does not relate to the Budget item. The item relates to assistance provided to tenants relocating from the old markets to the new markets, and was in response to submissions which indicated that the cost of transfer plus the higher cost of the new facilities was creating excessive pressure. The item does not refer to the markets as such.

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer to item 68 relating to the remote commercial television service allocation of \$2.874 million. Is this a subsidy to Golden West Network, and is it an ongoing payment?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: On 14 February 1985 Cabinet approved a subsidy of up to \$2 million per annum to ensure that commercial television would be available to 110 000 remote area residents, provided by a Western Australian company undertaking to include a significant degree of regional program content. The subsidy is paid directly to Aussat Pty Ltd to reduce the satellite transponder hire cost for the successful licence applicant. The successful applicant is currently the Golden West Network Ltd. The State subsequently advised the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal that the undertaking is for the initial period of the licence, which is probably for seven years, and confirmed that the terms and conditions were to be negotiated with the successful applicant.

Hon GEORGE CASH: Item 69 refers to a payment to Rothwells Limited (Provisional Liquidators Appointed) - Indemnity and Associated Expenses of \$200 000 for this financial year. In 1988-89 an amount of \$22 539 415 was paid to the liquidator in respect of what is now known as the Rothwells debacle. It is not my intention to speak at great length on this item, but I want to place on record the reason there is no need to retread arguments that have been put forward in this place over a number of weeks. During the first reading of this Bill an opportunity was available to debate this matter and a number of members on the Opposition side commented at length on what they believe is an unlawful payment by the Government. During the second reading debate reference was again made to this unlawful payment, although by that stage the Government had presented certain vouchers and other certificates of payment indicating from where the Government had appropriated the money. The Opposition was not convinced that the Government had acted in a lawful manner by making that payment in the manner it did.

Members would be aware that the documentation provided since the second reading debate indicates that rather than the \$22.5 million shown in the document before us a voucher for the amount of \$33.5 million was, in fact, paid to the provisional liquidator of Rothwells Ltd. We later found that \$10.5 million of that \$33.5 million was to be treated as a temporary advance recoverable from the National Australia Bank. After further questioning it became clear that although the Government expected to recover those funds it had not done so some two or three weeks ago. However, I understand that \$10.5 million has now been repaid to the Government by the National Australia Bank.

We believe this payment did not have a proper legislative base and was, in fact, illegal. We made the point during previous discussions that for the Opposition to vote in favour of this item would indicate it was prepared, irrespective of beliefs that the payment was an unlawful one, to provide the legislative base the Government needed to validate the payment. As members would be aware, schedule 2 of the Bill before us shows this amount as a payment made last year that the Government now wants validated by this Chamber. For all the reasons given during the first and second reading debates, the Opposition is not prepared to validate that payment.

There is no need to go into the argument advanced earlier that we believe the Government

has been deceitful in the payment of these amounts and has failed, despite its alleged desire to be accountable, to provide the Parliament with proper answers to questions raised over a number of months. In fact, the Government has been the architect of what could be its own downfall by refusing to provide reasonable answers to questions that have been put to it about not only this payment but other payments which we will come to later and which appear under the Miscellaneous Services division.

In the past 12 months of its business dealings this Government has brought our State into disrepute in Australia; that now seems to have extended overseas. It has engaged in unlawful and what some have described as corrupt practices because of the manner in which it has dealt with various organisations. The Government quite clearly found itself in a difficult financial position having entered into financial arrangements with some skilled entrepreneurs in Australia who clearly decided that they would be able to outsmart the Government, and certainly have outsmarted it to the tune of between \$500 million and \$700 million to date, a figure that is likely to rise to about \$1 000 million before we get to the bottom of this unholy situation.

Opposition members in this place and the other place have made comments on what they believe to be an unlawful payment by the Government and it is not their intention to agree to validate that payment. We believe the payment was wrong from its inception and the very fact that the Government has attempted, after a great deal of coercion by the Opposition, to provide some detail has done nothing in my mind to clear the unsavoury situation which has existed, and which still exists in relation to this and other payments.

I give notice to the Government that the Opposition will oppose the whole vote for this part of the Appropriation Bill. It is not practical merely to vote against this particular item having regard to a number of other items contained in the Miscellaneous Services division. What should be noted - and this is an important point - is that although the Opposition will vote against this part of the Appropriation Bill it does that in respect of item 69, and in due course in relation to items 74 and 78, of the Miscellaneous Services division. I make clear in respect of most of the other items mentioned in this Division that the Government has attempted to provide various answers about them.

The procedure we have gone through in the past week or so during this Committee debate on the Appropriation Bill has been an important experience for this Chamber. There is no doubt that it indicates clearly the need for a proper Estimates committee of this Chamber so that the Budget can be examined in depth, away from the Committee of the whole of this and the other Chamber, by a number of separate committees; that is, one large Estimates committee which would split into a number of smaller committees. I am sure that the Parliament will be the better for it should that Estimates committee be established.

With those comments I indicate that the Opposition is opposed to the validation of the payment of this \$22 539 415 which we claim was an unlawful payment to the liquidator of Rothwells.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I agree with the Leader of the Opposition on one thing only; that is, there is no real point in an extensive debate on this matter because of the debate which occurred at both the first and second reading stages of the Bill and, indeed, during the whole of the earlier part of this session. It is not enough for the Leader of the Opposition simply to repeat the old assertions that we have not come up with detail when *Hansard* is absolutely full of detail relating to this matter. That detail perhaps reached its pinnacle with the answers to a series of detailed questions tabled by Hon Eric Charlton on 5 December. Both before and since that detailed information was provided all other requests have been responded to in detail and the position is known.

There is one even more serious defect in the argument put by the Leader of the Opposition; that is, his assertion again that the payment of this \$22 million was unlawful or illegal. That has been asserted by him previously but has not been supported by him or by any authority. On the contrary, we have the implementation of those payments in accordance with established practice by Treasury and a comprehensive and detailed opinion by the Solicitor General indicating the validity of this payment and others to which his attention has been directed specifically.

One important development arising from previous discussions is the agreement by the

Government to in future divide its Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure in a way which will isolate payments of this kind from other payments. That is not, however, in any way to concede the generalised and unsubstantiated assertions of invalidity, let alone illegality. That cannot be, and is not, supported, and although we have undertaken that in the future we will provide accounts in a different form, that should not be misunderstood; and I am sure it is in fact not misunderstood. I accept that from the Opposition's point of view this is an item on which it should home in. Our respective positions are clear, and I conclude as I started by agreeing with the Leader of the Opposition that we really have passed the point where extended debate at this stage will serve any real purpose.

The CHAIRMAN: Before there is any further discussion, and before I call on anyone else, I have allowed a wide ranging debate by the Leader of the Opposition and the Minister for Budget Management, which has not really been in strict conformity with the item before us. I remind members of the Committee that we are talking about an indemnity to Rothwells for a vote of \$22.5 million.

Hon GEORGE CASH: Item 74 provides for a payment to Swan Building Society of \$750 000 for this financial year. It indicates also that an amount of \$4 639 870 was paid last year. The arguments that I have put in respect of Rothwells apply in part to this payment. We do not believe the Government has furnished the Opposition with the answers to substantiate this payment, and we will reject this item.

Hon MAX EVANS: Does the estimate of \$750 000 represent a specific amount which has been claimed by Swan Building Society against the Government?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No. The provision this year is largely to meet anticipated legal costs for substantial civil recovery actions.

Hon GEORGE CASH: Item 78 provides for a payment to WA Government Holdings Ltd which this year is estimated at \$62 300 000. Last year an amount of \$38 838 603 was paid in respect of commitments made by the Government. The saga of WAGH will go down in the history of this State as one of the greatest financial debacles we have seen in recent years. I put it to the Chamber that one day someone will write the history of the financial dealings of this Government, from when it was first elected to office in 1983 to this time, when the payments are being brought before the Parliament for validation in some areas and authorisation in others.

Hon P.G. Pental: It will need to be a very big book!

Hon GEORGE CASH: It will indeed. I know Hon Phil Pental will agree with me when I say that in recent years some of the greatest financial rorts in Australian history have been perpetrated on the people of Western Australia. I said earlier that at the moment the damages bill is between \$500 million and \$700 million. I believe that will blow out to \$1 000 million by the time we get to the bottom of the well. That does not include the incalculable amount of damage that has been done to business in Western Australia, and indeed Australia, as a result of the dealings of this Government. In saying that I want to make it very clear that I am not reflecting on those Treasury officers who have been required, on instruction from the Government, to make various payments to various Government and private organisations. I am sure there must have been absolute horror within Treasury and other Government departments as good, loyal public servants watched the money of this State being poured down the drain.

The \$62 300 000 for which the Government seeks authorisation tonight will not be the end of the WAGH saga because we know already that there are damages claims coming in from the contractors involved in the Petrochemical Industries Co Ltd operation that could amount to between \$30 million and \$50 million. There are those who believe that the damages bill may be substantially more than that. So I expect next year to again see an item crop up for WAGH to provide an additional \$30 million, \$50 million or perhaps \$100 million to pay for the damages claims arising from the PICL debacle. I invite members to cast their mind back to earlier this year, and to recall the comments of the Minister for Budget Management, who was representing the Government in the handling of the petrochemical Bill, when he was trying to convince us that everything was under control; there were no problems; the PICL venture would be a financial success; and the Government would loyally and steadfastly stand by the principles enunciated in the report of the Burt Commission on Accountability.

Yet today we see an absolute shambles. We see the remains of the crystal vase which this Government has absolutely shattered and destroyed.

Hon Garry Kelly: What a beautiful metaphor!

Hon GEORGE CASH: Mr Kelly may not like the metaphor, but let me tell him that for the price of \$100 million, we could have provided a lot of services to the people of this State. Mr Kelly was a member of a group of people who agreed with the financial dealings of this Government, which have and will cost this State plenty. We totally reject the payment provided for by item 78.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: The National Party members were very concerned about these two items, so much so that we sent a message to the other place requesting the Government to withdraw these two items from this Appropriation Bill. I believe the other place erred in not doing as this Chamber requested, because if it had acceded to our request we would not now be debating this appropriation; the debate could have been over some days ago. We on this side of the Chamber have decided to make the Government pay for its misdemeanours. The Government, in not acceding to our request to withdraw these two items, was saying to the people of this State, and to the members on this side of the Chamber, that it was somewhat disturbed, and perhaps even scared, because it feared that we would not pass the Appropriation Bill; but who would then pay for these debts, for which the Government needed money?

That is probably why the Government would not take these special items out of the Appropriation Bill; it knew very well that if they were moved out the Opposition would probably reject them. If they were left in we would have to decide whether to block Supply. I am gratified the Government acceded to our request so that, in future, items such as these will be provided for separately from the Appropriation Bill. However, I am disappointed with the present position. It would have helped the debate had items 69 and 78 been withdrawn and dealt with separately.

Hon PETER FOSS: I keep returning to a very important part of the questions which have been raised and not answered. The whole sorry story of WA Government Holdings Ltd revolves to a large extent around a deed of undertaking given by the State. Included in that undertaking was an obligation to give a guarantee. That guarantee would have enabled the Petrochemical Industries Co Ltd project to go ahead. The lack of that guarantee spelt the eventual end of the PICL project. According to the advice given by the Solicitor General, had that guarantee been given in accordance with the Northern Mining Corporation (Acquisition) Act it would have been a valid and binding guarantee on this State. Everything had been done, other than for the guarantee to be presented for the approval of the Governor to be given in Executive Council. If that had been done there would have been no further obstacles and it would undoubtedly have been considered at that stage to have been a guarantee, whether it had been executed or not.

However, the guarantee was not signed. A very important question is, what stage had the guarantee reached? Two letters were tabled in this Chamber, one from the Premier and one from the Deputy Premier. Both those letters gave an assurance to Bond Corporation that the recommendation would be made to the Governor and that the guarantee would be executed. We all know that constitutionally the Governor cannot act other than on the advice of the Executive Council; that is, on the advice of this Government. If the Premier and the Deputy Premier of this State said the guarantee would be presented, there would have been no obstacle to its being executed. The only thing which could stop the guarantee from being presented to the Executive Council would be if the Premier and the Deputy Premier themselves decided not to present it.

Two alternatives arise out of that. The first is that the Premier and the Deputy Premier did recommend the guarantee to the Governor, and the Executive Council did approve that guarantee. The second possibility is that they did not do it. Notwithstanding what the Premier and the Deputy Premier said by way of inducement to Bond Corporation, they did not do it. If the first is the case, it appears to me that there are binding contractual obligations between the State and Bond Corporation. If the second is the case and they changed their minds, for whatever reason, and decided not to go ahead with the guarantee, there must be a very high possibility that a contractual liability, or a breach of contract, arises out of their failure to carry out their undertaking. Either way there is a substantial exposure of this State to Bond Corporation.

I have asked very simple questions of this Government - the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the House. I have repeated those questions, and I shall ask them again. The answer always is, "We are not going to tell you." They will not tell us even this simple fact: That they did not recommend the guarantee in the Executive Council. These people will not tell us whether there is a binding, contractual obligation. They have denied there are guarantees, but they will not answer a simple question, "Was there a recommendation to the Executive Council that the guarantee be executed?" This question will not be answered by the Premier, by the Deputy Premier, or by the Leader of the House. Their protestations that they had made full disclosure are on that ground alone seen to be mere covering up. This is an important question; a question to which the people of Western Australia are entitled to an answer. It is tied to the question of the liability of \$63 million in the Budget papers, and to this whole sorry business. It is a question which has not been answered, and we have had a continual refusal to answer it. How can the Government say that it has made full disclosure while this simple question remains outstanding? One would have thought it was an easy question, and I can see no legitimate reason for not answering it.

Putting up the question of litigation is a blind; it is nonsense. If, on the other hand, the Premier and the Deputy Premier have resiled from their undertakings, where does that leave the reputation of our State and our Government? Where does it put the reputation of Western Australia? Why should we be giving money to people who behave like that?

Hon P.G. Pandal: Hear, hear!

Hon PETER FOSS: That is the question I would like answered. We are entitled to have it answered because I do not see why these people should have any money.

What was the next thing that this Government did? After having failed to provide the undertaking and the guarantee which would enable this project to go ahead, the Government petitioned to wind the company up on the basis that it did not have any money. Why did it not have any money? Because of the Government's failure to carry out the undertaking it had given.

The Government may say that there are perfectly good, legal reasons, but on the face of it, it looks as if the Government welshed. I cannot see any other reason. If this is an honest Government and there are good legal reasons, I would like to hear them, but it seems to me either the Government has been guilty of subterfuge in that it has made a recommendation to the Executive Council and it has hidden the fact that that recommendation has gone through and been approved, or else within days, or even hours, of signing these letters, one written in the Minister's own handwriting, the Government must have welshed on that undertaking. Following on welshing on that undertaking, the Government used the consequent financial distress as a ground for applying to the Supreme Court to wind up the company to which it caused this distress. What sort of a Government is this? What do people think of the Government of a State which conducts its business dealings in that manner?

Hon P.G. Pandal: A double-headed penny!

Hon PETER FOSS: This Government is asking us for more money, yet it will not answer the simple question, "Are you honest or not?" I would like to know the answer to that question. I do not know that the Government can answer in any other way than to say that it is dishonest, because whichever way it goes this Government has acted dishonestly. It has put forward the facade and the play acting that it has made full disclosure. That is disgusting. I for one am not taken in by it. Perhaps if the Government continues to say these things to the people of Western Australia they will believe them; perhaps if it continues saying these things it will believe its own words. I do not believe the Government; I cannot support the Government's receiving this money because I believe it has acted dishonestly. The fact that the Government will not answer a simple, easy question which any honest person would answer supports my contention.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I agreed a little while ago with the Leader of the Opposition that there was no point repeating the whole range of arguments which have kept us on this Budget not simply for days but for months during this session. I suppose it was to be expected that not all members could refrain from getting into a repetitive mode and carrying on as Mr Foss did.

Hon P.G. Pandal: I think you are lucky that the whole lot of us did not. If you are not careful, that is what will happen.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Let me just say this in response to Mr Foss's questions and comments: We have replied, we have given answers and details as and when required, but provided only that the questions were reasonable.

Hon P.G. Pental: What a joke!

Several members interjected.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I know members opposite will jeer when I say that, but I will stand by it. What we have tonight, as we have had on earlier occasions, is Mr Justice Foss giving his decision on a major piece of litigation which has not been heard yet and on which all our advice is to the contrary. He can stand up and say, "I am just asking you a simple question. Is there a binding agreement or not?" There is a huge piece of litigation waiting to be fought and Mr Foss says that is a simple enough question. I will tell him how simple it is. If indeed it reaches the stage of hearing it will be a long, complex, difficult hearing and not one which will simply require somebody to stand up and answer not simple questions from Mr Foss but simplistic questions.

He asked another question to which I am delighted to give a straight answer; namely: Is this Government honest? The answer is yes. That does not mean we deny the difficulties which have arisen from our past decisions; that does not deny the losses; that does not deny that the position which has followed from this project's going bad does not have serious implications and will not require the most concerted efforts to overcome. We do not deny any of that, but none of that justifies these constant calls of dishonesty. Indeed, Mr Foss does not support them, he merely alleges them.

I want to make only one other comment because it appears to me to raise an issue which is rather new; I do not recall this matter being discussed in these terms previously. I refer to the comments, I think by Mr Cash, about the likely cost of damages claims. As I understood Mr Cash he was not referring to the litigation with Bond but to the likely cost of termination payments on the contracts. Again, I have previously advised the Chamber, I think in response to Hon Murray Montgomery's questions, that negotiations on termination payments are proceeding in an orderly and indeed cordial way, to adopt Mr Montgomery's terminology, and it is expected that some conclusion will be reached within about a month. Nothing that has been brought to my attention would indicate that the extent of termination payments eventually required would be anywhere near the figures suggested by the Leader of the Opposition - they would be far less than he has suggested. But again, that matter will be decided within the month and it would certainly not be helpful to negotiations to be getting into detailed discussions or predictions as to their likely outcome.

I said before that I agreed with one thing the Leader of the Opposition said; that is, there is no real point to lengthy repetition of what we have discussed so far. I agree with him also that this is a point at which the view of the Opposition - that the Budget should be blocked, with all the implications which that has, and all the serious threats it would hold to the orderly provision of services and other matters - should be tested, and I think it would be as well for us all to proceed to that test now.

Hon GEORGE CASH: I am glad that the Minister for Budget Management is prepared to agree with at least some of the matters that I have raised. Perhaps he will also agree that right at this moment in Western Australia - and I mean right now - we face a constitutional crisis. That constitutional crisis was referred to some weeks ago by Professor Patrick O'Brien, Associate Professor of Politics at the University of Western Australia.

Several Government members interjected.

Hon GEORGE CASH: Mr Chairman, because it is difficult to record the Government's laughter in *Hansard* I should, for the record, indicate the cynicism of a number of Government members. I will read in part a paper by Professor O'Brien which was published in the *Great Southern Voice* only a few weeks ago.

Hon J.M. Berinson: You would not regard him as an impartial academic on these matters?

Hon GEORGE CASH: I will show the Minister for Budget Management how one of his members wants to take the National Party for granted, but we will deal with that in a moment. First I will deal with the constitutional crisis that Professor Patrick O'Brien believes the State faces, and it is right now that that crisis is upon us. The article reads -

According to Patrick O'Brien, Associate Professor of Politics at the University of Western Australia, this State is now in the grips of a Constitutional crisis. Mr O'Brien states "Mr Dowding and his fellow disinformators have accused People for Fair and Open Government of trying to destabilise government in WA. What in fact has happened, however, is that Mr Dowding and his government have destabilised the constitutional processes in WA, thus threatening both parliamentary government and the very foundations of Justice itself. That is how serious the situation is. So serious, in fact, that WA is now facing a constitutional crisis. This crisis must be resolved if we are to restore open, honest, fair and accountable parliamentary government. The constitutional crisis exists because the executive has usurped and deceived Parliament; in the former case by refusing to account to Parliament how and precisely under what circumstances it has 'lost' approximately a billion of taxpayers dollars; and, in the latter, by its statements over the PIL guarantee (refer Martin Saxon's article, 'Petro Promises Blew Up in Faces', Daily News 28/9/89) and letters by Dowding and Parker to Bond Corporation written late last year and which, despite absolute ministerial denials made in 1988 and throughout 1989 that a government guarantee was promised to enhance credit for the PIL project, a guarantee of \$1.2 billion (equivalent to WA's entire tax-revenue-raising base) was promised).

That is, in part, the statement that Professor O'Brien made and which was published in the *Great Southern Voice*. A week later one of the Labor members of this House, Hon Bob Thomas, decided he would reply to what I suggest is a learned dissertation by Professor O'Brien. Mr Thomas, who I would suggest is not academically qualified to the standard of Professor O'Brien -

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Professor Bunyip!

Hon GEORGE CASH: Yes, Professor Bob Bunyip is quoted as stating as follows -

Patrick O'Brien's assertion that W.A. was now in the grips of a constitutional crisis is sheer fantasy according to South West MLC Bob Thomas.

There is no crisis, no dispute between the two Houses of Parliament and, after Hendy Cowan's recent statement, no likelihood of this year's Budget being blocked.

If that is not an indication of the Labor Party, through Hon Bob Thomas, taking the National Party for granted, I do not know what is.

Hon P.G. Pental: It is showing contempt for the National Party.

Hon GEORGE CASH: The article goes on, although I am not quoting it seriatim -

The CHAIRMAN: How does this relate to the question before the Committee?

Hon GEORGE CASH: I appreciate your question, Mr Chairman. I am responding to comments made by the Minister for Budget Management when he alleged there was no crisis at all in Western Australia. He in fact suggested -

Hon J.M. Berinson: I did not refer to a crisis at all.

Hon GEORGE CASH: The Minister for Budget Management asserted there was a crisis.

Hon J.M. Berinson: No, I did not refer either way to the question.

Hon P.G. Pental: You said there were no problems.

Hon GEORGE CASH: They were the words.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I said exactly the opposite to that.

Hon GEORGE CASH: I will be very brief; I will read one more paragraph and then I will be more than happy to sit down. I think I have demonstrated that the Labor Party is prepared to take the National Party for granted. The article continues -

In fact, the crisis appears only to be wishful thinking on the part of Patrick O'Brien and the Liberal Party. Mr O'Brien has been one of the Labor Government's strongest critics and has taken every opportunity to work towards our downfall.

I am not even suggesting to the Chamber that Hon Bob Thomas wrote that article, because it does not use words which he normally uses in this place. I suggest that one of the Labor

Government's scribes wrote that article and put it in the paper under Hon Bob Thomas' name. The point is that very clearly this State now faces a constitutional crisis and it faces that crisis because this Government has not been honest in its spending of the taxpayers' money; the Government has not been honest and accountable to this Parliament and, as I said earlier, the Opposition is not prepared to support this part of the appropriations.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: As a result of Hon George Cash's mentioning the article which appeared in the *Great Southern Voice*, I feel obliged to comment on the matter. I was disappointed to see that article in the paper and I believe the person whose name was carried on the article only proved, by writing that article, that he is a very junior, inexperienced person. I do not know how long his memory is, but it cannot go back a long way because the National Party has on a number of occasions exercised its right to make decisions on what comes before this Chamber. If Hon Bob Thomas casts his mind back to the debate on legislation dealing with the petrochemical project which was brought before this House, I dare say he will remember that the Leader of the National Party did say exactly the same thing about that as he said about this Budget. When the legislation came to this Chamber, the National Party made the decision it thought was correct at the time. I warn Hon Bob Thomas not to be too complacent about what the National Party does. The National Party is a conservative party and I hope one day it will be in coalition with the Liberal Party in Government in this place. Nothing would suit me better than that.

Hon P.G. Pendal: And the sooner, the better.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: In respect of the article in the newspaper, this place makes the decisions. This is where we fire the shots in respect of what actually happens in Government. Members of the other place are only the rifles and sometimes their barrels are not terribly straight. I am proud of this Chamber making this decision tonight. That article does not describe what the National Party may do.

Hon PETER FOSS: The Minister for Budget Management has chosen to obfuscate by abuse a fairly simple question. He has tried to turn it around by saying that I am trying to solve a whole lot of legal problems in a simplistic manner. All I am trying to do is get an answer to a simple question. In reference to the letter of the Premier saying that he would recommend to the Governor the execution of a guarantee, the question read as follows -

- (2) Did the Premier made the recommendation referred to in the last sentence of the letter?
- (3) If the Premier made the recommendation, was it acted upon by His Excellency and what, if anything, has occurred as a result thereof?
- (4) If the Premier did not make the recommendation -
 - (a) did the Premier at the time he signed the letter and at the time he delivered the letter have the intention of making the recommendation referred to; and
 - (b) if so, for what reason did he not make the recommendation and on or about what date did he form the intention not to make the recommendation?

Those are simple questions - did the Premier make the recommendation? - but the Government will not answer them. The Minister for Budget Management tries, as much as possible, to forget this question. Every time I raise it, he forgets it. He deals with something else if he possibly can.

Hon J.M. Berinson: It was answered, but you do not like the answer.

Hon PETER FOSS: The Minister for Budget Management will not deal with this question. He comes up with all sorts of reasons, but the Liberal Party wants to know the reason the Premier either did not recommend or did recommend. However, the Minister for Budget Management will not even tell us whether the recommendation was made. This place is supposed to grant the Government this vote of \$63 million, with an additional \$32 million in schedule 2, on the basis of this transaction. However, the Government will not disclose the full facts of the transaction; the Government has refused to do so. The other place failed to deal with a request from the committee investigating Government investments to ask some members of that place questions in the privacy of the committee. My question has not been answered; the Government refuses to answer it. The Minister for Budget Management has

tried to forget this question; he ignores it whenever he can and tries to say that I am making complicated decisions on the law. The Minister for Budget Management well knows that I have asked a series of very simple questions; when one looks at those questions, one finds they are merely asking whether the Government did as it promised it would do, or whether it failed to do as it promised, and if it did fulfil its promise, where the guarantee is. These things will have an effect on our lives over the next year, and they bear on this vote very strongly. Whatever else this Government can do, it cannot claim it has made full disclosure of the facts in this matter. It has consistently refused to answer this question. Whatever else might be the reason this Government may ask to have this money, it cannot be, and it cannot stand, on the basis it has made full disclosure of the facts. Abuse will not take the Minister for Budget Management anywhere.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Hon Peter Foss keeps saying these questions have not been answered. They have been answered. The point is they have not been answered in the way he wants them answered, which is quite a different thing.

Vote put and a division called for.

Bells rung and the Committee divided.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the tellers tell I give my vote with the Ayes.

Division resulted as follows -

Ayes (17)			
Hon J.M. Berinson	Hon John Halden	Hon M.S. Montgomery	Hon Doug Wenn
Hon J.M. Brown	Hon Kay Hallahan	Hon Mark Nevill	Hon Fred McKenzie
Hon J.N. Caldwell	Hon Tom Helm	Hon Sam Piantadosi	(Teller)
Hon Cheryl Daveport	Hon B.L. Jones	Hon Tom Stephens	
Hon Graham Edwards	Hon Garry Kelly	Hon Bob Thomas	
Noes (14)			
Hon George Cash	Hon Barry House	Hon P.G. Pendal	Hon D.J. Wordsworth
Hon Reg Davies	Hon P.H. Lockyer	Hon R.G. Pike	Hon Margaret McAleer
Hon Max Evans	Hon N.F. Moore	Hon W.N. Stretch	(Teller)
Hon Peter Foss	Hon Muriel Patterson	Hon Derrick Tomlinson	

Pair

Hon T.G. Butler

Hon E.J. Charlton

Vote thus passed.

Schedule put and passed.

Schedule 2 -

Hon GEORGE CASH: Schedule 2 indicates the over-expenditures made by various Government departments during 1988-89 which the Government is now requesting this Chamber to validate as part of the Appropriation Bill. As I said earlier, we are not prepared to support the allocation for Rothwells Limited (Provisional Liquidators Appointed) amounting to \$22 539 415.

I acknowledge that during discussion which ranged fairly widely on schedule 1, Mr Chairman, you allowed members to refer at times to schedule 2 and the Leader of the House has given an undertaking to provide answers in respect of some other expenditure for the year. Therefore, I do not believe any great purpose would be served by our going through individual items. Although we will not be dividing on this schedule, we cannot support the \$22 million payment to the liquidator of Rothwells.

Schedule put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Metropolitan - Minister for Budget Management) [9.13 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON GEORGE CASH (North Metropolitan - Leader of the Opposition) [9.14 pm]: The Bill has passed through the first and second readings and the Committee stage, and has now reached the third reading. If the motion for the third reading succeeds, today will be a very sad day for Western Australia.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Hear, hear!

Hon GEORGE CASH: I make that statement for all the reasons advanced by the Opposition during the extended debate at the stages through which the Bill has already passed; but more than that, because the Government has avoided parliamentary approval for its actions during not only the past 12 months but also in several previous years. Secondly, a clear indication has been given of the gross financial mismanagement of the Government - mismanagement on which the public of Western Australia are entitled to cast a vote and to make clear where they stand in respect of the Government's actions. The third reason for our opposition to the third reading and why the Bill should be defeated is that the Government has wilfully and grossly misled not only members of Parliament and the Parliament itself but also the public of Western Australia.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Hear, hear!

Hon GEORGE CASH: For those reasons alone, not extending to all the deceit on the part of the Government, not only should the Bill be defeated but also morally the Government should resign and the people of Western Australia should decide once and for all who should govern this State.

HON J.N. CALDWELL (Agricultural) [9.16 pm]: Debate on the Appropriation Bill has not been primarily concerned with ordinary services; indeed lengthy debate has been caused by extraordinary appropriations. I liken those extraordinary appropriations to a disaster. Perhaps Western Australia will face a disaster if we do not witness some change in the way the Government conducts its business. The Government wanted to see the Appropriation Bill passed as quickly as possible. To its dismay, the Government has not achieved that because it has sheltered behind the need for commercial confidentiality. In many cases, commercial confidentiality is necessary when dealing with people in the private business arena. However, when the State faces a disaster, confidentiality must fly out the window, and it becomes important that our questions are answered.

The Government should be happy with events in this House tonight considering the National Party crossed the floor, but that does not guarantee that the Bill will be passed. However, the Government cannot be completely happy because the Opposition has managed to lift the lid on Pandora's box. It is now up to Hon R.G. Pike's committee to find out exactly what is contained in the box and to bring that information to this House at the appropriate time.

Perhaps I should comment on the actions of the Liberal Party during debate on this Bill. There is considerable difference between mere muscle flexing and the act of blocking Supply. The Liberal Party has assisted the National Party in practically everything we have sought to do. Indeed the Liberal Party has helped the National Party obtain a remarkable amount of information from the Government; perhaps much more information is yet to be supplied. I appreciate the cooperation by the Liberal Party in assisting the National Party to find out exactly what is behind the whole sordid mess.

To those Liberals who wanted a Royal Commission I say - as I said last week - that we have what is almost equal to a Royal Commission; that is, the committee that this House established on a motion by Hon Bob Pike which will do its job and make a report to the House at an appropriate time. When the committee produces that report, that is the time when we should make some hard decisions. National Party members in this place are disappointed that Hon Norman Moore did not get his Prorogation of Parliament Bill through the Parliament; even though it passed through this House with the support of all parties, it appears that there is no hope that it will pass through the Legislative Assembly when that House returns.

The National Party has achieved five points with this Appropriation Bill: Firstly, the Government has been forced to accept new ground rules to stop the practice of tacking extraordinary appropriations onto the Budget. We have been debating for the last hour or so those extraordinary natural disaster-type items which have occurred over the last couple of years. If the Ministers concerned with these deals had had to touch their pockets to cover these items, they would be loath to attempt something like that again. Secondly, no more secret WA Inc-type deals will occur provided that this House does its job properly, because this House makes the final decisions; we must be on the ball to watch out for that type of investment or negotiations that the Government may happen to tackle. Thirdly, the Parliament now has the undisputed right to veto any WA Inc-type deals in the future. Most importantly, that veto can be exercised before any deal is done. Fourthly, Hon Bob Pike's committee will not have its work interrupted by the prorogation of Parliament, and it will not be prevented from using its full powers in investigating the Government's most notorious business deals. Fifthly, a vast amount of information about the petrochemical deal has emerged which the Pike committee will be able to examine.

Virtually all of those five points were put together by the National Party, and all but one of them had all party support. That has come about because members know that we have the balance of power in this place which we can exercise when we see fit so long as we receive other party support - that is the way the cookie crumbles. I take this opportunity to thank Hon Bob Pike for his support, and also Hon George Cash for trying to bring this debate to an end. I assure members that holding the balance of power is a rather heavy responsibility, and sometimes we feel we are between a rock and a hard place. However, it is a responsibility we relish and we take it on our shoulders. This debate has been especially difficult as Hon Murray Montgomery and I have been thrown into this predicament without our leader being present; however, in the Budget debate we have tried to follow a responsible line, as we always do. We have managed to upset a few people now and again but that will never stop us from doing what we believe is right.

We recognise the course which we have set and followed has not pleased everybody. It has probably not pleased the Press very much because it seems to thrive on elections. If we had supported the Liberal Party in blocking the Supply Bill, I imagine that the main headline tomorrow morning in *The West Australian* would have been that the conservative parties were off on a rocky road in the election campaign because the leaders were not talking to each other. Therefore, we must be realistic about this. If we block Supply tonight it would be some months before an election could be held, and with the conservative forces not actually talking to one another as a coalition it would be a traumatic time to start an election campaign. Members would have received the same message from the electorate that we have, although I am not sure whether all members have been into their electorates and spoken to their constituents to discover the view of the people who voted for them.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Vote with us; we could solve that problem by breakfast tomorrow morning.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: We could solve it before then.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Vote with us, and we will tend to it.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: I am sure that people out in the electorates do not want an election as they are already becoming fed up to the back teeth with the soon to be held Federal election. If the potential consequences of blocking Supply were explained to the people, they would be more convinced that we should not have an election because it would hurt the average person more than he can bear. People want the Government to be more honest and do not want a mere shuffling of the pack; they want reforms that will expose corruption and deal with it severely; they do not want mindless party politicising as a substitute for effective action. The actions taken in this House - initiated by the National Party - will go a long way to meeting those demands. If this House were to block the Budget, having achieved what it has, that would be seen by struggling families as sheer bloody mindedness and would confirm the view that politicians fight and argue for their own views with the only motivation being the gaining of power. It is the struggling families out in the real world who are the victims of this Government's financial incompetence. The National Party has achieved a new set of ground rules which will stop this sort of thing happening again. It will not compound the costs imposed on the families of the State by moving to block the supply of essential services to this State.

The National Party will be supporting the third reading of this Bill.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (17)

Hon J.M. Berinson	Hon John Halden	Hon M.S. Montgomery	Hon Doug Wenn
Hon J.M. Brown	Hon Kay Hallahan	Hon Mark Nevill	Hon Fred McKenzie
Hon J.N. Caldwell	Hon Tom Helm	Hon Sam Piantadosi	(Teller)
Hon Cheryl Davenport	Hon B.L. Jones	Hon Tom Stephens	
Hon Graham Edwards	Hon Garry Kelly	Hon Bob Thomas	

Noes (14)

Hon George Cash	Hon Barry House	Hon P.G. Pendal	Hon D.J. Wordsworth
Hon Reg Davies	Hon P.H. Lockyer	Hon R.G. Pike	Hon Margaret McAleer
Hon Max Evans	Hon N.F. Moore	Hon W.N. Stretch	(Teller)
Hon Peter Foss	Hon Muriel Patterson	Hon Derrick Tomlinson	

Pair

Hon T.G. Butler

Hon E.J. Charlton

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

APPROPRIATION (GENERAL LOAN AND CAPITAL WORKS FUND) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 12 December.

HON P.G. PENDAL (South Metropolitan) [9.34 pm]: While this Bill is an essential part of the Government's money process, it is a Bill that should be dealt with in Committee. To that extent, the Opposition supports the Bill.

HON BARRY HOUSE (South West) [9.35 pm]: I do not want to speak at great length on this Bill. However, as my responsibilities include regional development, the spread of capital works funds around the State is of particular concern to me.

The Town Clerk of the Town of Narrogin wrote to me about inequities in regional funding. His letter stated -

Figures released at a Regional Development symposium, conducted at the Muresk College earlier this year, indicated that approximately \$5 per head is spent in the Central Wheatbelt regions, \$500 per head in the Great Southern Development area and in excess of \$1,000 per head in the South West Development area.

Hon D.J. Wordsworth: One man, one vote!

Hon BARRY HOUSE: I realise those figures must be qualified to a certain extent because regions like the south west are developing at a faster rate than other areas of the State. There is a pressing need, therefore, for infrastructure in those areas. However, the fact remains that there are gross inequities in the funding arrangements for different areas. The letter continued -

One glaring example of the inequities in regional funding is the instance of Townscape funding. I am proud to report that the Town of Narrogin is leading the State in terms of Townscape activities. Yet despite this fact, and numerous approaches to the State Government, we have been unable to attract any financial assistance. Meanwhile the South West Development Authority has \$1,000,000 to grant over the next four years to local governments in their areas for the purpose of Townscape activities.

That is one example of the inequitable distribution of funds throughout this State. It is worth mentioning also -

The PRESIDENT: Order! Hon Muriel Patterson is out of order talking across the Bar.

Hon BARRY HOUSE: The Building Management Authority has issued a list of non-residential capital works allocations for 1989-90 for non-Government electorates and for Government electorates. It compares some of the funding arrangements for different electorates in the State. Funding for non-residential capital works in Government electorates includes Balcatta, \$3.268 million; Bunbury, \$4.488 million; Cockburn, \$8.803 million; Kalgoorlie, \$5.027 million; Kimberley, \$9.827 million; Murray, \$8.37 million; Nollamara, \$9.034 million; Peel, \$36.748 million; Perth for reasons that we can all understand, \$60.409 million; and Wanneroo, \$10.716 million. The average amount of funds provided to Government electorates totals \$7.579 million.

Non-residential capital works funding for non-Government electorates totals an average of \$2 613 800. It includes Albany, \$378 000; Applecross, \$626 000; Avon, \$407 000; Greenough, one of the safest Liberal seats in the State, \$325 000; Merredin, one of the safest National Party seats in the State, \$140 000; Mandurah, probably because it changed hands at the last election, \$272 000; Roe, \$559 000; Wagin, as little as \$108 000; and Wellington, \$324 000.

Even when we take the allocation to the Perth electorate out of the average figure, which is probably fair enough, the average is reduced to \$5.547 million, still more than double the average for non-Government electorates. Strong grounds exist for suspecting that the Government is channelling funds towards its electorates at a very disproportionate rate compared with non-Government electorates throughout the State. The inequities in the General Loan and Capital Works Fund are glaringly obvious to some people in this State and the results are being felt Statewide.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon Garry Kelly) in the Chair; Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4 put and passed.

Schedule 1 -

Hon GEORGE CASH: Mr Deputy Chairman, could we establish some procedure as to the way in which this Bill will be handled during the Committee stage, particularly with regard to Schedule 1?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I suggest that we go through the Divisions on page 5 of the Estimates of Expenditure item by item. I will move at the end of the debate on each Division that the vote stand as part of the schedule.

Divisions 1 and 2 put and passed.

Division 3: Community Services -

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer to the construction of family centres and ask the Minister what centres have actually been completed and where the proposed centres will be established?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I can only give a general account without the detail of particular items. This program was part of the Government's commitment to provide 25 new family centres and to upgrade 15 existing facilities over a two year period. Nine new centres were commenced and one existing facility is being upgraded. It is expected that the centres commenced in 1988-89 will be completed and fully operational this financial year. An additional 11 high need areas have been identified and funds have been made available in the Western Australian Family Foundation budget to commence those centres and an additional seven upgrades in 1989-90. Planning is under way to identify the high need areas for the remainder of the program.

The notes which are available to me are fairly comprehensive, but they do not go further than I have indicated. If Mr Evans wants information about the particular locations, I will ask the Minister responsible to provide the information to him direct.

Hon MAX EVANS: I would appreciate that information and I am sure it will be of benefit to all members.

I am surprised that the remand and training centres of Longmore and Riverbank come under Community Services and not Corrective Services.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: We are looking at an historic arrangement by which not only the juvenile detention centres but also the Children's Court were out of the mainstream of the law enforcement system and came within the authority of the Department for Community Services - it has had various names over the years. I reminded members earlier today that the Children's Court is now part of the general court system and has operated as such since 1 December this year. Over the years suggestions have been made that the juvenile correction centres should come within the control of the Corrective Services portfolio. There are very marked differences between the two systems. A lot of work would have to be done before a proper evaluation of that idea could be advanced.

Hon MAX EVANS: Is the Minister saying that the operating costs incurred in this area come under Community Services and not Corrective Services?

Hon J.M. Berinson: That is right.

Hon MAX EVANS: In other words, the idea has been considered, but it will not happen in the near future.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It has not been actively considered. I tried to indicate that suggestions have been made from time to time that it should be considered, but it is not under active consideration yet.

Division 3 put and passed.

Division 4: Computing and Information Technology -

Hon MAX EVANS: I ask the Minister to explain the purpose of Joondalup - BureauWest which has been allocated a large amount of money. What exactly will be there in the short term and the long term? Will it become the nerve centre of the computer technology of the Western Australian Government?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Not all of them, but certainly of the main systems. It is proposed that the Joondalup BureauWest facility will be a replacement site for DOCIT's two existing sites at Royal Street and Main Street, and will provide an additional support site for at least one other agency.

Hon Max Evans: Is the estimated cost of \$25.591 million split between buildings and computer hardware and software?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I understand it is for the buildings alone.

Division 4 put and passed.

Division 5: Corrective Services -

Hon MAX EVANS: What is the current status of the Casuarina Prison building? How far behind schedule is it?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I have not checked the position since last week when I indicated I did not believe it would any longer be realistic to look to the former delayed completion date of October 1991. I now expect it to be at least the end of October 1991. That involves at least 18 months of capital expenditure from now.

Hon Max Evans: How will Fremantle Prison cope during that time?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: There is no doubt that pressure is increasing on Fremantle Prison, but on current indications, with proper placement management, we will see that period through.

Division 5 put and passed.

Division 6: Crown Law -

Hon GEORGE CASH: Will the Minister explain which Children's Court the \$700 000 allocated under New Courthouses will be applied to?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It will be applied to the central Children's Court. The East Perth court will be vacated in favour of a site at the corner of Moore and Pier Streets.

Hon George Cash: Is it a new building?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It is an entirely new building and I am sure anyone who has seen the present Children's Court will appreciate the urgent need for it. The Government originally proposed to incorporate the Children's Court in the new magistrates building to be constructed on the Hay and Irwin Streets site in the city. That had much to commend it, but the problem was the likely delay in getting a commitment to such a large project and the time the building program would occupy. The present Children's Court would not bear a delay of approximately four years - the time probably involved - so the Government has moved to the separate building plan. I hope the \$700 000 allocated for the Children's Court program this year will be adequate, but the building program will be expedited as soon as possible.

Division 6 put and passed.

Division 7: Economic Development and Trade -

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer to the Technology Park Development and query what is happening in that area. An amount of \$12.440 million has been allocated, of which \$7.2 million has been expended with a proposed expenditure in 1989-90 of a further \$2 million. Some units have been sold and I ask what further developments are proposed.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The Technology Park concept was adopted as a result of the perceived need to provide high quality, reasonable cost accommodation in an environment conducive to research, development and interaction between commercial, university and Government sectors. The capital works budget for 1989-90 covers three elements of upgrading and expansion of the park: Firstly, an integrated project including upgrading of landscaping, air-conditioning, access control, security, irrigation and signage systems commenced immediately prior to 30 June 1989 and is expected to be completed early in 1990. During 1989-90 two further projects are expected to commence, both of which were deferred from 1988-89 due to the need for additional research. The core building - namely, the Technology Centre - will be upgraded and slightly expanded to improve its efficiency in providing common user facilities. It is planned to expand the research and development building in line with demand.

Division 7 put and passed.

Division 8: Education -

Hon BARRY HOUSE: The use of the word "planning" in the Ministry of Education has become a misnomer because what is happening is the implementation of a system of damage control rather than planning. In areas of rapid development and growth in the south west such as Mandurah and Margaret River the development of school facilities is proceeding far more slowly than should be the case. There are many schools with too many temporary transportable classrooms or demountable classrooms. The planning process seems to be taking too long to catch up with reality.

The new high school at Coodanup in Mandurah is an excellent facility catering well from year 8 through the whole of high school. However, it caters only for the increase in the area in excess of numbers at Mandurah High School which still has 15 or 16 transportable classrooms. The planning section of the Ministry of Education has not caught up in that area. It is well behind in Mandurah and needs to get its upgrading together quickly.

There is a proposed expenditure for Australind High School stage 2 of \$2 629 000 which is another fine facility. However, there is one small problem which could have ramifications further down the track. It has been drawn to my attention recently that as this school gets bigger it will require a full-time school nurse. However, there is nowhere in the school building to house school nursing facilities as they have not been planned for. Therefore, people at a brand-new school are trying to work out ways of dividing an area or fencing off a passageway to provide an area for a school nurse. This is because of shortsighted planning for a new high school which caters well in most respects.

It is not what appears in the schedule that counts but what does not appear in it. An amount of \$10 000 is proposed for expenditure on the Busselton High School. Big deal! An amount of \$10 000 is not sufficient to have a decent set of plans drawn up for stage 2 of the upgrading, which was promised personally by the present Minister for Education about two years ago. Members can understand why there is much disillusionment among parents, staff and students in that area. Bridgetown High School is not mentioned again this year and is becoming almost like "Blue Hills". Schools around Bridgetown seem to be getting

allocations but the Bridgetown High School has missed out on its improvements for the tenth or twelfth year. It was given a brand-new double transportable building to substitute for its library. That was tremendous except they could not get extra funds to do anything with the buildings vacated, so they still have inadequate facilities.

Another school which deserves mention is the Pemberton District High School. Replacement of this school is sorely needed because it is in a disgraceful condition. A site has been chosen for a new school and \$200 000 has been allocated for commencing construction. However, there is no clear indication from the Minister as to whether this new school will include a district high school; it may well be just a primary school. This matter needs clarification. Other schools such as Vasse, West Busselton and Clifton Park have been upgraded and improved and they are grateful for that. However, for every improvement there are four schools in my area - and I dare say in other areas around the State - that are in dire need of urgent capital works. There is mention in the schedule accompanying the Bill of a \$500 000 proposed expenditure for transportable classrooms. Can the Minister say how many transportable classrooms that will provide

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The estimate is 10.

Hon N.F. Moore: It shows at 13 in the book issued by the Minister.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Then I stand corrected. Hon Barry House is absolutely correct when he says that for every job completed there are still a number on the waiting list. However, there has been a substantial effort in relation to this area and members can see that the allocation for school buildings has increased from \$53 million last year to \$64 million this year, which is an indication of the effort being made. Of course, even when funds of that magnitude are allocated, there are always schools which must go onto the next year's list.

Hon MARGARET McALEER: I join with Hon Barry House in saying that what is memorable about the allocation of funds to education in the Agricultural Region is the absence of works in the whole of that region. I can see a significant expenditure for Geraldton only. I am glad to see that money has been set aside for the agricultural high school hostel, the agricultural district high school in Morawa and a small sum for Lancelin Primary School. Many of the schools in the Agricultural Region are ageing and there are many facilities such as toilet blocks which may not be exciting but which are extremely necessary and are falling into decay. They are extremely out of date and repair or replacement has been sought for many years - year after year. Small things which are neglected become worse and the situation is becoming scandalous in country areas. The Minister has said that the total allocation is up, but that increase is not going to the Agricultural Region. The whole of the balance of funding in respect of country schools is being turned on its head. If an extra classroom, air-conditioning or an addition to a teacher's house is required the community has to raise the money to provide it. They are only small communities which do well in relation to these matters and which are providing some facilities themselves, but that is not the sort of thing one expects them to have to do and I am sure it is not the sort of thing the Government expects metropolitan people to do.

Hon M.S. MONTGOMERY: I endorse the comments of Hon Barry House in respect of schools, particularly in the lower south west. If some of those schools were in the metropolitan area, not only would they have been refurbished in some way, but also before they had even reached that stage they would probably have been condemned. Over the last six months a lot of comments have been made about the Pemberton District High School. It is pleasing that the Government has taken steps to replace that school, but other schools need to be upgraded; for example, Walpole Primary School. Representations have been made to the Minister, and as yet they have fallen on closed ears; I will not go so far as to say at this stage that they have fallen on deaf ears. The community of Walpole has pushed vigorously to get some recognition. Successive Governments have failed to take into account the need for schools to be upgraded; at the same time the building of new schools in the metropolitan area seems to have gone ahead almost at will, because those schools are seen by the greatest number of people. However, even though schools in country areas are not seen by a lot of people, they serve wide communities. Education takes a fairly large slice out of the Government's Budget; however, previous Governments have been remiss in not putting sufficient funds into capital works programs.

Hon MAX EVANS: What proportion of the State Development Fund will be used for capital

works? How does the Government decide the extent to which this fund will be used for a particular department's capital works program? I am fascinated by the reference to Pundulmurra on page 14, under Other School Facilities. What is that?

Hon TOM STEPHENS: I am happy to inform Mr Evans that Pundulmurra is an Aboriginal training college which operates in Port Hedland. For many years the college has been run primarily with Federal Government funding. These days the State Government's Budget has had to increasingly pick up the tab for the costs of both capital and recurrent expenditure.

Hon Max Evans: Did the Minister for Budget Management hear that?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No, but in the morning I will very carefully read *Hansard* because I am sure the member's comments were very authoritative. Once again Mr Evans' thirst for knowledge has taught me something. The State Development Fund was initiated with Government funds, but it now relies on payments by developers towards specific earmarked projects, so that if a developer in a particular area wishes to enhance the interest of families in his development, he may make a contribution to the school, some sporting facility, or another joint facility. I think I remember correctly that there was a combined project at Leeming High School to develop sporting facilities, and these were expanded by way of a contribution from the local government authority, and one or more of the local developers also contributed in a modest way towards that expansion. So the fund now deals only with earmarked contributions.

Hon MAX EVANS: Until two years ago when we received the first report of the Auditor General, the dividends of the Western Australian Development Corporation and Exim were appropriated through the State Development Fund. Do those amounts of money still go into this fund; if so, how are they appropriated?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The funds available from that source are now appropriated to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Hon MAX EVANS: So these moneys now go into specific purpose funds?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Yes.

Hon N.F. MOORE: I was prompted to make a few comments about the total amount being spent on education when the Minister talked about the big increase in expenditure on education from last year to this year. If we look at what has been spent on capital works in education over the last five years, we see that in 1985-86 the Government spent \$51.7 million; in 1986-87 it spent \$47.6 million; and in 1987-88 it spent \$41.8 million. So there was an increase in 1985-86, which was a pre-election year, and in every year thereafter the expenditure was reduced. The next pre-election Budget was in 1988-89, where the expenditure was \$53.7 million. That was a pleasing increase. In this Budget the expenditure has been increased to \$64.4 million, and I suppose the Minister should be patted on the head for that because he has now changed the pattern; instead of the expenditure being reduced after an election, it has been increased.

The point needs to be made that \$64.4 million for this year, compared with \$51.7 million in 1985-86, probably does not reflect an increase in respect of the rate of inflation over that time. I have not had an opportunity of calculating this, but I suggest that when one takes inflation into account, probably less is being spent in real terms this financial year than was spent in 1985-86. However, it is pleasing to see that in actual dollar terms, the amount has been increased after the election. I hope that trend will continue because of the comment made by Hon Barry House that many towns in Western Australia are badly in need of capital works in respect of education.

I congratulate the Minister for Works and Services on the presentation of the booklet called "Non Residential Building Program 1989/90". The descriptions attached to each item of expenditure make it very easy for members to find out what is going on in their electorates. That is how I knew there were 13 transportable classrooms.

Division 8 put and passed.

Division 9: Health -

Hon MAX EVANS: I notice borrowings of \$4 million last year. I wonder why there is this specific item of \$4 million, and a contribution to the Lotteries Commission. The actual

expenditure last year was \$3.6 million, and the Budget this year shows \$6.4 million. What is the basis of the capital expenditure on the Lotteries Commission?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The \$4 million relates to a special borrowing for upgrading the Hospital Laundry and Linen Service. From memory, that was an upgrading of its equipment rather than its building.

Hon MAX EVANS: What is the basis of the Lotteries Commission putting money into capital?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I do not think there is any scientific basis for the breakdown between the contribution to Capital Works and the Consolidated Revenue Fund. In the end it would come down to the availability of funds in the respective areas.

Hon Max Evans: There is nothing specific allocated?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No.

Hon MAX EVANS: In regard to the Hospital Laundry and Linen Service, in 1975 I was instrumental in getting the plumbing work finished. John Tonkin was desperate to get that place finished before the election. The Minister should be grateful to me.

Hon J.M. Berinson: We are very grateful, especially now that we know that you did it.

Hon BARRY HOUSE: The Margaret River Hospital has been a perennial source of discontent for many years, so I am pleased to see the final allocation towards that hospital. I believe work will be completed in the relatively near future, and that will be welcomed by Margaret River residents. However, now that the facilities are there, the hospital is suffering staffing problems. A couple of doctors who perform operations in that hospital have mentioned problems about staff availability, but that argument is separate from capital works.

Warren District Hospital has an allocation of \$679 000 under capital expenditure. This looks good on paper, but this amount was virtually spent prior to the election, and the Government seems to have suddenly lost interest in the hospital since it lost the seat of Warren. Earlier commitments to complete that hospital do not seem to have been followed through by the Government, I hope not for political reasons.

If ever there was an example of Labor's policies, both federally and State, distorting the health system, Bunbury is a very good one. Bunbury has two major hospitals, St John of God, which is a private hospital, and Bunbury Regional Hospital. St John of God has recently been refurbished under an extensive capital works program and it is now a very fine facility with excess capacity. Because Federal Labor policies actively discriminate against private health insurance, the hospital is thinking of advertising for patients because its huge amount of excess capacity cannot be filled under the present Federal Labor Government's policy.

On the other hand, the Bunbury Regional Hospital has not had any major funds spent on it for 23 years, when it was originally constructed. It has now reached the stage where a decision must be made whether to scrap the hospital completely and start again, because refurbishing that hospital will probably be too expensive. As a result of staff agitation, towards the end of last year or early this year a very damning report on the Bunbury Regional Hospital was released. The facility is overcrowded. Last year I took the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Barry MacKinnon, to the hospital. The visit was not planned, but that day in the children's ward there was not sufficient room for the children, and two or three were on the verandah outside. That is a typical example of the overcrowding at that hospital. Another huge problem concerns the amount of asbestos in the building itself. That is not unique to Bunbury Regional Hospital; it is fairly common in many public buildings. The electrical system and many other things which I cannot recall now are mentioned in the report, which came to the conclusion that there was an urgent need for some sort of funding for the Bunbury Regional Hospital. The report suggested the Government may be better off starting again rather than trying to do something with those facilities because the hospital had been allowed to deteriorate so far.

Division 9 put and passed.

Division 10 put and passed.

Division 11: Marine and Harbours -

Hon MAX EVANS: Dawesville channel investigations and design are to cost \$1.429 million. We have already spent \$256 000 this year. Could the Minister advise what work has been done to date? The overall cost will be far more than that. Does the Government still propose to go ahead with the scheme?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The vote in this connection is to provide for completing the bridge design and for the completion of the sand bypassing option. I am not aware of any final decision. Given the scale of that project, I would prefer not to comment on something of which I have no definite knowledge.

Hon Max Evans: To date all this is still just in paper work and design?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes.

Hon BARRY HOUSE: Under Geographe Bay - Boat Harbour Investigation, there is no allocation for this year. The actual expenditure last year was \$17 849. Is the Minister in a position to give some idea of the nature of that expenditure?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: This is restricted to investigations and preliminary planning.

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: Under Camarvon - Fascine Investigations, the estimate is \$100 000. Could the Minister tell me whether that money is being directed to engineering estimates or whether it is for possible dredging?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: This project will undertake a full predevelopment study of the fascine dredging proposals, including evaluation of boating needs, preferred options, coastal dynamics, environmental assessment and examination of commercial opportunities.

Hon M.S. MONTGOMERY: I refer to the item entitled Improvements to Rivers, Foreshores and Estuaries and to the \$100 000 allocated for the stabilisation of Emu Point Beach at Albany. Although that amount has been allocated, storms have taken out a lot of the sand dunes that were at Emu Point Beach, which has undermined the houses, and over the last few years the beach line there has changed rather dramatically. I am concerned that even when the \$100 000 is spent and the work has been done it will not be sufficient. If that proves to be the case, would the Government allocate further funds for stabilisation of that area if it is deemed necessary?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The \$100 000 was supplemented by the local authority to the extent of \$25 000. I cannot make forward commitments but I am sure that just as the problem was taken on board and treated seriously on this occasion any decline in the position would be considered seriously as well.

Division 11 put and passed.

Division 12 put and passed.

Division 13: Office of Government Accommodation -

Hon MAX EVANS: I refer to the item entitled Public Buildings, Construction - East Perth. The estimated cost was \$35 597 000 and the expenditure to June 1989 was exactly that amount, no more and no less, with no more expenditure to come. It would have to be the only building construction in Perth that came out at the estimated cost, and I would be interested to hear the Minister's comments in that regard.

I refer also to the Parliament House additions, the estimated total cost of which is \$1.33 million. The Budget shows estimated expenditure to June 1989 of \$980 000, and actual expenditure of \$700 593. Where was that amount spent last year on additions to Parliament House, and where is the \$350 000 allocated for this year proposed to be spent? Some real money should be spent on this place. We all know that currently many facilities are lacking here. We have heard about some plans to be drawn up for extensions to the east side of the building and I would appreciate the Minister's comments.

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: I also refer to the item for Parliament House Additions. The Budget indicates that expenditure last year was \$700 593 and \$350 000 has been allocated this year, but the time has come for us to take a serious look at Parliament House. I bet those Treasury officers sitting in this Chamber do not have to share an office with three other people. They would not be here for five minutes if they did - they would go and work for somebody else.

Hon J.M. Berinson: No they wouldn't. The CSA would come in and do something about it.

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: I do not believe those officers should have to share offices, but I bet not one of those gentlemen has to share an office with three other people. I know it is a tough decision for any Government to make to spend money on Parliament House but the accommodation here for members of Parliament is a disgrace.

Hon P.G. Pendl: It is a pigsty.

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: It is becoming worse by the minute. We have little boxes for the Hansard staff and the library seems to be expanding faster than the inflation rate - it is getting bigger and all those services are needed. The Premier's office is like a little dogbox. As for the Leader of the Opposition's office, if someone wants to have a private conversation with him - if he is trying to sack someone as he has tried to sack me from time to time - the whole world can hear it.

Hon J.M. Berinson: What about the Council Ministers' office here? It is absolutely impossible!

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: I wish that when the Minister for Budget Management is slashing things from his list with his sharpened pen he would not put Parliament House at the top. The Government must make a decision sooner or later to spend a lot of money here. We should build a new Parliament House somewhere else, as happened with the Queensland Parliament. This is a disgrace. For a start, it is degrading to have four members of Parliament to an office. I am one of the fortunate ones - because I was prepared to suffer Hon Graham MacKinnon for seven years I got an air-conditioned office. I know I am one of the very few who have one. I have Hon Reg Davies with me these days. I bet Hon Beryl Jones' office is not air-conditioned.

Hon B.L. Jones: No, it is not.

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: How many other people does she share it with?

Hon B.L. Jones: With one other.

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: The office of the Leader of the Opposition, Hon George Cash, is not air-conditioned either.

Hon J.M. Berinson: It is like mine.

Hon P.H. LOCKYER: It is ridiculous - the Minister for Budget Management is supposed to be the No 3 man in the Government, yet he has to suffer an office that is not air-conditioned. I bet the Minister that not one of the Treasury officers here would go to work if the air-conditioner did not work, and I do not blame them.

Some serious plans ought to be drawn up for this Parliament. All members of all political persuasions should get together to support a practical plan. I understand a plan was shown to members the other day. I did not see it, but one of our members said it was a dreadful plan. I do not know what the answer is. I understand that we own the property across the road, and that it is all the property of the Ministry of Education. I might tell the House that a number of us began our education across the road at the old Hale School. Is there any possibility that much more thought could be given to improving the lot of members of Parliament? The time has come for us to bite the bullet and all members of the Parliament deserve to know they are not going to continue to live as they are presently living in this Parliament. No wonder people go half mad in this place - it really is a disgrace.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: There are other reasons for going the other half mad in this place. I cannot argue against Hon Philip Lockyer's proposition in principle, but he really highlighted the difficulty when he said we cannot do things by half measures any more and that we must bite the bullet and put in a very substantial amount of money. That must be considered in the context of continually reducing loan fund approvals by the Loan Council and continuing increases in demands from other sectors.

Hon P.H. Lockyer: Charlie Court told me that in 1980. He sounded just like you and he shed nearly as many tears.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: He would have told Hon Phil Lockyer in 1981, 1982 and 1983 as well if he had been here, and it would have been true every time. The member has some

strong allies in very high quarters in the Government, but to be fair I am not yet converted to his side, purely because of the constant pressure of setting priorities. We heard a few moments ago that \$64 million was not enough for the Education vote, and it is not; the same could be said in a number of other areas. I think we are inching forward towards a decision which will produce something substantial, but it is a very difficult decision to make.

Hon P.H. Lockyer: What about the \$700 000? You could not even scratch the surface with that.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Again that would do no more than cover the preliminary planning and there is a vote which cannot be delayed, which is \$300 000 for asbestos removal. Members should not ask me to get into a discussion about asbestos removal because that really should have a lot more discriminating attention than I feel is sometimes given to it. That is a separate question and another Minister's portfolio, and I will not open the way to a demarcation dispute.

Division 13 put and passed.

Divisions 14 to 17 put and passed.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again at a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management).

[Continued below.]

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE - EXTENDED AFTER 11.00 PM

Wednesday, 20 December

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [10.42 pm]: I move -

That the House continue to sit beyond 11.00 pm to complete consideration of Order of the Day No 5.

HON GEORGE CASH (North Metropolitan - Leader of the Opposition) [10.43 pm]: In supporting the motion moved by the Leader of the House, I indicate that with the progress the House is making with this Bill at the moment it is possible that the debate will be finished a few minutes before 11.00 pm or just a few minutes after. I know that my learned colleague, Hon Max Evans, could speak until 3.00 am or 4.00 am on various items in the Capital Works Budget, but he believes, as I do, that the Opposition has made its point in respect of questioning items of expenditure. The Opposition looks forward to the next item of debate - the establishment of a committee system which will enable us to handle the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the General Loan and Capital Works Fund accounts in a different manner next year.

Question put and passed.

APPROPRIATION (GENERAL LOAN AND CAPITAL WORKS FUND) BILL

Committee

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting. The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon Garry Kelly) in the Chair; Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management) in charge of the Bill.

Schedule 1 -

Progress was reported after Division 17 had been agreed to.

Division 18: Resources Development -

Hon BARRY HOUSE: Three items within this Division are close to my home and I would like to seek more information about all of them. The first item involves assistance to industry. There is no allocation for SCM Chemicals Pty Ltd this year, although it was allocated \$9.5 million last year. I would like some explanation about the source of that expenditure. Secondly, the Kemerton infrastructure has been allocated just over \$5 million this year. The third item concerns Barrack Silicon Pty Ltd, which has been allocated \$4.7 million this year. I understand this amount was agreed between Barrack Silicon and the Government prior to the construction of that plant in order to compensate Barrack Silicon for any delays in starting up the furnaces. The Opposition pointed out at the time that this would

be a very costly exercise, which resulted initially from a political decision to relocate the silicon smelter from Bunbury to Picton, and, when that site proved unsuitable, negotiating another relocation to Kemerton. In the meantime the company was disadvantaged and the Government wasted more taxpayers' money. The Barrack Silicon plant has started operations and is progressing so well that there are already plans to double the capacity of the plant.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: SCM Chemicals does not show an allocation this year because the balance of funds due under that assistance arrangement are payable in the next financial year, not this financial year. In respect of the Kemerton infrastructure, funding for that project was approved in 1988 to allow purchase of properties at Kemerton for additions to the buffer zone and to provide an access road into Kemerton from the South West Highway. To the end of the 1988-89 financial year, 55 of the required 65 properties sought have been purchased and negotiations are advanced on a further three. It is anticipated that the purchase of the remaining properties will be completed in 1989-90. Construction of the access road should commence in September and be completed early in 1990. In respect of Barrack Silicon, arising out of the relocation of the silicon project at Kemerton the State had certain outstanding obligations to compensate Barrack Silicon. The State has agreed with Barrack on a total final compensation of \$4.7 million. This is made up of the following items: Identified commissioning delays, \$4.4 million; road costs, \$80 000; freight costs, \$120 000, and hazardous gas, \$100 000.

Division 18 put and passed.

Division 19 put and passed.

Division 20: Sport and Recreation -

Hon MAX EVANS: I thought the original swimming complex was to cost something like \$4.8 million or \$5 million. The proposed expenditure this year is \$6.3 million, but the estimated total cost will be \$9.194 million. Will more money be spent after the end of June or will it cut out at a lower figure than originally estimated? Could the Minister provide the total make-up of the amounts up to \$9 million?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Funds of \$6.3 million were approved by the financial economic development committee in August 1988 to provide facilities to run the 1991 Sixth World Swimming Championships. Subsequent meetings with FINA, the world governing body, resulted in significant changes to the competition program and facilities required to hold the event. This resulted in a significant impact on the Budget estimates. The Cabinet committee approved a revised Capital Works Program of \$5.958 million, plus \$3.236 million for event operations capital works, which brings the amount to a total of \$9.194 million. Expenditure of \$6.34 million is estimated for 1989-90, with the remainder to be expended in 1991. Works to be completed include three external pools, site and external works, score boards, poolside amenities and upgrading of the Bicton pool facilities for women's water polo.

Division 20 put and passed.

Divisions 21 to 28 put and passed.

Division 29: LandCorp -

Hon MAX EVANS: Can the Minister provide an update on the latest position on the Swan Brewery Development? What work has been carried out and what will be the final amount spent?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: An amount of \$5.7 million is provided in 1989-90 for continued redevelopment of the site. Expenditure will be incurred on external renovation and reroofing of the existing buildings and on the construction of the sea wall, boardwalk and jetty. The redevelopment aim is to provide a facility with broad community appeal, focusing on arts and performance. A review is to be undertaken on private sector involvement and an Old Brewery Management Board is to be established. That is the aim, but the current position is that activity is frozen pending an application to the High Court. I think I am right in saying that that matter is due to be heard in March. As it happens, it raises questions going well beyond the narrow question of the brewery redevelopment project. It is in fact developing into a constitutional question of high significance. I think it most unlikely under current circumstances that the allocation will be expended this year.

Division 29 put and passed.

Divisions 30 to 34 put and passed.

Schedule put and passed.

Schedule 2 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management), and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - ORDINARY

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [10.56 pm]: I move -
That the House do now adjourn.

Adjournment Debate - Clerk's Deferment of Christmas Day Bill - Senator's Plagiarism

HON GARRY KELLY (South Metropolitan) [10.57 pm]: I wish to bring to the attention of the House a serious matter in the history of the federation. Some five or six days ago I asked the Clerk - bearing in mind the terrible time constraints we face if we are to finish Government business before Christmas Day - to draft a piece of legislation to address this shortage of time. As is his wont, the Clerk came to the fore and drafted the Deferment of Christmas Day Bill which puts the observance of Christmas Day in this State back until 2 April next year.

Hon P.G. Pental: Are you sure that Hon J.M. Berinson is not behind this?

Hon GARRY KELLY: I have shown that draft legislation to a number of people who are quite impressed with it because it shows innovation and a significant amount of lateral thinking. I was listening to 6WF on the wireless this morning and heard a news item stating that Senator Noel Crichton-Browne had introduced similar legislation to the Senate to defer Christmas Day to 15 January 1990. That shows very poor taste and, to say the least, it is an example of plagiarism - I would go so far as to say that he has stolen the idea from this place.

Hon P.G. Pental: Would you not agree that we set the pace?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon GARRY KELLY: I contend that it has probably set the stage for one of the worst constitutional crises ever to face the federation. The Attorney General may find himself embroiled in endless discussion with officers of his department in an attempt to work out a way to counteract these scandalous activities.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I may move to repeal section 109 of the Constitution.

Hon GARRY KELLY: What does that section say?

Hon P.G. Pental: It stops you from speaking!

Hon GARRY KELLY: It is a scandalous activity for that senator to have the temerity to introduce such legislation. During the Budget debate last night I informed Hon Phillip Pental that astronomical observations were a Federal power. That comment obviously went over his head, because he did not stop speaking about the Bickley Observatory.

Hon P.G. Pental: I was seeing stars all night!

Hon GARRY KELLY: Astronomical observations are part of the Federal power, but time is a State power!

Hon J.M. Berinson: Absolutely!

Hon GARRY KELLY: I contend that the Federal Parliament has no power whatsoever to pass a Bill purporting to put back Christmas Day; that is solely a State responsibility.

Hon P.G. Pandal: It is a State right.

Hon GARRY KELLY: Not only that; the penalty prescribed in our Bill is one with a humane and reasonable penalty; that is, a \$2 fine, decapitation, or both for daring to observe Christmas Day on any day other than 2 April next year. The penalty attached to Senator Crichton-Browne's legislation shows just how illiberal that gentleman is, and in terms of the American Constitution it would be cruel and unusual punishment. His penalty for observing Christmas Day other than on 15 January is to inflict on people compulsory readings of the Commonwealth *Hansard*. How draconian can one be?

Hon R.G. Pike: That is far worse!

Hon GARRY KELLY: It is a terrible punishment. It behoves this House and the Government of this State to make it clear that such Commonwealth legislation cannot be applied to the States because the Commonwealth Bill purports to put back Christmas Day for not only the Territories but for every State in this country. It is outrageous; we cannot have that. It is important, therefore, Mr President, that I incorporate into *Hansard*, as part of our history, this innovative Bill, this example of lateral thinking -

A BILL

FOR

AN ACT to defer the observance of the alleged birthdate of Jesus Christ for 1989

Short title

1. This Act be cited as the *Deferment of Christmas Day Act 1989*.

Christmas Day deferred

2. Because it has been found necessary for Parliament, particularly the Legislative Council, to remain in session longer than anticipated and because it is desirable to ensure that members of the Parliament enjoy their annual vacation to the same extent as the rest of the working population of the State, it is hereby declared that notwithstanding any written law, canon of any ecclesiastical organization, or any rule of law, Christmas Day observance for 1989 is transferred from Monday December 25 1989 to Monday April 2 1990 and any written law or subsidiary law of the State shall be read, construed and applied accordingly.

Penalty: \$2 or decapitation or both.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I remind the member that he has only five minutes left.

Hon GARRY KELLY: I will not take long, Mr President. I know time is precious.

That sort of legislation demonstrates the power of this place. We have heard about the balance of payments crisis facing our country. It is important to get some sort of industry together which will generate income for the country. I have thought of one - the space launching business. The previous Queensland Government proposed that a space port be established at Cape York. I do not know whether the Goss Government will take that further. It would be an innovation for the Western Australian Government if it got the Minister for Economic Development and Trade to sign up contracts to steal a march on the Long March missile from China, from NASA and from the European Space Agency by offering launching facilities in Western Australia allowing for much larger payloads with very small launching costs. The biggest problem facing space exploration is gravity. If we could get rid of the law of gravity or mitigate it in some way, our launching costs would be lower and we could get bigger payloads into space. A suitable site for such a facility would be Subiaco Oval. Football has just about had it. The Subiaco City Council does not want the WA Football Commission to have it. I propose that the Parliament enact the Subiaco Oval (Suspension of the Law of Gravity) Act 1990 to allow spacecraft to leave the Earth from Subiaco, Western Australia, at a much cheaper rate than would otherwise be the case. I further suggest that the House convene on Sunday, 1 April 1990 to enact that legislation.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.03 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

BURSWOOD CASINO - FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

Government Inquiry

981. Hon P.G. PENDAL to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

Will the Minister clarify the Government's intention of conducting an inquiry into the foreign ownership of the Burswood Casino by indicating -

- (a) whether the current agreement prohibits foreign ownership;
- (b) whether the current ownership structure contravenes the agreement; and
- (c) whether the Cabinet has expressed any provisional view on the matter?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

- (a) No. It is a condition of the agreement that the total number of units held by foreign persons shall not exceed 40 per cent of the total number of units in issue in the Burswood Property Trust at any time. It also provides that I can exempt any holding of units by a foreign person from the provisions of the agreement.
- (b) No.
- (c) No. As I have stated before, a thorough investigation as to the suitability of the applicant must be carried out before the matter is formally considered.

PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES LTD - GOVERNMENT PAYMENTS

IBD Communications Management - International Business Development Pty Ltd

984. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Leader of the House representing the Treasurer:

- (1) Have any payments been made by the Government its instrumentalities or agencies on behalf of PIL to the following companies -
 - (a) IBD Communications Management; and
 - (b) International Business Development Pty Ltd?
- (2) If yes, will the Minister please provide details?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The Treasurer has provided the following reply based on Treasury advice -

- (1) No payments have been made by the Government, its instrumentalities or agencies on behalf of PIL to either IBD Communications Management or International Business Development Pty Ltd.
- (2) Not applicable.

SPORT AND RECREATION - BMX CLUB

South Metropolitan Region - Funding Assistance

986. Hon P.G. PENDAL to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

With reference to a BMX club which is run by volunteers and caters for children aged between four and 18 years, in my region -

- (1) Is any funding available to assist the club with track improvements and maintenance and the building of a canteen and toilet block?
- (2) If so, how should the club proceed with an application for such funding?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

- (1) Not at this time. The community sporting and recreation facilities fund is currently being reviewed, and no new applications for funding have been called in this current financial year.
- (2) Not applicable.

HETHERINGTON, MR BOB - FORMER MEMBER
Government Employment

993. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Does Mr Bob Hetherington, a former member of the Legislative Council, hold any positions within Government or Government agencies at the current time?
- (2) If so, what payment does he receive for those positions?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The Premier has provided the following reply -

- (1)-(2)
No.

LEESON, MR RON - FORMER MEMBER
Government Employment

994. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Does Mr Ron Leeson, a former member of the Legislative Council, hold any positions within Government or Government agencies at the current time?
- (2) If so, what payment does he receive for those positions?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The Premier has provided the following reply -

- (1)-(2)
No.

BATEMAN, MR TOM - FORMER MEMBER
Government Employment

995. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Does Mr Tom Bateman, a former member of the Legislative Assembly, hold any positions within Government or Government agencies at the current time?
- (2) If so, what payment does he receive for those positions?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The Premier has provided the following reply -

- (1) Commissioner, Western Australian Lotteries Commission.
- (2) \$6 000 per annum.

TAYLOR, MR DON - FORMER MEMBER
Government Employment

997. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Does Mr Don Taylor, a former member of the Legislative Assembly, hold any positions within Government or Government agencies at the current time?
- (2) If so, what payment does he receive for those positions?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The Premier has provided the following reply -

- (1)-(2)
No.

SHIPPING - SHIP PAINTERS AND DOCKERS
Work Force

1001. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Minister for Racing and Gaming representing the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Will the Minister advise if the Chinese fishing fleet, which is permitted to fish in Western Australian waters, has been landing and selling frozen snapper fillets on the WA market, contrary to Federal Government guidelines?

- (2) Is the Minister aware of concern within the WA fishing industry that Chinese fishing boats are able to sell their catch under a "Product of Australia" label in Singapore without complying with the stringent export regulations of Australia?
- (3) What action has the Minister taken to advise the Federal Government that the agreement entered into by the Federal Government to allow Chinese trawlers to fish off the north west coast is having a dramatic effect on the domestic market?
- (4) Will there be greater protection of the Western Australian fishing industry as a result of the activities of the Chinese trawlers?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

The Minister for Fisheries has provided the following reply -

- (1) The Chinese fishing fleet is not permitted to fish in Western Australian waters. However, under an agreement between Australia and China the fleet is permitted to fish in Commonwealth waters off Western Australia.

Some of the product caught has been sold to a Western Australian marketer of fish who in turn has offered it for sale in Western Australia. Some of the fish caught is north west snapper.

Following the adoption of new guidelines for the landing of catch from foreign fishing vessels, the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industries and Energy has sought my views on the restrictions which should apply to future landings of product from the Chinese vessels. It is important that the Commonwealth finalise this aspect prior to 1 March 1990 when the fleet is expected to return to Australian waters.

- (2) I am aware of industry concern, but am not aware of fish from the Chinese vessels being sold in Singapore as "Product of Australia".
- (3) The Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industries and Energy has been advised that Western Australia views with strong concern the 1989 practice of landing of fish from foreign boats and that the new guideline 5 on this subject should be strictly adhered to.
- (4) The degree of protection given to the Western Australian fishing industry will depend upon the decisions taken at the Commonwealth level.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PRISONS - FREMANTLE *Riot Compensation Applications*

664. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Minister for Corrective Services:

- (1) Have the cases of all officers seeking compensation as a result of the riot at Fremantle gaol been determined?
- (2) If not, what is the current status of those claims?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The department has provided me with the following information -

(1)-(2)

Eleven applications have been received. Two applications were deferred at the request of solicitors pending receipt of further information. Two applications are awaiting further information from solicitors requested by the assessor. Seven applications are in order and are before the assessor for determination in the near future.

STATE FINANCE - STATE PUBLIC SECTOR BORROWINGS
Overseas Borrowings

665. Hon M.S. MONTGOMERY to the Minister for Budget Management:

- (1) What is the overall level of State public sector borrowings?
- (2) What proportion of this money is borrowed offshore?
- (3) Has the State Government guaranteed any private borrowings from overseas?
- (4) If yes, what is the overall level of such guarantees?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The Treasurer has provided the following detail -

- (1) The State public sector borrowing level as at 30 June 1989 is detailed in the Treasurer's Annual Statements Part B. It would take considerable time to collate specific details on borrowings since 30 June. However, a measure of this level can be given by advising that the global borrowing program for Western Australia, as approved by the Australian Loan Council, is \$448.4 million.
- (2) Overseas borrowings as at 30 June 1989 were \$1 777.7 million. Of the \$448.4 million global allocation, 22 per cent, \$98.648 million, may be borrowed overseas.
- (3)-(4) No, although a guaranteed loan by WA Government Holdings Ltd in United States dollars was on-lent by that company to the Western Australian Diamond Trust. This loan has been repaid in full.

BIRDS - LICENSED NATIVE BIRD EGG COLLECTORS

666. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming representing the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) How many licensed native bird egg collectors are there in Western Australia?
- (2) Is a senior technical officer of the Woodvale Research Centre of the Department of Conservation and Land Management a licensed collector?
- (3) If so, are travelling or living away from home allowances payable to this person?
- (4) If so, how much in travelling or living away from home allowances was paid in the last financial year?
- (5) Is the Minister aware that the New South Wales national parks and wildlife service recently apprehended an illegal dealer in native bird eggs, who was carrying documents indicating he had bought eggs from a Western Australian licensed egg collector?
- (6) Does the Minister consider it is a conflict of interest for an official wildlife technical research officer with CALM to be a licensed egg collector?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

- (1) Six are currently licensed.
- (2) No.
- (3)-(4) Not applicable.
- (5) No.
- (6) No, so long as the collection of eggs for personal purposes is carried out in accordance with the Wildlife Conservation Act, and independently of the person's duties as a departmental officer.

CHILDREN'S COURT ACT - NEW LEGISLATION
Video Facility

667. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Attorney General:

I refer to the recently proclaimed Children's Court Act: Will the Attorney General advise whether the new legislation has removed the facility and option of using video/closed circuit television for juvenile victims who need to give evidence in criminal proceedings against adult persons?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

A side effect of the recent legislation has been to reduce to a very small number the cases heard in the Children's Court for which the video witness arrangements were first organised. The matter is now being considered by the department and the judges, with a view to similar facilities being developed in the District Court.

CHILDREN'S COURT ACT - NEW LEGISLATION
Children's Evidence - Court Appearance Requirement

668. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Attorney General:

On the same subject, does that mean that children who are the victims of crimes will be required to appear in person in higher courts to give evidence against alleged adult offenders?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

They always have been, but the number of cases will now increase substantially as a result of the change to the legislation. Intensive attention is being paid to this question with the benefit of the assistance of Ms Rayner, the Chairman of the Law Reform Commission, who was very helpful in initially establishing that system, and who is being consulted with a view to further developments.

Hon George Cash: I assume amendments may be brought forward?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes.

PRISONERS - SEX OFFENDERS
Wooroloo Prison Farm

669. Hon PETER FOSS to the Minister for Corrective Services:

Is the computer now able to yield the information requested on sex offenders at the Wooroloo Prison Farm?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

I have that information, and the raising of the question has advanced some consideration of this general question that the executive director has in hand. It has been indicated that the criteria applied to the selection of prisoners to be placed at Wooroloo has been so stringent that very few prisoners convicted of sex offences have been available for placement. I do not have the precise figures per month, but I am reasonably certain that at no stage has more than one such prisoner been placed at Wooroloo.

That, of course, calls into question the whole rationale of the placement of these prisoners, and it appears that the criteria I established with a view to meeting the concerns of the local community are tending to show up as impractical. That being the case, I have asked the executive director to expedite a review of the position, something he already had in mind. My present inclination is to believe that it would not be satisfactory to relax the established criteria. If that is so, the whole question of placement of prisoners at Wooroloo will have to be fundamentally reconsidered.

BURSWOOD CASINO - FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

Exemption

670. Hon P.G. PENDAL to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

Following the answer to question 981 on notice given today, which alluded to the Government's intention to conduct an inquiry into the foreign ownership of the Burswood Casino -

- (1) Has the Minister at any time since he has been Minister for Racing and Gaming exercised his power to exempt any holding of units by a foreign person from the provisions of the agreement?
- (2) If so, will he reveal details?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

(1)-(2)

I am not sure which provision the honourable member is talking about as there are two. Therefore, I suggest he place his question on notice and I will provide an answer for him. However, to the best of my recollection the answer is no.

ROADS - PORT HEDLAND-NEWMAN HIGHWAY

Motorists Facilities Need

671. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Lands:

Does the Minister share my concern about the need to ensure that facilities are available for motorists travelling along the newly opened Port Hedland-Newman sealed highway?

The PRESIDENT: That question is nearly out of order as it asks for an opinion. However, the Minister may answer.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN replied:

I thank the member for prior notice of this question.

Under the Government's Wittenoom assistance policy it released a roadhouse-motel site which was subsequently allocated to Auski Holdings in mid-1987. Members should note that it is proposed in the Reserves and Land Revestment Bill to excise additional land from the Hamersley Range National Park for an airstrip and waste disposal site for this project. Auski has been unable to proceed with the development primarily because of access problems to the site as a result of a Main Roads Department road culvert which is part of the road upgrading. Auski has, however, until July 1991 to complete the development, which I understand includes a 72 room motel.

Recently a Mr Manser has sought the release of a further roadhouse site at Cunmagnunna Hill. This site is not supported due to its close proximity to the Auski site. However, the Department of Land Administration is considering two possible sites further north which would be approximately midway between the Auski site and Port Hedland. There is one other possible stopping facility to the south of the Auski site. This involves the location of a new town, possibly in the region of Yandicoogina. All Government authorities support the need for these vital facilities and are working together to ensure appropriate sites are released.

SPORT AND RECREATION - BMX CLUBS

Funding

672. Hon P.G. PENDAL to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

This question arises from an answer given today to question 986 in which the Minister advised that no funding is currently available for BMX clubs which apply for it. In light of item 32, which appears in Division 25 under Miscellaneous Services in the State Budget and which releases \$3 million for outer metropolitan facilities, will he consider allowing BMX clubs to make application for, and have access to, part of that \$3 million?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

The appropriate fund in this case is the community sporting and recreational facilities fund which, as has been advised, is currently under review. I am not sure what form that fund will take at the end of the review. All I can do is reiterate the answer given previously that the outer metropolitan facilities fund is not controlled by the Minister for Sport and Recreation.

BURSWOOD CASINO - FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

Exemption

673. Hon P.G. PENDAL to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I asked the Minister a question earlier about foreign ownership of the Burswood Casino. If the information he has requested from me is provided today will he undertake to provide the information we seek in respect of any exemption given in relation to foreign ownership before the Parliament rises?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

I can see nothing preventing my doing that. However, I do not think it wise to give a commitment until I know what the circumstances are. If the information is readily available I will be more than happy to provide it.

QUESTIONS - UNANSWERED

Answers Request

674. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Leader of the House:

- (1) The Leader of the House would be aware that there are 39 postponed questions on the Notice Paper. Will he make every effort to have those questions answered by tomorrow or in due course in writing to the members involved?
- (2) Will he also ensure that the questions and answers are incorporated in *Hansard* in due course so that all members are able to gain knowledge from the answers given?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(2)

Yes.

The PRESIDENT: Whether something goes into *Hansard* has nothing to do with the Leader of the House.

BURSWOOD CASINO - FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

Dempster, Mr Dallas - Unit Holding Changes

675. Hon P.G. PENDAL to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

Given that ownership of the Burswood Casino is the subject of an agreement ratified by this Parliament -

- (1) Has the Minister been advised whether there have been any alterations in the number of unit holdings held until now by Mr Dallas Dempster?
- (2) To his knowledge, has there been any substantial disposal of those units?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

(1)-(2)

I once again ask the member to put his question on notice.

BURSWOOD CASINO - FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

Unit Holdings Disposal Control

676. Hon P.G. PENDAL to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

My supplementary question is whether the disposal of unit holdings in Burswood Casino by Australian nationals are subject to the same controls and exemptions applying to any units held by foreigners?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

Once again I ask the member to put his question on notice. I am happy to get that information for him, but I want to be absolutely sure what he is seeking so that I can consider the matter and give a full answer.
