

# Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 22 September 1988

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett) took the Chair at 10.45 am, and read prayers.

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### *Newspaper Article - Parliamentary Debates*

THE SPEAKER: Members, I feel it is timely for me to say a few words about the front page article in this morning's *The West Australian* headed "Our Parliament in a Mess, says Cowan".

I must join with the Leader of the National Party and a number of others who from time to time have deplored the disappointing standard of behaviour and debate which occurs in this House. I have many times addressed the House on this subject, as have my predecessors. I, together with all the other critics and commentators I have referred to, deeply regret that at times parliamentary debates descend to the levels that they do and, as I have said so many times, I fervently wish that it were not so. In fact, I have, as members would be aware, on a number of occasions taken steps which have been designed to try to improve the situation.

However, having said that, I must insist that whatever its faults, whatever its weaknesses, whatever perils are inherent in the system we have, it is far superior to those systems in other countries where there are no Opposition members; there is no true freedom to question those in power, and the reward for being outspoken against the authorities is often a prison term, and in some cases worse.

This year, parliamentary institutions following the Westminster style have been recognising the 300th anniversary of a revolution. The English revolution of 1688 led directly to the granting of the Bill of Rights, 1689. It would be well for all of us to remember at this time that the single most important attribute of our so called parliamentary privileges is the freedom of speech established by the 1689 Bill of Rights.

The ability to speak in this House without fear of being questioned in any court as a result of statements we make is the most important and valuable freedom we have. I, along with so many of my predecessors, would simply once again urge members to be very careful to treat this freedom as a privilege and not as a licence, as has been done on a number of occasions, and an opportunity to make wild and unsubstantiated statements.

Members: Hear, hear!

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### *Liveris, Mr Andy - Retirement*

THE SPEAKER: Before going any further I want to point to the fact that I was preceded into the Chamber this morning by Andy Liveris, and some members would know that is an unusual course of events. The reason that took place is because this is the last day that Andy Liveris will be in this Chamber as the Clerk of Papers. Andy has decided to retire and will be doing so early in October. There will be a parliamentary recess between now and the date that he retires, so this will be the last day that a number of us will have to talk to him and recognise the contribution he has made to this place over the last in excess of 20 years. Andy has been a particularly loyal and diligent servant of this House, and I hope that his exemplary service to this House and its members can be followed by those who follow behind him in that task, but that will be very difficult. I want to take this opportunity of saying to Andy, on behalf of everybody in this House, how grateful we are for the service he has given to us, and I want to wish him and his family well in his retirement.

[Applause.]

MR PETER DOWDING (Maylands - Premier) [10.54 am]: On behalf of the Government, I wish to endorse your remarks, Mr Speaker, and to say that Andy Liveris has shown an unfailing courtesy to all of us who have been in this place for varying periods of time. I am sure he has made everybody in this House feel the warmth of his friendship and his ability to deal with those often tiresome and difficult problems rapidly, efficiently, and with a great

deal of courtesy and support. It is very difficult for one person in this Chamber to have that sort of relationship with people on all sides of the House and in all stages of their careers. Andy Liveris has certainly managed to do that, and on behalf of the Government I would like to publicly wish him the very best for his future and to thank him on behalf of the people of Western Australia for the service he has given them in this place.

**MR MacKINNON** (Murdoch - Leader of the Opposition) [10.55 am]: In line with your opening remarks, Mr Speaker, I have great pleasure in unequivocally supporting the Premier's remarks on behalf of Andy Liveris. Andy has been around this Parliament a lot longer than most of the members and has served many members, both present and past. In my thanks to Andy I would want all those former members of our party to be associated with our thanks. Andy has, as the Premier said, been able to carry out his tasks in this Parliament in an exemplary way. He has set a standard that all others who have come here have followed; a standard that I think is very high. We join with the Premier and you, Mr Speaker, in not only thanking Andy but wishing him and his family well for the future, whatever that might hold for them, and indicate we will remember the tremendous work he has done on our behalf and will attempt to make this place the very good democratic Parliament that it is.

**MR COWAN** (Merredin - Leader of the National Party) [10.56 am]: It gives me a great deal of pleasure to support your remarks, Mr Speaker, and the remarks made by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in conveying to Mr Andy Liveris the appreciation of the members of the National Party for the services he has provided to us in the course of our political careers. There are not any members of the National Party who have been here for as long as Andy, and as a consequence they have looked to him on many occasions for advice in the areas where he was able to give that advice. On behalf of the members of the National Party I say to him that I wish him well in his retirement, and the experiences of myself and my colleagues have been the better for knowing Andy Liveris.

[Applause.]

## MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

### *Uranium - Mining and Export*

**THE SPEAKER:** I have to advise that earlier today I received a letter from Mr Richard Court MLA, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, seeking to debate as a matter of public importance the issue of uranium mining and its export from Western Australia.

If sufficient members agree to this motion, I will allow it.

[Five members rose in their places.]

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with the Sessional Order, half an hour will be allocated to speakers on my left and half an hour to speakers on my right for the purpose of this debate. Before I call on the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I want to point out to members that from today I will recognise the new Deputy Leader of the National Party, the member for Katanning-Roe, from the seat which members can see him now occupying in the front row.

**MR COURT** (Nedlands - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.00 am]: I move -

That this House supports the commencement of uranium mining and its export from Western Australia, provided stringent safeguards are in place and it is used exclusively for peaceful purposes, taking into account -

1. Market opportunities which are currently available internationally
2. The environmental concerns in heavily populated countries burning predominantly fossil fuels

and that this House still supports the statement of the Deputy Premier, Mr David Parker in relation to the mining and export of uranium on the Diana Warnock programme on 31 May 1988 when he stated -

"that we have a highly illogical policy at the moment which is neither one thing nor the other, and which is in fact quite nonsensical - and I have been arguing for change"

and that this House endorses the Deputy Premier's contribution to bring about change in Labor Party policy on the uranium issue.

Whenever the issue of uranium mining is raised we have an absurd situation in relation to the Australian Labor Party. Whether it be their national conference, their State conference or in this House, they go to great lengths not to debate the subject, but try to skirt around the issue. Last week in this House I asked the Minister for Mines a question about uranium mining, and he said it was not his responsibility, and handballed the question on to someone else. I asked, "Just what is the Minister for Mines responsible for if he cannot answer questions in relation to the mining of uranium?" This year, when we moved an amendment to the Address-in-Reply to support the Deputy Premier on the stance that he had taken in relation to uranium mining, again we found a number of excuses as to why members opposite could not support even their own Deputy Premier on this subject.

Mr Pearce: Rubbish!

Mr COURT: What does the Leader of the House mean - rubbish?

Mr Pearce: I said quite clearly the Government supported the Deputy Premier on that occasion.

Mr COURT: Why did members opposite not support that amendment to the Address-in-Reply? I will give the House the explanation. Members opposite did not support amendments to the Address-in-Reply being made, yet in Opposition they did not mind moving amendments to the Address-in-Reply.

Mr Parker: You did not support them when you were in Government.

Mr COURT: Members opposite cannot have it both ways. The main argument was that the Government could not support an amendment to the Address-in-Reply which supported the Deputy Premier's comments in support of the moves being made to change the Government's policy in relation to uranium mining because members opposite did not want to amend the Address-in-Reply. They said there had been two precedents where the Premier of the day had agreed to changes to the Address-in-Reply. This was a pretty weak argument, because they themselves have on many occasions moved to have the Address-in-Reply amended. Leaving that aside, today we have a forum during this matter of public importance where we are able to debate this issue, and I would like to think we will gain the support of both sides of the House on this matter because it is one where members opposite support the stance we have taken in this motion, and I am sure they support the position being taken by the Deputy Premier.

The uranium policy of the Labor Party is in itself a bit of a joke. Most members opposite would agree with that point of view. The Deputy Premier was on the "Diana Warnock" program on 31 May, where he stated "... that we have a highly illogical policy at the moment which is neither one thing nor the other, and which is in fact quite nonsensical - and I have been arguing for change." I commend the Deputy Premier for the stance that he has taken on this issue, and some of his backbench colleagues who have also been prepared to be quite forthright in their stance on this issue. It is all very well for some of them to say, "We want the policy changed," but they are not doing anything constructive to make sure that that policy is changed. We have the scenario where Government members are going into their State conference this weekend, and they have, as they think, cleverly removed a number of items from the agenda. They do not want anything controversial discussed at that conference. One of the items which has been removed is a discussion on changes to the party's uranium policy.

Members know only too well that the current policy of the Labor Party in this State and Australia-wide discriminates very much against Western Australia. It allows no mining of uranium in this State, and no export of that uranium from this State. Our former Premier actually supported a uranium project proceeding in South Australia at the expense of Western Australia's project. He was prepared to participate in negotiations with the Federal Government which have enabled the Roxby Downs project to proceed, and that has enabled the South Australian Government to establish that large project in that State. He was prepared to sacrifice the development of uranium mines in this State, even though some of the companies concerned had spent a great deal of money - literally millions of dollars - in exploration and working up projects in this State.

It has been said that if the embargo were lifted, if the Australian Labor Party's policy was amended, if new mines were allowed to open and take advantage of the opportunities

appearing in the world, we would be looking at an additional income of some \$600 million to \$700 million. The Kintyre project, if it were able to proceed, could result in an additional \$200 million a year in revenue to this State.

There is a growing demand for uranium, as we have previously outlined in this House. Currently some 16 per cent of all power generated in the world comes from nuclear energy. It is forecast that by the year 2000 approximately 20 per cent of the world's power generation will be coming from nuclear energy, so it is one of the most significant forms of power generation in the world today - not in the future. We cannot continue to ignore the fact that we as a country have something like one third of the world's total known resources of uranium, yet we supply only 10 per cent of the world markets.

To use the terms of members opposite, there is a window of opportunity in the marketplace. In the early 1990s there will be a need for new supplies of uranium to come into the international marketplace, and this is why the CRA people are keen to proceed now with the Kintyre project so that they can win those sales contracts and participate in the market which will be available in the early 1990s. The way the Government is going, we will end up with a similar situation to the North West Shelf project where, in the early 1970s, as a result of the actions of the Whitlam Government, that project was put back many years. People do not realise the great cost to this State of having that project delayed for as long as it was. When that project was delayed, projects in other countries were enabled to go ahead and take advantage of that market opportunity. We are going the same way now in this uranium question. If we do not allow these mines to be developed in this State, mines in other countries will be developed to take advantage of this opportunity.

Earlier this year we had the debacle of the Federal conference of the ALP, where members went through the contortions of trying to put off the debate on this issue, and they came up with the compromise of forming a committee to look into the matter, report back and so on. To the credit of the member for Welshpool, who recently attended a resources conference in the Pilbara, he tried to explain to the meeting when that policy review on uranium would be completed. The best I could work out was that by the middle of next year some reports might be coming back. In other words, it has been put off for a year; it has been put in the too hard basket and there will not be any change to the Federal policy in the short term. It is only by pressure from the States and from the Labor Party's own State Conference here that the Government will be able to ensure that changes do take place so that Western Australia can rightly become a major uranium exporter. Members opposite have made a mistake by keeping that item off their State Conference agenda. They are signalling to the mining industry and the people of Australia in general that they really do not want to see a change to that Federal policy which makes it virtually impossible under Labor Governments for projects in Western Australia to get off the ground. I hope the Deputy Premier does support this motion. Will he be supporting it?

Mr Parker: I will speak shortly, don't you worry. You will hear what I have to say.

Mr COURT: I just thought he might be able to tell me whether he supports it because we have gone to great trouble to support him in his stance on uranium mining and we would like to think this House could support this motion so pressure can be applied for the Labor Party to change its policy to enable these projects to proceed. It is interesting to note that members opposite do not mind rubbishing what goes on at a Liberal Party Conference. They are going to say proudly, "We have been able to launder our conference." We read in the newspapers that anything controversial - and there is a list there, which includes uranium mining - will not be discussed. The minerals and energy committee is recommending a relaxation of the anti uranium policy and they have taken it off the agenda; they have taken off the agenda Aboriginal affairs, civil rights, law reform, industrial relations, and small business. That does not leave a great deal for discussion.

Mr Parker: It is not true to say they have been taken off the agenda.

Mr COURT: Is the Deputy Premier saying the uranium mining issue is to be debated at the conference?

Mr Parker: I am saying none of those policy items has been taken off the agenda.

Mr Clarko: It shows they have no shame, because they don't mind if everybody knows it either.

Mr COURT: Yes. It is like what happens in many Communist countries. The first thing they make sure of is that not many people belong to the Communist Party which governs the place, and the second is that things which are debated publicly are very much controlled. I think we are witnessing quite a laundering exercise this weekend as the Labor Party goes into its State Conference. They will not speak about anything controversial, but the part which concerns me is that a company such as CRA Limited, with its Kintyre project, has two major issues to resolve: Firstly, it must get the Government to change its policy on uranium mining; and secondly, it has to face up to some of the issues related to Aboriginal affairs with regard to that project. That project also has problems with national parks. Companies looking to invest in this State certainly would not gain a great deal of confidence to learn that the Government, when faced with a hard decision, does not want to even put it to its members at the State Conference.

Today members opposite have the opportunity to tell the people of Western Australia just what their stance is in relation to the mining and exporting of uranium from this State. They will also be able to tell us whether they support their Deputy Premier, who has come out with a pro uranium mining stance. It will be interesting to see how members opposite vote on this issue. If the Government does not want uranium mining to proceed, if it does not want to take effective measures to have the Labor Party's policy changed, its members should say so. They should tell the mining industry, "It is not in our policy, we will not fight to have the Federal policy changed", so that those companies can stop wasting their money on exploration activity if they are not to get the support of this Government in those projects. We have already seen hundreds of millions of dollars spent on the Yeelirrie exploration work and proving up of the pilot plant, which unfortunately did not go ahead because, as I have said, the then Premier allowed South Australia to proceed with its project at the expense of establishing a project in Western Australia.

Members opposite just cannot continue to sit on the fence - they cannot keep ducking this issue. We have seen their gymnastics at the Federal Labor Party Conference and now at their State Conference in withdrawing the matter from the agenda; we have seen their gymnastics in this House when we debated this issue in a previous amendment to the Address-in-Reply, and when we ask questions on the matter we receive very evasive answers. Members opposite are currently the Government - I hope not for too much longer - and they have a responsibility to the mining industry and to the people of this State to fully explain their stance on this issue. It is embarrassing when one travels overseas and talks to representatives of various countries. Those that have nuclear powered generation capacity often ask why we have this restrictive policy on exporting uranium to supply their projects. It must be very difficult for the Deputy Premier, who can say that he comes from a State which has some of the best proven uranium reserves in the world, that he personally would like to sell that uranium but his party's policy - and he just happens to be the party in Government - says we are not allowed to sell it. They must wonder just what sort of party it is when, even when it is in Government in this State, it cannot and will not exert any influence over its Federal counterparts to have that policy changed.

This motion is designed to support the Australian Labor Party in changing its policy on uranium mining. We support the Deputy Premier's comments that the current policy is highly illogical, and would like to think some action will be taken to have that policy changed, so that rather than this laundering process we are witnessing over the State Conference this weekend, the Government can come out in the open and tell us fairly and squarely where it stands on this issue. If members opposite are divided in their ranks, they should say so publicly. The Deputy Premier should not keep coming out with public statements that he supports uranium mining but his party's policy is otherwise. The Government should make it clear to the Western Australian people so they know what the Government's stance is. After five years of Labor Government and after the former Premier allowed us to miss a major opportunity, another major marketplace is opening up in the early 1990s. CRA is ready and keen to proceed with its Kintyre project. The Minister knows of the work the company has been carrying out.

Mr Hassell: The Minister has been encouraging them.

Mr COURT: Yes, he knows of the good reports CRA is preparing on how quickly that project can be got under way. There would be huge advantages to this State in selling large quantities of uranium, as we have said in our motion, with the proviso that there are stringent

safeguards in place and it is used exclusively for peaceful purposes. I urge the House to support the motion.

Mr CASH: I formally second the motion.

*Amendments to Motion*

MR PARKER (Fremantle - Deputy Premier) [11.19 am]: I move -

To delete all words after "That" where first appearing with a view to inserting the following -

1. This House congratulates the Australian Labor Party on its decision at its National Conference in Hobart to appoint a committee to conduct a thorough review of all aspects of the party's uranium policy; and
2. Recognises that this is an issue on which widespread and disparate views are held in the community, and all groups and opinions have a right to be heard; and
3. Welcomes the opportunity that the Government and people of Western Australia will have to participate in this most important and far-reaching debate.

Mr Court: They have not had any participation in your decision making processes.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PARKER: That is not true. When one looks around the world and Australia, it is interesting that issues that have anything to do with nuclear power, nuclear weaponry, uranium, radioactivity or anything else, depending on the nature of the countries and their involvement in those areas, arouse considerable controversy. For example, in Germany and Sweden the number one issue is not the question of uranium mining but rather nuclear power generation. Those countries have huge debates and hold referendums on the question of whether they should be involved with the use of nuclear power. In Australia the debate is over whether we should be involved in uranium mining. It is also interesting that the division in respect of people who are pro or anti the various aspects of the issue - whether they are pro or anti nuclear power, nuclear weapons or uranium mining - by and large is unrelated to the traditional political position they occupy, whether it is left, right or centre. It relates rather to a whole range of other factors, including whether they are in Government, whether they are responsible for the economy of their particular country or whether their power generation needs are greater than some of their environmental concerns and so on. This division and concern about the nuclear industry is natural and understandable because the nuclear industry has only, by historical standards, existed for a very short time - something like 40 years. Of course there are concerns about the impact of radioactivity and nuclear power, just as there are now growing concerns about the impact of the generation of power by fossil fuels in many parts of the world.

As people learn more and more about fossil fuels and their impact, more evidence is coming to light about things happening in the world because of the activities of humans in that regard over the last few centuries. People are becoming concerned about that, and there is now widespread debate on this issue. There is also concern about issues relating to radioactivity; indeed it has to be acknowledged, even by people such as me who are strongly in support of the opportunities and abilities to exploit that industry for the benefit of mankind, that there are serious doubts about aspects of those issues. For example, there is continual revision of the standards and codes applying to exposure to radioactivity, and at the moment world health authorities are examining and debating what level of exposure to radioactivity - any form of radioactivity - by individual workers and members of the public should be allowed and what international standards should be adopted. Again, it is interesting to note that whether or not those standards are adopted reflects much more on the involvement of the country concerned in the actual process than it does on any particular ideology that country might have. For example, the country which at the moment is arguing most strenuously for a substantial reduction in the level of exposure to radioactivity of workers involved in the processing of radioactive material is the United Kingdom, which is run by a conservative Government. The country most vigorously opposing any reductions in the standard for exposure to radioactivity is France, which is run by a socialist Government at the moment.

This industry is so new and the various components and aspects of it so new that there is genuine concern in the community about it, which is reflected not just in the protest movements, marches and demonstrations, and the letters and opinion polls, but also it is reflected in those organisations which seek to represent the views of people in the community, such as political parties. When one asks oneself about the various differences, for example, between the Liberal Party and the Labor Party in this State in particular, one realises that there are many differences. One of them is that the Labor Party recognises that we live in a pluralist society, where there are a great number of different views and the fact that there are different views does not make any one of them right or wrong. It means that one cannot offer and achieve a simplistic solution and then go out and simply push those through. One has to take into account all of those views and try, if at all possible, to accommodate as many of them as possible. If it is not possible to accommodate them, one must at least take account of them and try to reflect in policies adopted by the Government the fact that those views exist.

The issue of uranium mining has caused widespread disagreement within our community, not just within the Labor Party, which I acknowledge, but there are differences in views. There is no doubt about that -

Mr MacKinnon: There is no division in the Liberal Party.

Mr PARKER: There may not be division in the Liberal Party but there are divisions in that party on other issues, where there are significant differences -

Mr Lewis: Name one.

Mr PARKER: Immigration.

Several members interjected.

Mr PARKER: The Labor Party has not seen five of its members crossing the floor to vote with the Opposition.

Mr Clarko: You will never see a Labor man cross the floor.

Mr PARKER: I refer to one issue on which there is division in the Liberal Party; I could probably think of half a dozen more given time, but that is not what this debate is all about. There is a very substantial division -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PARKER: I am sure that when the time for voting comes members on that side will see how members of the Labor Party vote.

Mr Clarko: Like sheep.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PARKER: I am moving an amendment and with all due modesty I fully expect that amendment to be supported by all members of my party. What I have been trying to say - although it has been very hard to get a word and a half out in the last couple of minutes - is that the community as a whole - not just the community which forms part of the Australian Labor Party, the Western Australian community or the Australian community - has various views, which are very strongly held, about this issue. I have my views, which are very much on the record and have been referred to in this debate. I do not resile from them and I hope they will ultimately prevail. However, I accept not only in respect of uranium, but on all other issues, that part of my job as a politician in this State and as one of the leaders of my party is to ensure that I do not just seek to impose by dictatorial fiat my views on the community and my party but allow the views of various people within that organisation or community to be heard.

Ultimately the Government must make decisions on this issue; and sometimes those decisions will be in accordance with the beliefs of the majority at any time and sometimes they will not be. People have a habit of changing their positions. For example, my colleague, the Minister for Environment, the other day told me that he had received a complaint from the environmental movement in respect of the Government's policies on mining and exploration in national parks. Those policies went through an extremely tortuous

process in order to accommodate the disparate views of the community, and the Government was roundly criticised by the environmental movement at the time of their announcement. Now the environmental movement is complaining because the Government is not implementing those policies as quickly as it thinks it should. When he raised with them their previous trenchant opposition to the policy and their expressed views that they would rather not have a change to policy they said, "Of course, at the time we had to say that but now we really would like you to go ahead and implement them." As politicians we learn to live with that because we can have people saying something one day and another thing on another day. That is not unusual.

On one issue I agree with John Elliott, the Federal President of the Liberal Party, who I can recall talking recently on the radio about the process of coming to policy decisions in Australia and lamenting the fact that we as Australians - he was talking generally but specifically referring to the process of policy debate within the Liberal Party - do not have the sort of ethos that encourages public debate on policy issues. He suggested that part of the problem that had occurred in Australia over the last 40 to 50 years, and one reason why the country has faced some problems, has been that the ethos has been almost against the process of public debate and public involvement in the process of decision making. He advocated specifically for the Liberal Party, but generally for the community as well, a much greater willingness and preparedness to allow people to stand up and be counted without being pilloried within their own disciplined organisation, or within the community as a whole, for expressing their point of view. I endorse the sentiments behind those comments.

This Government has recognised that opportunities may present themselves to Australia, or to various Australian companies over the next decade. Indeed the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made the comment that these things will occur in the 1990s - and everybody understands we need as a community to prepare ourselves for that. The motion which I moved at the National Conference of the Labor Party in Hobart in June, and which was passed by the party, basically did two things. First, it asked the national executive of the party to set up a committee of review; the national executive has now set up the terms of reference of that review and is currently calling for nominations for membership of the committee. The proposal is that the committee should take account of many of the things put forward in this debate by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and many of the things that I have been on the record for some years as saying. At the same time, it will take account of the countervailing views which exist not just within our party but within the community as a whole. Having done that we should then make our decision.

The second component of the motion which I moved, relating to decision making, is an important one. Another committee set up in relation to privatisation of airlines was not scheduled to report until the next national conference of the party which is likely to be held in either 1990 or 1991, and in relation to which the clear indication in debate at the conference was that the overwhelming majority was not very keen on making changes at all to the policy. By contrast on this issue, the clear evidence from debate was that the majority was inclined to some change to the policy. Therefore the resolution which I moved, and which was carried, made provision for the policy to be changed by postal ballot of the delegates. This meant that the policy could be changed at any time when the committee comes out with its report - rather than having to wait two or three years until the next national conference. That is something which the industry understands well.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made reference to CRA and the problem it might have in its confidence. Representatives of CRA were present at the time the debate took place - I keep in close contact with CRA as I do with everybody in the mining industry - and are well aware of the processes which are in hand and understand those processes. Of course CRA would like to see the matter resolved; no one likes to be in an uncertain position. However it is understood that the process of resolution will take some time - but not such an amount of time that the industry will be disadvantaged should we change our policy in the international marketplace. The industry clearly understands that and is appreciative of what is being done. Apart from anything else it recognises that the Labor Party in Australia has become the party of -

Mr MacKinnon: It has done nothing for them.

Mr PARKER: That is not the industry's view. The Labor Party in Australia has become the



party of long term Government. The industry recognises that and is appreciative; the work that has been done to address the issues is appreciated. The Leader of the Opposition in the Northern Territory has, as a result of debate in Hobart, embarked on a fact finding mission to identify market opportunities. He has contributed to debate with a paper which he has published and distributed; other people no doubt will be doing the same thing. Some people have already done so; some people will be doing so over a period of time. I am in little doubt about the ultimate outcome of that debate. Because we live in a democratic community in which there is little point in doing things if the overwhelming bulk of the population is not supportive, it is important to allow that process to take place. It is important that it is not taking place in a way that is damaging to the commercial opportunities of the people involved. Of course people would like the situation to be cut and dried, but people are equally keen to ensure that when they are able to proceed they can do so in a way which ensures that industries will have security in the knowledge that changes of government will not damage commercial investments. Industries are happy for the debate and the process to take place in a way which ensures solidity to any change, and a commitment to that by at least a very broad cross-section of the community.

Mr Court: Does the Minister still believe that if the policy was changed the Northern Territory would benefit before Western Australia would benefit?

Mr PARKER: If the policy was changed tomorrow, no doubt the potential mines which are in the best position to take immediate advantage are in the Northern Territory rather than in Western Australia.

Mr Court: Does the Minister not think that is a shame when Yeelirrie and Kintyre are ready to go?

Mr PARKER: The Kintyre deposit is not at a stage that it could go tomorrow. The only reason that the Northern Territory has the opportunity to go earlier than this State - if the change in policy occurred tomorrow - is because the development of the Northern Territory mining operations is at a more advanced stage. If we change the policy around the middle of next year, in my view the Kintyre deposit will be at a stage where it will be able to move into the market just as quickly as the Northern Territory.

Mr Court: Will the policy change?

Mr PARKER: I obviously hope that it will, otherwise I would not have moved to achieve what we have done. The clear indication at the national conference of the party was that the majority of delegates was in favour of reviewing policy with a view to change. Having made those comments, I believe everybody in our community should participate in this debate. I have indicated that active and wide ranging debate is taking place within my own party - and within the leadership of that party - with people such as Terry Smith from the Northern Territory Government, and me, contributing very actively to that debate. Active debate is also taking place in the community. For example, I am being opposed by someone at the next election because of my views on this matter. That is fine; that is a person's democratic right. I am not concerned about that; we will see what my electorate thinks of that.

Mr Hassell: We will come and help the Minister.

Mr PARKER: The Opposition has already done that. I am very pleased with the endorsement given to my opponent.

Mr Speaker, I believe the amendment that I have put forward reflects the appropriateness of the method of political debate in this country and should be endorsed by the House.

Mr PEARCE: I formally second the amendment.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch - Leader of the Opposition) [11.40 am]: It is absolutely extraordinary and unprecedented in Parliament for the Deputy Premier to completely remove from Parliament a motion which is commendatory of him and his own position as Minister. By reading his words or just listening to his speech it is clear that he was arguing in favour of the motion. It is extraordinary, but clearly demonstrates that he could not get the rest of his party to support that motion.

Mr Parker: Nonsense.

Mr MacKINNON: If it is nonsense, I challenge the Deputy Premier to defeat this

amendment and let us vote on the motion put forward. Why will the Government not let us vote on what the Deputy Premier has put forward?

Mr Parker interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: What is it, specifically, about the motion which the Government does not like? It is quite clear, as the Deputy Premier himself admitted, that the ALP has faced deep division on this issue. That division comes directly into this Parliament where not even the Deputy Premier of this State is game to put forward to the Premier, and support in this Parliament, a motion which compliments him for the stand that he has taken.

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: It has been clearly demonstrated in this Parliament for some time that there is deep division in the party opposite on this issue. As a demonstration of how weak and spineless the ALP is, we have a State Conference coming up this weekend - the ALP has them every two years, does it not?

Mr Pearce: Yes, open to the Press and you don't have to queue up to get in either.

Mr MacKINNON: The conference is designed to debate the key issues of the day. What is one issue which will not be debated next weekend? It is the uranium policy. The people of Western Australia will see a new sponsor for the ALP conference in Claytons. Claytons is sponsoring it this year, and is making history. Claytons has offered a good deal of money to sponsor that conference; the first Claytons sponsored conference in Australian history will be held here in Western Australia.

Mr Court: They wanted to cancel it altogether.

Mr MacKINNON: Exactly. They might as well have done so, for the good it will do. Let us see where we will end up. This Government will be going to the State elections asking for the support of the people of Western Australia, including those in business, with a policy which says, "We will reject the construction of nuclear reprocessing plants, and the storage of nuclear waste in WA. We will ban new uranium mines."

Mr Parker: With which aspects of those do you disagree?

Mr MacKINNON: I am talking about the Government's policy, not mine. The banning of new uranium mines is the policy on which this Deputy Premier will go into the next election -

Mr Parker: What is your view on nuclear waste?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MacKINNON: - yet he is on record as saying, "We should change to a rational policy because if we do not, apart from missing out on major opportunities, we are going to find ourselves constantly bickering about an unsustainable policy." This is from the man who has not the guts to take the matter to the State Conference. The spokesman for the Labor Party, as it goes into the election, is saying, "Our policy is to ban new uranium mines." He will then go around the back and say, "Whoops, this is an unsustainable policy." He will then run to the other side and say, "We are going to ban new uranium mines, but no, we don't think we will because we might be going to a conference over east, and the committee could look at it. On the other hand, our policy does say that, but we are not going to debate it either." The Government has not the gumption to face up to reality.

Mr Parker: We are talking about it.

Mr MacKINNON: Let me give the Deputy Premier, who continues to interject incessantly, his due. He, at least, is a man of courage who is prepared to state his position, unlike his Premier who says, "I don't think the policy is all that good, but I am really not prepared to say anything more about it. I am not going to say that I want this, that or the other." The Deputy Premier will state his position, but his own Premier will not. That shows how deep the division runs in the ALP on this issue. It is hypocritical in the extreme.

Mr Parker: There is no division at all.

Mr MacKINNON: It is hypocritical in the extreme for this Deputy Premier to come here and ask us to support this nonsense amendment which says -

This House congratulates the Australian Labor Party on its decision at its National Conference in Hobart to appoint a committee to conduct a thorough review of all aspects of the party's uranium policy;

If that is the best the ALP can come up with, as I said yesterday, it should move aside. It wants to appoint a committee. Is that a policy commitment? Is that a courageous decision? Is that the sort of leadership for which the people of Western Australia are looking?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MacKINNON: What will the cost be? It will be substantial. I quote from an article in *The West Australian* of 1 September as follows -

CRA officials have said that an early change in Labor's Federal policy would allow production to start at Kintyre by 1991 at an annual rate of 1 000 tonnes.

This would earn about \$70 million and provide \$3.5 million a year in State royalties.

That is \$3.5 million which could be used to replace the 12 transportable classrooms at Rostrata and West Lynwood primary schools, with change left over for more, and hospitals and roads.

What sort of leadership is the Government providing to try to stand up to the people from eastern Australia, who could not care less about Western Australia? The Government's answer is to refer the matter to a committee, and it expects us to support that. The Government must be joking. The Deputy Premier has not even the courage to stand up and put his own commitment to the test of his own party. Clearly he does not have the support of his parliamentary party or the organisational lay wing of the ALP. If he had, they would have allowed this matter to be debated this weekend. Interestingly enough, they have not even allowed WA Incorporated to be discussed this weekend. Some conference; Claytons will certainly get value for money this weekend.

MR THOMAS (Welshpool) [11.49 am]: I wish to speak in favour of the amendment moved by the Deputy Premier. It is quite an unusual event in this House that we should be debating a motion which has been moved by the Liberal Party which is really addressed to an Australian Labor Party Conference about to take place in the next couple of days.

Mr Pearce: If you pay us \$20 you can come along and speak yourself.

Mr THOMAS: It is a little bit more than \$20.

I am very proud to be a member of the Australian Labor Party. I have been a member for 20 years and I am honoured to hold the office of Vice President of the Australian Labor Party in this State. The Australian Labor Party is an important institution in the Australian community and has played and will continue to play a very important role in Australia's history. The Labor Party is the largest political party in Australia and enjoys wide support within the Australian community. It is the longest existing political party in Australia and is approaching its centenary in 1991. It has made a very substantial contribution to the Australian nation and is unique, certainly among the political parties represented in this Chamber, because it does not exist to protect sectional interests. People do not join the Australian Labor Party to protect privilege or advance themselves. They join because they wish to improve the communities and the world in which they live. They join to improve the living standards of people in the community, to create a better environment, to ensure that the peoples of the world have enough to eat, that peace prevails, and so on. People join the Australian Labor Party for the most part because they wish to improve the world in which they live.

When people join organisations with that sort of motivation, very often there will be differences among them about how they perceive those interests. Of course, there are differences in the community about uranium mining, the nuclear fuel cycle, and other matters. People who are concerned about creating a better world will very often have differences of opinion about how best to pursue those issues. On occasions people will become emotionally involved because they are concerned about very important matters such as pollution and other issues associated with those industries.

The Liberal Party is not concerned about these matters and never has been concerned about

them. The Liberal Party has not made one significant contribution to the debate on uranium mining in the 15 years that the debate has been going on. The first major contribution made to the debate in Australia was the publication of the Fox report in 1976. The Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry was set up by the Whitlam Government when uranium mining first became a controversial issue. The recommendations of that report were accepted by a Liberal Government. The second major contribution to the debate was the publication of the report of the Slatyer inquiry which was commissioned by the Hawke Government in 1983. That was a major and seminal document which contributed a great deal to the debate in the community.

The answers to these questions are always easy and simple for members of the Liberal Party because they are not concerned about the reasons that people join the Australian Labor Party and are not concerned about making a better world, or about issues of peace, pollution, and other controversial subjects that motivate people to become involved in the uranium debate. The community is concerned.

Mr Court interjected.

Mr Thomas: And many more votes than your party has ever got. The community is concerned about these issues because these matters are important and will ultimately affect the sort of world we will leave to our children and the generations that follow us. For that reason I am sure that the community appreciates the Australian Labor Party's taking the trouble to ensure a very thorough evaluation of this issue. It carried out a very thorough evaluation with the commissioning of the Fox inquiry in the early 1970s and by commissioning the Slatyer inquiry in the early 1980s. I am sure that, ultimately, the Australian community will thank the Australian Labor Party for the measured and thorough way it has evaluated the issue. The party is still attempting to determine its policy by carefully evaluating all of the points of view held by the community. Ultimately, the community will thank the Labor Party because it has not rushed into decisions on this sensitive issue; it has taken care to ensure that the decision made is the correct one.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Leader of the National Party) [11.55 am]: The National Party does not support the amendment moved by the Deputy Premier. The words which the Deputy Premier has moved to delete are far more appropriate to the welfare of this State and in accord with the thinking of the Deputy Premier. I feel the original words should have been supported by the Government. I acknowledge that a need may exist to demonstrate some solidarity or conformity with the decision to be made at the conference of the Australian Labor Party with the uranium mining issue again being referred to another committee. I am sure that everybody in Western Australia knows that the referral of the matter to the committee is a deferment procedure and nothing more.

Mr Parker: That is not true. The industry does not think that.

Mr COWAN: The Minister's assessment of the industry's view of the Labor Party's attitude on uranium mining is certainly not as rosy as the picture the Deputy Premier is attempting to paint. The industry had no choice but to express that view. It is not likely to bite the hand that feeds it. It knows it has to obtain an export licence and it knows that it has to deal with the Government of the day. If that Government decides that it will defer a decision on uranium mining, the industry may say that it does not like it, but it will say so in the most polite terms possible. The Minister knows that and everybody else knows it. The fact is that there is a conflict of interest between the desires of the Australian Labor Party and what is of value to the economy of Western Australia. The truth is that the decision has been made that the Government will abide by its party's rules rather than work for the economic wellbeing of this State.

Mr Pearce: You should recognise the significant national contribution that the Deputy Premier is making in this area instead of associating yourself with cute political tricks by the Opposition.

Mr COWAN: I am looking at this issue far more deeply than that. The Deputy Premier's amendment has some merit; I do not see it as a cute political trick. The truth is that he is attempting to pursue a policy which the party will not allow him to pursue.

Again, the policy is under review. In fact, the only policy that the Labor Party has on the issue is to review the matter. It does have a three mine policy - but not a new mines policy.

The party has provided a mechanism for reviewing the policy and then perhaps changing it which I think would be most appropriate. This country cannot be left behind because of the Australian Labor Party's ideological beliefs. The truth is that there is a need to find an energy resource to prevent the greenhouse effect. Whether the Government likes it or not, the uranium issue can resolve that problem. We acknowledge that it creates others. I believe all the Government is doing is deferring the question because it is not prepared to face it. If the Deputy Premier wants that fact demonstrated he should look at the way the party has laundered the issues to be discussed at the conference. It does not indicate to me that there is scope for appropriate debate. All the Government has done is defer the whole issue - that is its policy. I accept the comments of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and we support his motion and oppose the amendment moved by the Deputy Premier.

Amendment (words to be deleted) put and a division taken with the following result -

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Ayes (26)			
Dr Alexander	Mr Evans	Mr Parker	Mr Thomas
Mrs Beggs	Dr Gallop	Mr Pearce	Mrs Watkins
Mr Bridge	Mrs Henderson	Mr Read	Dr Watson
Mr Burket	Mr Gordon Hill	Mr Ripper	Mr Wilson
Mr Carr	Mr Hodge	Mr D.L. Smith	Mrs Buchanan ( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr Cunningham	Dr Lawrence	Mr P.J. Smith	
Mr Peter Dowding	Mr Marlborough	Mr Taylor	

Noes (20)			
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Grayden	Mr MacKinnon	Mr Fred Tubby
Mr Cash	Mr Greig	Mr Schell	Mr Reg Tubby
Mr Clarko	Mr Hassell	Mr Stephens	Mr Watt
Mr Court	Mr House	Mr Thompson	Mr Wiese
Mr Cowan	Mr Lewis	Mr Trenorden	Mr Maslen ( <i>Teller</i> )

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Pairs	
Ayes	Noes
Mr Grill	Mr Crane
Mr Tom Jones	Mr Blaikie
Mr Bertram	Mr Lightfoot
Mr Troy	Mr Mensaros
Mr Donovan	Mr Williams

Amendment thus passed.

**MR PARKER** (Fremantle - Deputy Premier) [12.04 pm]: I move -

To substitute the following for the words deleted -

- (1) This House congratulates the Australian Labor Party on its decision at its National Conference in Hobart to appoint a committee to conduct a thorough review of all aspects of the party's uranium policy;
- (2) Recognises that this is an issue on which widespread and disparate views are held in the community, and all groups and opinions have a right to be heard; and
- (3) Welcomes the opportunity that the Government and people of Western Australia will have to participate in this most important and far-reaching debate.

The **SPEAKER**: I suggest to members that at some time in the future they give consideration to suggesting an amendment to Standing Orders to avoid waiting the full two minutes when dealing with successive divisions.

Amendment (words to be substituted) put and a division taken with the following result -

## Ayes (26)

Dr Alexander	Mr Evans	Mr Parker	Mr Thomas
Mrs Beggs	Dr Gallop	Mr Pearce	Mrs Watkins
Mr Bridge	Mrs Henderson	Mr Read	Dr Watson
Mr Burkett	Mr Gordon Hill	Mr Ripper	Mr Wilson
Mr Carr	Mr Hodge	Mr D.L. Smith	Mrs Buchanan ( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr Cunningham	Dr Lawrence	Mr P.J. Smith	
Mr Peter Dowding	Mr Marlborough	Mr Taylor	

## Noes (20)

Mr Bradshaw	Mr Grayden	Mr MacKinnon	Mr Fred Tubby
Mr Cash	Mr Greig	Mr Schell	Mr Reg Tubby
Mr Clarko	Mr Hassell	Mr Stephens	Mr Watt
Mr Court	Mr House	Mr Thompson	Mr Wiese
Mr Cowan	Mr Lewis	Mr Trenorden	Mr Maslen ( <i>Teller</i> )

## Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Grill	Mr Crane
Mr Tom Jones	Mr Blaikie
Mr Bertram	Mr Lightfoot
Mr Troy	Mr Mensaros
Mr Donovan	Mr Williams

Amendment thus passed.

*Motion - as Amended*

Question (motion, as amended) put and a division taken with the following result -

## Ayes (26)

Dr Alexander	Mr Evans	Mr Parker	Mr Thomas
Mrs Beggs	Dr Gallop	Mr Pearce	Mrs Watkins
Mr Bridge	Mrs Henderson	Mr Read	Dr Watson
Mr Burkett	Mr Gordon Hill	Mr Ripper	Mr Wilson
Mr Carr	Mr Hodge	Mr D.L. Smith	Mrs Buchanan ( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr Cunningham	Dr Lawrence	Mr P.J. Smith	
Mr Peter Dowding	Mr Marlborough	Mr Taylor	

## Noes (20)

Mr Bradshaw	Mr Grayden	Mr MacKinnon	Mr Fred Tubby
Mr Cash	Mr Greig	Mr Schell	Mr Reg Tubby
Mr Clarko	Mr Hassell	Mr Stephens	Mr Watt
Mr Court	Mr House	Mr Thompson	Mr Wiese
Mr Cowan	Mr Lewis	Mr Trenorden	Mr Maslen ( <i>Teller</i> )

## Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Grill	Mr Crane
Mr Tom Jones	Mr Blaikie
Mr Bertram	Mr Lightfoot
Mr Troy	Mr Mensaros
Mr Donovan	Mr Williams

Question thus passed.

**ARTIFICIAL BREEDING OF STOCK AMENDMENT BILL***Returned*

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

**STAMP AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

**MR PEARCE** (Armadale - Leader of the House) [12.10 pm]: On behalf of the Treasurer, I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to amend the Stamp Act in order to close off certain avoidance schemes, clarify the application of certain exemptions and provide some concessions from duty. The Bill proposes to clarify and extend the power of the commissioner to investigate any matter relevant to the administration of the Act.

At present the Act restricts the commissioner's power of investigation to matters relating to the production of records only where there is a dutiable instrument. There are now a number of provisions in the Act which impose duty on transactions which do not require the drawing up of a dutiable instrument. This amendment will authorise the commissioner to investigate and obtain records relating to such transactions.

The Treasurer made an announcement on the 15th of this month about the blocking of a tax avoidance loophole in the Act which allowed companies incorporated in the State to move their shares on to a branch register in the Australian Capital Territory where stamp duty was not payable on security instruments. Shareholders then executed outside the State a security over the shares free of the duty which would have been payable in this State had the shares remained on the principal register in Western Australia.

Instances recently detected by Department of State Taxation officers indicate that stamp duty in excess of \$1 million may have been avoided. In keeping with its commitment to ensure that no particular class of taxpayer is allowed to defeat the intention of the law and gain an unfair advantage relative to other taxpayers, the Government has acted decisively to block this avoidance device. Duty will now be payable in this State where any shares of a Western Australian incorporated company are used for security and are situated in a place where no security duty is payable. Where duty is payable in another jurisdiction, the provisions will not apply. This measure will be made retrospective to 16 September 1988, that is to say, the day after the Treasurer made the announcement.

Section 31B of the Act requires duty to be paid upon a statement to be lodged in respect of a transaction effecting the change of beneficial ownership of property or lease of property where there is no instrument chargeable with ad valorem duty. The section does not specify that if there is an instrument it has to be chargeable at the same rate applicable to the transaction before the requirements of the section become inapplicable. The Bill proposes to amend the Act to specify that the ad valorem rate must be appropriate to the transaction.

The Commissioner of State Taxation, until recently, exercised an absolute discretion in determining which instruments involving charitable organisations should be exempt. Generally, where the transaction was of a commercial nature such as the acquisition of an investment property not used directly for the charitable purposes of the organisation, exemption would not have been granted on the relevant instruments. However, the Supreme Court has recently ruled that the Act did not convey such a discretion on the Commissioner and it was mandatory for him to allow exemption on any instrument which would otherwise impose duty on a charitable body. To allow this situation to continue could cost millions of dollars in revenue. It was never intended that such institutions receive exemption in every instance. This Bill proposes to restore the commissioner's absolute discretion in these matters and to restrict the right of appeal to the responsible Minister. An exemption from duty is proposed for funds transferred into or out of private unit trusts where all of the unit holders are approved State and local Government bodies. A lower differential rate of duty is also proposed for transfers of units between these unit holders, except where the underlying assets of the unit trust are realty. These measures are intended to remove any stamp duty impediment to the investment of Government funds and will assist in facilitating the management of those funds. Other minor provisions are inserted to clarify further those

areas of the Act which restrict the acceptance of evidence of dutiable transactions by courts and public offices of record and to make the lodgement of false statements an offence under the Act.

Finally, the Bill contains some concessions in respect of motor vehicle duty. Previously, a dealer was obliged to pay full duty when licensing a second-hand unlicensed vehicle acquired for resale. It is proposed to remove this impediment to such acquisitions to be consistent with the existing concession of nominal duty for licensing a new vehicle when acquired by a dealer for resale. In addition, transfers of vehicles from a deceased estate to the entitled beneficiary will now also receive the benefit of nominal duty. Other than as previously indicated, these measures will come into effect upon a date to be proclaimed.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

## **SKELETON WEED AND RESISTANT GRAIN INSECTS (ERADICATION FUNDS) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

**MR PEARCE** (Armadale - Leader of the House) [12.15 pm]: On behalf of the Minister for Agriculture, I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Skeleton Weed (Eradication Fund) Act, which imposes a levy on producers of grain and seed to provide funds for skeleton weed control and to pay compensation to growers required to destroy contaminated produce, was first introduced in 1974. The original Act covered the 1973-74, 1974-75 and 1975-76 crop years and provided for growers delivering 30 or more tonnes of grain and seed in aggregate to pay a flat contribution of \$30 a year. This legislation was extended in 1976 and 1979 in the same form for two further three year terms.

An amendment was made in 1980 to allow for the establishment of a resistant grain insects eradication fund. Up to \$20 000 can be transferred annually to this fund from the skeleton weed eradication fund. The resistant grain insects fund is used to meet the cost of the eradication of grain insects which have evolved resistance to insecticides in common use. The Act then became known as the Skeleton Weed and Resistant Grain Insects (Eradication Funds) Act. A further extension of this Act for a three year term was made in 1982. In 1985 the legislation was again extended for three years, but the contribution was increased from \$30 to \$41.50 for growers delivering 30 or more tonnes of grain or seed combined. The Bill before the House seeks to extend the legislation covering skeleton weed and resistant grain insects eradication for the 1988-89, 1989-90 and 1990-91 crop years. An extension is necessary to allow the campaign to continue as the current Act will expire on 31 October 1988, the end of the 1987-88 crop year.

The Bill represents a departure from past procedures in so far as a flat contribution will not be specified in the legislation. An order will be made by the Governor, on the recommendation of the Minister for Agriculture, specifying the amount of the contribution or the method of calculating the contribution to be paid by growers in a crop year. The order will need to be made prior to the commencement of the crop year and will be based on meeting the costs or estimated costs of eradication of skeleton weed and resistant grain insects; payment of compensation after grain, seed or crop destroyed as a result of skeleton weed eradication; and expenses incurred in determination of compensation payments. Wording of the legislation in this form will enable a flat contribution or a production levy to be determined annually.

The production levy on a per tonne basis has widespread support among farmers because it is a more equitable way of raising funds. The amount to be raised from growers to provide the service in the 1988-89 crop year is \$430 000. A production levy cannot be calculated accurately until estimates of grain and seed production are more firm, but based on the estimates approaching 6 million tonnes in 1988-89 the levy would be in the order of eight cents per tonne. If a flat contribution is applied according to the previous formula of 30 or more tonnes the contribution would need to be \$65 per grower.

The extension of the Act, the question of a production levy versus a flat contribution and the amount of funding required has been discussed with the parent organisations of the board.



These are: The Country Shire Councils Association of WA (Inc); the Western Australian Farmers Federation (Inc); the Pastoralists & Graziers Association of WA(Inc); and the Agriculture Protection Board of WA's zone control authorities. Extending the Act for a further three year period has received support, as has the level of funding, with the raising of funds by a production levy rather than a flat contribution being generally favoured.

The Agriculture Protection Board by virtue of its structure represents the views of growers, but further liaison specifically on skeleton weed has been established through a skeleton weed liaison committee, made up of board and grower organisation representatives. It would be normal procedure for the liaison committee to consider skeleton weed eradication programs and the estimated cost of these. No change has been made to the provision that \$20 000 be transferred annually from the skeleton weed eradication fund to the resistant grain insects eradication fund. A new subclause has been included requiring payments in respect of the 1988-89, 1989-90 and 1990-91 crop years to be made into the fund 28 days after they have been deducted by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd or a receiver of grain. This will ensure prompt payment into the fund.

Ecological studies show that skeleton weed is capable of invading large areas of the Western Australian wheatbelt. Since 1963, when the weed was first reported in this State, 223 farm outbreaks have been recorded. Eradication, in the sense that the weed has not re-emerged for three or more years, has been achieved on 64 of these properties, leaving 159 active farm infestations. Although the number of farm outbreaks is increasing each year the total area of skeleton weed infested land is insignificant in comparison with the area cropped. Based on the ability to establish and the likely costs to farming systems, continuation of the eradication campaign is essential.

Studies have been made on the potential economic effect of skeleton weed in Western Australia. The net benefits of the campaign vary according to the assumptions made, but there seems little doubt that a very positive benefit/cost ratio exists. The campaign has the support of the farming community and 1 800 volunteer days of searching were undertaken in 1987-88. Growers have strongly urged the development of remote sensing techniques as a means of detecting skeleton weed. The Agriculture Protection Board has commissioned the CSIRO to investigate instrumentation and remote sensing methodologies and report on options for further development. Discussions are also being held with private firms on this technique. However, detection by photographic or similar techniques will only be by a follow up to initial detection, and the farmer will still remain the key. With this in mind the skeleton weed eradication campaign contains provision for publicity aimed at creating and maintaining awareness among farmers in particular and the public in general.

Unavoidably, skeleton weed seeds are introduced from interstate on rail wagons. The only effective way to fight this battle is for detailed searches to be made of the rail system. Westrail contributes approximately \$40 000 towards the cost of these searches. An on-farm inspection service for grain insects has operated for some time. The basic aim of the service is to maintain a clean pipeline between the farm and bulk grain installations, and to encourage farm hygiene for grain insect control generally. Co-operative Bulk Handling is progressively upgrading its country installations by sealing permanent grain storages to enable controlled atmosphere techniques to be used for grain insect control. In the interim the company is relying on fenitrothion for insect control. The purpose of the resistant grain insects fund is to provide funds to eradicate fenitrothion resistant insects before they reach the bulk handling system. By doing this Co-operative Bulk Handling will be able to continue to use fenitrothion and will not need to use more expensive insecticides. The end result is that costs to the grower are reduced. Some eradication treatment of phosphine resistant insects is also undertaken. Phosphine resistance is limited at this stage, but as phosphine is the insecticide of choice for controlled atmosphere storage, eradication of pockets of resistant grain insects is desirable. A \$20 000 annual transfer is seen as adequate to meet all costs involved in resistant grain insect control.

The Bill provides for the continuation of what has proved to be a successful means of controlling skeleton weed and limiting the damage done by grain insects in Western Australia. It serves as a vital link in the chain between farmer and export grain buyer. I commend the Bill to the House.

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

**APPROPRIATION (GENERAL LOAN AND CAPITAL WORKS FUND) BILL***Second Reading*

Debate resumed from 21 September.

MR HASSELL (Conesloe) [12.23 pm]: I want to raise in this general debate the matter of the State Superannuation Board and the way in which that issue has been dealt with and continues to be dealt with by the Government. The Premier and Treasurer, and the Government as a whole, hopes that the issue will go away; he refuses to tell the full truth and he refuses to answer questions. Last week I posed 57 specific questions, and I have asked further questions which appear on today's Notice Paper. There has been plenty of opportunity in the debates and discussions this week for the Treasurer to have answered those 57 questions and to have given a report on the matter so that a further assessment could be made. However, the truth is that the Treasurer is stonewalling on the State Superannuation Board issue; he refuses to answer the questions and he refuses to appoint a public inquiry. The questions necessarily arise: Who is the Government protecting? What is the Government hiding?

The Treasurer has used three tactics in relation to the State Superannuation Board issue: Firstly, there has been the now almost traditional tactic of stonewalling, to which I have referred; that is, to simply run dead on the issue. Despite the fact that legitimate questions are raised over and over again no answers are given. The Treasurer does not use his air time on the radio to answer the questions or the issues. Secondly, the Treasurer has used the swings and roundabouts argument. Over and over again he has said that the Danbury losses are just part of the swings and roundabouts of the activities of the State Superannuation Board. Of course, there have been many losses in the State Superannuation Board.

*Point of Order*

Mr HASSELL: Is the clock showing the time I have left in which to speak correct?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Alexander): Yes, the clock is correct.

Mr HASSELL: Have the Standing Orders been amended? According to Standing Order No 164 a member may speak on appropriation Bills for 45 minutes, and on other Bills for 30 minutes. This is an appropriation Bill.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Although we are debating an appropriation Bill, it is the Appropriation (General Loan and Capital Works Fund) Bill and not the Appropriation (Consolidated Revenue Fund) Bill. Therefore, according to the Standing Orders the maximum period for which a member may speak shall not exceed 30 minutes. I am assured that on the basis of experience that is a correct interpretation of the Standing Orders.

*Debate Resumed*

Mr HASSELL: I have been misled by the out of date copy of the Standing Orders in my possession. I will have to adjust my remarks accordingly. The Treasurer has adopted three tactics: Firstly, stonewalling by not answering the questions; secondly he has claimed that the losses incurred by the State Superannuation Board - that was when he got to the point of not being able to dispute those losses - were part of the swings and roundabouts of stock exchange investments. The Opposition has pointed out that in the past 12 months, in the absence of Mr Len Brush, the State Superannuation Board has not made any stock exchange investments. That in itself is a comment on the activities that went on before. The Treasurer has now come up with another ploy, as reported in *The West Australian* this morning; that is, the challenge to produce facts or evidence. We have heard this over the years about every issue raised; I will mention some of those issues this morning because a few people in this place need to be reminded that the Opposition has produced the facts and evidence on every occasion in relation to all the issues. People should think very carefully before conveniently taking up this cry about facts and evidence as a way of seeking to discredit an Opposition which has done its job very effectively in exposing the activities of this Government.

Let us talk about what has been established in relation to the activities of the State Superannuation Board. First, it is undisputed that many millions of dollars have been lost; the Treasurer has not disputed that. Secondly, we have established that a very strange transaction was entered into by the State Superannuation Board with the Danbury group; not an investment, as it has been referred to, but a guarantee or put option guarantee, which is not

part of the regular and normal sort of transaction that one would expect a superannuation board to enter into, and that extraordinary transaction has not been explained except by the comment by the Treasurer that it was entered into to help save the company in which the board had previously invested.

Thirdly, it has been exposed that Danbury was on a downhill slide at the time of the deals, as disclosed by its own auditor's report, which was for the year ending 30 June 1987, as referred to in detail by the Leader of the Opposition in the debate on Tuesday. Fourthly, it has been established that Mr Leonard Brush - a discredited man who as the Chairman of the State Superannuation Board took \$100 000 from a person with whom the board was dealing - was in charge at the principal and material times; in other words, the deals that we are questioning all had their origins during the reign - the frantic, furious, fast, irresponsible reign - of Mr Brush as Chairman of the State Superannuation Board when many losses were made, some perhaps explainable as swings and roundabouts and others not explainable in that way, including the Danbury deals, which were not swings and roundabouts losses. That is established and on the record: Brush was in charge, and that is fact number four, which cannot be disputed.

Fifthly, it has been established that the people Mr Brush and others in the State Superannuation Board were dealing with were Mr Neil Ohlsson and his associates in the Danbury group and that Mr Ohlsson was himself a discredited man, the strongest discreditation being the fact that he was discredited by the Victorian Government which announced in a fanfare that Mr Ohlsson's company, or a company with which he was then associated, was to be the developer of the museum site - my memory tells me that was an \$800 million project - yet some months later was dropped by that Government. He was discredited because he was known to be associated with United States crime figures. He had many dealings with the Nugan Hand Bank even after the disappearance of one of the partners; he was involved in the Whitlam loans affair and he was rejected by the Federal Treasury because of his proposal for a funny money deal; he was a principal of the failed Dollar Group; and he was named unfavourably in both the Costigan and Stewart Royal Commission reports.

All of those reasons put together tell us that the State Superannuation Board, under the control of Mr Brush - the personal friend of Mr Burke whose wife was Mr Burke's personal secretary and the man for whom Mr Burke went into the courtroom on the day before the jury verdict and put on a good public display before the jury reached its verdict - was doing these deals and making these arrangements. I move on to the sixth fact which has been established without question, that in the words of Mr Rolston - the current and unquestioned present Chairman of the State Superannuation Board - money was lost in the Danbury group through a payment to a company to subscribe for shares that were to be listed on the stock exchange but were never listed. There are a whole lot of questions related to that transaction and loan which have not been answered.

**Mr Maslen:** Insider trading.

**Mr HASSELL:** We do not know whether there was insider trading or not, but it was a funny affair. Mr Acting Speaker, what is someone talking about when they say that people put up money to be in a company that was to be listed on the stock exchange and it was not listed yet all the money was lost or disappeared? Surely one is talking about some kind of unsatisfactory outcome which might have been fraudulent, yet the Treasurer does not want to investigate this matter - does not want to know the facts. Seventhly, we have established again - on the admission of Mr Rolston - that more money was put into Danbury. I have not been able to find out about that, again because questions are not answered as to whether it was \$450 000 or \$1.35 million. We still have not found out why more money was put in Danbury when it was known in March this year that it was failing. That money was put in and a charge was taken over the Danbury company, a \$450 000 charge. We do not know whether that was in relation to three or four separate loans amounting to \$450 000 or one charge over several companies.

Surely these questions cry out for an answer? Surely the Premier, as Treasurer of this State, must acknowledge that there is a serious failure of accountability? It is no good the Treasurer spouting in the newspaper and getting himself a big headline saying that he challenges the Liberals to produce the facts when we have produced the facts; they are on the

board and the questions are screaming out to be answered. How much more does the Opposition have to produce to justify an inquiry? What more has to be proved? Why is the Government stalling? What is being hidden? Who is being protected? I say to the Treasurer again that it will not go away.

The Treasurer has accused me of indulging in sleaze and innuendo. Let me put on the record without any innuendo, without any possibility of misinterpretation, that I believe there is a substantial *prima facie* case in relation to the State Superannuation Board's dealings with Danbury that improper, if not criminal, practices were involved and that is what we have been aiming at all the way through. I am not beating around the bush in this matter. I am saying that millions of dollars have been lost; the characters involved are bad characters with publicly provable bad records; there have been unusual transactions; there have been losses, not only on the initial investment but also on subsequent investments when it was clear that something was wrong; and there has been a guarantee or put option which was given in February or June of 1987, we do not know precisely when, but it appears it was agreed in February under Mr Brush and finalised in June under Mr Kevin Edwards.

There are dealings which have to be explained and which have not been explained and it is no good the Treasurer's going on putting up this stonewall because there are people in this town who believe in the integrity of Government and who want to know about the integrity of Government. I want to move on from saying clearly that I believe a *prima facie* case has been established in the absence of a proper explanation, and he has had nearly four weeks to give it. In the absence of a proper explanation from the Treasurer, which he refuses to give, I am strengthened in the belief I have held all the way through that there were improper, if not illegal, practices in relation to the investments in Danbury. Given that we have had four weeks in which we could have had answers I specifically ask this question: Is the Treasurer satisfied that Mr Brush did not receive payments from someone or other in, or associated with, the Danbury group as he did from Mr Martin and as he did from Mr Connell? Is the Treasurer satisfied of that, and if he cannot give the House assurances on those matters, why does he persist in refusing to answer the fundamental questions that have been asked over and over again about these dealings - the 57 questions that I gave to him in a speech last Wednesday, over a week ago, and the questions on notice today? I am waiting to see if they are answered. I turn now to the more general issue of the conduct of this Government.

I am sorry that my time is shorter than I thought it would be because that will curtail some of the things I want to say. I have been writing down and putting together a report of the history of this Government over the years it has been in Government. I cannot do better in starting off that history than by referring to the matter of corporatism and the Curtin Foundation, which after all is the starting point and foundation of what this Government has done. I want to quote to members what the Leader of the House, the Minister for Planning, is quoted as saying in the book *Burkie*, which was written by John Hamilton, a former editorial man from *The West Australian*, who I think now works with the Western Australian Development Corporation. I do not want to defame him, but I think he works in one of those Government institutions; he has left *The West Australian*. He used to sit in the Press Gallery during the time of the lead up to the retirement of Mr Burke. In his book he quoted Mr Pearce as saying -

The whole concept of what he calls "corporatism" shows really what an innovative thinker Brian Burke is. It took some of us a long time to realise what his approach was. It is not a philosophical system - rather, he thought out on a practical basis how to get things done so the economy works and electoral popularity is maintained.

Corporatism is a significant development to Labor thought. It is very "user-friendly" to private enterprise but it is also very interventionist because it means the government has a finger in every pie. It is a different kind of socialism. It is the kind of socialism that capitalism can live with.

It has that aspect of consensus which is very important to maintain your position in government and it means that you have a base where rich people are not opposed to you.

And so it was that the Curtin Foundation was launched in 1983. That was a Labor Party financial foundation, and it is of course perfectly legitimate that a political party should form a foundation to raise funds on a long term basis. The Curtin Foundation included in its

launch by the former Premier, Mr Burke, and the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, Alan Bond, Laurie Connell, John Horgan of the Western Australian Development Corporation, John Roberts of Multiplex, Ric Stowe, and other leading business figures. Some years ago I was sent by a political friend of ours a photograph which had been taken at the launch of the Curtin Foundation. He put it in a frame, and wrote underneath the photograph, "Lest we forget." It is a timely reminder as we move up to this election to look at this photograph and to not forget the record of this Labor Government, because one thing we can count on is that this Government will stand on its record. The Government needs to be reminded of its record - not just the record of today, not just the State Superannuation Board and its dirty dealings, for which the Government is responsible, but also the record it established in 1983 when it set the course - as described by the Minister for Planning - of identifying itself with the rich and very rich, and when it adopted the policy of being "user friendly", to adopt the expression used by Mr Pearce. The significance of all these people who are lined up in this photograph is that over the years of this Government most of the deals done in this town have been done with those people. I am not saying they were all done improperly but I am saying it is a remarkable coincidence how this Government has moulded over the years a total plan of action based on remarkable wealth in the Labor Party deriving from its associations with these people.

Members must not forget that it was never denied that in the 1986 State election the Labor Party spent more than \$5 million on its campaign, which was more than five times the amount spent by its opponents, and more than the Federal Labor Party spent on the 1987 Federal election. The Labor Party has gone to great lengths to protect the enormity of its activities by suing all sorts of people over its fundraising activities.

To come back to the point, this is a rich Labor Party which has aligned itself with rich people. This Labor Party has wallowed in pleasure and in the deals it has done with the rich and the very rich. The Labor Party has been seen and perceived to be under the influence of the rich and the very rich. It is a champagne Labor Party, not the Labor Party of the working man or of the ordinary people of this State. We must remind ourselves as we come up to face this election of the Labor Government's methods of dealing and the propriety of its dealings. The question of the Government's dealings goes back to 1983 to the days of the Chinese restaurant deal, when Premier Brian Burke was the signatory to the planning application which sought approval for the use of an approved Labor Party headquarters in part as a private dining room, and then it was attempted to use it as a public Chinese restaurant, contrary to the wishes of the neighbours, in breach of the planning laws and parking requirements of the City of Stirling, and in breach of its own application. I mention secondly the WA Diamond Trust deal, where the Government negotiated, with the help of Mr Connell, in relation to the diamond agreement and the obligation to build a town; secured for the State \$50 million; and did a deal with Mr Bond to buy Northern Mining Corporation NL. The Government then floated off part of it and had to give a guarantee to sustain the price.

I consider next the Western Australian Development Corporation and John Horgan, the Chairman of the WADC. Mr Horgan is pictured in this photograph. He recently kicked up a fuss when the Government said it was going to keep completely separate from the WADC the Gold Bank and the Gold Banking Corporation; and he was put in charge of the Gold Bank. The public is entitled to know what Mr Horgan, this man of business, who is prominent in the Western Australian Government apparatus, is being paid. I can tell the House what I understand his payments to be. I understand that Mr Horgan was signed up just before the departure of Mr Burke for another five year term at the WADC. He would receive \$3 million over five years, and he received \$400 000 on signing on. He is to be paid something of the order of \$250 000 to \$300 000 per annum, plus all the side benefits during his further period. I understand that is a source of considerable embarrassment to the present Premier, but it was put in place before the present Premier took office.

Mr Court: The driver went as well.

Mr HASSELL: I understand Mr Shervington is his driver as well. Mr Shervington was Mr Burke's personal driver. I suppose the Premier can have a personal driver, but he has now been transferred, I understand, to Mr Horgan. I do not resent Mr Horgan's being paid properly to do a job, but I believe the public of this State is entitled to know what is being paid to these people. The head of every Government department in this State has a salary

which is public knowledge. There is nothing secret about what the Commissioner of Health, or the Solicitor General, or the Chief Justice, or the Governor gets. Why is Mr Horgan exempt? Why are the fees of all the directors of WADC not a matter of public knowledge? Why is it that all our questions are met with a stone wall? Because that is all this Government does. It is the same with Exim. I could go back and deal with some of these things individually. Take the State Government Insurance Commission. If we look at the history of that we will see the way this Government moved in. It set up the WADC. It started to do its deals. It took over some Government land, like the technical college site, at twice what it would have cost as a result of tendering. It made artificial profits and it generated figures. We now have another device by which it is generating figures.

I have asked questions in the past week about LandCorp and the land which has been transferred from other departments to the WADC in the name of LandCorp. All these figures have been artificial; there has been very little genuine profit for WADC. There has been no profit for WA Incorporated; there were losses, as we have demonstrated time and time again.

Look at Observation City! I think Observation City is a great development - let me make that clear. It is a great improvement, as far as I am concerned, on the Scarborough I used to know. I am not criticising the development. What I am saying is this: Prior to the 1983 election the Labor Party said publicly over and over again, for the purpose of winning the seat of Scarborough and getting the present member for Scarborough into that seat, "We will not allow high rise development on the beach front." The totality of the Bond Corporation Observation City development was undertaken under the Labor Government. The Government had the power to stop it; it had the numbers to stop it. I remind the House that a few weeks after being elected in 1983 it called the Parliament together to introduce price fixing legislation because that was its policy. Why did it not act at the time to stop the high rise development on the Scarborough beach front? Why did it not carry out its promises in that regard?

These deals go on and on. The same people go backwards and forwards. There is the constant presence of Mr Connell and his company; the extraordinary financial arrangements which have been made in relation to Mr Connell's bank, Rothwells; the moving of Mr D'Arcy Farrell, a key Government adviser, out of the Government into Rothwells; the shuffling around which has been done by Mr Kevin Edwards; the deals done by Mr Brush. We can trace what it did through WADC. It then moved into the State Superannuation Board. Then the State Superannuation Board crashed and fell around its ears as a result of the actions of Mr Brush and these other people. Surely someone was overseeing what Mr Brush was doing! Surely somewhere in Government somebody drew attention to these dealings! The failure to supervise the credit unions and the spectacular crash of the Teachers Credit Society - the Government spent months trying to blame the Opposition for this, and then it moved into the SGIC. It has now moved into the R & I Bank and has threatened the R & I Bank with political interference through putting a political person on the board and bringing in another political person in the form of Mr Garnaut as chairman. He has a political background. The Government talks about individuals all the time, trying to make out that every one of these deals, over 10 to 12 pages of them -

[Leave granted for the member's time to be extended.]

Mr HASSELL: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I thank the House for agreeing to that. I assume the Minister in the House is in charge, so I appreciate it. I would like to use the 15 minutes I have been given to list the dealings about which I have talked in a general way. My concern is that this State has established a record which is just deplorable. The Treasurer has been much concerned in recent days to accuse the Opposition of giving the State a bad name interstate and overseas. May I point out that in 1983, 1984 and 1985, no-one had a better reputation interstate than the then Premier, Mr Burke, because Mr Burke worked assiduously to establish that reputation. He had articles published in *The Bulletin*, in *The Australian Financial Review*, in *The Australian*, in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and in *The Age*. He was on national television, on "The Sunday Show". Every media outlet was putting Mr Burke forward as a hero. Now it has turned around because the same media which were prepared to recognise his activities and his new corporate image have now seen the results of it. The Eastern States media have been exceptionally vigorous in investigating what has been going on.

I have mentioned the Chinese restaurant affair; I have mentioned the WA Diamond Trust and the establishment of the Western Australian Development Corporation.

Mr Pearce: Is this your way of moving a motion?

Mr HASSELL: Then Exim was established. We have been questioning the Government in recent days.

Mr Pearce: You will not be in power.

Mr HASSELL: Members opposite have given me an extension of time, and I appreciate it. I am not sure if it was deliberate, but I appreciate it.

Mr Pearce: They did not ask me.

Mr House: He was asleep in the corner.

Several members interjected.

Mr HASSELL: It was only fair. This is a genuine speech, and I am sure the Leader of the House wants to hear it.

Mr Pearce: I am here to listen.

Mr HASSELL: We have been questioning the Government about how it will put up to \$150 million of the taxpayers' money into the petrochemical deal, because we believe that a commitment of this sort of money should be made only with the approval of Parliament, yet in 1983-84 Exim was established out of the shell of Northern Mining NL without parliamentary approval and without Parliament's ever being told that it would be used in that way. We have seen Exim perform so badly that both the Minister for Agriculture and the Deputy Premier have publicly questioned the performance of Exim. The South West Development Authority has also got into all sorts of things.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.15 pm*

Mr HASSELL: Before the luncheon suspension I was referring to the activities of this Government between 1983 and August 1988. I referred to the style of its dealings, to some particular dealings, to some of the associations formed by the Government and to the public perception that has been formed as a result of those associations. In the short time that remains I do not have the opportunity to deal with all of these issues, but I do want to put down a list of dealings that took place between 1983 and August 1988. These dealings might be referred to as "Burke and Dowding's doings", because they were dealings, in all cases, that have necessarily involved the Premier of the day and the approval of the Premier of the day. These dealings have characterised the style of Government to which this State has been subjected and it is these dealings that constitute WA Incorporated. It is these dealings which represent the putting into practice of the corporatism referred to by the Minister for Planning in the quotation that I read to the House from the book called *Burkie*.

Mr Pearce: What was the quotation?

Mr HASSELL: It was the Minister for Planning's quotation about "corporatism".

Mr Pearce: It was a good quote that involved a lot of philosophical thought.

Mr HASSELL: Yes, it was a good quote as it shows the thinking on the Minister's side of the House, and what the Government has been up to; it also shows that the Government has been determined to pursue a particular line which is now coming home to roost on its shoulder like a big black eagle which will bring it down. If it does not bring the Government down, it will bring the State down first.

I will now relate a list of these happenings and decisions and the people who have been involved: The Chinese restaurant affair of 1983; the WA Diamond Trust dealing of 1983-84; the creation of the Western Australian Development Corporation with its various subsidiaries and dealings; the Exim Corporation, which was originally a company and is now a statutory body; the highly successful WAOPA, the Western Australian Overseas Projects Authority, which merged into the failed Exim and the successful profits of which were used to make Exim look respectable; the State Government Insurance Commission, which was a traditional body that worked well in the State and for the State, and which was converted into a dealer body - a four on the floor body; the Observation City deal, which epitomises the Labor Party's breach of trust and breach of promise.

Mr Clarko: You are spot on with that.

Mr HASSELL: On occasion after occasion the Government indicated that it would stop the deal, and then let it go ahead. That deal, of course, involved Bond Corporation.

The list continues: The Bunbury Hotel and office block development, which was entirely based on a big Government rental commitment; the casino development which contained numerous controversies, none of which was necessary. We could have had an uncontroversial casino in this State if it was approached in the way that the Opposition said that it should be; that is, get it at arm's length from Government. Instead, we had the unedifying spectacle of the Government up to its armpits in controversy with the responsible Minister going up and staying at the Genting Highland Resort and compromising his position as an independent member of Government. The controversy of the public land allocation; controversy about the planning process and the role of the City planners; controversy about the licence and the non-prosecution for huge cost overruns.

Mr Pearce: Your effort to whip up this smear and innuendo is a total non event.

Mr HASSELL: Every time one of these issues is raised over the years the Government says it is "innuendo". Yet every single one of these matters has been brought home to roost: The David Jones site and the extraordinary obligations undertaken by the State Superannuation Board over funding that site, the burden of which the board is still trying to escape; the technical college site in St George's Terrace, cutting across the process of tendering; the Rothwells Limited guarantee - the unprecedented, unbelievable proposition that the State should support a merchant bank, not a regular bank, that got itself into trouble. The Government put in \$150 million, about which it now is embarrassed and from which it is trying to escape by linking it up with a project very important to Western Australia, the petrochemical plant, which it should be kept 100 miles away from because that is an important program. There was the fiasco of FundsCorp which was going to take over funds management for the Treasury, the State Government Insurance Commission and the State Superannuation Board but which only ever took over cash management for the State Superannuation Board; it was sacked by the board and is now going out of business. There was Goldrock, the Exim venture which went bad and was exposed in Parliament. Talk about innuendo, talk about facts - it was the biggest scandal possible, where people working for the Government were shown to have provided interest free loans for friends and relatives. There was the Fremantle Gas and Coke Co Ltd deal, where the Government made changes which enhanced the value of the company and then bought at the enhanced value, way over the top. Again that involved Mr Connell and his interests, Mr Goldberg, and so on. There was the matter of the Midland Abattoirs, another scandal of major proportions, where valuable land was sold not by tender but by a deal done by the Government for political motives, because of its obsessive dislike of Mr Ric New of Midland Brick, and because Mr New happens to be a Liberal supporter. There were the Bell Group dealings of 1988 in the pressured circumstances of the State Government Insurance Commission buying property, and still those dealings have not been explained to the public.

Still the liabilities and obligations of the State have not been exposed, despite the fact that we are right now considering a Budget that does not tell us anything about what is really going on in this State with the taxpayers' money. There was the Bell Group share deal, the absolutely shameful act by the SGIC through Mr Kevin Edwards, cooking up a deal to buy the Bell shares, with the National Companies and Securities Commission intervening to force a takeover bid by Bond Corporation because the proposition was accepted by the commission, as it was accepted by everyone else, that the SGIC and the Bond group acted in concert. What happened with Mr Edwards and company in relation to that was just disgraceful. There was the matter of the Bell Group bonds, which the taxpayer is still carrying - bonds bought way over the price of the market, and they still are. I wish I had time to list all the details of that. There was the Western Australian Meat Commission, with Mr Connell appointed as chairman but not turning up to the meetings. There was the Rottnest Island Board and the way Rottnest Island has been operated; the Rottnest Island cottage, the Rottnest Island moorings and the mysterious explosion on a reef that just happened to make way for certain people's large boats to get in there, Mr Connell's included.

All these amazing things have happened, and how well were they dealt with by a Government that was really trying to get to the facts and the truth? There was also the



Anchorage project, a matter on which debate raged in this House for many months - after the technical difficulties in getting it before the House were solved, because there were all sorts of sub judice and other difficulties to overcome - leading eventually to Mr Brush and Mr Martin being charged. There was the whole saga of Mr Brush and his activities, and the fact that the Government has never investigated them. There was the Mosman Bay Tearooms issue, the Exim pastoral leases, a State Minister of the Crown selling his land to the Commonwealth Aboriginal Development Commission, Catt Corporation, the Teachers Credit Society, the Swan Building Society, the Swan Brewery site, the petrochemical plant, the political appointments, and the O'Connor case, where criminal charges against Mr O'Connor were dropped on a political direction. I have mentioned the Curtin Foundation, the 6PR Radio deal, Mr Horgan and his salary which has not been disclosed - the list goes on and on.

Mr Pearce: You can move for another extension of time.

*Extension of Time*

Mr COURT: I move -

That the member for Cottesloe be given an extension of time.

The SPEAKER: Just a minute while I give consideration to what I might do about this.

Mr Pearce: We are not going to support it, but I said you could move it if you wanted to.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members would be aware that immediately prior to the luncheon suspension I was not in the Chair. It has been drawn to my attention that immediately prior to the luncheon suspension the member for Cottesloe was given an extension of time and that that extension has now expired. Is that right?

Mr Pearce: Yes.

The SPEAKER: Under Standing Orders no further extension is permissible. The member's time has expired.

Leave denied.

*Debate Resumed*

MR COURT (Nedlands - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.28 pm]: During this General Loan and Capital Works Fund Bill debate I want to concentrate on some issues related to the energy side of the Government's activities. Members will note that in the papers given to this House some detail was set out as to what the Government was proposing to do through the State Energy Commission this year. It talked of spending some \$235 million in 1988-89 on the expansion and improvement of the State's electricity and gas systems. The Liberal Party is concerned that this State is extremely well placed to move into a phase of quite considerable industrial expansion, but that the groundwork has not been laid to ensure we have adequate generating capacity in place over the next decade as this expansion occurs. We believe that the Government has not been showing a great deal of vision in planning the forward generating capacity for the State, and in fact has allowed the situation to creep up so that it will now have to rush into the planning and construction of the future generating capacity that will be required. This will be particularly so if the State is able to attract some of the larger industrial projects that certainly we will be looking to attract when we return to Government after the next election.

We would appreciate the Government's spelling out its proposals for the expansion of this State's generating capacity. The Government has issued Press releases saying that if the aluminium smelter is to proceed a new power station is required but there has been no talk about whether the station will be built and owned by the Government or by the private sector. The Liberal Party supports the construction of the next major power station at Collie and we support that power station being owned and operated by the private sector. That is, the private sector should build and operate the station and sell the power into the SEC grid. With an election coming up shortly no doubt the Government will announce once again that an aluminium smelter will be constructed. Prime Minister Bob Hawke made that announcement twice before the last Federal election.

Mr Hodge: The member's dad announced the North West Shelf project 10 times.

Mr COURT: And it was built. They first wanted to get that off the ground during the time of the Whitlam Labor Government, but that Government stopped it from going ahead.

Mr Hodge: The economic conditions at the time had something to do with that.

Mr COURT: Not at all. The big concern at the time was that a number of market opportunities were available for the gas to be sold; that did not proceed at the time and other countries were allowed to build their big export LNG plants. Unfortunately our gas does not come on stream until next year. When a person from Woodside was addressing a conference recently he said that that one of the scandals of the Whitlam years was the fact that the project was put back and the opportunity to win large gas contracts was lost.

As I said, no doubt we will hear the Government announce again that an aluminium smelter will be built. For the good of this State I hope that that announcement is made and that the smelter is built; but I also hope that the Government is not involved. I do not go along with the concept that the Government take equity participation in resource projects. Government people are working on such projects, and the Government should spell out during the Budget and General Loan Fund debates how it would prefer to have the future power generating capacity in this State built and operated.

A lot of uncertainty and concern exist in Collie at present, both in the coal industry and in the area of future power generation. Many people in Collie have become confused about the changes that have taken place; for example, Western Collieries has been taken over by Rothwells. People found that rather unusual because one week they read that Rothwells was in severe financial difficulties and could no longer proceed with its involvement in a petrochemical plant, and the Government had to participate in a rescue operation with a \$150 million guarantee; then a few weeks later people read that Rothwells had spent \$100 million on the purchase of Western Collieries. Rumours have been going around Collie about the intention of the new owners, together with talk about discussions taking place on whether the two coal producing companies can be merged into a new organisation which includes a new power station. All of that is floated off to the public; the power station which will be needed in the mid 1990s would be a part of that float. These are the different ideas being considered, and it would be advantageous if the public of Western Australia, and particularly the people of Collie, were given a better understanding of the Government's intentions. We have been keeping in close contact with the people involved in the Collie coal industry - both employers and employees. We see coal as the major energy source for our future power generation.

Mr Gordon Hill: The member did not say that earlier this morning.

Mr COURT: What did I say?

Mr Gordon Hill: The member's comments conflict with what he said in earlier debate.

Mr COURT: I was talking about selling uranium overseas earlier today.

Mr Gordon Hill: Maybe the comments I refer to were not made by the member.

Mr COURT: The Leader of the Opposition spoke, and I spoke, and no-one mentioned nuclear power generation.

Mr Hodge: The comments conflict with the actions of previous Liberal Governments.

Mr Court: For the benefit of the Minister, I made the point this morning that 16 per cent of the world's power is currently generated by nuclear power plants. That is expected to rise to 20 per cent by the year 2000. As a country with one third of the world's uranium resources it is logical for Australia to export that uranium to the users - but at the moment we export only 10 per cent. The Minister is talking on a completely different subject, but I appreciate the opportunity to make that point again.

Coal is a major energy source for generating power in this State. We appreciate that difficulties have occurred short term with the introduction of gas from the North West Shelf project. We do not shy away from that at all because we are proud of that project; it is one which has guaranteed this State, particularly the south west, an assured supply of gas. The project is one which, at the end of next year, will allow Western Australia to earn huge sums of export income out of the LNG stage of the project. The project is enabling a whole new range of industries to be established, including the petrochemical industries which we are

keen to have established. As I have said, we realise the short term difficulties that have arisen as the supply has come on stream.

As the Government has belatedly stated, in a few years this State will need all the gas it can find for different projects, and for further processing into LPG, ethane, VCMs and so on. We would not be making efficient use of that gas if it were all burned for power generation. I query the Government's figures relating to the need to bring more gas down in the next few years. At some time in the future we will need to spend money to bring more gas through the pipeline; but the Government should realise that at present approximately half of the electricity being generated in this State is using gas, with coal generation in the past year going as low as 36 per cent. In answer to a question in this House I received the statistics for coal, gas and oil over the past year: Approximately half of our power is currently being generated using gas. As the demand for gas builds up and we can burn less of it in power generation, at what stage would the Kwinana power station be put back on to burning coal instead of gas? Perhaps I should place that question on notice, as the Minister is not in the House at the moment. The Kwinana station comprises a large part of our power generating capacity and I would like to know whether the Government plans to return that station to burning coal.

Mr Thomas: It will be good news for Collie if it does.

Mr COURT: I am interested to know whether the Government intends doing that because I have been told that the Environmental Protection Authority is concerned about reversion to coal.

There is a very clear realisation by both the companies and the unions at Collie that coal needs to become more competitively priced if it is to compete with gas. The SEC has indicated to the companies and the unions the achievable price levels that would make coal more competitive. It is a tough marketplace.

I saw in the news today where the marketing of our coal from the east coast is becoming more difficult because the United States is starting to pick up some of our Japanese markets. However, the union in Collie should be complimented for being in the forefront of the debate for change. It is a fairly aggressive union involving a group of young people. It is not running away from the issues but is prepared to debate the changes that will be required. Some of its members have been sent overseas to gain a better understanding of trends in the coal industry.

We were concerned recently to hear that the SEC favours a stronger concentration on open cut mining in that area. The Coal Industry Council presented its arguments in the *Collie Mail* on 25 August supporting more open cut mining in preference to deep underground mining. The Opposition believes that if Collie is to have a long term future as a producer, it needs to commit itself to underground mining. The long term future of Collie as the State's major coal producing centre depends on a Government commitment to a set tonne percentage coming from underground. It would be very short-sighted of any Government to support recommendations for cheaper open cut coal in the short term. Collie is a long term coal producer. However, to fulfil that role it will be required to mine coal underground to fully exploit the reserves available in the area. Underground mining is also essential for environmental reasons. There is a limit to how many large open cut pits the people in the south west area will put up with. The policy should not be to rip out the easy coal first but to have a proper balance between it and underground mining. The policy of mining the best and leaving the rest is not the sort of policy that the Opposition supports.

For those reasons, the Opposition reaffirms its support for the commitments it gave for underground mining when in Government because it is essential for the area's long term future. The member for Collie knows that big improvements have been made to underground mining. These improvements will enable the companies to reduce the price of coal considerably and will enable it to become more productive. With those improved techniques, it is important that we keep the skills in place so that we do not have to start training people in future in the skills of underground mining. The new techniques apparently allow much more coal to be extracted. I have been assured that safety factors are already in place and the price of the underground ore is being reduced.

The Opposition's policy on the Collie coal situation is clear cut. We believe that coal has a

great future in an industrially expanding State provided it is competitive. Coal has gone through difficult times because of natural gas. However, that situation is now turning around and more and more coal will be required in the future. We believe it is essential to keep the underground mining skills in place to guarantee that a certain amount of coal is obtained from that source.

In considering other matters contained in this Bill, I notice that \$6.1 million was to be allocated to upgrading the power supply in the Kemerton area. When the Government was bungling its decision about where it would place the silicon project, it negotiated a very comfortable package with the company and ended up placing the project at the Kemerton site. At the time, the Opposition said it would cost a lot of money to transfer power to that site; that has happened. I realise that power has to be put in the area if it is to succeed as one of the major industrial areas of the State. However, I want the Treasurer to explain how that money will be recouped.

In the future, the petrochemical project will be debated at length. At the moment, I am very concerned about the direction that project is taking. For a start, the Government is talking about putting loan funds into that project. As I have said on a number of occasions, we do not have any evidence of that showing up in the accounts that I am debating at present. At the moment the Government is committing an act of monumental deception against the people. It has got itself on a hook by guaranteeing \$150 million to prop up the Rothwells organisation and it is trying to put in place pretty tricky financial deals to cover up that arrangement. Unfortunately, the taxpayers are the bunnies in the exercise. The same political advisers that have got this Government into all sorts of trouble with the WA Inc deals are now trying to work out more funny deals with this project.

Mr Thomas: Are programs available through the Family Foundation being used in your electorate?

Mr COURT: What has that got to do with the petrochemical project?

Mr Thomas: You are talking about WA Inc. That is where the money came from.

Mr COURT: WA Inc has lost hundreds of millions of dollars. This Government should have thought about helping families when it guaranteed \$150 million of taxpayers' money to rescue Rothwells. The Government issued a family package costing \$10 million.

Mr Thomas: It cost \$12 million.

Mr COURT: Okay, \$12 million, but it has lost hundreds of millions of dollars in WA Inc deals. The member for Welshpool could not have picked a worse example of what should be happening to taxpayers' funds. They should be channelled into hospitals and schools instead of these crazy schemes. The petrochemical project by itself is a good project. It is to be hoped that it will be the first of many such projects that will be established in this State. However, there is no role for the Government in the project. It should not become involved in the project for the purpose of participating in a bit of financial fiddling in order to cover up some of its disasters.

I also want to touch on the matter of water supplies Statewide. In the Budget's Capital Works Program it is proposed to spend \$174 million, of which \$117 million will be spent in the metropolitan area and \$56.6 million in country areas. We are concerned that the Government is not planning far enough ahead with its water projects to ensure that in a few years down the track we will be in a position, first, to handle the industrial development in this State, and, secondly, to handle our residential development. We have seen what can happen when there is no proper plan for the release of land for domestic purposes in the State. We have now become concerned that the Government has skimmed on its Capital Works Program and its maintenance of our water supply infrastructure. In the short term it is possible for the Government to make the figures look good. Unfortunately, if capital works are not planned ahead there will be problems. This is exactly what happened in New South Wales where the Wran Government allowed the situation to deteriorate. We are concerned that provision of the necessary water, sewerage and drainage services is not keeping pace with the demand for the release of more land. We need to make bold plans for the future of our water supply in all parts of the State. We need to plan that expenditure now. We would have preferred it had the Government said in its Budget papers that some projects had to be undertaken, regardless of the expense. The Government should have indicated an intention

to start planning and building projects now so that a few years down the track, when we are encouraging even more industrial and residential development in this State, we would have some of the basic ingredients in place. For example, we would have serviced land and adequate power supplies available. The Government has not put enough emphasis on that sort of forward planning; instead, it has concentrated on spending its money on bailing out a few of its mates. The member for Welshpool talked about spending money on family plans. Such money is certainly well spent if it is going into those areas. Imagine what could have been done with those hundreds of millions of dollars; for example, the money could have been spent on expanding water supplies to rural areas that do not have a proper water supply at this stage.

The balance of what I have to say with respect to the Bill I will cover during the Committee stage when the Estimates are considered. I just want to touch briefly on the situation with respect to the iron ore industry at Mt Newman. I was concerned to read in the Press yesterday that Mr Bill Ethell, the Secretary of the Construction, Mining and Energy Workers Union, said that he wanted to make Japanese investments in the State less profitable and that they could be punished for their involvement in some of the resource projects up north. I thought we had gone past that stage. I regard the use of that sort of language as economic vandalism. Mr Ethell believes that he can hold these companies to ransom, that he can blackmail them. We have become accustomed to such tactics from militant sections of the union movement, such as the Construction, Mining and Energy Workers Union. The member for Welshpool would surely agree that if we want to have good industrial relations we have to have cooperation from both sides of the fence.

Mr Thomas: Hear, hear!

Mrs Buchanan interjected.

Mr COURT: The member for Pilbara should not talk too loudly about this. The company in Mt Newman has large sales contracts - it wants to export 36 million tonnes of iron ore this year. The company has said publicly that it will have difficulty meeting those sales contracts unless there are increases in productivity. I would have thought that the parties involved would have seen that as a challenge, realising that if they cannot fill those contracts, other countries will fill them for them. Unions, instead of trying to get the best possible deal for themselves because they know the company wants to supply the iron ore, should cooperate with the company and work out the best way to achieve improved productivity and meet the contracts. They could then proudly say to the rest of Australia that they were major contributors to the export income of the country. They could say, "We met the challenge - 36 million tonnes this year; it will be 40 million tonnes next year." The negativity of the union involved is making the area a bit of a battleground.

Mr Thomas: It is nowhere near as bad as when your party was in power.

Mr COURT: The member for Welshpool could not possibly support what is taking place up there at present. Companies must have the right to manage their businesses - for example, Robe River Iron Associates had to be able to manage its business - and employees have to have the right to work instead of this situation up there where a small section of one or two of these unions is making it difficult for the company to manage and for the people to work. We will become the laughing stock of the world if companies which want to invest in resource projects in this State have to go to an industrial commission to regain their right to manage their businesses. That is an absurd situation. There must be managers in businesses, just as there must be employees. We fully support the moves of Robe River which regained the management of its business. I think the member for Pilbara rather begrudgingly would have to say that its productivity improvements have enabled Robe River to become a major force again.

Mrs Buchanan: I have never said that begrudgingly.

Mr COURT: I am glad of that because it has enabled the company to win more export contracts. The same thing should happen with Mt Newman. Both the parties involved should get together and proudly work towards achieving the record sales contracts in that area. I will further expand on my comments during the Committee stage.

MR BRADSHAW (Murray-Wellington) [2.58 pm]: I refer first to the waiting lists for elective surgery in public hospitals. I was interested to read the comments of the Minister for

Health as reported in this morning's edition of *The West Australian* with regard to the Opposition's policy on and our ideas with respect to reducing the waiting lists. We do not see our ideas as providing a panacea or the complete answers to the problem. Major changes need to be made to the Medicare scheme, which has proved to be a disaster. It was quite pleasing to see that the Minister for Health publicly acknowledged that a few weeks ago at a meeting I attended. However, I was disturbed by some of the Minister's comments, as attributed to him in the newspaper article. He apparently said that elective surgery was not urgent, although the patient's condition was often uncomfortable or even painful. I would have thought he would have been a much more compassionate and caring person; he certainly gives that impression. After reading his words, I feel that he perhaps does not have the compassion and caring attitude that I thought he had. He has to realise that some of the people on waiting lists for elective surgery are in excruciating pain, not just mild pain. That has an effect on their general mental and physical wellbeing because such pain tends to drag them down completely. I refer, for example, to those who are waiting to have elective surgery to replace hip or knee joints.

It is about time that this Government made a greater effort to get the Federal Government to realise the distress and dissatisfaction there is in the community with regard to Medicare. The editorial in *Medical Observer* dated 16 September 1988 states -

Doctor Blewett's baby is now growing at a rapid rate and becoming increasingly more expensive as it grows. It is very easy to promise a high quality, free medical scheme to a community before the real costs are known.

The recent changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme are an example of such politically motivated decision making. Instead of admitting that the costs of the PBS are getting out of hand and the whole scheme needs to be looked at, the Government has gone for the PR solution of trying to convince the public that there are "cheap alternatives" to some drugs which it has decided to restrict for purely economic reasons.

To make matters worse the Government has now put an economic value (and a low one at that) on quality of life and decided that the community cannot afford it in the case of some of these drugs.

Since the introduction of Medicare we have been proven right in what we pointed out would occur when complementary legislation was before the House in 1983. We said that three things would happen: That waiting lists would develop, and they did not take long to develop; costs would get out of proportion; and services would be reduced, and we have seen a reduction of services since the introduction of Medicare.

We have also seen a reduction in the number of pharmaceutical items on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme list. A couple of years ago cough mixtures and analgesics and other things were taken off that list for pensioners. Authorisation for a whole range of essential, life saving drugs for which there are no alternatives has been introduced recently. When authorities were required to do so initially it was because there were cheaper alternatives available. We have seen the removal of the Medicare subsidy for private hospitals, and a lowering of the rebate to doctors treating patients in those hospitals. There are other examples of reductions in services to the people of Australia. It is time the Government reviewed Medicare and made suitable changes to it to try to get back to the previous balance between private and public hospitals.

I am not saying it should chuck out Medicare, but it needs to be revised so that we get a balance back in that area. It is not only that costs have blown out, but also that people are being put at a disadvantage, and a lot of them are people who cannot afford private insurance. Yesterday I heard two examples of people who have been disadvantaged by Medicare under present circumstances. A woman rang me about her mother who has cancer of the left lung and who was given a hospital booking for 27 September to have her operation on 28 September. However, she received a letter saying not to go because there was no bed available and that she may have to wait for anything up to six months. If I had lung cancer I would want to be in there yesterday having the operation and not be waiting for six months not knowing whether there would then be a bed available and an opportunity to have an operation.

In the other case the daughter of the man who rang me had a perforated ear drum requiring surgery. Her operation was put off for some weeks purely because of the waiting list. A few weeks after his daughter came out of hospital, having had the operation, there were complications. The operation had not been as successful as it should have been and the person was given a date to return to the hospital. The man turned up with his daughter and left her at the Royal Perth Hospital just after 9 am because he had to go to work. He was assured that she would be all right. He returned at 12 o'clock to find her sitting in the waiting room waiting to be admitted. He went and asked what was going on and was told they did not have a bed for her. He then went and rang the Minister's office and within half an hour she had a bed; whether that was coincidental or the Minister did something about it, I do not know, but it is atrocious that people can sit in a hospital all morning and maybe wait all day before they get a bed.

Last year when my father was in Royal Perth Hospital having an eye operation, he was in, I think, a four bed ward, and we noticed that the beds did not get cold after someone got out of them before someone else got into them. It is disgusting that a situation exists where hospitals are working at over capacity putting a lot of stress and strain on staff. This could be remedied by getting back to a balance between private and public hospitals, and it would not be difficult to achieve that. Unfortunately we have a Federal Government that does not want to recognise the fact that there are problems. In Western Australia, for instance, there are about 8 000 people waiting for elective surgery. I know that when we released our presentation a week or so ago regarding helping reduce waiting lists I said during a radio interview that I thought the State Minister was trying to reduce those waiting lists but was handicapped by Medicare. He realises that there are people waiting out there and he is the first to admit that there are waiting lists. He has had money allocated to alleviate those lists, but until he gets to the root cause of the problem it will not be fixed. Medicare is not only having an effect on people waiting for elective surgery, but also the situation has now arisen where the accident emergency services at Royal Perth Hospital and other Perth teaching hospitals are working under huge pressure and strain. Who knows what mistakes will occur under those circumstances that could have been avoided if money was available to remedy these matters?

Mr Wilson: Money is being made available.

Mr BRADSHAW: Only since it got publicity.

Mr Wilson: It is set aside in the Royal Perth Hospital budget; \$700 000 has been allocated for restructuring the casualty section of the hospital.

Mr BRADSHAW: I looked in the Budget and could not find it there.

Mr Wilson: It is in the Royal Perth Hospital budget.

Mr BRADSHAW: In the Budget we had here? What does the Minister mean, "In the Royal Perth Hospital budget"?

Mr Wilson: Each hospital has its own budget, don't you know that?

Mr BRADSHAW: The point of the matter is that it should never have got to that stage.

Mr Wilson: If the previous Liberal Government had gone ahead with the development of the north block, which we went ahead with as soon as we got into Government, it would have been on stream before now. It was the dilatory treatment by the Liberal Government of the north block development which put it behind schedule. That is the reason for the problem the member for Murray-Wellington is talking about.

Mr BRADSHAW: This Government has been in office for six years.

Mr Wilson: And we have gone ahead, and will bring it on stream in the next six months. If we waited for the member's Government to do anything we would still be waiting.

Mr BRADSHAW: The Minister does not know that.

Mr Wilson: I know that it was delayed by a Liberal Government for several years.

Mr BRADSHAW: It was always planned to be done.

Mr Wilson: Don't you remember how it was standing there with no work being done on it under your Government? I remember that very well. It was a monument to a lack of action

by the Liberal Government. I think I can safely leave now, because I don't think that I am going to learn much.

**Mr BRADSHAW:** The Minister has shown a lot of compassion for those poor people awaiting elective surgery who should not be waiting. Royal Perth Hospital has reached the stage where it needs major renovations; the conditions under which the staff work are absolutely disgusting. I was looking at the north block a few weeks ago. The difference between the old and the new is like chalk and cheese. Old buildings do deteriorate, and it is up to the Government to make sure that renovations are kept up to scratch so that people work under suitable conditions. The conditions the staff are working under, with all the equipment out in the corridors as there is nowhere to store it, are deplorable. It is unfortunate work has not been done to rectify the position. The north block is a magnificent building and there may be difficulties with the staff, some of whom may be happy and others quite depressed.

This Government, although it claims to be doing as much as it can, has made conditions quite impossible in the health area. The morale of those people is at rock bottom because for years the Government has been making -

**Mr Lewis:** It could not be worse than Homeswest.

**Mr BRADSHAW:** It would be pretty hard to get much lower than it is at the Health Department. For two years the functional review has been going on.

**Mr Thomas:** That is just not true. I know quite a few people in the health department.

**Mr BRADSHAW:** Probably ones who have been put in there by the Government.

**Mr Thomas:** No, ordinary public servants.

**Mr BRADSHAW:** There are many concerned people in there worrying about the future of their jobs. They are not impressed at all.

Another mistake was when the three departments were put together in 1983-84. Since then no-one has known who is doing what and how it is being done. Ivor Davies is now trying to sort out the management problems and who is doing what in each department. The situation is quite confused, and it has been bad since those three departments were amalgamated. They should have stayed separate as we suggested, rather than be formed into a monolith which was not required.

There is now a new health department near Silver City in East Perth. It is called "Sardine City", because the staff do not all fit into it. The Government tried to shoe horn people into it, but they refused to move for at least 13 weeks. The people working at Curtin House put off moving in view of the conditions in the new health department in East Perth, which were deplorable. There was an effort to squeeze as many people as possible into that building where there was insufficient room; it would have been an embarrassment to find that all the workers would not fit into this brand new building. The Government is in the process now of knocking out walls and making renovations to a brand new building, which is ludicrous. The Government's general policies are wrong; the Government cannot even get the buildings right to put the workers into. The workers are concerned about the final solution.

Turning to education, the Minister came to Harvey last Friday and we were pleased with some of what she told us. We would have liked to hear something more substantial in the way of education support teachers, but the Government is now working on that problem, as the Minister said. It is immoral that in 1983 and again in 1986 the Government promised to provide preprimary places for four year olds. There are very few schools in my electorate which do not need major sums of money spent on them in the form of capital works.

**Mr Read:** What about Pinjarra High School?

**Mr BRADSHAW:** My concept of turning that into a TAFE and providing a new high school would be a better idea.

**Mr Read:** Have you checked with TAFE that the buildings will be suitable? My information is that TAFE would rather have a new college.

**Mr BRADSHAW:** I am sure we would all like new buildings, but does the member for Mandurah want to knock down the old buildings?



Mr Read: No.

Mr BRADSHAW: The former Minister for Education and the then candidate for the seat of Murray-Wellington for the Labor Party said in January or February 1986, "We will set land aside for a new high school." This is in Pinjarra.

Mr Read: Are those two separate people?

Mr BRADSHAW: The Minister for Education and the candidate. I said that in the first place.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRADSHAW: The Minister knows what I am talking about.

Mr Gordon Hill: You forgot the comma.

Mr Read: Have you been to Pinjarra?

Mr BRADSHAW: Of course I have.

Mr Read: I have not seen it in the Press. You never said what a magnificent job the Government has done at Pinjarra High School.

Mr BRADSHAW: The former Minister for Education and the then Labor candidate for the seat of Murray-Wellington put out a Press statement in January 1986 saying, "We will put land aside for a new high school at Pinjarra." Later in 1986 I put a question on notice to the Minister for Works and Services, or whoever looks after the land, and asked if land had been put aside for a new high school at Pinjarra. Surprise, surprise! The answer was no. I then had some correspondence with the Minister, and he kept putting it off, saying all sorts of strange things. Firstly he wrote to the shire as though he had put land aside and he had not. We found the land had not been put aside when we followed up the matter. It was immoral for the Minister to say that he had put land aside as an election promise, and when the election was held a month or two later we found the land had not been put aside. When the election comes up, probably in February next year, or perhaps January, there will be another Press release from the Minister for Education and the Labor candidate saying, "We are going to set some land aside for another high school."

Mr Gordon Hill: What has been spent recently?

Mr BRADSHAW: About \$1.1 million or \$1.2 million has been spent on it.

Mr Gordon Hill: What about praising the Government for that?

Mr BRADSHAW: I appreciate it, and the people of Pinjarra appreciate it.

Mr Read: Tell everybody how hard you worked.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRADSHAW: I was waiting for the member to contact me.

Mr Read: It is your electorate.

Mr BRADSHAW: It has been fixed up.

Mr Read: You did not contact me.

Mr BRADSHAW: I was waiting for the member to contact me.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Are we having a nice little chat?

Mr BRADSHAW: Getting back to the immorality of the Government's making these pre election promises for four year olds for preprimaries when it cannot deliver the votes on other education, very few schools in my electorate do not need a lot of money spent on them in one way or another. Until the Government can come up and satisfy that demand I do not think anybody should be trying to expand the Education Department budget or put more stress on the education budget, because the chances of receiving an increase are generally pretty slim. This year there has been a major injection of funds. I had a letter from the Busselton High School the other day saying it had been given the impression major sums of money would be spent on that school, and it felt that in view of the increase provided for in the Budget, it would be in line for something.

Dr Lawrence: Every school in this State which missed out thinks that. We do try to be fair. In the Busselton area there was a substantial injection of funds and the high school is well and truly on the list for next year. We cannot do everything.

Mr BRADSHAW: I know the Government cannot do everything in one Budget but if it cannot deliver on the education promises it has already made, it should not put more stress on the Budget by promising anything else.

I refer now to drainage rates. I am certainly pleased that the Liberal Party has indicated it is prepared to remove drainage rates in the country. Certainly since there was a change in the way drainage rates are formulated two years ago, many anomalies have been pointed out to me. Since that time I have campaigned to have the drainage rates changed in some way. Pockets of areas, where somebody draws a boundary line and says, "You are in a drainage area and you have to pay rates" exist while other people in other areas do not have to pay rates. For example, people on the coast in places like Mylock, which has sandy soil, do not want drainage anyway, let alone having to pay for it, because they know that whatever rain comes down disappears in no time because of the soil. They are being hit with fairly large rates; in some cases the drainage rates are actually two to three times higher than their shire rates. I would have thought that in all cases the shire rates would have been higher than the drainage rates. In some cases the Water Authority charges for drainage provided by rivers and streams; the drainage is little more than a channel. If one happens to live on the side of a river and one's water drains off into that river, one is charged drainage.

Another anomaly came to light when I was approached by a farmer who lives near Waroona. He was surprised to find that the drainage line which runs along the hills suddenly detoured around his property and then back up to the hills again. I went to the Water Authority and asked why the line had been drawn like that, but the Water Authority did not know, although I was told it must have been for some reason. It is quite incredible that the Water Authority does not know why the line was drawn like that. One can imagine a line being drawn in a straight line and then suddenly being detoured around somebody's property. As a result of those anomalies I do not believe drainage rates like that should exist. Certainly many farmers are benefited by the drainage, and many of their farms would be ineffective because of the amount of waterlogging that occurs in winter, but the drainage rates have grown out of proportion. The cost of maintaining those drainage schemes seems to have gone mad over the years. Either we have to abolish those drainage rates or we have to get them down to a level which makes people happier to pay them. It was interesting that the Government instigated a committee last year headed by Malcolm Lee, QC, who brought down a report. One of the major recommendations of the Lee report was the removal of drainage rates. The Minister for Water Resources came down to Busselton talking about what he was going to do; unfortunately the main issue, the removal of drainage rates did not occur. The Minister made some cosmetic changes which will affect very few people and will have little effect on reducing the drainage rates to farmers; he then went off thinking he had done a great job.

As I said, I am pleased that the Liberal Party has made a commitment to abolish drainage rates in country areas.

MR WIESE (Narrogin) [3.25 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to this Budget debate and to refer to matters that I believe need to be highlighted.

Mr Gordon Hill: Bit early for you to rise.

Mr WIESE: Yes it is. I seem to make a habit of speaking on Thursday afternoon. It is pleasing to see that we have an even better roll-up from the Government than we had last Thursday. I am pleased to see that the member for Welshpool is still here and in good form; perhaps we will get some intelligent interjections from him today.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the debate which took place yesterday in respect of housing and the problems the Government is facing in that area, particularly in the metropolitan area. That debate focused on the problems faced by people - especially young people - in this State who are endeavouring to obtain housing and to find funding to achieve that great Australian dream; that is, a home of their own on a quarter acre block, with a little bit of garden to go with it. That dream is certainly becoming harder to attain, particularly in the economic climate we have at present. One thing that struck me was the interjections coming from the Government side. One in particular related to how the Opposition would establish new housing areas and where there are opportunities to do so.

Mr Thomas: An important question.

Mr WIESE: It is an important question and I do not believe it was answered yesterday. I do not believe it was answered either by the Government or by the Opposition. I certainly am not going to stand here and answer it because I do not have sufficient knowledge of the problem and the locations available to try to provide the answer. What struck me, in listening to that debate, was the contradiction between the problem in the metropolitan area, where there is this enormous and ballooning need for housing and land, and the problem faced in non-metropolitan areas, where houses are lying vacant and where there is a great deal of land already subdivided and ready for housing developments to go ahead. However, we have no takers to go into those locations. We have everything people need but we do not have the industry, jobs and that type of development which would enable this existing infrastructure to be utilised. I cannot help but think it is really time that Government in general - and I do not speak of any particular Government - started to look at the planning process and what is happening in the metropolitan area; the Government should look to shifting away to the regional centres and to the country in general, but specifically to the regional centres because I believe it is inevitable that development will occur in regional centres rather than the continuation of the scattered developments we had in the past, which were a reflection of the fact that there were not transport facilities and good communications; farms were closer together and we had the infrastructure which could support the small rural towns.

That infrastructure has gradually broken down. The farms are bigger, roads and motor cars have improved out of sight, and communication systems have improved. It is inevitable, but unfortunate, that development in our country areas has become more regionalised. However, many of those regional centres are losing people and job opportunities for their children to the metropolitan area and to larger coastal regional centres. That is a result of a lack of Government commitment to these areas. It is also the result of deliberate Government decisions to move many Government services which have existed in country towns for many years to regional centres on the coast or to the metropolitan area.

The Government has no commitment to reverse the trend. It will require a deliberate commitment for that to happen. The Government will have to establish services in regional centres rather than on the coast. For example, why should the regional office of the Western Australian Water Authority be moved from Narrogin to centres on the coast? Why should Telecom move its regional services from Narrogin to Albany or Bunbury or even to the metropolitan area. I know that Telecom is a Commonwealth instrumentality, but the Commonwealth needs to make the same commitment to rural towns.

Mr Watt: The Commonwealth has moved much of Telecom from Albany to Bunbury.

Mr WIESE: That is right. These deliberate decisions by the Government are affecting regional centres. I believe the Government has to look at the situation and attempt to reverse the trend.

The infrastructure required to help establish industry exists in our regional centres. Land is available to home buyers in Narrogin, Katanning, Northam and Merredin at a quarter of the price it is available in the metropolitan area. It is fully serviced and the blocks are close to town centres. The towns have good public amenities but do not have the job opportunities. The Government should address the problem. I can see no reason why the Government cannot establish major new industries in Geraldton, Bunbury or in some of the inland towns. If the planners investigated this issue they would probably find that it would cost a lot less to establish industries in these towns than it would in the city. The initial cost may be more, but when one considers the cost of providing the necessary infrastructure in the metropolitan area for an expanding population, the long term cost will be less. Someone has to pay for providing freeways and for subdividing land. Some people already spend an hour travelling 15 or 20 kilometres to work. It is a crazy situation and it will only get worse if the metropolitan area grows at the rate it is growing at the moment.

Many of the problems in the metropolitan area directly relate to a growing population. There is a strong case to be made for a Government policy to establish new industries in WA outside the metropolitan area. We are now experiencing some of the problems that have arisen from establishing industries in the southern corridor, particularly in the Kwinana area. I have been fighting for nearly 12 months for a commonsense solution to the decision to

establish a sodium cyanide plant in the Kwinana area. I accept that the Environmental Protection Authority has investigated the proposal and has found no problems with it. It has deemed it environmentally acceptable. However, many problems have arisen in relation to the transport of the liquid sodium cyanide from Kwinana to users in the mining areas around Kalgoorlie, to the north east of the State out from Geraldton, and to the goldmining area at Boddington. This is a clear indication of the stupidity of deciding to establish the plant at Kwinana. There are enormous problems in finding an acceptable route and method for transporting the sodium cyanide. Road transport is acceptable to everyone but the EPA. The trucks would have to pass through densely populated areas within a 50 kilometre radius of the GPO. The EPA is concerned about the problems that would arise if the sodium cyanide leaked into underground water resources that ultimately will be tapped to service the water requirements of the city if an accident occurred.

The Environmental Protection Authority ruled, on those grounds, that it was not acceptable to transport sodium cyanide by road from the factory which it agreed could be established at Kwinana. We now have a situation where that material will be transported by rail. That is not a major problem when considering the transportation of sodium cyanide into Kalgoorlie or the north eastern goldfields, but it has caused a ridiculous situation with regard to transporting that product into the Boddington goldmining area. We now have a situation in which the EPA, because of its ruling, will not alter the method of road transportation of sodium cyanide. I am of the opinion that road transport is the most logical method of transporting liquid sodium cyanide from Kwinana to the Boddington goldmine. I will not argue about the Kalgoorlie or north eastern goldmines but the most acceptable way to transport that product to Boddington is by road from Kwinana to Mundijong, to South Dandalup to Dwellingup and then to the mine. These problems would not have arisen had the Government looked at the feasibility of establishing that industry which is a noxious and dangerous industry; it produces a highly poisonous and dangerous product. The Government and the EPA should have considered siting the factory in an area away from the Kwinana industrial area.

Another industry which I shall highlight concerns the present proposal to establish a petrochemical plant in the Kwinana industrial area. This is another development which the Government should consider closely. It should be looking at a different location for the establishment of the industry. I find it very hard to think of any reason that an industry of the magnitude of the proposed petrochemical plant, which will have an enormous spinoff in terms of the development of related industries, should be established in the middle of the Kwinana industrial area. It does not matter what people say; highly toxic and dangerous materials will be manufactured in the petrochemical plant. The effects of products from a sodium cyanide plant would not have a longlasting effect on the environment, but some of the products that will be manufactured at the petrochemical plant will have a longlasting effect on the environment. Regardless of what happens at that plant those products will remain in the atmosphere for a very long time. To establish a plant which will have that sort of potential danger in the middle of what is already an overcrowded industrial area, and that is what Kwinana is, is the height of absurdity and the height of stupidity.

Another point I would like to raise concerning the proposed plant is the possibility of an accident occurring - we all hope it will not, but it will be man made and operated by man and undoubtedly in time an accident will occur in spite of the amount of care that is taken in planning and operating the plant. The plant will be established downwind from the metropolitan area and I am amazed that that factor has not been highlighted in discussions. A leakage at the plant would pose an enormous threat to the metropolitan area; the sea breeze could spread fumes across the metropolitan area in a couple of hours. Quite frankly, there would be absolutely nothing that anyone in authority could do to stop it except to try to clear the area. It is absurd to consider establishing a plant of that nature close to the metropolitan area and the Government should consider an alternative site.

I commenced my speech by highlighting that the Government should be using the establishment of the petrochemical plant as a spur to establishing a completely new industrial area in the State. I am not fussed about where it is established. Perhaps it could be north of Perth near the Moore River, or in the Geraldton area, or in the north west of the State. It is a decision that would have to be made by the planners. I am well aware, and the Government has told us, about the enormous spinoff benefits that will accrue from the proposed

petrochemical plant and that is another major argument for the importance of establishing it away from Kwinana. Myriad factories will be established as a result of the petrochemical plant and there is no room for them in the Kwinana industrial area; that is a major reason for locating the proposed petrochemical plant away from Kwinana and using it as a spur to establish another industrial area in the State.

I will move from that aspect of developing this State and refer to some of the problems facing the Narrogin region with regard to agricultural development. In previous speeches in this House I have highlighted the lack of Government commitment to the upgrading of the regional office of the Department of Agriculture in Narrogin. This is a problem for the farmers not only in the immediate vicinity of Narrogin, but also in the surrounding region. A regional office has been established at Northam and a major development of the department's resource is established in the Katanning area. I applaud that. However, a major agricultural region centres on Narrogin and is not serviced by Katanning, Northam or Merredin, which is in the eastern agricultural area. It is essential for the future development of the Narrogin agricultural region that this Government reconsider its planning for the agricultural servicing of the region surrounding Narrogin. The Narrogin region covers the Boddington and Darkan area in the west to Kulin, Hyden, Corrigin, and Kondinin to the east of Narrogin. All those areas should be serviced from the Narrogin regional centre. A very good case can be put for the Narrogin region to become a centre specialising in salinity and soil conservation problems.

They are probably tending to go that way already. A very strong case can be made for centring that agricultural expertise in Narrogin. Soil erosion and salinity are two of the major problems facing the region. A great deal of research needs to be done on salinity problems. Such research should be managed from a centre established in Narrogin which specialises in that type of work because salinity and soil conservation are the major problems facing the region at present. The Narrogin area lacks completely the resources necessary to help farmers tackle salinity and soil conservation problems. The local office of the Department of Agriculture does not have enough manpower. It does not have the funds to send officers to the farms to help the farmers to do the work which they are already doing and it does not have the resources to carry out the research which needs to be done if we are to come to grips with problems in the area.

Major soil conservation districts operate in the area. The Wickepin soil conservation district received national recognition for the work it has done. As a result of an Australia-wide competition, it received a trophy for its work. It has not been drawn to the attention of the public that since achieving that recognition for its work, the work has almost ground to a halt because of the lack of funds and resources. The farmers do not lack commitment but they are not receiving the help they need. The Wickepin soil conservation district was getting some help to draw up an overall plan, and the plan is half done. However, it is not able to get a planner to finish the process so that the work can go ahead. The farmers themselves are committed to the project, but no resources are available to help them plan on an overall basis the work that needs to be done in order to achieve the ends of re-establishing trees and timber over much of the area that was cleared in the past, and getting into some of the salt degraded areas and trying to re-establish cover on them.

If anyone doubts the commitment of rural people and the farming community to soil conservation he should drive around or fly over some of our farming areas. He would see that an enormous amount of money has been spent by farmers to establish drainage banks, WISALTS banks and that type of infrastructure in an endeavour to solve some of the problems. An enormous number of trees and salt bushes have been replanted in country areas. The Government should give the farmers, particularly those in the area serviced by the Narrogin office of the Department of Agriculture, the help they need to help themselves.

MR WATT (Albany) [3.55 pm]: Before commenting on the Bill, I join with those who spoke this morning in wishing Andy Liveris well in his retirement. I place on record my appreciation of the work he has done. There is a special dimension to the work Andy has done for country members. Members of Parliament who are frequently well away from Parliament House and require information, papers or assistance in some form have had to rely on Andy's cooperation perhaps more than have metropolitan members. My secretary and I have relied on Andy very much at different times. On behalf of my secretary, myself and, I am sure, other country members, I publicly express how much we have appreciated the

courtesy that Andy Liveris has shown us at all times. We certainly wish him well in his retirement.

I want, first, to make a couple of brief comments on some environmental issues. There is some good news and some bad news. I compliment the Minister for Environment on a couple of recent decisions that he has made. Since becoming the shadow Minister for Environment and Conservation and Land Management competing interests have presented their points of view to me. I now realise that it is simply not possible to please all the people all the time. The decision the Minister made, acting on the advice on the Environmental Protection Authority, to approve subject to the conditions that might be imposed the WA Chip and Pulp Company licence renewal was correct. I know that there are many arguments about woodchipping and that many people are passionately opposed to the industry. I can understand that. I also happen to love the forest very much and I spend as much time in forest areas in the south west as I possibly can. Having recently visited the area for a couple of days and spent some time with the forestry officers and discussed matters with the millers and a whole range of people who operate in the forests, I am satisfied that with proper management, conducted on a sustainable yield basis, the industry is quite capable of being managed for the good of all. I believe the Minister's decision was right and proper.

The decision to go ahead with the integrated waste disposal plant is also worthy of support. The project must go ahead fairly quickly. I also place on record my support for the decision with respect to the woodchip proposals of McLean Sawmills based in Albany. It is a much smaller operation than the WACAP one, but it is worthy of support. I wish that some of the people who are so vocal in their criticism of some of these projects would take the trouble to visit some of the areas concerned to see for themselves the operations and some of the benefits to be gained.

It is interesting that the member for Narrogin, who spoke before me, chose to spend a considerable time speaking about the problem of transporting liquid sodium cyanide. I have a few comments to make about that. I am probably not as well informed on the subject as he is because he has a special interest in this area, but members need to understand just what is going on. It seems to me to be quite unusual, if not ludicrous that, as I understand it, the chemical is to be manufactured at Cockburn and transported to the gold mines at Boddington - which as the crow flies would not be a terribly great distance, maybe 160 kilometres - by rail but from Northam to Pingelly or Narrogin it will be transhipped as road freight to Boddington via Wandering. It is probably significant that the last place is Wandering because the route to be taken seems to have the product wandering over half the State before it eventually arrives at its destination.

The problem is, first, that these arrangements seem to have been made without adequate negotiations or discussions with local groups or interests in the towns through which the product is intended to pass. I am surprised at the frequency with which we hear of chemical spills. It is not at all uncommon to hear of them either out on the major highways or at an intersection in Perth where something comes off a truck, a truck overturns, or something similar happens. This highlights the legitimate concern held by people in these towns about the prospect of liquid sodium cyanide being transported through their towns. The people have proposed an alternative route which would be much shorter and much more direct. I understand that it would involve loading the product onto rail at North Dandalup. Westrail has suggested that that is unsuitable because shipment facilities at North Dandalup are not available for that purpose. If that is the only thing stopping them, I find it difficult to accept because those facilities could be built quickly should this be found to be an acceptable route. However, I also accept that whichever way it goes there are problems with liquid sodium cyanide because if it is taken via the direct route and there is a spill it has the potential to enter some of the catchment areas, dams and water supplies while, on the other hand, on the other route there is a capacity to affect people in a much greater way in the event of a spill.

Because of these problems the Government should be taking a role in bringing to an end the manufacture of liquid sodium cyanide. I am aware that there is a considerable investment in the manufacturing process for such things. I am told that CSBP originally proposed producing 15 000 tonnes of liquid sodium cyanide each year but, with gold extraction levels on the rise, is seeking to produce as much as 30 000 tonnes per year of that product. I have been advised that the Du Pont company wants to produce sodium cyanide in pellet or solid form. It seems to me that it ought to be given approval to do that, if it has not already got it,

because the transportation difficulties would then be overcome by transporting the product in a solid rather than liquid form. I am also told that the mining industry would prefer to have it in pellet form if it were available at a competitive price. I am fast arriving at a stage where, provided the price difference is not unreasonable, I say we should be putting pressure on this company to manufacture this product in a solid form so that the environmental difficulties being considered can be avoided.

It seems from meetings held in the great southern area - and I give credit to the members for Narrogin and Avon for their active role in these matters - that decisions have already been made and some meetings that are taking place are really only going through the motions, and that the EPA is seeking to justify the decisions that have already been made. Newspapers from these areas are rightly raising public concern over this issue and the sooner we can move to a solid form of manufacture of this product the better it will be and the happier will be the residents of those areas.

The only other matter I will mention arises out of the Federal Budget and relates to beer prices, in the context of consumer affairs and road safety. I was contacted recently by a constituent who understands that the excise on low alcohol beer is to be removed, which should make Swan light beer about \$13 a carton, a reduction in price. When I checked I found that he was wrong because light beer as we understand it in Western Australia - that is, Swan Special Light - has an alcohol content of only about one per cent and excise has not been paid on it but sales tax has. His concern was that with the removal of excise the price of beer would come down but would then go up because it would attract sales tax. That is not right, but what we now have is a situation that with the removal of excise from the other beers the price of those beers comes down and the difference between the light beers and export type or higher alcohol concentration beers is much less than it was. Given that there has been quite a bit of debate about the effect of alcohol on road safety, and that there has been conjecture about the possibility of increasing the age at which people are legally permitted to drink from 18 years to 21 years, we should perhaps look at a different alternative. The situation already exists that P plate drivers are permitted an alcohol content of .02 for the period of their probation, which is one year.

Rather than increase the drinking age at this stage - which I would not necessarily oppose, I hasten to add - we should be talking about increasing to four years the period before drivers issued for the first time with a licence can drive with a blood alcohol content of more than 0.02. That would mean that persons given their first licences at the age of 17 would be 21 before they could drive with a blood alcohol content of up to 0.08.

Everybody is aware that the greatest problem in our road toll is drivers between the ages of 17 and 25 drinking. We are very much aware that a very substantial number of those killed or injured in that age group have a higher blood content than those in the higher age group. We are also told that generally the lower the age the higher the blood alcohol content. Something must be done about this problem. While I would not be opposed to increasing the legal age of drinking to 21, I believe we could achieve a significant success rate with the road toll if the drinking age were extended to 21, or four years after gaining one's first licence, before the blood alcohol could exceed 0.02.

The only reservation I have in saying that is that legislation has recently passed through the Parliament to provide for random breath testing. That was not universally agreed to in this Parliament, but if we are to have a trial period of 18 months for that legislation, it is important that we compare like with like. In other words, we will not be able to compare the statistics for the next 18 months while this trial is operating with the 18 months immediately preceding it. If during that time, as I suspect will happen, there is no significant change in the road toll, we could move to adopt more drastic measures. It is then that I will suggest that the 0.02 figure should be applied to the period of four years.

**MR THOMPSON (Kalamunda) [4.13 pm]:** I derived immense pleasure from the comments made a little earlier in respect of Andy Liveris, because I appointed Andy to a senior position on the staff of the Legislative Assembly during the time I was the Speaker. I did it with the utmost confidence that Andy would perform his duties in the way expected of people who occupy the various offices in this place. Andy in fact occupies a position which is about the fourth level in terms of seniority in this place. The appointment was one which attracted some comment. I do not know if Andy ever knew this, but I came under a lot of

pressure from the Premier of the State who had been got at by someone in the Public Service Board - it may even have been the chairman - who roundly criticised the appointment and suggested that we should be appointing someone else.

I do not know what academic qualifications suit people for appointment to various positions in a parliamentary institution. I do not know of any specific academic course which sets out to equip people for this specific job. What I do know is that people who work in this institution need to have some very special attributes. They need to be able to perform their duties in a professional way, and they need also to be able to relate to the most unusual group of people in the world; and I am referring to members of Parliament. We are all very different in our ways; we have our little idiosyncrasies and so on. The people who serve us in this Chamber need to be able to work with all those different sorts of people. I have been delighted with the way those who serve in this Parliament do so, and in particular I have been delighted with Andy Liveris' performance during the time he has been with this place, and more particularly since he has occupied one of the senior positions. I join with those who spoke earlier in wishing Andy and his wife a very happy retirement. I hope we will see him around here from time to time.

Addressing my remarks to the Loan Estimates, I want to raise two or three issues. The first is a parochial one as far as I am concerned, and I refer to the Kalamunda Senior High School. Unfortunately this school had the worst possible start of all. A political decision was made to establish a high school in Kalamunda at a time when there was apparent growth in the area. Kalamunda was a fairly sleepy hollow until the mid 1950s, when reticulated water was first introduced to Kalamunda. Until that time it was principally a holiday place. There were a lot of weekend cottages and that sort of thing. With the introduction of reticulated water, when a 10 inch main was installed from Mundaring Weir to Kalamunda, people who recognised the benefit of living in such a pleasant environment so close to the city swarmed to the area.

The Government of the day was under pressure to do something about a high school, and to honour a pre-election promise a high school of sorts was established. It started with about four or five classrooms with no speciality rooms. The school has grown bit by bit from that time. The Kalamunda Senior High School has been the poor relation of the high schools in and near the Perth metropolitan region.

Mr Troy: You are not forgetting the Eastern Hills, are you?

Mr THOMPSON: The Eastern Hills was probably in the same category. I worked as an apprentice on the construction of the Eastern Hills High School. Eastern Hills High School had most of the basic facilities there when it got going.

Mr Troy: For a high school?

Mr THOMPSON: It had a manual arts section and a home economics section when it started. That was not the case with the Kalamunda High School.

Mr Clarko: As you have told every Minister for Education.

Mr THOMPSON: I have told every Minister for Education that. I am happy to say that the present Minister for Education has been to Kalamunda and has given me, the P & C and the teachers there, a commitment to do a little job there, and I have every confidence it will be done. I raise the question of the school because an ongoing review of the situation at that school is necessary.

Returning to the historical development of the school, it was one of the first to be provided with a hall gymnasium. I know that schools built today start off with every conceivable facility, but contrasting the Kalamunda High School with the Lesmurdie High School, the latter started off only a few years ago and when it commenced it had everything that one expects a high school to have in this day and age. I applaud that, but people in Kalamunda and Lesmurdie find it hard to understand why one school is provided with all the modern facilities while a neighbouring school is left poorly equipped in many respects. The point I would make to the Minister for Education is this: When the Government is developing new schools and deciding how it will spend its money, greater emphasis should be placed on ensuring that schools already in existence have the facilities needed for modern education. The school has undergone significant changes in recent years; there has been a significant reduction in its enrolment rate, which means that a lot of space has been freed up. More



attention should be paid to utilising that space more efficiently than perhaps was the case in the past. I am happy to report that the Minister for Education has been to the school and I urge her to keep an eye on the development there, and also to have regard for every school in a similar type of area - areas which developed at an earlier stage, where the schools do not have those modern, "you beaut" facilities possessed by the newer schools.

I searched in vain through the Budget papers to see whether there was a significant increase in the funding to attack the backlog sewerage program. There is an urgent need in this State to address the problem of our sewerage system. Mistakes were made in the past by allowing the metropolitan area to develop by using on site effluent disposal for human waste. I was one of those who thought we were lucky in Perth, having sandy soils in which to discharge effluent, and in my simplistic way I thought we were doing the right thing. Obviously that view was held by people in authority; it must have been because they allowed so much development to be based on the on site effluent disposal from septic tanks. It has now been discovered - and people have become increasingly aware of this in recent years - that a real danger exists to the environment as a result of the discharge of effluent into the soil. I am not sure that the environmental danger itself is as great as some people would have us think. The problem is not a health matter so much as an environmental one. It is showing up in the deteriorating standard of the water in our rivers and lakes. Evidence before the Select Committee into Effluent Disposal indicated that the potable water supply was not as much a threat as was the water that flowed into the Swan and Canning River system and the lakes around the Perth metropolitan area. The waters in those rivers and lakes carry more and more nutrients, and there is a severe risk that algae will grow in abundance if something is not done about it. While it is true that some of the nutrients growing in the system come from septic tanks, the majority of it comes from agricultural activities and the activities of ordinary urban living - that is, by way of application of fertiliser on farms and our homes, where it is put on lawns and gardens. We need to maintain a balanced view of the situation and not go overboard by blaming the whole problem on the discharge of effluent into the soil. It is clear that in the future Governments will have to attack the problem of nutrients getting into the system. However, turning to the sewerage system, a greater emphasis needs to be placed on getting more homes onto deep sewerage.

Mr Hodge: Particularly those where sewerage is already available and they have failed to connect to it.

Mr THOMPSON: More than 30 000 homes in the city currently have sewerage pipes running past their doors but are still discharging their effluent into the soil. That situation cannot be tolerated when environmental damage is occurring as a result of effluent going into the system. I know it will be an unpopular thing for the Government to do, but there is no doubt that in the interests of the wider community, people who have sewerage available to them must be forced to connect to it. At considerable expense the community has funded the installation of that reticulation for sewerage, and at a time when there is an environmental problem the community is entitled to expect people to connect to the sewerage system.

Mr Hodge: Do you think we could get a consensus between all the political parties to support that?

Mr THOMPSON: The Minister would get it from me but I cannot speak for anyone else. I suggest to the Minister that there will be problems on his side of the House as well, from what I can deduce from around the traps. We must be big enough to accept that the problem is serious and must be confronted and resolved. I was alarmed when Barry Carbon came before the Select Committee and said that the Swan River was close to becoming a green, stinking pool and that it was only a bit of luck that that had not happened in the last couple of summers. Members all know of the problems of the Peel and Harvey inlets.

Mr Read: Your shadow Minister was not aware of them.

Mr THOMPSON: Those problems exist and I do not think anyone who has anything to do with those areas thinks that is a desirable situation. We certainly do not want the Swan River to come to that. When I was a schoolboy there was a problem with the Swan River; we were barred from swimming in it because the water was polluted -

Mr Lewis interjected.

Mr THOMPSON: Not only that. It was mainly because of the algae bloom.

Mr Clarko: It is good today.

Mr THOMPSON: It is and that is a tribute to the Swan River Authority or the Conservation Board as it used to be known. We talk about environmental protection today as though in the past nothing was done to protect the environment. I reckon a classic as far as protection of the environment was concerned was the establishment of the Conservation Board.

Ever since people have been barred from swimming in the river, the quality of the water of the Swan River has improved. It is important that we maintain its quality, because of its value to the city. I hope that the report of the Select Committee of which I was a member will be taken seriously by the Government and that this Government and Governments that follow will pursue the findings and recommendations of that report.

I turn now to another matter relating to water, this time at the other end of the scale - not the stuff that we discharge from our bodies, but the stuff we take into our bodies - the drinking water. There is an ongoing problem in the hills in relation to the policy pertaining to the management of catchments. Until recently two water authorities harvested water adjacent to the metropolitan area, the Country Towns Water Authority which maintained the Mundaring Weir which serviced country areas, and the Metropolitan Water Authority which maintained several dams in the hills from which it supplied the Perth metropolitan area. The two authorities had separate philosophies with respect to their catchments and different philosophies in many respects of their operations. For instance, in the 1970s the ludicrous situation existed where the Metropolitan Water Board paid about \$82 000 - a significant sum at that time - to buy the Pickering Brook Sports Club. The clubhouse and associated facilities were located on the catchment of the Victoria Dam. That dam was owned by the Metropolitan Water Board and supplies water principally to Kalamunda. Water from that reservoir also goes into the metropolitan system.

Adjacent to it was a catchment administered by the Country Towns Water Authority, the Lower Helena Piped Dam catchment. Water is pumped from that catchment into the Mundaring Weir and is a significant source of water for the goldfields. In fact, one third of the water stored in Mundaring Weir is derived from the Lower Helena Piped Dam catchment. It is therefore a significant catchment.

The catchments of the Victoria Dam and the Lower Helena Piped Dam were administered by different authorities. Both authorities permitted development of their catchments. However, in the 1970s the Metropolitan Water Authority paid the Pickering Sports Club \$82 000 for its facilities and had them removed. In fact, they gave the buildings back to the Pickering Brook Sports Club from which it had bought them. The club promptly demolished them and moved them over the road. It built new facilities on the catchment of the Lower Helena Piped Dam.

All catchments in the hills are now under the control of the one authority. A review is currently being undertaken to determine what policies should apply in relation to the management of all the hills water catchments. I believe that there will be increasing pressure to allow the water catchments to be used for recreational purposes. I urge the Government to ensure that, as far as possible, recreational activities are accommodated on the catchments. Recreational activities are permitted in water catchment areas in other parts of Australia and the world and there is room for those pursuits to be accommodated here.

Many people own land in those water catchments and should be able to use their land as far as possible in ways that are unaffected by the fact that they are on the catchments. A number of people in those areas have been greatly disadvantaged because of the stringent policy adopted initially by the Metropolitan Water Board but now being continued by the Water Authority. The area to which I am referring, the lower Bickley catchment, is not an active catchment and has not been active since 1924. Many members will have visited the Bickley recreational camp. That dam supplied water to the Perth metropolitan area. It was taken out of service because of the deteriorating quality of the water for one reason or another. It was never put back into service and has been used for recreational purposes ever since. It is still gazetted as a catchment and because it has that gazettal, people who own land in the valley are precluded from developing their land. Several have been disadvantaged because of that policy.

One person I know has an orchard on the catchment, which orchard he took over from his father. The orchard is old and needs rejuvenating. However, the owner is reluctant to do

anything about rejuvenating it because he is scared of investing in it only to find that he could be denied the right to obtain a reasonable return from his capital investment. He is considering subdividing it or selling it and moving out. It is beautiful land with a beautiful view over the coastal plain. It is very fertile and, in every respect, very desirable land. It is not that people are not interested in buying it; hundreds would like to buy it. However, the moment they discover it is in a catchment area, their interest wanes. As a result, the price is continually falling. There is an unrealistic buyer in the market, the Water Authority, which, if it does buy it, is buying on a market influenced by its having held control over it. If the Government wants to use that facility for the wider community, the wider community should recompense the individuals who live there.

I have taken the matter up with the Minister for Water Resources and officers of his department are attempting to resolve the problem. It is not something that I have taken up recently; I have been battling for these people ever since I came to this place. I have made representations to every Minister responsible for water resources and every one of them has recognised the unfairness of the situation. Unfortunately, Ministers do not stick around long enough to overcome the built in inertia in the policy they control. I hope the present Minister is able to stay long enough, and is interested enough, to ensure that a fair policy is implemented for those people who are locked into that situation. I have every confidence that the present Minister will see -

Mr Bridge: Our meeting was a constructive one.

Mr THOMPSON: Yes, indeed. I was elated with the Minister's approach to that meeting and I can tell him that the officers in his department would like to have him hung, drawn and quartered because he, at least, recognised the unfairness of the situation those people were in. The Minister obviously put a bullet into his officers, but I can tell him that they will still resist. I hope the Minister is around long enough to overcome that resistance.

Mr Clarko: He will never get his akubra hat on now that you have said that to him.

Mr THOMPSON: The Minister is doing the right thing. A review is under way of the policies which apply to water catchments. In the Minister's presence I want to restate that I hope the rights of the land owners, both active and non active, in water catchment areas will be protected in that review. I hope that the voices of the many local authorities which are affected will be considered. The Kalamunda Shire Council is now undertaking a very comprehensive review of the agricultural land in its area. That review has been called the hills orchard study. I hope the Minister will see to it that his policy gives appropriate consideration to, and does not dismiss out of hand, the work that is being done by local authorities, particularly that of the Kalamunda Shire Council.

The other matter which I hope the Minister will ensure is considered in the review is the recreational aspect of catchments. Those water catchments occupy prodigious areas of land and it would be against the community's interest to lock up that land and say it cannot be used. As the community of Perth expands people will require areas for recreation, and I see nothing incompatible with harvesting water from land at the same time as it is being used for recreational purposes.

MR LEWIS (East Melville) [4.44 pm]: My contribution to the Appropriation (General Loan and Capital Works Fund) Bill debate today will target small business. I am sorry that the Minister has had to leave the House. Nonetheless, I would like to draw the attention of the House to areas which affect small business and should be addressed.

The first thing we should look at is the existing situation regarding land tax. In July or August of every year people get their land tax bills and are concerned about the increases they see in the amount of money they must pay. The unfortunate thing about land tax is that, in the main, it is the business community which pays. I remind the House of the amount of money which is generated for Consolidated Revenue via land tax, and how it has increased out of proportion when compared with the Consumer Price Index over the last year or two, and particularly this year. In 1987-88 \$59 million was budgeted as revenue from land tax; actual receipts were \$63.3 million, which represents an increase of \$4.3 million, or 7.4 per cent. We must remember that that was an increase over what was budgeted. When one compares the budgeted figure for 1987-88 of \$59 million with this year's budgeted figure of \$72 million, it shows an increase of \$13 million, which represents a 22 per cent increase.

As I said, small business is crying out for some relief from taxation, licensing fees and other charges. I appreciate that the Government has got rid of the registration requirements for shops and factories, but that was done not only on the basis of giving relief, but also on the basis of freeing up a situation within occupational health and safety regulations whereby the enforcement of compliance with those regulations was costing far more than it was worth. The point is that Governments, particularly this Labor Government, take for granted the contribution of small business to the economy of the country, and the gross taxes and charges it pays. That is amply illustrated by the 22 per cent increase in this year's Budget over last year's budgeted figure. Bearing in mind that Treasurer Keating has forecast a 4.5 per cent inflation rate, that increase represents nearly 3.5 times the expected CPI increase. That small shops in the central business district pay a couple of thousand dollars a year to have a couple of cups of coffee a day is exorbitant. The time has come when this Government should - and our Government will, when we come to power next year - take a comprehensive look at land tax to see how it can be rationalised to bring some equity to those people in the small business area, who are predominantly the people who pay. These increases are out of order, and it is unreasonable to expect people to be burdened with a 20 per cent increase in their land tax bill every year.

I remind the House of another situation which has developed with regard to land tax. In the 1986 session of Parliament a Bill was introduced by the Minister assisting the Minister for Budget Management, which removed the ability of a person who had paid more tax than was needed, because of an error by the Taxation Department, or on valuation, to reclaim overpaid taxes retrospectively. As the Act now stands I understand appeal has to be made in the year in which the assessment is levied, and there is no right to retrospective repayment of overpaid land tax. That is a very important point. I have four or five letters in my office complaining about this problem for small businesses and households which have been structured into family trust situations. There is an anomaly in the Act because I believe it was the intention of Parliament at the time that a person should be exempt from paying land tax on his place of abode. Of course, if that person owned other property he would be liable to pay land tax. It is interesting to note that if the family structure were that of shareholders in a proprietary limited company, the residence would be exempt under the provisions of the Act. Also, in a unit trust, in which the units have no discretion as far as the beneficiaries are concerned, the unit holders, being prescribed beneficiaries, are exempt from paying land tax if the ownership of the home is incorporated into the unit trust. Unfortunately, a family trust, which has been put in place for the welfare of the family, but in which the beneficiaries are not prescribed other than that they can only be members of the family, is not exempt from paying land tax on the family home. It is deemed that because some members of that family trust may not be living in the home, there is a discretion from the trustee as to who are the beneficiaries of that trust. A trust which is structured such that it does not have specific beneficiaries is not exempt from paying land tax. That anomaly in the legislation should be addressed. If people in proprietary limited structures and in unit trust structures are exempt from paying land tax, it is reasonable that people living in their own home which is incorporated in a family trust should also be exempt.

A further point I wish to emphasise is that the Department of State Taxation is now asking these people for back taxes since 1982. That is grossly unfair. I have received letters from one constituent who set up a family trust in 1976 and at that time was advised by the Department of State Taxation that the trust would be exempt from paying land tax on the family residence. I understand that this year a Crown Law opinion was sought by the Department of State Taxation and, because the Act is silent and there is no prescribed way of dealing with family trusts, the Department of State Taxation has demanded land tax payments going back to 1982. Hitherto, all the advice received by those people from accountants, business managers and solicitors indicated that they would not be liable to pay land tax on the family home.

Only two years ago this Parliament removed from the general taxpayer who pays land taxes his right to claim retrospectively any overpayment of taxes. On the one hand the Government has told people that they should have been paying taxes since 1982, and even though they were advised otherwise, they must now cop it; and on the other hand, if people pay too much tax they are not allowed to claim recompense for that overpayment. That is an anomaly to which this Government should give consideration.

I now turn to the question of stamp duty, in which area I feel the Government has gone too far. The take on stamp duty has exploded in recent years. Unfortunately, none of that stamp duty revenue has been returned to the small business area from which most of it came. To emphasise my point: In 1987-88 the Government budgeted \$301.8 million for receipts on stamp duty; actual receipts were \$432.4 million, a 43 per cent increase. In other words, the Government received \$130.6 million more than it expected to receive. In 1988-89 the estimated receipts for stamp duty are \$454.5 million; \$152 million more than budgeted for in 1987-88. That represents a 50.5 per cent increase from one year's Budget to the next.

Mr Gordon Hill: Are you suggesting that we put the rates up?

Mr LEWIS: This Government professes to look after small business and these are the people who pay the taxes in the main; they pay stamp duty, payroll tax and land tax. The general public is exempt from paying many of those taxes. The Government has budgeted for an increase of 50 per cent in stamp duty revenue, but surely the time has come when some relief should be given to small business.

Mr Bridge: I do not have a problem with that proposition. However, you need to make it clear that although you refer to increased figures, they are not based upon a change of structure in the rating system, but rather on the buoyancy of the economy.

Mr MacKinnon: Rubbish, you put up all those rates.

Mr Bridge: That is not true.

Mr LEWIS: One of the main reasons for the increase is the bracket creep. The Government has said that it has not raised the rates and charges, and Mr Keating has said that he has not raised the rate of taxation. However, salaries have increased and people have gone through the various thresholds on taxation; the scales have not changed but the people have moved into different tax brackets. It is an insidious way of ramping taxation. The Government can be accused of deliberately ramping taxation in the area of stamp duty, because every time the transactions have moved into a different bracket the rate has increased from 1.75 per cent to 3.25 per cent. That is the problem. The Government may not have increased the rates of taxation, but inflation has had its effect. The Government has not been honest and admitted that bracket creep has caught up and that, therefore, it should increase the thresholds to give people some relief from taxation. The Government has pulled a confidence trick on the public by winding up revenue on stamp duty by 50 per cent in one year.

Mr Gordon Hill: You are inconsistent. You have just admitted we have not changed the structure.

Mr LEWIS: The Minister must really be dumb. It is no wonder he sits back there and never says anything unless one of his cronies asks him a question.

Mr Cash interjected.

Mr LEWIS: The member for Mt Lawley has just said that the consumption allowances on water were increased appreciably, yet the Government is saying it has not put up any charges.

The next area I wish to turn to is payroll tax, which also severely affects small business. The Treasurer, when presenting the Budget, said the Government was going to give \$7 million worth of relief to small businesses by lifting the threshold for exemption and thereby granting payroll tax exemptions to about 230 businesses. The payroll tax receipts as shown in the 1988-89 Budget have increased by \$73 million from what was budgeted for last year. The Government is giving back only 10 per cent of the additional revenue, yet has the gall to come into this House and say it is giving taxation relief in the area of payroll tax. If the Government wants to increase its taxes, that is fine - it will stand on its record - but the Treasurer should not come into this Parliament and tell untruths and try to dupe the public and say the Government is not doing things when it clearly is. The Government has budgeted for a 20 per cent increase in payroll tax receipts, yet the Treasurer has come in here and said he is providing relief from payroll tax. The Government is winding up payroll tax from \$365 million last year to \$438 million this year, and if members consider that \$73 million increase represents relief for small business and is giving something back to help small business, then I cannot be standing here. I want to point out that is nonsense and untruthful. The Treasurer should not tell untruths in the House or indulge in a propaganda

exercise in the community. The Treasurer should admit the Government will receive an extra \$73 million this year from payroll tax. The Government should increase the exemption level; in fact, it should try to get rid of this insidious tax against employment.

Mr Bridge: Are you saying altogether?

Mr LEWIS: We want to get rid of it completely, and we will use our best endeavours when we are in Government to do so. That is an undertaking from this side of the House.

Mr Gordon Hill: How will you increase revenue?

Mr LEWIS: We will not need to increase revenue. Our Government will be efficient and will not spend the money that the dummies opposite spend all the time. I will not field any more of the interjections. I would like to address my attention to another area where the Government is interfering with small business, the R & I Bank settlement agency. This is a property settlement agency which happened to be under the umbrella of the Teachers Credit Society, and when the R & I Bank was told to take over the disastrous dealings of that society - which has cost this State in excess of \$120 million - the R & I Bank picked up this little business called TCS Settlements. The R & I Bank put this settlement agency on the market for sale, but then started to look at its figures and thought, "Hang on; this is not a bad little business. We can use this." So the R & I Bank, one of the largest corporations in Western Australia, took over this agency because it wanted to do its own property settlement transactions, even though it had assured the real estate industry that it would not do that; it would not interfere. I have received telephone calls that settlement agents are losing their jobs or contracts because the R & I Bank is involved in financing particular deals and has said to the people involved that it would be better if its agency were to handle their settlements.

Here is the rub. All these small settlement agencies in the community are required by the Act to be licensed. Their staff have to conform to a prescribed standard of education and competence. A settlement agency is required to have a licensed person who is deemed to be the manager or operator; one member of the board has to be licensed; and the agency has to be licensed. So one would think that if all the branches of the R & I Bank are going to deal in settlements, its bank managers should be licensed settlement agents as prescribed by the Act. As I have said, a settlement agency is required to have three licences, which on a triennial basis would cost around \$650. It costs a licensed settlement agency about \$220 a year to operate, and it also needs to have a trust account, which must be audited annually, and pay 65 per cent of the minimum trust account deposits into the Settlement Agents Supervisory Board trust account. It needs to have professional, indemnity and fidelity insurance. So the bottom line is that in order for a settlement agency to open its doors, it needs to pay about \$1 400 a year for insurance, auditing and licence fees. The R & I Bank is not required to have a licensed, competent person in every one of its agencies or branches which operate in this State as settlement agencies, nor a trust account, fidelity insurance and professional indemnity insurance. The R & I Bank presumably operates under the umbrella of the State and Crown Law opinion is that it is exempted from the provisions of the Act. This huge settlement agency is operating in competition with small one or two man businesses which have to pay \$1 400 or \$1 500 before they can open their doors. Secondly, settlement agencies are required to have a competent person to manage their dealings. The R & I Bank does not have one licensed person - not one. It is exempt; it does not have to be licensed. Is that fair and reasonable?

Mr Taylor: Don't shout.

Mr LEWIS: I thank the Minister. The point I am making is that if the R & I Bank wishes to operate in property settlements and so on it should at least have competent people and abide by the requirements by which other settlement agencies must abide. Quite frankly, this is another situation where WA Inc - the Government - is becoming involved in business where it should not become involved. Why cannot the Government leave this tiny area of business to small business people who are trying to grub out a living for themselves? Why does a huge corporation like the R & I Bank have to pinch their business? It is because the R & I Bank is one of the biggest financiers in Western Australia and automatically says to the customers to whom it lends money, "It would be better if you did your settlements through us, you know." Is that fair and reasonable? Is it not something the Minister for Small Business should address?

Mr Burkett: The R & I Bank, if it were doing so, would not be saying, "Do your settlements through us." When you buy or sell a property, on the form of Offer and Acceptance you nominate there and then, when the contract is drawn up, who will be your settlement agent.

Mr LEWIS: Of course one does, and it needs only a phone call to change it. The member for Scarborough is a dummy.

Mr Burkett: Do you know the R & I Bank is doing that? They would not have one settlement agent -

Mr LEWIS: That is why I have had three or four complaints; that is why I have had questions on notice for the last week or so; that is why I have letters here from people complaining about this; that is why it has been on the front page of a publication. Is the member for Scarborough not aware of what is going on?

Mr Burkett: It surprises me. The settlement agents in this State are all doing so well and they are thankful to our Government for the legislation it has brought in. If you had stayed in Government for the last six years the only people to do settlements would have been your mates, the lawyers, and you know that. Don't say you were not here, because your mate, the Leader of the Opposition, knows it only too well.

Mr MacKinnon: Don't shout.

Mr Burkett: The truth hurts.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Alexander): Order!

Mr LEWIS: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I quite liked that lump of diatribe from the member for Scarborough. He seems to forget that very competent and efficient private sector settlement agencies were operating without the need for legislation. I am not talking about that point at all; I am talking about the R & I Bank acting in unfair competition with small business. That is something this Government should address and do something about.

Debate adjourned to a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr Cash.

[Continued on p 3378.]

## EDUCATION AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

DR LAWRENCE (Subiaco - Minister for Education) [5.14 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purposes of the Bill are twofold: Firstly, it facilitates community participation in the formulation of an educational policy in a Government school; secondly, it establishes the subdepartment of the Office of Technical and Further Education within the Ministry of Education. I shall address these objectives in turn.

Community based decision making groups: I am delighted to have this opportunity of presenting an amendment to the Education Act that recognises the valuable role the parents and community members have in enhancing the relevance and quality of decision making about educational directions for a particular school. We have acknowledged through the Beazley Report and the Better Schools Programme for Improvement that schools are very much part of the community they serve. We know that each community will have its own goals and aspirations for its young people, and that each community will have its own circumstances that will in part determine the educational needs of the children in the school.

The Ministry of Education has begun a process of devolving responsibility from the central administration to schools and communities, allowing them to make decisions about goals and directions. As part of this process each school is to prepare a school development plan that will outline the priorities and targets of the school community. What is needed now is a legal framework that will allow parents to be an integral part of a planning group. The school based decision making group will assist a school to respond to local educational needs.

At the moment Part VI of the Education Act - headed "Parents and Citizens Association" - deals with and determines community involvement in Government schools. It gives parents and community members the right to form an association which can provide facilities and amenities and promote the interests of a school; but section 27 prohibits the association from

contributing in any meaningful way to the school's directions and goals. The amendment is designed to remove this prohibition, enabling parents and community members to take part as partners in a school based decision making group. It will expand the purposes of an association to include participation in the formulation of school policies and operations, ensuring a meaningful contribution by the community to the education of its young members.

It is proposed that section 23, which details the objects of an association, will have a subsection inserted. This subsection will add, unless expressly excluded by resolution, a further object: Participation in the formulation of the educational policy and operations of the school to the extent prescribed by regulation. It is also necessary to amend section 27 which prohibits interference in any way with the control or management of the school. It is proposed to allow parents to participate in the decision making process of the school but they will still not be able to exercise any authority over the teaching staff.

To reiterate, parent involvement in schools is longstanding, as Part VI of the Education Act demonstrates. However, legally they have been denied any meaningful input into educational policies that directly affect their children. This amendment will allow teachers and parents to work as partners in establishing goals for the individual school development plan.

**Creation of the Office of Technical and Further Education:** The Education Act is the operational Statute for all aspects of the Office of Technical and Further Education, except for head office staff and other Public Service staff employed in colleges. It governs the employment, transfer, promotion and disciplining of teaching staff and the general management of curriculum, teaching and facilities. The Education Act is framed within the context of Government schools in general and there is no specific reference to TAFE or its predecessor, the Technical Education Division, in the Act. TAFE is captured by the Act through the definitions of 'Government schools' and 'Teachers' in section 3. It is through the regulations to the Act that TAFE is effectively managed, and where specific reference is found to TAFE as an administrative entity.

Presently the chief executive officer, as the permanent head of the Ministry of Education, is, subject to the Minister, responsible for the administration of the provisions of the Act as specified under section 8. The Executive Director of the Office of Technical and Further Education is not, under the provisions of the Education Act, a legally accountable officer. As specified under section 8, accountability and end of line responsibility for decision making in respect of the administration of the Office of Technical and Further Education rests with the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, there are no formal provisions for the delegation of authority by the chief executive officer to the Executive Director of TAFE which could have satisfied the requirements for legal accountability.

The Act, being framed primarily within the context of the administration of primary and secondary schools, ignores the vastly different environment within which the Office of Technical and Further Education operates. The proposed amendments will effectively separate the operations of TAFE from other education responsibilities by the creation of a subdepartment within the Ministry of Education. The amendments will also effectively designate the senior officer of the subdepartment as the responsible officer under the Act for administering the Act in relation to Technical and Further Education.

It is proposed to amend sections of the Education Act relating to the delegations from the Minister for Education to the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Education, extending the delegations relating to the management of teaching staff to the Executive Director of the Office of Technical and Further Education. It is proposed to amend section 3 so that reference to the chief executive officer in the Act or regulations made under the Act shall, in respect of Technical and Further Education, be construed as reference to the designated officer under section 8. It is proposed to amend section 8 so that by publication of a notice in the *Government Gazette* the Minister for Education is empowered to designate the senior officer of the department having responsibility for Technical and Further Education to be the designated officer for the purposes of section 3. These provisions cover the officer acting in that office. Provisions also exist for the Minister to revoke or amend a notice under section 8 by publication of a notice in the *Government Gazette*.

It is widely accepted that vocational education and training is a key component in the process of labour force skills formation and in the context of improving the State's economic



performance. The underlying labour market objective of the State Government is to improve and extend matching within the labour market by supporting initiatives which improve -

matching people to available and potential job vacancies;

matching skills formation processes to productivity objectives, and

matching the supply of labour to strategic growth areas of industry.

Therefore, a major priority must be to provide appropriate skills training programs, within the framework of an integrated labour market and training policy.

The creation of the Office of TAFE, and the allocation of portfolio responsibilities for its day to day management to the Minister for Employment and Training - as the Minister assisting the Minister for Education with TAFE - has facilitated close cooperation between the Government's primary labour market related agencies - the Department of Employment and Training, and the Office of TAFE. The result is the development and implementation of integrated labour market policies.

The aim of a highly skilled, educated and adaptable labour force can only be achieved through the provision of flexible arrangements, mechanisms and resources.

The proposed amendments to the Education Act, seek to establish a mechanism by which these objectives can be obtained.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Fred Tubby.

## APPROPRIATION (GENERAL LOAN AND CAPITAL WORKS FUND) BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR CASH** (Mt Lawley) [5.21 pm]: In my contribution to this debate I wish to refer to recent action by the State Government which, in conjunction with the Federal Government, has agreed to allow the Soviet fishing fleet access to ports in Western Australia.

Two important issues are at stake: First, the likely disadvantages that will occur to the Australian fishing fleet and, second, the question of security, which I believe to date has not been fully canvassed publicly. To those members who think I will use this opportunity to "kick the Commie can", all I can say is that they will be disappointed. There is a need for serious rational debate on the likelihood of an infringement of Australian rights if the Soviet fishing fleet exercises the right granted to it by the Federal Government. Some months ago, the Minister for Fisheries in this State said that, whilst he was not totally opposed to the Soviet fleet having access to our ports, he was concerned about a possible security threat if the fleet were to use the Port of Fremantle or some other port close to the Cockburn Sound naval establishment.

**Mr Peter Dowding:** The Minister also said that he did not want them fishing in our waters in competition with our fishermen.

**Mr CASH:** I will get to the fishing side of the proposition in a few minutes. I note what the Treasurer has said regarding the Minister saying that he does not want the fleet fishing in Australian waters at the moment. That matter is still under consideration and my view is that this will be a case of first a toe in the door, next the foot, followed by the whole body. I believe that in due course the Soviet fishing fleet will be granted the right to fish within Australian waters.

**Mr Peter Dowding:** Why?

**Mr CASH:** Because quite clearly, the way this State Government acts, and the way the Federal Government acts, is on a lever action. Both Governments say one thing, test the water, and then make a decision and claim that no other action will flow from that original decision. But sure enough a few months later we find that all sorts of other ramifications come to the surface.

**Mr Peter Dowding:** Where is your evidence?

Mr CASH: If the Treasurer is asking me whether I trust him or his Government, or the decisions of his Government, then the clear answer is no.

Mr Peter Dowding: Where is your evidence?

Mr CASH: In respect of the actions of the Treasurer's Government in agreeing to the Commonwealth's approval of the entry of the Soviet fleet into Western Australian ports - that is a bad decision. Other things will flow from it. Mr Speaker, I do not doubt that the Treasurer and some of his thinking Ministers and members have probably already thought through the consequences and have asked: What will be the end result of this action?

As I have said, I do not wish to raise this debate to an hysterical level where we can be accused of "kicking the Commie can". I want rational debate. I do not want the Treasurer interjecting and saying, "Where is your evidence?" If the Treasurer is looking for evidence he should go to the Parliamentary Library and read some of the defence publications put out and analyse the effect of the Soviet fishing fleet's operations in the South Pacific at Kiribati and Tuvalu. The Treasurer should consider the effect of the Soviet influence in those areas and then transpose that influence into the possibilities that could occur off the Western Australian coast. Does the Treasurer believe it was a responsible action to support the use of our ports by the Soviet fleet?

Mr Parker: What about Hawaii?

Mr CASH: The Deputy Premier is obviously keen to have the Soviet fleet get access to our State ports.

Mr Parker: It uses Hawaii.

Mr CASH: What is the Deputy Premier representing by saying that? Is he saying that there is no security threat?

Mr Parker: I am not.

Mr CASH: Very well.

Mr Parker: If the member wants rational debate he should contemplate my question about Hawaii.

Mr CASH: One questions the fact that the Soviet fleet may be a security risk, and the Deputy Premier springs up in its defence and suggests that the mere fact that it uses Hawaiian ports is sufficient evidence to support its use of Western Australian ports.

Mr Parker: I have not said that but the member should contemplate that.

Mr CASH: I want debate to be at a rational and reasonable level but clearly the Deputy Premier does not want that to occur.

I made the point that I do not believe the public of Western Australia or the Australian public generally have been given an opportunity to consider the possible consequences of the Soviet fishing fleet's being given access to Western Australian ports.

Mr Parker: The member should consider not only Tuvalu, but also Hawaii.

Mr CASH: The presence of the Soviet fishing fleet within Australian waters will pose a security threat to our State. Some very eminent and competent people in the defence area have suggested it is a very dangerous proposition for the Federal Government to grant access to our State ports to the Soviet fleet. What special deals has the Federal Government made with the Soviet Union to cause the Federal Government to agree to that proposition? A suggestion has also been made that the only benefit to Australia to accrue from the Soviet fleet's using our ports - and I assume in the first place the Soviet fleet will use the southern ports - is an economic benefit in the order of about \$10 million.

Mr Peter Dowding: Is there any benefit to Albany?

Mr CASH: No doubt there will be some peripheral benefit to Albany. There may be some short term benefit to Albany, but I wonder whether we should be looking beyond that to determine the advantage to the State. Is it that the Treasurer is not really interested in the security of our State and the security of Australia, that he wants to encourage the Soviet fleet to do as it is alleged to do in other parts of the world; that is, use its fishing fleet as an adjunct to the Soviet Navy for spying and other work?

Mr Peter Dowding: Do you think we are interested in the security of the State?

Mr CASH: No, I do not believe that the Treasurer has a very great interest in the security of the State. I think the Deputy Premier is probably in the same boat.

Mr Peter Dowding: That shows how out of touch you are.

Mr CASH: When this debate resumes perhaps the Treasurer in his response will tell me why the State Government is not giving more encouragement to our State fishing industry; why it is not working in conjunction with the Federal departments to try to improve the Australian fishing industry so we can send the Australian fishing fleet into the area in which the Soviets are now fishing in order that we, as Australians, can benefit from the natural resources which are off our coast, rather than selling out to the Soviets and, in so doing, selling our fishing industry down the drain.

[Leave granted for speech to be continued.]

Debate thus adjourned.

[Questions taken.]

#### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - SPECIAL

On motion by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House), resolved -

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 11 October, at 2.15 pm.

*House adjourned at 6.00 pm*

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# QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

## LAW ENFORCEMENT - PUBLICITY

### *Campaign Costs*

1128. Mr MacKINNON to the Premier:

What has been the cost to date of the Government's publicity in support of its law and order campaign?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

The overall cost for producing and publishing the two booklets "Working Together to Beat Crime. The Western Australian Government's Crime Prevention Plan" and "Practical Ways to Beat Crime", which was released by the Office of Crime Prevention, plus the associated newspaper and television campaigns has amounted to \$750 216.

In the recent issue of Perth's advertising and media magazine *Campaign Brief* reference was made to the success of the "Working Together to Beat Crime" campaign. Research undertaken for the *Campaign Brief* revealed that 94.2 per cent of adult respondents were aware of the campaign. Fifty eight per cent of respondents approved the campaign, considering it to be an "excellent idea and money well spent". A further 28.2 per cent considered the campaign to be a "good idea, but not really worth the money, spent on advertising". Only 6.2 per cent of respondents criticised the campaign as a "poor idea and a waste of money". The campaign was well received by respondents of all ages and in all occupations. The research also indicated that 23.2 per cent of respondents have taken positive action which took the form of -

- (i) obtaining the brochure mentioned during the advertisements - eight per cent; or
- (ii) becoming involved in Neighbourhood Watch activities - eight per cent; or
- (iii) increasing household security - 7.2 per cent.

The cost of the overall campaign represents less than 49c for each child, woman and man in Western Australia.

## CRIME - YOUNG OFFENDERS

### *Dangerous Driving Offence - Sentence*

1250. Mr HASSELL to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) With reference to question 2732 of 26 November 1987, how long was the girl actually kept in custody?
- (2) Where was that custody served?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) Four months, which represented six months' custody less two months, standard remission.
- (2) Nyandi Detention Centre.

## LICENSING

### *Renewal of Plastic Licences - Response to Letter*

1299. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

When can I expect to receive a response to my letter to him dated 27 May 1988 which questioned why a constituent had not received a response from the Minister's office in connection with his endeavours to be given the opportunity to put before the Minister, and his department, his system for the renewal of plastic licences?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

As soon as possible.

#### GOVERNMENT BUDGETS

##### *Country "Budget Outlook" - Greenhouse Effect Strategic Planning*

1300. Mr SCHELL to the Minister for Agriculture:

In the Budget paper labelled "Budget Outlook" under the heading "Country", it is listed that the Government will initiate the development of strategic plans to minimise the adverse effects of the greenhouse climatic changes. What are these plans?

Mr GRILL replied:

The Government has established a ministerial committee and an interdepartmental committee on greenhouse effects, responsible for developing strategies in the context of predicted climate change. Specific agency responsibilities include -

Department of Agriculture - the review of agricultural practices in the light of increasing temperatures and altered rainfall patterns.

Department of Marine and Harbours - monitoring of sea level and tidal measurements.

State Planning Commission - planning according to best information on likely changes in sea level and climate.

Water Authority - planning the State's water resources in the light of climatic change.

#### ROAD CONSTRUCTION

##### *Two Rocks Townsite-Wanneroo Road*

1302. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has consideration been given to constructing a road to connect the Two Rocks townsite directly to Wanneroo Road?
- (2) What would be the approximate cost of a road between the Two Rocks townsite and Wanneroo Road?
- (3) Are there any plans for commencing construction of such a road in the near future and, if so, will he provide details?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1)-(3)

The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority published a summary report in October 1977 entitled "Planning Structure for the North West Corridor" which refers to the concept of additional access to Two Rocks from an extended Mitchell Freeway rather than from the Wanneroo Lancelin Road. I understand the City of Wanneroo is in the course of arranging a meeting with interested parties to investigate an additional access to Wanneroo Road from Two Rocks.

#### FISHING

##### *Swan-Canning Estuary Professional Fishermen - Monthly Returns*

1303. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) In the 12 months period from 1 July 1987 to 30 July 1988, how many Swan-Canning estuary professional fishermen submitted six or more nil monthly returns?
- (2) Did any fishermen submit all nil monthly returns for this period and, if so, how many?
- (3) How will vacant fishing positions be filled once numbers have fallen below 12?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Three.
- (2) One.
- (3) The mechanism is yet to be determined.

#### FISHING LICENCES

##### *Swan-Canning Estuary Professional Licences - Buy Back Scheme*

1304. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Is a buy back scheme available to holders of Swan-Canning estuary professional fishing licences?
- (2) If yes, how much is being paid for each Swan-Canning estuary professional fishing licence?
- (3) How many of these licences have been purchased to date?
- (4) Are there any applications to buy licences back under negotiation at present and, if so, how many?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Yes. The buy back scheme is available to all licensed fishing boat owners in Western Australia.
- (2) A figure of \$5 000 has been offered to those Western Australian estuarine fishermen who sought participation in the licence buy back scheme.
- (3) One.
- (4) The last round of tenders has closed and there are no current negotiations. However, it is intended that the buy back scheme will become an ongoing process with an invitation to apply being in each issue of *Fins*.

#### FISHING LICENCES

##### *Swan-Canning Estuary Professional Fishermen - Restricted Entry Fisheries*

1305. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

Are professional fishermen licensed to fish the Swan-Canning estuary also permitted to hold professional fishing licences or endorsements for other restricted entry fisheries?

Mr GRILL replied:

The holder of an endorsed licence for the Swan-Canning estuary shall not hold an endorsed licence for any of the following fisheries -

- (i) Shark Bay beach seine and mesh net fishery;
- (ii) Mandurah estuarine fishery;
- (iii) Leschenault Inlet;
- (iv) Hardy Inlet estuarine fishery; and
- (v) South coast estuarine fishery.

There are no other restrictions concerning the holding of licences or endorsement on licences for any other fishery.

#### FISHING LICENCES

##### *Swan-Canning Estuary Licensing Officers - Instructions, Rule 7(b)*

1306. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) What are the criteria the licensing officer uses to determine whether discretion should be used in respect of rule 7(b) of the instructions to licensing officers for the Swan-Canning estuary?
- (2) Is there an appeal procedure available to aggrieved parties in respect of decisions made on the discretionary enforcement of rule 7(b) and, if so, what is the procedure?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Please see answer to question 897 asked on 24 August 1988.
- (2) Any person aggrieved by the refusal of a licence or of the renewal, removal, suspension, cancellation or transfer of a licence, or by the imposition of any one or more conditions, may appeal to the Minister for Fisheries - refer section 17(4) of the Fisheries Act 1905.

### EASTERN GOLDFIELDS TRANSPORT BOARD

#### *Operations Review*

1307. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has a review of the operations of the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board been recently completed?
- (2) If yes, who conducted the review and what were the terms of reference?
- (3) Has the report been presented to and discussed with the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board and, if not, why not?
- (4) What were the recommendations contained in the report and does the Government intend to implement any changes to the operations or functions of the board?
- (5) If yes, will he advise of the proposed changes?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A joint review was conducted by the Department of Transport and Transperth. The terms of reference were -
  - (i) Examine the merits of the 1986 Vic Smorhun report and ascertain the extent to which the recommendations have been implemented.
  - (ii) Determine whether the arrangements by which operating losses are funded - or profits shared - and capital grants made are equitable in comparison to other bus service operations in Western Australia.
  - (iii) Assess the alternative options available for the funding, structure and operation of the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board and Goldenlines Bus Service. Propose a timetable for implementing any change, specifically the financing of operating losses which may be incurred in the 1987-88 and 1988-89 financial years.
  - (iv) Identify amendments to the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board Act 1984 which are necessary to put all recommendations into effect.
  - (v) Report on, and make recommendations in respect of, these terms of reference by 30 April 1988.

(3)-(5)

The recommendations of the report - which is not a public document - were not fully accepted by Government. However, based upon these recommendations and further information provided to me by the Chairman of the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board, the Government decided that change was essential in order to maintain a viable public transport service for the Kalgoorlie-Boulder region.

The major features of the arrangements to be introduced are -

the establishment of a new board of three or four people with expertise in bus operations. The board would have a chief executive;

the establishment of a committee to advise the board. The committee would then be made up of 12 to 15 people nominated by the local authorities and community organisations; and

a new arrangement for funding the operating deficit.

## SOIL CONSERVATION

*Soil Conservation District Advisory Committees - Project Funds*

1309. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What funds are being made available for projects put forward by soil conservation district advisory committees?
- (2) Have any funds been made available to the Wickepin SCDAC for completion of the Toolibin freshwater lake catchment conservation project?
- (3) If yes to question (2), was representation made to the Commonwealth Government for funds for this project and what proportion was received from it?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) For 1988-89 the allocation for State assistance to soil conservation districts is \$238 000. In addition, a number of soil conservation districts have obtained funding from the national soil conservation program (NSCP), generally to support larger projects than those funded from State assistance.

(2)-(3)

The Wickepin soil conservation district advisory committee (SCDAC) has received the following amounts towards projects for salinity control in the Lake Toolibin catchment -

	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	Total
State Assistance	\$ 10 796	-	\$ 7 600	\$ 18 400
NSCP	\$ 59 900	\$ 91 300	\$ 36 500	\$ 187 700

In addition, the Department of Agriculture has provided considerable back-up assistance and advice. The department also strongly supported a further submission from the Wickepin SCDAC to the NSCP for \$85 000 which was not approved.

## ROAD CONSTRUCTION

*Montgomery Drive - Public Submissions*

1311. Mr HASSELL to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Further to question 1232 of 1988, when will consideration be given to public submissions in relation to the redevelopment and the construction of Montgomery Drive?
- (2) Who will consider those submissions?
- (3) When will a decision be announced?
- (4) In what way is LandCorp involved in the decision?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The State Planning Commission has now received the submissions from the City of Nedlands and will consider them shortly.
- (2) The State Planning Commission, then me.
- (3) The State Planning Commission will advise the local authority of my decision in due course.
- (4) LandCorp has no formal role in the decision but is involved as the proponent.

## GROUP LIBEL

*Legislation*

1324. Mr CASH to the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs:

- (1) Further to my question 2982 of 1987, what consideration has been given to introducing legislation in the area of group libel?
- (2) When is it expected this legislation will be introduced into the Parliament and become operative?



Mr GORDON HILL replied:

- (1) The matter has been considered.
- (2) Advice to date indicates that legislation, in the specific area of group libel, would not prove to be an effective remedy in addressing the issue of incitement to racial hatred. It has been demonstrated that legislation has, in fact, had the reverse effect. However, the Law Reform Commission has been asked to provide advice on the appropriateness of amendments to the Police Act.

Again, I invite the member to submit his views on this issue to me for consideration.

#### PETITION - TRAFFIC FLOW

##### *Noranda*

1325. Mr CASH to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Does he recognise that Noranda residents are greatly disturbed by increasing traffic numbers, present and predicted, for the area?
- (2) Does he acknowledge that he is in the possession of a petition, containing 2 500 signatures, that highlights the aforementioned question?
- (3) Does he acknowledge that the petition proposes a viable alternative to that stated in the metropolitan region scheme, amendment No 708/33A, at no extra cost, by restaging construction of the northern perimeter highway?
- (4) Will he provide accurate traffic movement figures to test the viability of the petition proposals?
- (5) Does he agree that every attempt will be made to direct through and heavy traffic along the new northern perimeter highway-Tonkin Highway and not directly through the wholly residential area of Noranda and Morley via a McGilvray-Crimea Street restrictive link road?
- (6) What is he prepared to do about restaging the construction of the northern perimeter highway as stated in the petition?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) I am aware of the Noranda residents' concerns which are being addressed through the proposed construction of the northern perimeter highway, Tonkin Highway and associated works.
- (2) I am in possession of a petition that advocates changes to the proposed construction program for the northern perimeter highway.

(3)-(6)

The proposals supported by the petition were made as a submission to metropolitan region scheme amendment 708/33A. This submission is still under consideration by the town planning appeal committee and it is inappropriate for me to respond until such time as I receive the required report and recommendations on this submission from the committee.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT - TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

##### *Residential Developments - Age Restrictions*

1328. Mr CASH to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Is he aware of the circumstances where local authorities have specified, when zoning residential land, that a condition of occupancy of future buildings on the land shall be restricted to persons over the age of 50 years?
- (2) If yes, does he support local authorities imposing age restrictions on residential developments?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) No. I am aware, however, that some local authorities limit occupancy of aged persons' accommodation by zoning provisions, planning conditions or agreements.

- (2) See (1) above. Aged persons' accommodation enjoys certain concessions under the residential planning codes and it is not unreasonable, therefore, for local authorities to ensure that such developments are occupied by aged persons.

**PRIMARY EDUCATION - DARDANUP PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
*Resource Centre*

1331. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is she aware of the need for a resource centre at the Dardanup Primary School?
- (2) Is she prepared to authorise immediately a temporary demountable for use as a resource centre?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) When can the Dardanup Primary School expect a resource centre?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) All temporary rooms are required for normal classroom use at the present time.
- (4) The needs of Dardanup Primary School will continue to receive consideration when future building programs are being compiled.

**POLICE**

*Truancy Patrol - Forrestfield Forum Centre*

1332. Mr GREIG to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Will he undertake to continue without interruption or diminution the two-officer truancy patrol now established in the Forrestfield Forum Centre for the districts of Forrestfield, High Wycombe and Maida Vale?
- (2) Will he undertake that the patrol will remain located in Forrestfield and not be based in Kalamunda or another centre?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

The member should quite clearly understand that such operational matters are decided upon by the Commissioner of Police. I am advised by the Commissioner of Police that the truancy patrol located at the Forrestfield Forum Centre is subject to a three month trial period and an evaluation of its success will be made at the conclusion of the trial.

The accommodation at the shopping centre is subject to review and renegotiation at the end of the three months trial period.

**RAILWAY TRANSPORT**

*Mundijong Railway Station - Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire Council*

1333. Mr FRED TUBBY to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware that the Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire Council has been trying to lease the Mundijong Railway Station since November 1987?
- (2) Is he also aware that council correspondence on the matter dated 25 February, 25 March, 30 April and 1 September 1988 have gone unanswered?
- (3) What is the intention of the Government in regard to the future of the Mundijong Railway Station?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. However, I am advised that on site discussions were held with council in July and a letter regarding fencing requirements issued to council on 27 July.

- (3) A 10 year lease of the station to the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale is now being finalised on a peppercorn rental basis.

# HOMESWEST

## *Tenant Eviction - Palmyra*

1334. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is she aware that some residents of Palmyra have been asked to leave their Homeswest houses to make way for a redevelopment?
- (2) Is she further aware that many of these residents do not wish to leave their homes but fear they may be evicted?
- (3) Will she give a written assurance to these residents, some of whom have lived in their homes for 30 years, that they will not be forced to move?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) I refer the member to my reply to a question without notice from the member for Morley-Swan on Tuesday, 20 September 1988.
- (2) I am aware that the Opposition has convinced a few residents that they may be evicted despite assurances from Homeswest to the contrary. No resident who wishes to remain will be forced to relocate and they have been reassured of that again since the Opposition created anxiety on the issue.
- (3) I will write to any Homeswest tenant in Palmyra who is afraid of forcible eviction because of the redevelopment if the Opposition provides me with their names and addresses. I will also write to those tenants who are now afraid that the redevelopment may not proceed because of the Opposition-created controversy.

# ARTS, DEPARTMENT FOR THE - FILM AND TELEVISION INSTITUTE (WA) INC *Second Perth Film Event - Assistance*

1337. Mr CASH to the Minister for The Arts:

- (1) Is the Western Australian Department of The Arts giving financial or other assistance to the Film and Television Institute (WA) Inc for its Second Perth Film Event and, if so, will she advise on the extent of the assistance?
- (2) Is she aware of the titles and contents of the films to be screened?
- (3) Does she consider that the films comprising the Middle East focus to be screened between Sunday, 9 October and Sunday, 16 October fairly represent a balanced approach to those countries comprising the Middle East region?
- (4) Will she invite her department to review the film *Kafir Qassem* to ensure that taxpayers' funds in the form of financial assistance provided by her department are not used to promote propaganda which could be interpreted to be anti Semitic in content?

Mrs HENDERSON replied:

- (1) The Department for The Arts gives a general purpose grant to the Film and Television Institute and a separate grant for equipment. The Second Perth Film Event is not funded by the department and is run by the Film and Television Institute on a cost recovery basis.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) In line with the Government's policy the Department for The Arts does not exercise a censorship function in regard to the activities of the Film and Television Institute.
- (4) Not applicable.

WESTRAIL

*Travel Allowances - Narngulu Personnel*

1338. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What travelling allowances are payable to Westrail employees transferred from Geraldton to the new facilities at Narngulu?
- (2) Will these travelling allowances be payable to new employees of Westrail who are required to work at Narngulu if they were not previously employed at the Geraldton facility and, if not, why not?
- (3) Will payment of the travelling allowance be a precedent for other Government employees required to travel to their workplace?
- (4) What is the rate per kilometre payable for these travelling allowances?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Westrail employees whose place of work is relocated from Geraldton to Narngulu will be paid the travelling allowance of 26.75c per kilometre for any extra distance travelled.
- (2) No. New employees will be made aware when recruited of the requirement to work at Narngulu.
- (3) No. This is a special case as a result of the relocation of Westrail's depot from Geraldton to Narngulu and the allowance is subject to an order of the WA Industrial Relations Commission and was decided by that authority.
- (4) Answered by (1).

DRIVING INSTRUCTION

1339. Mr CASH to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) In view of the unacceptable level of road trauma on Western Australian roads this year, will he advise which department or agency is now carrying out the driving instruction and driver training which was previously carried out by the National Safety Council in Mt Lawley?
- (2) Has the closure of the National Safety Council driver education and training program been a contributing factor to the apparent lack of adequate driving skills by young drivers?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Driving instruction and driver training which was previously carried out by the National Safety Council is now done privately; however, all examining is conducted by the Police Department's Licensing and Services Section.
- (2) No. All drivers are still required to display the stringent requirements that were necessary prior to the closure of the National Safety Council.

PRIMARY EDUCATION - NORTH MANDURAH PRIMARY SCHOOL

*Covered Assembly Area*

1344. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the Government intend to provide a covered assembly area for the North Mandurah Primary School?
- (2) What is the estimated cost to provide such a facility?
- (3) If yes to (1), when is it anticipated that the assembly area will be provided?
- (4) If not, why not?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) \$140 000.

- (3) The school will be considered for the provision of a covered assembly area when the 1989-90 school building program is being compiled.
- (4) Not applicable.

**PRIMARY EDUCATION - ROSTRATA PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
*Educational Admission - 1989, 1990, 1991*

1345. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the current enrolment at the Rostrata Primary School?
- (2) What is the projected enrolment at the school for the beginning of the school year in -
  - (a) 1989;
  - (b) 1990; and
  - (c) 1991?
- (3) What plans does the Government have to relieve the enrolment pressures at the school?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1) 103 preprimary and 704 primary.
- (2) (a) 104 preprimary and 760 primary students; and  
 (b)-(c) and (3)  
 strategies to ease the future enrolment pressure are currently being negotiated with the parent body, the staff and with the Canning City Council.

**PRIMARY EDUCATION - WEST LYNWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
*Educational Admission - 1989, 1990, 1991*

1346. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the current enrolment at the West Lynwood Primary School?
- (2) What is the projected enrolment at the school for the beginning of the school year in -
  - (a) 1989;
  - (b) 1990; and
  - (c) 1991?
- (3) What plans does the Government have to relieve the enrolment pressures at the school?
- (4) Does the Government intend to appoint a deputy principal to the school?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1) 104 preprimary and 720 primary.
- (2) (a) 104 preprimary and 780 primary students; and  
 (b)-(c) and (3)  
 strategies to ease the future enrolment pressure are currently being negotiated with the parent body, the staff and with the Canning City Council.
- (4) Yes.

**SCHOOL TRANSPORT**  
*Safety Belts*

1347. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Has there been a recent study into the practicality of making compulsory the wearing of seat belts on school buses?
- (2) If no, will he undertake such a study?

- (3) If yes, is it his intention to legislate to make compulsory the wearing of seat belts on school buses?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Numerous worldwide studies have been conducted and indications are that it would be impracticable to have seat belts fitted to school buses; however, any buses that convey 13 or fewer persons must have seat belts fitted.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - ASBESTOS-RELATED DISEASES

##### *Liability - Micalco Pty Ltd*

230. Mr MacKINNON to the Premier:

- (1) Now the Supreme Court has upheld a damages award to former Western Australian mine worker, Mr Klaus Rabenalt, will the State Government Insurance Commission be able to make a more accurate assessment of its liability over the coming years in relation to its position as a sole insurer in this industry during the time this mine was operating?
- (2) Does the SGIC anticipate a legal challenge from Micalco Pty Ltd now that it has said that its insurance policy with Micalco is considered to be inoperative?
- (3) Will the Premier be able to give details of his negotiations with the different parties on this matter prior to our debating the workers' compensation legislation in this House?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(3)

I do not know that this matter has any relevance to the amendments to the Workers' Compensation and Assistance Act. It may be of relevance to the general issue, but I do not think it has the slightest relevance to the situation we are confronting. I take it that the decision to which the Leader of the Opposition is referring is the decision in the Victorian Supreme Court and not the Western Australian Supreme Court. That decision, which has gone to an appeal and which appeal has been dismissed, has raised issues and I understand the SGIC has indicated it regards the company as having breached the terms of its contract of insurance. It is therefore not possible for me to say what is the potential liability of the SGIC. If there is a breach of the contract of insurance, depending on the date of the breach and the number of claims affected by that breach, then of course the answer might be not at all, or that there is no liability on the SGIC. The point should be made that the rights of the victims of asbestos related diseases to claim against the company are unaffected by any position that the SGIC might take in respect of the relationship between it and the company. The victims' rights are retained and continue to exist against the company.

Mr Parker: They always were.

Mr PETER DOWDING: They always were, but under the terms of the contract of insurance, the SGIC was, in particular cases, able to act on behalf of the company and in lieu of the company. In the event of a breach of the contract it would not choose to do that and the matter would continue to be between the victim and the company for damages for negligence.

**SCHOOLS - EMPLOYMENT LEVEL**  
*1989 - Reduction Claims*

231. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

Could the Minister please respond to claims that the number of teaching and support staff to be appointed to schools in 1989 is far below the number announced by the Treasurer in his Budget statement.

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

I do so with pleasure. This is an issue which arose on the first day after the Budget was presented when the shadow Minister for Education made some extraordinary claims about the number of teachers and support staff who would be employed. I ignored it at the time except to comment to the Press that Hon Norman Moore seemed not to understand the Budget papers and that he should take advantage of a briefing which I subsequently offered him.

In the meantime I have discovered that candidates for the Liberal Party, including people who should know better and who supposedly have academic qualifications, are reiterating the same nonsense. They are doing it now through a direct mailing campaign to teachers. It may be that all is fair in love and politics, but the tactics used in this case are really disgraceful. At the same time as we have given indications to schools of the exact number of extra teachers they will be supplied with, teachers are receiving letters saying that not only will there be fewer teachers this year than last year, but also some clerical staff will have to be sacked. Nothing could be further from the truth. There has been a substantial increase in the Budget and the problem is that Mr Moore and some of his colleagues seem not to understand that when looking at the Budget papers one must look at the number of teachers employed not for the full financial year, but between February and June of next year. Out of the 26 fortnightly pay packets, only 10 of those will appear in this Budget. The extra teachers and support staff are employed from next year. It is a fundamental error and one which I thought should not have been repeated or sent to every teacher in the State.

The second thing that Mr Moore seemed not to have understood is that the Budget figures are reported in terms of full-time equivalents. That does not mean to say that heads are counted - it is quite a complex formula and it was changed in the 1986-87 Budget. I have now arranged for him to be briefed and I hope the candidates responsible for circulating the letters will now properly withdraw this misinformation and withdraw the allegation that there is some sort of deceit or sleight of hand in the Budget. In fact, 811 extra staff are being placed in schools at the beginning of next year - teaching, support, clerical, gardening and cleaning staff. Far from there being a reduction, redeployment or sacking, as suggested in the letter from these candidates, it is the exact opposite. The Opposition should view with shame the fact that its senior shadow spokesman in this area is not capable of getting the facts right.

**PETROCHEMICAL PROJECT - EDWARDS, MR KEVIN**  
*Negotiations - Members' Visits Abroad*

232. Mr COURT to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

- (1) Did Mr Kevin Edwards travel with the Deputy Premier on his recent visit to Japan and Hong Kong for negotiations on the petrochemical project?
- (2) What was Mr Edwards' role in these negotiations?
- (3) For how long will Mr Edwards, the head of the Department of Resources Development and a senior Treasury Department official stay in Tokyo on their current trip finalising negotiations for the project?
- (4) When is it anticipated these final negotiations will be completed and made public?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1)-(4)

Certainly, Mr Edwards together with a number of other people, was with me when I was in Japan. He was not with me when I was in Hong Kong. Mr Edwards remained in Japan to carry on negotiations that were under way. As I have said publicly, I was there to commence negotiations and to put the Government's position very firmly. His role is in working for me in furthering the myriad things which needed to be done in a project and contractual relationship as complex as this. Neither the senior officer from the Treasury Department nor the former head of the Department of Resources Development, now the Coordinator General of the Ministry of Economic Development, is in Japan, but they were there when I was there. The negotiations will be completed as soon as possible and when it is appropriate I will, as I have said publicly, announce the details.

**PETROCHEMICAL PROJECT - EDWARDS, MR KEVIN**  
*Negotiations - Members' Visits Abroad*

233. Mr HASSELL to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

- (1) Is it not correct that there is an important deadline in relation to the completion of negotiations for the petrochemical project, and that that deadline is 30 September 1988?
- (2) Is it correct that one of the principal problems currently being experienced by the Government in negotiating the deal is the insistence of Mitsubishi, as a condition of its product purchasing contract or agreement, that the company JGC-Chiyoda build the plant to the detriment of Western Australian content and expertise?
- (3) Is it correct that not only did Kevin Edwards go with the Minister to Japan and that he is there now, but also that he visited Japan prior to the Deputy Premier's visit in an attempt, which was unsuccessful, to sort out the problems?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) I have indicated that I hope negotiations can be concluded by the end of this month. I have said that again publicly. However, with any project of this size and complexity I cannot be absolutely confident that it will be completed by the end of this month and I have also said that publicly.

Mr Hassell: Isn't there a financing deadline?

Mr PARKER: No.

- (2) No, that is not the case at all.
- (3) Soon after the Government determined in principle that it would participate in this project, Mr Edwards went to Japan to meet with some of the principals involved in the various negotiations. That would have been about a month or six or seven weeks ago. However, it was not intended that any negotiation be undertaken, nor was any undertaken, in those discussions. It was simply an introductory visit during which Mr Edwards, on the Government's behalf, and an official of the Bond Corporation were introduced to the principals with whom they had been dealing by others who had been involved for a longer time. No negotiation was either intended or carried out on that occasion.

**BREAD ACT - TIP TOP BAKERIES**  
*Delivery Hours - Exemption*

234. Mr WIESE to the Minister for Labour:

- (1) What were the relevant circumstances on which the Minister based his decision to allow Tip Top Bakeries an exemption from the provisions of the Bread Act relating to delivery hours?
- (2) Was the Minister aware that as a direct result of his decision to grant the



exemption to Tip Top Bakeries many employees of local bakeries throughout the country will lose their jobs and several country bakeries will be put out of business?

- (3) Can the Minister for Labour tell those people, many of whom have been employed in the bread industry all their lives, where they will find suitable employment?

Mr TROY replied:

(1)-(3)

I am surprised that the member for Narrogin was not aware that I saw a delegation of country bread manufacturers some two or three weeks ago. They were introduced to me by the Leader of the National Party. They discussed with me the circumstances surrounding this decision. Prior to the change in the Bread Act, Tip Top had enjoyed somewhere in the order of 12 per cent to 14 per cent of the country bread market. That bread came from Perth and there was a considerable consumer interest in maintaining access to bread through the major retail outlets offered by large stores. When Tip Top sought an exemption from the travelling times in the new Act, I was very conscious of the need to allow the consumer the benefit of that access to bread. Therefore, I permitted Tip Top to take bread to Albany, Geraldton and Bunbury under quite restrictive travelling conditions. Tip Top was not permitted to deliver bread en route or to deliver bread at a time earlier than that which would give a two hour advantage to the local country bread manufacturers, so maintaining a significant advantage for country bread manufacturers.

Quite clearly it is completely wrong to say that jobs would be lost as a result of the exemption, because it merely allows Tip Top to maintain that sector of the market which it had prior to the decision. When I spoke to the delegation of country bread manufacturers some two or three weeks ago, neither I nor my department had received one complaint on the issue. The delegation showed the first sign of concern. Members of that delegation seemed to leave the meeting reasonably satisfied. Certainly I gave them an undertaking to continue to monitor the situation.

#### TISSUE AND ORGAN DONATIONS - BLEWETT, DR

##### *Support*

235. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Does the Minister support Dr Blewett's call to assume people are prepared to donate body organs unless they indicate otherwise before they die?  
(2) If so, does he intend to introduce legislation with regard to this matter?

Mr WILSON replied:

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

#### UNIONS - WEST AUSTRALIAN LOCOMOTIVE ENGINE DRIVERS' FIREMEN AND CLEANERS UNION

##### *Ministers for Transport - Document*

236. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of a recently released seven page report from the West Australian Locomotive Engine Drivers' Firemen and Cleaners Union to its branch secretaries and members, wherein it is stated, "Sir Charles Court and Mr Ray O'Connor, both of whom were past Liberal Premiers of our State, were in fact the best Ministers of Transport we - the union - ever had"?  
(2) Is he further aware that the union in its document suggested that the current Minister with responsibility for industrial relations was noted for his "parrot-like statements which were now all too common"?

- (3) Does he support the union in its scathing attack and the treatment it has received from the Dowding Government?

If the Minister does not have a copy of the document, I could give him one.

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes.  
(2) No.  
(3) No.

# UNIVERSITIES - MURDOCH UNIVERSITY *Amalgamation*

237. Mr SCHELL to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Minister yet in a position to give the House details of her strategy to ensure that Murdoch University is able to retain its autonomy?  
(2) What does she understand to be the extent to which the Federal Minister, Mr Dawkins, intends to involve himself in forcing or encouraging Murdoch to amalgamate with another institution?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1) The final decision about any amalgamation rests with this Parliament, as I have said on a number of occasions. I have publicly stated my resistance to the view which Mr Dawkins has put on a number of occasions that a forced amalgamation is a desirable outcome in some instances of the changes that have been foreshadowed by the White Paper. I indicated to the Press last week that I was looking for some measures to ensure that the State was in a position to have a clear plan for higher education, given the changed circumstances following the Commonwealth's White Paper. In the next few days I will make an announcement giving the details of that planning.  
(2) I reiterate that Mr Dawkins has no power to coerce or force institutions to amalgamate. He may persuade them, he may induce them, but at the end of the day it will be a matter for the Parliament to decide. It is not a recommendation that I am likely to make, given the circumstances that apply, especially with respect to any suggestion that there should be any amalgamation between Murdoch and the Western Australian College of Advanced Education. The proposals I suggested early in the week will be coming forward in the next couple of days. Mr Dawkins is not in a position to achieve any outcome without the cooperation of this Parliament.

# HOSPITALS - ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL *Accident and Emergency Section - Inquiry*

238. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the assessment of the Royal Perth Hospital accident and emergency section been instigated only since the letter to the editor in *The West Australian* on Monday 19 September 1988?  
(2) Why has the inquiry been instigated only after crisis point has been reached at Royal Perth Hospital?  
(3) Are other major accident and emergency centres in a similar state of crisis?

The SPEAKER: I direct that part (3) of the question is out of order and the Minister may choose whether or not to answer it.

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) No, because I thought it would have been plain to the member and to others from comments that I have already made.

Mr Bradshaw: Earlier today?

Mr WILSON: No, much earlier than that. To continue: The hospital has allocated \$700 000 of its own budget to allow for the restructuring of the facilities in

the emergency department at the hospital. That work is proceeding. The full effect of it will not come into benefit for people until the commissioning of the North Block of the Royal Perth Hospital within the next six months. As I said earlier, that would have happened long ago if the previous Liberal Government had not stalled the construction of the North Block for a considerable amount of time. The people in this State would not have encountered much of the problem they now have if the Liberal Government had been prepared to give that capital works the priority that the Leader of the Liberal Party says the Opposition is now prepared to give major capital works. Obviously the former Liberal Government was not prepared to adopt that course, and we are suffering from that lack of initiative and subsequent inaction.

Mr MacKinnon: It takes you six years to catch up.

Mr WILSON: The Liberal Government left it standing as an uncompleted monument for years; the Leader of the Opposition was a Minister of that Government and he did nothing about it.

Mr MacKinnon: Totally incompetent.

Mr WILSON: What a terrible state of affairs. It was necessary for a Labor Government to get into office before that project got under way.

- (2) A full assessment has not been possible because it was necessary to wait until the end of the winter to carry it out. Further time will be needed before a full assessment can be completed. However, an interim assessment is in progress which will allow us to attend to the immediate concerns about the overload on staff. That will be ready in a very short time. It will take more time to assess the long term pressures, because we have just been through a particularly difficult winter period; the load on emergency departments at hospitals has been exacerbated by a fairly widespread influenza epidemic which has had major complications, particularly for elderly people. Also, a spate of horrific accidents has occurred which had an impact on all hospitals and on that hospital in particular. It has always been the case that the emergency departments of hospitals are under greater pressure during the winter months; for instance, during this winter the hospital had a bed occupancy rate of more than 93 per cent. That is well and truly above the normal situation, and it has resulted from the extra pressures on resources.

A further factor involved is that more people with chronic illnesses are using the emergency services in hospitals, whereas in the past people with those illnesses went to their local GP or sought some other form of care. More people are using the emergency services for this reason and that is placing further pressure on the department. We are coming to terms with that aspect quickly and we shall be allocating resources as soon as this assessment has been completed.

In no way is the Government acting in an ad hoc way; I can certainly say that some of the individual cases reported in the Press, and those which I have learned of through letters to me, are very distressing and they should not happen. We must ensure that as far as possible the health care system in this State is such that these problems do not arise again. This Labor Government will do that.

#### GRAIN SILOS

*Broome*

239. Mr THOMAS to the Premier:

In view of the Opposition's suggestions that it can manage economic decisions better than the Government, can the Premier throw any light on the infamous Broome grain silo?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

I thank the member for accepting my notice of this question, but I thought I should help the Opposition. What a desperate 20 minutes it has had.

Suddenly it looked as though the Opposition was running out of questions and members opposite were trying to find something penetrating to ask.

Mr Court: Extend question time by half an hour.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Opposition was as flat as a pancake and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was trying to wind up a couple of questions. In view of the recent comments about the performance of the Liberal Party in the House, I decided to give people an opportunity to see how pathetic the Opposition is at question time if it is not buoyed up and supported by Government members asking penetrating and interesting questions about matters of Government policy. In order to rescue the situation and bring some life into the House, the Government decided to ask this question, to which I will now give the answer.

Members opposite may remember that in 1981 the Broome grain silo was constructed on the express instructions of the Cabinet of the day. Was the Leader of the Opposition a member of that Cabinet?

Mr MacKinnon: Yes.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Cabinet of the day said that this wonderful new silo, which one would have thought was an integral part of a major commercial activity in the Kimberley, had to be constructed urgently and rapidly using taxpayers' funds.

Mr MacKinnon: Were you the member for the area at the time?

Mr PETER DOWDING: I was, and I told the then Government what I thought of it at the time. I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition look in *Hansard* if he wants to read my comments at the time. In addition, he will find on file letters from me on this subject. It was one of the greatest environmental disasters because the then Government was so out of touch with the north that it did not know that if a building was constructed on the edge of the beach in November or December there was a chance of its being washed away. The Government caused a huge environmental mess which is only now just being overcome, apart from the fact that the grain silo standing there has never once had a single element of grain put in it deliberately. The only bits of grain in the silo were those which blew under the door from the local oat grass.

Does the Leader of the Opposition know how much his Government spent of taxpayers' money on that facility in 1981? It cost \$3.343 million. That was a great thing for the taxpayers; to spend more than \$3 million on a grain silo against the advice of many departments and agencies for a project that everyone said at the time was running into strife. Everybody in the Kimberley knew that the Camballin project was hot air, but the Liberal Party felt committed to it to the extent of spending \$3.343 million of taxpayers' money on a silo that has never held one stick of grain, to support a commercial project which was desperately trying to get finance elsewhere. The then Government used this money to support an ailing business which at the time was scouring the world to get funds. The Liberal Government tried to prop up that project. I remind members opposite that the silo has not received sorghum or any other grain. It is now leased and used to store the odd bit of cargo which needs urgent storage as it passes through Broome. It is a great white elephant; it was a stupid decision, and the Liberal Government spent the equivalent of \$7 million in today's dollars, wasting that money simply because it did not know what was going on in the area.

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