

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 22 September 1993

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko) took the Chair at 2.00 pm, and read prayers.

PETITION - JURIE DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL, COMPLETION TIMETABLE

MR McNEE (Moore - Parliamentary Secretary) [2.04 pm]: I present the following petition -

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

We, the undersigned, note that there is difficulty in the proper functioning of the High School while it has inadequate facilities and temporary buildings. This impedes the smooth running both academically and practically for both the staff and students.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Ministry of Education provide a timetable and date be made available for the completion of the Jurien District High School.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition bears 117 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 158.]

PETITION - COMMON LAW AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION RIGHTS, RETROSPECTIVE CHANGES

MRS HENDERSON (Thornlie) [2.05 pm]: I present the following petition -

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

We, the undersigned people of Western Australia on behalf of injured workers and their families wish to express our opposition to and concern at the proposed unfair and unjust retrospective changes to common law and workers compensation rights, with effect from 4.00 pm on 30 June 1993 announced by the Minister for Labour Relations at about 2.00 pm on 30 June 1993.

The planned removal of common law rights if a writ had not been issued before 4.00 pm on 30 June 1993, unless an injured worker can establish a 30% total body impairment, is a draconian and unwarranted change to the law. It is estimated that 90% of common law claims will be disentitled to compensation. It has not been shown by the Minister that any extensions under the Workers Compensation Act will adequately compensate injured workers.

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

The petition bears 57 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 159.]

PETITION - PRIMARY SCHOOLS, CROSSINGS PERSONNEL

MR MARLBOROUGH (Peel) [2.06 pm]: I present the following petition -

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

We the undersigned citizens of the Electorate of Peel, ask that, as a direct result of a fatal road accident outside a local primary school, all primary schools be provided with appropriate personnel to control traffic flow at strategically placed zebra crossings in front of the major school exits.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will act upon this petition for the safety and welfare of our younger generation. And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

The petition bears 120 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 160.]

STATEMENT - BY THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING*Burswood Bridge and Road City Committee, Report Tabling*

MR LEWIS (Applecross - Minister for Planning) [2.08 pm]: The State Government has today released for public comment the findings of the Burswood Bridge and Road committee. The committee was established in 1988 and its report "The Burswood Bridge and Road City Bypass and Access Study" has taken nearly five years to complete. The report is a comprehensive package of major transport and planning initiatives that have far reaching implications for the future of Perth city and the metropolitan region. Its recommendations contain a range of measures that the State Government will consider implementing in an effort to cope with Perth's future transport and traffic needs. The report warns that in the future Perth city faces the risk of becoming choked by increasing traffic, unless changes are made to the present road transport system. For example, the study states that unless new roads are built, more than 130 000 vehicles a day will use the Causeway by the year 2021.

Principal to the study's recommendations is the construction of a new east-west road link north of the city and the building of a third new major river crossing east of Perth. The report recommends the State Government consider two bypass options connecting Great Eastern Highway and Orrong Road in Rivervale to the Mitchell Freeway in Leederville. The Government is considering both options and is keen for the public to debate the choices. The two options are -

- (1) the construction of a \$235m twin tunnel connection that would be built behind existing buildings to protect Northbridge's unique character. The tunnel option would have three lanes in each direction, extending from Stirling Street to west of Beaufort Street and from Lake Street to Fitzgerald Street; and,
- (2) a \$155m above ground connection, again with three lanes in each direction, that would extend from the Mitchell Freeway in Leederville, along Newcastle Street, eventually connecting with Orrong Road and Great Eastern Highway in Rivervale.

The State Government accepts the need for a third river crossing and a better city bypass and access facilities north of the city. The bypass option also has important economic implications for the whole metropolitan region by providing a more efficient east-west link for the transport of important goods and services. The report is about not only a new bypass road and bridge north of the city, but also guaranteeing the accessibility and long term future of Perth so that it continues to grow as the financial, entertainment and cultural centre of the State. The two bypass options are part of a total package of transport and planning improvement measures for Perth and the metropolitan area. The

report makes a number of other recommendations that provide solutions to some of Perth's most pressing planning and transport issues, such as limiting all day commuter parking in the central city area, a new inner city mass transit public transport system, such as electric buses, and the introduction of dedicated bus lanes on the Causeway. A new northern bypass road would also reduce the amount of traffic along Riverside Drive, allowing for the redevelopment of the Perth city foreshore, which is presently mostly used by vehicles. It is obvious that if we can reduce the number of vehicles along Riverside Drive, we can, once again, enjoy access to our beautiful foreshore.

In line with the report's recommendations, the State Planning Commission later this week will advertise a major amendment to the metropolitan region scheme to include a future bypass road reserve east of the city. The Government invites public comment on the amendment and the report's recommendations, which it believes are vital for the future of the city and the Perth metropolitan region. I table the Burswood Bridge and Road committee's report, "The Burswood Bridge and Road City Bypass and Access Study".

[See paper No 333.]

PARLIAMENT HOUSE - VISITORS

Fischer, Tim, Leader of the Federal National Party

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): I welcome to our gallery Hon Tim Fischer, the Leader of the Federal National Party.

[Applause.]

[Questions without notice taken.]

BILLS (2) - INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Censorship Laws Amendment Bill
Bill introduced, on motion by Mrs Edwardes (Attorney General), and read a first time.
2. Police Amendment Bill
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Catania, and read a first time.

DISABILITY SERVICES BILL

Further Report

Further report of Committee adopted.

RURAL ADJUSTMENT AND FINANCE CORPORATION BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

Third Reading

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr House (Minister for Primary Industry), and transmitted to the Council.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No 1)

Second Reading - Budget Debate

Debate resumed from 21 September.

MRS van de KLASHORST (Swan Hills) [2.45 pm]: I rise to support the Bill and also to express my gratitude to the Government and the Treasurer for presenting a responsible Budget. It is a balance between the human side and the economic side. The

Government, in framing the Budget, has looked at both sides of the equation and worked a path down the middle that will help set Western Australia on the road to financial stability and recovery and, at the same time, will not take away from the needy people of Western Australia or from the consideration of social justice issues for the people of this State.

I am very pleased to be able to report that, after considerable lobbying and taking the Minister for Education to various schools in the area, the Minister has seen fit to provide \$800 000 towards the \$1.8m needed for the upgrading of the Middle Swan school, which, under the previous Government, was left without a library, an arts centre, a music room and without enough classrooms, even though the former Government had set in train some developments in that area. I thank the Minister for realising that children would not be educated properly with the facilities available and for agreeing to the construction of the library and the other facilities. The Middle Swan area is a growth area with many needs. We will now work towards upgrading the school as soon as possible.

Subject to Budget constraints and funding, I will pursue with the Minister the upgrading of the administration block at the Swan View Primary School which is a badly needed facility. The building and staffing at the Midvale school will benefit from the devolution should it go ahead because it will use its resources for extra staffing. It has a large transient population and staffing is one of the major priorities. The school at Sawyers Valley also needs a library and I will be working with the Minister over the next year to see whether funds can be made available for that to be built. The preprimary school at Upper Swan also needs upgrading and it, with the other schools to which I have just referred, will be on my list of priorities for upgrading next year, subject to the availability of funds.

An amount of \$500 000 has been provided for the upgrading and modification of the Midland saleyards. That follows the positive decision by the Government to purchase the saleyards. That money will provide an opportunity for more positive working conditions to be provided at the saleyards. They are not in my area, but they impact on my area because many of the people living in Swan Hills work at the Midland saleyards. Midland is a major growth area. I have been appointed by the Minister for Planning to serve on the central Midland task force to consider the redevelopment of the 70 hectare site currently occupied by the Midland Railway Workshops.

Mr Hill: Is it in your electorate?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: No, it is not.

Mr Hill: It is in my electorate.

Several members interjected.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: The task force also comprises representatives from the Midland Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Department of Commerce and Trade, the Heritage Council, the Environmental Protection Authority, the eastern region economic development community and the Shire of Swan. The task force meets regularly and it is committed to making sure that the land is used in a way that is advantageous to the people of Midland. I am grateful to the Minister for allocating funds to that task force to employ consultants to consider the best use of the land with a view to providing jobs for the people who live in the Midland area.

Another area which is growing rapidly in my electorate is Ellenbrook. Recently I was fortunate to visit the Golden Grove development in the Adelaide metropolitan area because it has set the trend for public housing in South Australia. We must be mindful that public housing will be part of the Ellenbrook development. The proposed development is a really good concept and one in nine homes will be public housing and it will not allow for public housing to be grouped together. The type of development envisaged for Ellenbrook will improve the standard of public housing and will ensure that it blends in with the streetscape and the other proposed development. I will be working with Homeswest and the Minister for Housing to ensure that the development goes ahead while benefiting the people who are building their own homes, buying homes through Homeswest and renting homes.

An amount of \$80 000 has been allocated to refurbish the Midland licensing centre. This work has been required for some time and on completion of the building it will be a better place for the staff to work in.

Midland Junction is a junction to the hills, valley and country. Transport facilities in Midland will be improved by the long term plan to upgrade the railway station. Consideration must be given to a method of bringing together the transport links to enable people to travel from the hills and valley to the city and to other parts of the Perth metropolitan area without undue delays. I have discussed this matter with the Minister for Transport and that is his long term goal. Funds have been asked for to upgrade the Great Northern Highway near Bullsbrook. The Minister has commissioned an investigation into the safety aspects of that highway through Bullsbrook. He also recently announced that an investigation would be conducted into a traffic problem at Sawyers Valley. Several accidents have occurred at Sawyers Valley on the Great Eastern Highway and a survey will be undertaken of that area. The planning of the roads in the Swan Hills electorate needs reviewing and this is being organised in conjunction with the Shire of Swan. Consideration must be given to the way in which the major roads converge on Midland. A thorough investigation of the major transport plan for the Midland area must be undertaken within the next few years.

Another allocation in this year's Budget which impacts on my electorate is the amount of \$8.8m which has been allocated to complete the upgrading of the Swan District Hospital. I have lived in the area for 26 years and on three occasions have been admitted to that hospital. My children have been admitted to the same hospital. I have seen it grow from a country hospital to a regional hospital, but it needs to be upgraded and more facilities should be provided at that hospital for the people of the hills and valley districts. The objective of the upgrading of the hospital is to increase its facilities, including day surgery, the restoration of 24 beds and a much needed new theatre complex. Three years ago when I had to use the existing theatre I was told that the facilities were not up to scratch. The people of the district are looking forward to the benefits the new theatre complex will provide. The member for Helena referred to the birthing unit at the hospital which has been lying idle for a number of years. Apparently it is being used for computers and storage purposes. However, on completion of the upgrading of the hospital the unit must be put into use because it would be of benefit to the mothers who live in the hospital's catchment area.

The Budget allocation to the Department of Community Development has increased this financial year by 7.5 per cent, in a global sense. The Government has demonstrated a commitment to helping people and, as I said at the commencement of my speech, it has taken into consideration the social justice and human side in the development of this State. The increased allocation will help those people who want to help themselves. The funds will be devolved to the regions to allow people to work out where the money should be spent. The Government is allowing people at the coalface to have a say in the decision-making process to determine where the money will be best used.

Recently I was privileged to open CLAN, a community link and network organisation which is committed to helping families. It has investigated some of the drug problems in the Midland area and is working towards solving those problems. The Midland enterprise centre has been allocated funds in this year's Budget to upgrade the toilet block and build a small kitchen. A great many community functions are held at this centre and only today I had a telephone conversation with the director about a request from another community service to use a room at the centre. Continued funding of the areas currently under the control of the Department for Community Development and the non-government agencies have been assured by the increased allocation for community development. The Government has said that services currently funded by the Western Australian Government will continue to be funded this financial year. That is gratifying and several people have telephoned me saying they are appreciative of the Government's commitment.

On another occasion in this House I spoke about library funding and I made an approach to the Minister for the Arts in the other place about the need for an increase in library

funding which, over the past three years, has run down to an unacceptable level. The \$400 000 allocated in the Budget for the installation of a new computerised library and information management system is gratefully received as it is a start and will allow information to be disseminated among the libraries in Western Australia. One of the things at which the Government is looking is the fact that private companies, public services and non-government agencies, will be able to use the computer services of the libraries, in some cases for a small fee, to allow for much more and quicker dissemination of materials that are needed urgently, so that we are not duplicating services in many small libraries throughout the State. This \$400 000 grant will help towards that. The Government has also given a \$110 000 allowance for hardware and software in libraries and, even though it is just the start, this will enable them to bring some of the much needed services up to the set standard. Along with other members of the Australian Library and Information Association (WA Branch), I will pursue requests for additional funding to bring libraries up to the standards that are necessary in today's society. We need to have information available very quickly. Unfortunately, library systems have been allowed to run down and a lot of work needs to be done to bring them back to standard.

All electorates need a lot of money, and Swan Hills is no different. Unfortunately, like householders, the Government must budget according to what is available. We need to be aware that the Government has looked very responsibly at the funds available and has allocated an amount of funding to enable us to do what can be done now. I commend the Government on what it has done. I support the Bill.

MR MCGINTY (Fremantle) [3.02 pm]: My remarks on the Budget will be directed to the environment. The Budget continues the attack on environmental standards and reflects poor priorities by the Government in respect of environmental matters. This matter is more pronounced when one has regard to the pre-election rhetoric of the Liberal Party, now the Government in the State, when compared with what it has done since. Before the election, the coalition promised the people of Western Australia the establishment of a wild and scenic rivers commission. That body was designed to coordinate environmental activity with all our waterways here in Western Australia. The press release put out by the then Opposition in the names of Phillip Pendal MLC and Richard Court as Leader of the Opposition stated -

"We accept that river protection and management remains fragmented and un-coordinated."

"This plan will set us on a new course for protection."

The party was conscious of the need to extend Perth's deep-sewerage system to those suburbs whose septic tanks could cause pollution of the Swan River and ground water.

"But the problem goes beyond the Swan - it reaches out across the State into our river, inlets and inland waterways."

Clearly, considerable extra resources would be needed by a Liberal Government and these would be allocated as the economy improved, and revenue increased.

Mr Court said the program would be treated as one of the priorities of his Government.

That was the rhetoric before the election. Since the election the reality has been remarkably different and in this Budget, the first to be brought down by the Liberal-National Party Government in Western Australia, we have seen a very significant cut in funding, particularly in relation to our rivers and waterways, the intended beneficiaries of a plan to create a wild and scenic rivers commission.

We also saw before the election an environmental policy which was very much welcomed by the conservation movement in Western Australia; it is one about which it now feels quite betrayed. Since the election, notwithstanding the rhetoric, the promises and the policies, we have seen unprecedented attacks on the Environmental Protection Authority, on its head, Mr Barry Carbon, and on the independence of that authority. We

have seen one of the jewels in our environmental crown, the Ningaloo Reef, threatened with oil exploration and drilling. We have also seen the spectre of mining in national parks rear its head as a very serious threat to conservation in Western Australia. We have seen an unprecedented motion of no confidence in the Minister for the Environment carried by the Conservation Council of Western Australia. What we are now seeing in this Budget are strategic and devastating cuts in environmental and conservation funding.

I refer at the outset to the position of the Swan River Trust. We entrusted that body with the role of conservation and management of the Canning and Swan Rivers and their systems in Perth. The Budget provides a 7.7 per cent cut in funding to the Swan River Trust. Its budget is being cut from \$1.328m to \$1.226m. But a closer examination of the Program Statements which were attached to this year's Budget reveals that the cuts in the crucial areas are a lot more than that and the losers will be the Swan River and the Canning River.

If we look in the Program Statements we find that there has been a 12 per cent cut in the funding given to the important area of environmental investigation and standards. The allocation is now down to \$210 000. The area of development and management planning has been cut by 7.8 per cent, down to \$364 000. Again in relation to the Swan River Trust, the provision that has been made for waterways protection and enhancement has been slashed by 12.2 per cent, down to \$590 000. If one looks at these as indicating that the areas which have been cut are the areas which are most important to protecting, conserving and enhancing the Swan and Canning River systems in the metropolitan area, after one takes away the fixed costs associated with salaries and administration from the Swan River Trust, one finds that this leaves an operations budget of only \$65 000 for initiatives to be taken by the Swan River Trust to protect arguably one of our greatest environmental assets, the Swan River. It is a very savage cut to the funding of the Swan River Trust at a time when not only the Swan, but also many of our other waterways are very much under threat. A cursory examination of newspaper articles over the course of the past 12 months would clearly show the measure of public concern, justifiable public concern, at the state of our rivers and waterways. But what we see in this Budget is a savage cut to the funding that has been made available to the body that we entrust with the protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers.

A similar cut has occurred in relation to the Waterways Commission. We find that gross expenditure has been cut by a massive 30 per cent in this year's Budget. This is the body that is responsible for protecting our waterways throughout the length and breadth of the State - other than the Canning and Swan Rivers. What we have seen is gross expenditure cut from \$5.374m to \$3.721m. Admittedly, most of that cut is in the capital area, but even if we look to the non-capital area or recurrent funding we see a cut there as well. Approximately half of the budget of the Waterways Commission is to be expended on the program entitled Waterways Protection and Enhancement. What we see there is a massive cut of 12.2 per cent in the funding which is made available for waterways protection and enhancement, down from \$1.568m to \$1.376m. The objective of that subprogram of the Waterways Commission is to protect the waterways from the adverse effects of human and other activities and to provide facilities for public use. It reflects a warped sense of priority when the budget for our waterways, which are under so much pressure from industry, the expansion of residential development, the effects of overclearing and so many other factors, is being cut by such a large proportion.

Mr Omodei: You know as a former Minister for the Environment that there is a lot of overlap in the economics of catchment management between the Department of Agriculture, CALM and the EPA. If you look at the overall aspect, there may not be a cut.

Mr McGINTY: If we take the Budget statements as being indicative of an allocation of Government priorities, there is no indication that any of these functions is to be picked up by the Water Authority, the Department of Agriculture and the like. Anything above a 10 per cent cut for small agencies is a massive cut, particularly in the operations area, because their fixed costs essentially will remain the same. The real impact is on the operational area. Unless there is a strong indication that certain functions will be taken

over by a larger department we are looking, at least on the surface, at a change in priorities for the worse so far as the environment is concerned.

I want to refer to a number of important areas in relation to our waterways where no Budget allocation, or a minimal allocation, has been made, and certainly not sufficient to meet the needs of those areas. The member for Murray spoke yesterday in glowing terms about the Dawesville Cut, but what do we see in this Budget by way of very necessary funding to monitor the effects of the cut going through? In the next few months the ocean and the estuary will be connected, but no provision has been made for any monitoring work to be done to look at the effects of the cut. After all, it has been described as one of the biggest environmental experiments undertaken anywhere in the world; but we will not know whether it has been successful because no funds have been allocated for monitoring.

Mr Omodei: Doesn't the Peel Inlet Management Authority do those sorts of things?

Mr McGINTY: It comes under the Waterways Commission's budget. I will deal with those other areas in a moment. The commission is working on a shoestring budget and will have to undertake a massive increase in its workload as a result of the Dawesville Cut. The 12 months after the cut opens will be the important time for monitoring the effects of the flushing action on salinity in the estuary and on the fringe vegetation around the estuary, and for monitoring flooding of the low lying areas as a result of the tidal surges, the impact on fisheries, and all those sorts of things. There is not a cent in the Budget for that; insufficient funds are being made available. In fact, there is no additional funding to look at the effects of the Dawesville Cut, and that is a very important area one would expect the commission to be looking at.

The areas to which I have just referred in relation to the Waterways Commission, particularly the subprogram of waterways protection and enhancement where there has been a 12.2 per cent cut, are where the funds would be found to do the extra monitoring required as a result of the Dawesville Cut going through. No funding is expressly set aside for the additional work associated with the cut. In addition, the area where the money would normally come from has been cut by 12.2 per cent. It says to me that there is a significant problem with our waterways because there is not enough money to do the work that is necessary, particularly if much of the low lying area is flooded or if the results of the flushing and the introduction of a lot more salt water have unexpected consequences for the ecology of the estuary. It is a pity that more forethought has not been given to the allocation of resources to monitor the impact of the cut, particularly in the early stages.

Mr Marshall: The tidal flows have now been monitored. There is a leaflet summarising the tidal effect.

Mr McGINTY: Once the cut goes through, much more monitoring will be needed. That has not been necessary in the past because the cut did not exist. The area where the money should come from has been cut by 12.2 per cent in this Budget. There is simply not enough money to do the work, and that is the problem I am raising. Otherwise we would have seen an additional allocation to the Waterways Commission or the Peel Inlet Management Authority to enable them to carry out the work.

It does not stop there. If members go through each of the significant areas of development that affect our waterways, whether our coastal areas, estuaries or rivers, they will see a similar neglect. The Environmental Protection Authority has been undertaking a coastal waterways study - the results were published in *The West Australian* earlier this week - to look at the outflows from our rivers and estuaries in the south west. Members who saw the aerial photograph in the newspaper will recall that it showed a significant outflow of nutrients and other chemicals that had been collected along the way from the Peel-Harvey and Swan-Canning systems. They were discharged into the sea, making what I have always presumed to be a fairly pristine ocean environment rather polluted. It is certainly one we claim to be pristine when we are trying to sell our crayfish and other seafood products overseas. However, it is polluted as a result of discharges, particularly from the Peel-Harvey and Swan-Canning systems.

Again, no funds are available in this Budget for monitoring those effects on our ocean front which have now been revealed to be quite significant. We cannot claim to have safe, clean beaches and fisheries off the Western Australian coast between Perth and Mandurah. That is showing up in the results of the surveys done by the EPA, but not enough resources are being allocated to monitoring with a view to controlling those effluent outflows.

We also have a significant health problem in the south west of the State with the Ross River virus being associated with a number of estuaries and waterways. We do not see any funds in this Budget for the Waterways Commission to monitor mosquito numbers, movements and breeding patterns with a view to eliminating that health risk. Again, that risk to Perth comes predominantly from the member for Murray's electorate. I would have thought the need for resources in that area was obvious.

The story does not get any better because there is insufficient funding for waterways management - the control of pollution to ensure that we have clean waters and are meeting the salinity and pollution problems. In this Budget we see that funds for those sensitive areas have been cut significantly. One of the initiatives undertaken in recent years to meet the problem of our waterways not being adequately managed has been to establish a number of waterways management authorities. The Swan River Trust was the first of those, established a number of years ago, with responsibility for managing the Swan and Canning Rivers. That body has frequently reported that it is frustrated by not having sufficient funding to enable it to ensure a safe and healthy environment in those rivers. The Peel Inlet Management Authority has significant responsibilities, which it cannot meet, to harvest the algae and monitor problems, particularly those to which I have referred in relation to the Dawesville Cut. The Leschenault Inlet Management Authority is another and, most recently, the Albany Waterways Management Authority has been set up to manage what is, unfortunately, one of the most polluted waterways in Western Australia. They have very significant challenges ahead of them, but they are not provided with sufficient resources to meet those challenges. Importantly, as a result of initiatives of the previous Government, two management authorities were established in connection with the Avon River and Wilson Inlet at Denmark. Some years ago I had my first experience of a badly polluted waterway in Western Australia: I was shocked that a Western Australian river would require a sign which read "Danger, pollution! Do not swim".

Mr Omodei: Where was this?

Mr McGINTY: At Wilson Inlet at Denmark. I was pleased to be associated with the extension of the Waterways Management Authority to incorporate the Avon River. This is an important major waterway for this State and the metropolitan area as it is the source of the Swan River. When we established the Avon River Management Authority last year it was recognised that it required a minimum of \$150 000 to undertake a basic level of task. However, the Budget allocation will mean it cannot perform the basic level of tasks for which it was appointed. The allocation is \$138 000, which happens to be precisely the amount required to provide staff and administration - not a cent will be available to do anything. The priorities are wrong: The Government will set up a bureaucracy, but it will not provide a cent for monitoring the waterway to ensure that the Avon River catchment is one of which we can all be proud on environmental grounds. The Budget allocation will do no more than employ staff to sit in an office and not to take action.

Appointments have not been made at this stage, notwithstanding that the authority was created late last year or early this year prior to the State election. Therefore, this Government has had seven or eight months in which to make appointments, regardless of the importance of this waterway to electorates which members opposite represent. That indicates that this issue has not been treated as a priority; it has been treated with contempt and neglect. However, a worse situation has emerged in the electorate of the Deputy Leader of the National Party. The Wilson Inlet Management Authority was established under the previous Government in the last few months of its term in office. It was funded to the tune of \$75 000 for a half-year's operation.

Mr Omodei: Are you sure about that?

Mr McGINTY: To my recollection. No, the Minister is right: The Avon River Management Authority was funded in that way.

Mr Omodei: Do you think it is responsible to establish an authority without properly funding it?

Mr McGINTY: We set up the authority with the clear intention of funding it, as we did with the Avon body. The Avon authority was more advanced and the funding was provided for the half-year's operation. The Wilson authority was established on the basis that it would be funded once appointments were made. That authority is concerned with one of the most polluted waterways in the State which is a blight on a system, yet the Government has provided it no Budget allocation. The authority will wither on the vine as it has no funding to employ any staff or for the authority to even meet. Therefore, the important waterways of Western Australia have been neglected, regardless of the glowing promises made by members opposite prior to the election. It was claimed that the wild and scenic river commission would be established; it is a grand title, with due respect to the member for South Perth, which overstates the proper position of our waterways in Western Australia. It is a sad indictment of the Government because people thought it was a good idea when the promise was made. Full credit is given to the policy, but that has died in this Budget.

Mr Pendal: The Government is still committed to doing that in its four year term.

Mr McGINTY: A Government which cuts the budget allocation by 12 to 13 per cent in the operational area of the Waterways Commission, and the body responsible for maintenance and supervision of the Swan and Canning Rivers, does not indicate a commitment to that area. The failure to appoint and fund the Wilson Inlet Management Authority indicates the situation as a result of this Budget.

Mr Pendal: We may have some short term pain in order to implement the policy in the second or third year of this Government.

Mr McGINTY: If we were to see the maintenance of the status quo with the water instrumentalities, there might be some point to what the member is saying. However, it is unfortunate that some of the biggest cuts have been with waterways protection. I am aware of no other area in the Budget which would be more detrimentally affected than our waterways. A cursory glance at newspapers on any week will show how necessary this protection is to the State. I have selected some random clippings from *The West Australian* and the *Sunday Times*. The first is headed "Funds warning on river algae" and reads -

The Swan River Trust is helpless in its bid to control pollution which could cause serious algal blooms in the river this summer . . .

The next headline reads "Channel a boost to local tourism" and indicates -

The Dawesville channel is being built to flush nutrients from the Peel Harvey Inlet south of Mandurah but it will do far more than rid the district of an unpleasant algae problem.

The article under the headline "Pollution shows up in bores" reads -

Contaminants from the 1950s, '60s and '70s are causing problems for WA's water management authorities, with chemicals from established industrial areas emerging in suburban bores.

Under the headline "Jobs fear in abattoir harbour effluent row" is the following article -

Albany's Metro Meats abattoir is at the centre of a row over the amount of effluent being pumped into the Princess Royal Harbour.

At stake is an industry which employs 300 people and contributes \$16m to the local economy.

The next headline is "Pollution claim at Cedar Woods site", and the article reads -

Claims that the controversial Cedar Woods development in Helena Valley is polluting the Swan River are being investigated by the Waterways Commission and Mundaring Shire Council.

The article under the "Nutrients warning on Swan" heading reads -

The Swan River has a clean bill of health but cannot afford an increase in the amount of nutrient and waste discharged into it according to the Swan River Trust.

The river's upper reaches were most at risk because of poor natural flushing, trust executive director Bruce Hamilton said yesterday.

Other articles are headed "Clean beaches under threat", "Old tip still a threat to river", "Pig farm agrees to EPA clean-up" and "Long way to go in Albany algae war". I could relay such incidents for hours to the House, but I am sure that members read newspapers and are aware of the acute problem we face with our waterways. It is a pity that the Budget cuts funding in this area, which is meagre anyway to most bodies charged with waterways protection. This is our most important environmental asset.

The Budget also involves cuts in other areas which affect the environment. The Department of Conservation and Land Management appears on the surface to have an increased allocation from \$220m to \$221m. However, the department's nature conservation and wildlife management division's allocation has been cut - last year it received \$22.986m, and this year's figure is a 3.2 per cent reduction to \$22.23m. There is also a staff reduction in the nature conservation and wildlife function of the Department of Conservation and Land Management. On the other hand, forest resources management, which some people would argue is the antithesis of conservation and environmental management, has been increased by four per cent from \$90m to \$93m. CALM's planned major achievements for 1993-94 at page 726 of the Program Statements has not one single new policy initiative on the environment, conservation or wildlife management functions of CALM. It is planned to finalise and implement management programs which were begun under the previous Government for crocodiles and boronia, to finalise the nature conservation strategy, to complete the replacement of the Wildlife Conservation Act, to coordinate with other agencies, and to complete things which were already begun.

Mr Omodei: They were the achievements. What about the proposed programs?

Mr McGINTY: I just read out all six of the major planned achievements for 1993-94, and not one is a new initiative in the conservation area.

Mr Omodei: We have a whole lot of other things.

Mr McGINTY: They are not in the Budget papers, which contain six proposed major achievements for CALM under the conservation and environment heading but not one is a new initiative. That is disappointing.

Mr Bloffwitch: You would expect the older programs to be finalised.

Mr McGINTY: I have no objection to the old programs, but I would expect to see a new Government, one which had been out of government for 10 years, showing a measure of reformist zeal, to identify those areas which needed to be identified and attacked in order to provide us with a better environment.

Mr Omodei: You left the timber industry in absolute crisis.

Mr McGINTY: The member for Warren is wrong, but we are talking about conservation and the environment. The Budget foreshadows an increase in funding for the timber industry and a reduction in funding for conservation and the environment. That is the significance of what has happened in CALM's budget and it runs through CALM, the Environmental Protection Authority the Waterways Commission, the Swan River Trust and all those bodies charged with protecting our environment. In particular, those parts of their budgets dealing with environmental protection have been cut. That is most unfortunate. A similar picture emerges about the poor old embattled Environmental

Protection Authority about which we have heard so much in the media in recent times. Its expenditure has been cut from \$10.98m to \$10.656m but, most importantly, the area of environmental investigation and policies has been cut from \$1.986m down to \$1.726m, including a staff reduction. Again, most importantly, the Environmental Protection Authority's planned major achievements for the next 12 months can be adequately described only as destruction, sophistry and tokenism. That is not what we expect from a body which was set up to be an independent environmental watchdog charged with the responsibility of looking after our environment.

Two of the six proposed major achievements for the EPA for the next 12 months involve the destruction of our conservation estate by allowing guidelines to be drawn up to provide access for the petroleum and mining industry to our conservation estate. That cannot be said, for a body that is charged with protecting our environment, to be a major achievement. That is a reflection of poor priorities. These people opposite would regard it as a major achievement for the petroleum and mining industry to be allowed access to the conservation estate of this State.

I have already spoken about our waterways, particularly in the south west of our State. One of the proposed major achievements for 1993-94 for CALM is to further protect wetlands, ground water and river systems of the south west. The Creery wetlands featured prominently in today's newspaper. A decision to protect that area was reversed, and it looks like it will be developed and the environmental values of that area significantly lost. We have spoken already about cuts in funding to the Waterways Commission. It is demonstrable nonsense for this Government to claim that one of its proposed major achievements is to further protect wetlands, ground water and river systems of the south west of this State.

The measure of tokenism is the area in which new initiatives are identified. That is, an environmental strategy will be developed in relation to urban bush land and incinerators. That is fine, but they are not the most important issues confronting our environment in Western Australia today. They represent a token move towards protection on one or two fronts only. A Government seriously concerned about our environment would move in that area to do something more significant than that. The most recent edition of *The Greener Times*, the magazine put out by the Conservation Council, which is the peak environment body in Western Australia, said in its September 1993 editorial headed "A question of integrity" -

It is now abundantly clear that the Coalition Government does not intend to honour most of its election promises. Over the past six months they have broken a string of commitments on open government, industrial relations, urban planning, better management and environmental protection.

The Coalition promised not to allow mining or exploration in national parks without an EPA review. Now they have introduced a Bill to excise the Kintyre uranium deposit from the Rudall River national park without an EPA review.

The Coalition promised to give unprecedented attention to wetlands conservation and instead they have reversed the Labor Government's promise to buy the valuable Creery samphire marshes in Mandurah.

The Coalition promised to strengthen the EPA and to implement the recommendations of the independent review panel. Instead they have launched an unprecedented attack on the EPA Board members and have introduced legislation which will undermine the independence of the EPA and convert it into a rubber stamp for the Minister.

Many people have said, "we told you not to trust the Coalition." They recall the dark days of the previous Court Government and predict that we are headed down that path again. Others thought that the conservatives may have learnt something about the environment after a decade in opposition. They were hoping for integrity and new ideas after a decade of disappointment with Labor. Now it is apparent that the players have changed but the environmental agenda is unchanged.

During the State Election campaign the Coalition spokespeople promised us that they could be trusted to honour their promises.

The article continues -

These people are now angry and disappointed that they were hoodwinked so blatantly by the Coalition. This is a question of integrity in politics. It is a cause which the conservatives championed in Opposition during the WA Inc era. Now they appear to be following a similar course to that which brought down the Labor Government.

The Coalition promised to bring openness and honesty to government. It now appears that this commitment was nothing more than political rhetoric. The Government has changed but the abuses of office continue.

That is from a group of people who were prepared to be photographed happily sitting on a log, ironically at the time of the launch of the coalition's environment policy, and to generally praise the environment policy of the coalition. The editorial of the September edition of *The Greener Times* can now add to that list this Budget's cut in funding for the Waterways Commission and generally a significant cut to the level of funding for important conservation and environment initiatives.

For my own electorate of Fremantle, this Budget contains a number of provisions, in particular on the capital works side, that I will openly acknowledge are the sort of things I would have done if I were in Government. However, in regard to the environment it is a great disappointment that these cuts have occurred. I hope, as has occurred under previous Governments, that during the course of the Budget year when there is a chance for the Government to review the financial situation, extra funding can be made available to these very important areas; in particular to the most important of our various environmental factors, the purity and integrity of our waterways.

MR OSBORNE (Bunbury) [3.39 pm]: I will quickly run through what I see as a very positive Budget for the electorate of Bunbury and the south west area of Western Australia generally, and then concentrate on some areas of interest to me in particular; that is, the Western Australian Tourism Commission and the public sector reform that the Government has foreshadowed in the Budget papers.

In general, the Budget has been welcomed by all of the commentators and civic and business leaders of the south west, because of its overall thrust of reducing the State's debt, while at the same time taking account of the necessary social obligations that any Government must take account of. The important areas of core activity this Government has recognised in the Budget, such as education, community development, health, roads and police, have recorded substantial increases in funding. I am particularly delighted that the wealth generating areas of our economy, such as minerals and energy, have received significant boosts in expenditure. At the same time the Government has addressed the debt problem we inherited from the previous Government. With income rising by three per cent and expenditure increasing by just 1.7 per cent, we have managed in a suitably conservative way to hold spending as tight as possible, as the net financing requirements the State faces have fallen from \$225m to \$165m. The balancing act has been superb: On the one hand, we have met the core responsibilities that this and any Government must properly address and, on the other hand, we have addressed the long term difficulties and problems of the State debt.

The Budget gives special attention to the south west. Over \$40m of capital works are detailed for the south west region, and I am pleased to note the electorate of Bunbury is a strong recipient of attention. The member for Mitchell is not here, and if and when he does speak I would expect him to overlook the fact that the Government also paid attention to his electorate. In expectation that he will overlook those expenditures, I will record with appreciation the expenditure of \$576 000 on the Australind Senior High School and, a matter the member for Pilbara was complaining about last night, the expenditure of a significant sum of money on the library of the South West College of TAFE, which is in the electorate of Mitchell.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! It is disorderly for the member for Armadale to interject without being in her seat.

Mr OSBORNE: The member for Pilbara complained last night and did not fully understand, but the money was provided for the South West College of TAFE's library in the previous financial year. In an attempt to establish a clearing house for TAFE enrolments - originally involving a five year program which was compressed, in order to meet the Government's political imperatives, to a period of nine months - all the colleges of Western Australia were docked different amounts. The South West College of TAFE was docked \$170 000 and a red line was put through the South West College of TAFE's library expansion. The member for Pilbara complained about what he saw as favoured treatment, but it was in fact nothing more than a just restitution of money unjustifiably taken from the college by the previous Government. In the lead-up to the 1993 election we all remember the pyrotechnics, gymnastics and public relations stunts that the previous Government went through using public funds in order to be re-elected, and the \$170 000 from the South West College of TAFE was used to finance that. It was an attempt, I am pleased to record, which was not successful.

Other major expenditures have been committed in the Budget for the electorate of Bunbury. I am pleased with one in particular because it is an area of wealth generation in the Western Australian economy, and this concerns Bunbury Port. A sum of \$5.9m has been made available to complete the dredging of inner harbour berths B and C. Bunbury Port is one of the most profitable and successful ports in Australia and it accounts for an extremely significant percentage of Australia's mineral exports, especially alumina and mineral sands. The expansion of the harbour at a cost of \$5.9m will be vital to the future expansion of the mining industry in the south west and also to the expansion of south west specialist manufacturers and retailers in the city of Bunbury.

Another major area of interest and concern to Bunbury is the Bunbury Harbour City development, which was a revitalisation of the old railway yards area of Bunbury. This was instituted by the previous Government in the early to mid-1980s and, because this program has such widespread support and enthusiasm behind it in Bunbury, this Government of course will continue to pursue it and is making a total of \$3.2m available in the Budget for further works at Bunbury Harbour City. The total Bunbury Harbour City project is being divided into two separate areas. One is the Koombana peninsular development site, which is being overseen by the South West Development Authority. Very soon we are hoping for the announcement of an investment prospectus for that site, where 2.89 hectares of freehold land will be made available for the construction of a tourist resort and a further leasehold site made available for the construction of a caravan park. It is hoped that as soon as this prospectus is out, investors will take advantage of this magnificent opportunity right on the doorstep of the Bunbury city between the ocean and the Leschenault Inlet. Because all the services, like roads and underground power and water, are already in place on the leasehold site, we hope it will be possible for a caravan park to be in place before the next summer season. That will be a wonderful place to take a holiday. Many people from the inland areas of Bunbury and further afield, such as Perth, have many fond memories of the caravan park at Bunbury, enjoying a summer holiday close to the Koombana Bay sailing club and fishing for crabs in the Leschenault Inlet.

That project is to be supported by a further \$500 000, which has been announced in the Budget, for the dolphin discovery centre, which is the first stage of the construction of the South West Eco Museum. I have mentioned before in this House that in common with Monkey Mia we have a significant dolphin attraction in Bunbury, attracting 60 000 to 70 000 visitors a year. Despite the protestations of the member for Northern Rivers, it is a superior attraction, because not only is it closer to Perth but also, if the dolphins are not in on a particular day, it is possible for visitors to do many other things in the environs of Bunbury. The South West Eco Museum will provide an enormous boost to the caravan and resort development on the Koombana peninsular site.

The other part of the Bunbury Harbour City project is the Marlston Hill area, which is also well advanced. LandCorp is currently working with the Department of Land Administration to assemble the land at Marlston Hill, and a structure plan will be - available, hopefully by the end of next month. When it is available we look forward to the development of residential, commercial and recreational sites in the Marlston Hill area. The Government has provided \$1.6m for a marina with 50 pens, a spur groyne and some commercial fishing boat facilities in the Bunbury Harbour City area, and that will be an enormous fillip to the early start up of the Marlston Hill area.

In the true spirit of the collocation proposal of the hospitals in Bunbury, the Government has made \$2.5m available for the construction of the Bunbury Hospital in the event that negotiations to collocate with the St John of God Hospital are not successful. The hospitals issue has been one of the great disappointments that I have experienced since entering politics. The proposed project, which is inherently sound and offers genuine benefits to the people of Bunbury and the south west, has been used as a political football. It has been hijacked by people with other agendas and the possible net result will be that the health care services of the south west will be no better than they have been in the past.

Bunbury has two hospitals which are submarginal - St John of God Hospital and Bunbury Regional Hospital. Over the last few years beds and wards have been closed regularly at Bunbury Regional Hospital because of a shortage of funds. In addition, it has been difficult to find the necessary funds to provide a truly regional hospital. The solution proposed by the Minister for Health is to collocate the public and private hospitals on the one site. The hospitals would share the same administration, and expensive services such as accident, emergency and intensive care units. It is proposed that the savings from the collocation of the hospitals will be used to provide new services for the people of Bunbury and the south west.

I am disappointed that the opposition to the collocation proposal has very little to do with the health care issues involved. It revolves around the adamant union opposition to concepts like workplace agreements and contracting out of Government services to the non-government sector. There is also an extremely disturbing element of sectarianism which people have chosen to kick along to achieve their aim of destroying the collocation proposal. The Minister for Health and the Treasurer have said that the collocation proposal is still at the discussion stage and that if the discussions are not successful the Government is prepared to proceed with the original proposition; that is, the construction of a publicly owned and operated hospital in Bunbury. That commitment has been borne out by the Government's funding commitment in its Budget.

I will take this opportunity to range a little more widely than my electorate to areas of general interest and I will refer, in particular, to an organisation in which I have a great interest; that is, the Western Australian Tourism Commission. I read the Budget papers pertaining to the commission very carefully and, generally speaking, the Government has once again confirmed the importance of the tourism industry, which accounts for between five and six per cent of the State's gross domestic product. The industry is on track to becoming the largest industry in the world by the year 2000.

The Tourism Commission has made savings and efficiencies in its operations. The total number of full time employees has been reduced from 149 to 125 and that reduction has been made mainly in the Eastern States' travel centres. The Tourism Commission has reached the conclusion that a more efficient way to deliver tourist information and travel sales services to potential customers in the Eastern States is to enter into contractual arrangements with major travel agents and motoring organisations such as the RACV. This allows the Tourism Commission to expand its promotions into major suburban centres in the Eastern States and travel centres throughout the cities. In the past it was possible for the Tourism Commission to support travel centres only in one spot in each capital city of Australia. This move has resulted in a saving to the Tourism Commission and an improvement in the efficiency of its operations in the Eastern States.

I recall that the McCarrey report said that the Tourism Commission should spend more money on promotions. I understand the superficial attraction of this sort of

recommendation, but it is a superficial one. The marketing task is complex and it does not only involve promotion at the end of the process. Marketing involves researching a product, developing it and placing it on the market; only then does it involve promotion and retail. While promotions are quickly and visibly effective - a promotion can be undertaken one week and the next week a jumbo jet is on the runway - the real benefit the Government can give the tourism industry is to boost the research and the planning areas of the Tourism Commission. In the past the commission has undertaken a great deal of research, but most of it has been quantitative and has counted what has happened in the recent past. While it is accurate and interesting, it is not a lot of use to people who want to get into the industry or want to plan promotions because it does not tell them anything about what might happen in the future. More expensive and sophisticated research tries to look ahead and project what people's future travel patterns might be. Investors and promoters can try to meet changes and new growth in the tourism market, but that research is expensive and it takes a lot of time to do. However, if it is done properly the benefits are enormous. Contrary to what McCarrey recommended, spending on promotion is secondary to spending on research into planning. An old saying in marketing is that if the marketing is done properly the product does not have to be sold because it will be bought. All one has to do is concentrate on providing the right product and customers will come through the door almost without any promotion being necessary. Promotions can effectively be covered by close association with the private sector. A lot of the brochures and tourist campaigns organised by the commission in recent years have involved it in a coordinating role and the private sector has spent the money to get the brochures into the marketplace.

I refer to something else which is close to my heart; that is, the public sector and public sector reform. Most of the things I have raised today are about the normal expectations of a good Government. They are the sorts of things on which, as the years roll by, one would expect any competent Government to spend money on. While they are appreciated, they are not offering anything new. An additional benefit this Government can offer the people of Western Australia is to pursue public sector reform which is outlined in the McCarrey report and is detailed in the "Economic and Financial Overview" papers attached to the Budget. In that area of reform this Government will save the taxpayers of Western Australia a significant amount of money - in the order of \$300m to \$800m per annum. Those savings can be achieved with no loss of efficiency or quality of service in areas such as health, education, roads, and law and order.

The Budget papers and the McCarrey report state that the major imperative facing the Government is to reduce debt and, at the same time, to maintain the quality of services to the people of Western Australia. That is certainly achievable and I am convinced that the Government, the Treasurer and the Deputy Premier will pursue reform in the public sector in the years ahead.

I said that Public Service reform was close to my heart because I joined the Public Service in 1972. While many people in the Public Service worry about what this Government will do to them I can, on the basis of my experience, truthfully say that the worst damage that has been done to the public sector in the last 20 years occurred during the 1980s. As I spoke to public servants and teachers during the election campaign it struck me that there was a generalised fear that this Government would take what these people saw as "their job" from them. A fundamental misunderstanding is apparent because a Public Service job is not "their job"; it belongs to the people who are paying the bills - the taxpayers. As long as the job a public servant does is required and is effectively done then of course the taxpayers have no problem in continuing to employ that public servant. However, if that job is no longer needed or is no longer being done effectively, what can the Government do to fulfil its obligations to the taxpayers? It must find a different way to have that job done. When the Opposition and members of the union movement say this Government is about sackings and job losses, they are missing the point. Jobs do not disappear; they simply move from one sector of the economy to another. This Government is seeking ways of moving jobs from the public sector to the non-government sector because it believes efficiencies are to be found. Many people in

the business sector to whom I speak every day - and I am sure members on this side also do so - simply cannot afford to pay for jobs that are either unnecessary or are being poorly done. I see people in business who are struggling financially and wondering where their next funds will come from.

Mr Brown: How many jobs do you reckon will be lost as a result of the McCarrey report?

Mr OSBORNE: We shall find that out in time. A Cabinet subcommittee, chaired by the Premier, has been appointed. As clearly stated when the McCarrey report was produced, it was not a report of Government but a report to Government. The Cabinet subcommittee will consider the report carefully and accept, amend or reject its recommendations as it sees fit. When the assessment is complete, I am sure there will be an answer to the member's question.

The other area in which I am interested, and which was also touched on by McCarrey, is transport in the south west. McCarrey recommended the privatisation of Westrail coaches, because it duplicates services offered in the private sector by South West Coach Lines. It recommended the abolition of the *Australind* on the same basis. I have said publicly, and I think many members on this side agree, that this is a case in point. It is a recommendation the Government will amend because I see the *Australind* not as a replication of what is offered in the private sector, but more as a unique service. It should stay for that reason. However, a "steady as she sinks" policy is not viable, and we must seriously look at ways of commercialising the *Australind* operation so that it runs more nearly like a private sector operation. The benefits and the disadvantages under which that service operates should be cleared away so that it can operate in a situation of commercial neutrality, and the community service obligation inherent in the provision of the service can be openly and honestly acknowledged and offered by the Government. I am sure the Government will continue to accept that the community service obligation inherent in the *Australind* service should continue to be offered.

In conclusion, I welcome the reforms the Government is foreshadowing in the public sector. Notwithstanding the nitpicking of the Opposition about the McCarrey report and the Budget document, the Budget is both realistic and balanced. It is refreshing that it places proper emphasis on wealth creating areas of Western Australia, such as agriculture. I am pleased it encourages growth in business in country areas of Western Australia and, at the same time, pays proper attention to core responsibilities of the Government, such as health, law and order and education.

MR McNEE (Moore - Parliamentary Secretary) [4.03 pm]: I support the Government's Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 1). What a wonderful feeling it is to have a properly framed Budget. Although I noticed some comments that perhaps were not favourable, I wonder how many of the people making them are Clayton's budgeters; that is, people who have never prepared a responsible budget. This Government has produced a very responsible Budget that shows some compassion for the people of Western Australia. It offers them a chance. The Leader of the Opposition said it was a tread water Budget; of course, she would know all about that. It must be said that it is much better than the drowning Budgets she, along with her predecessors, introduced. The Western Australian economy was drowning under the previous Labor Governments. At long last this Liberal Government has come to the rescue of the people of Western Australia, after the 10 years of scandalous spending, looking after its mates and the brown paper bag budgeting of the previous Government. This Treasurer and Government are starting to turn that situation around. That is important because we simply must reduce the deficit which was in the order of \$260m last year. That must be a priority of any responsible Government.

It is delightful to see that the Treasurer will get his Budget through, unlike the Opposition's Federal colleagues. It would be bad enough for the local marbles club to be in the position the Federal Government is in, but it has happened to a Government led by a Prime Minister of whom it was once said that he was the world's greatest Treasurer. His mates are now saying that they have done a great job with the Budget, but the Federal

Government cannot get that Budget through the Parliament. I think it is now on Budget mark III. The Federal Treasurer has now indicated that he will give up and resign because it is all too much for him. I have news for him: It is all too much for the rest of the Australian community. The Federal Budget provides for such dopey things as a tax on exports and, therefore, is it any wonder that this country is in its current parlous state? This State Government has budgeted responsibly, regardless of what anybody might say to the contrary. It has given Western Australian people the chance to regain their former position. My electorate, like every other electorate, has expectations and needs.

Mr Cunningham: They have you and that is all they need!

Mr McNEE: The people in my electorate at least now can have expectations. Under the member for Marangaroo's Government they were merely a milch cow. At least now they can look forward, as far as the State Government is concerned, with some optimism. Of course, that optimism will be marvellously fulfilled the day we see the departure of those two people in Canberra to whom I have referred, with their merry men, and a decent Government elected. The rest of Australia will then follow the lead of Western Australia since the Court-Cowan Government came to office in February. The rest of Australia will catch up with this State.

I make a point now about a coastal road running from Lancelin to Green Head and Leeman. This issue has been around for a long time and I make no secret of that. For one reason or another no Government to date has seen its way clear to providing the funds to build that road. I know that this Government, as time passes and it strengthens the ailing economy and gets rid of the excesses of the 10 years of the financial vagabonds, will be able to provide that very necessary facility. Therefore, I can say to the people of my electorate that I have put on record this problem and that now at least we have a chance. The provision of that road will contribute toward opening up that coastal strip to tourism, and that will make a significant contribution to the economy of Western Australia. It is interesting to note that in excess of 100 000 people visit the Pinnacles each year. One of the problems is that those people have to be enticed to go off the Brand Highway and onto the coastal strip. It is with some difficulty that people call in to Jurien, Lancelin or Cervantes because it means that they have to retrace their tracks, and I guess that is not one of the things that tourists want to do. Another problem is the inconvenience caused to people in the area whose children take the school bus to school, because it means that students have to travel 43 km, and in some cases more, rather than 15 km or 20 km. Therefore, I respectfully ask the Government to keep in mind the degree of inconvenience when it makes a future determination about funding for roads.

This year, the State Government has put into roads an additional \$33m. However, the Federal Government has reduced Western Australia's road funding by the same amount of money that has been put in by the State Government, so that helps only to replace the money which has been stolen by the Federal Government. The Federal Government has a responsibility to make good that funding to Western Australians, particularly to the people in my electorate, who because of their rock lobster industry provide a net gain to the economy of Western Australia through their exports and through their contribution to employment, and they deserve some consideration for that.

Other vital road arteries in my electorate, such as the Great Northern Highway, have an increasing demand for funding as the traffic on those roads increases. One of the objectives surely must be to send freight from one point to another by the cheapest method. That means that trucks must get bigger because they must be able to haul more, and that puts additional pressure on roads, which is reflected in the requirement for road repairs. In passing, I commend the excellent work that has been done by the Main Roads Department in my electorate, particularly in regard to the revegetation of the roadsides, to the point of cultivating kangaroo-paws in some of the parking bays. It has provided rest areas for travellers, and it is not uncommon throughout the year to see people make use of those rest areas, some of which have barbecues. Norm Fox, the divisional engineer, and his team deserve a great deal of credit for the excellent work that they have done. We can all take a lesson from their revegetation program because it is of vital importance to the State.

I make special mention of Cunderdin Agricultural College. It is the State's premier agricultural college because it is in the electorate of Moore; however, I respect the right of all other members to claim that for their own colleges. Cunderdin Agricultural College has done an outstanding job. About 10 per cent of the students from that college go on to Muresk, and about another 10 per cent take up apprenticeships. Employers are now encouraged to take on apprentices because they do not have to pay payroll tax for them. The Government is moving toward - steady as it might seem - getting rid of that impost. I was delighted to see the Government remove that impost which the Opposition when in Government found it could not do. That number may increase as employers become more enthusiastic about taking on apprentices, because these young people are well prepared in a wide range of subjects that make them desirable to a future employer.

Cunderdin Agricultural College started out life as an air force base and was used to train pilots during the Second World War. It was later used to house what were known as displaced persons after the Second World War. Indeed, last Friday at the college's annual open day, the Polish community erected a plaque to commemorate its occupation of the college as displaced persons. Those people were introduced to Western Australia through Cunderdin and made great citizens, and they and some of their families were at that open day last Friday. Some of the buildings at that college are pretty old. There is a real need to provide a new butcher shop because it is very crowded when the students are doing their training. The recreation hall needs some attention, and there is also a need to provide a gymnasium. I appreciate, as do the students, the school board, the staff and the parents that not all of these things can be achieved in one year, but I know that this Government will look sympathetically at these requests. I was amazed to discover that the college was not included in the group for consideration. That reflects the performance of the previous Government. It completely ignored the college which is making a very real contribution to assisting young people to obtain vital jobs. I have met ex-students of the college. They are working in stock firms, as auctioneers at sales and so on, as well as in agricultural areas with chemical companies or with companies providing veterinary equipment. The students are filling a very real need in the community.

The McCarrey report was an excellent document. However, that does not mean that everyone would agree with all of its contents. At least it is a report that shows where the State is at. I am aware that members opposite have had precious little business experience, but members opposite were a nasty experience for the electors. Their nightmare was that members opposite would be returned to Government. Indeed, members opposite have nightmares; they wake up thinking that they are in Government, and when they realise it is just a nightmare, the rest of the night proceeds relatively uninterrupted. As with any other report, the McCarrey report indicates where we are at; it suggests solutions to our problems, and how we might get out of this mess.

Mr Thomas: The Budget rejected the McCarrey report.

Mr Hill: Which part of the McCarrey report does the member support?

Mr McNEE: I am making this speech!

Mr Hill: I am giving the member a chance to elaborate.

Mr McNEE: I might talk about the \$80 that the member for Helena won for me. It was not a good performance by the man who could not make up his mind about the closure of the Midland saleyards. He complains he was not the Minister responsible. However, he ducked and dived on the issue. He could not make up his mind. He did not know what to do. He almost ducked and dived himself out of Parliament over that issue. If that is the way the member makes decisions, I cannot help that. It shows that after 10 years he has not learnt a lot.

The McCarrey report needs to be analysed in an unemotional way to determine the parts which might be accepted by Government. The report is excellent value for money. It left the efforts of the previous Government for dead. The McCarrey report was commissioned by the Liberal Government, which is more than the previous Labor Government ever did. Opposition members employed people to make political decisions

for them. Cabinet meetings were held and then the Labor members went outside to find out what should be done. They consulted their minders and asked how to handle problems. They did not have the guts to make decisions for themselves. It is obvious that they received bad advice on most occasions, and that was a problem for the Opposition.

I support the Budget because it gives Western Australia a chance to turn the tide. If my farm experienced a 10 year drought - similar to the financial drought faced by the Labor Government - I could not rectify that situation in one year. If any bank manager suggested I could change the situation in one year, I would stop borrowing money from him straight away because he would be an idiot. However, slowly and surely the Government will turn around the financial situation in this State; it will return Western Australia to its rightful place because it will recover the AAA credit rating which was destroyed by members opposite when in Government. In Government, members opposite had no credibility and they set out to destroy Western Australia's credibility in the financial world. Members opposite almost caused this State to be bankrupt; they made an absolute botch of the State's finances.

Mr Taylor: The McCarrey report's recommendations are to slash and burn the Department of Agriculture.

Mr McNEE: I will talk about agriculture. I will tell the member what his mob did not do. Agriculture needs a substantial amount of research. Many farmers talk about the requirement for good legumes, and that sort of thing. If the member wants to talk about agriculture perhaps we could bring on an appropriate debate. Members opposite knew nothing about running a State; in matters agricultural they were hopeless. I can match members opposite on that issue. The Government has done an outstanding job with the Budget.

Mr Taylor: You are very easily pleased!

Mr McNEE: The Budget will give people a chance. The Government could have put together a tougher Budget but that would not have made sense. A Budget must be a balance between what can be achieved and what cannot. Members opposite did not understand that, and obviously many other people did not understand. I loosely classify the Budget of the previous Government as a Claytons Budget. I do not know what members opposite have ever done in the real world of budgeting, but the final figures must be adhered to, and that is what this Budget is all about. It is not a Budget from the 1930s as the Labor Government Budgets were.

Last year the former Treasurer stood here and said that she had produced a balanced Budget, when she intended to borrow \$100m to fund her redundancy packages. She had budgeted for \$50m for that package but it blew out to \$100m. After borrowing the \$100m she bought a few cars. The former Treasurer said, "I have put up a few hospitals." She did not do it in my electorate. The former Treasurer said, "I have brought in this \$200m, popped it into the receipts side and now I have balanced the Budget." This Government in its term in office will have a properly balanced Budget. That is of paramount importance to this State. Anybody who is financially illiterate would deny that. I absolutely support and congratulate the Government on its Budget. My electorate looks forward to at least some years of steady growth and confirmation of where Western Australian stands.

MR HILL (Helena) [4.30 pm]: I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of the sitting.

[Leave granted.]

Debate thus adjourned.

[Continued on page 4468.]

GRIEVANCE - GUILLOTINE, SESSIONAL ORDER

MR THOMAS (Cockburn) [4.31 pm]: My grievance, addressed to the Leader of the House, is about the operation of the sessional order on the allocation of time which is

known, in the vernacular, as the guillotine. I was suspended from this House a couple of weeks ago. On that occasion and on the days since I had some cause to ponder the operation of the guillotine.

Mr Bloffwitch: And your behaviour.

Mr THOMAS: I do want to talk about that. When I returned to the House on the following Wednesday - I was not able to return on Tuesday - I apologised to the Speaker. I said that my comments, which were motivated by extreme anger with the proceedings of the House on that day, 20 August, should have been directed not towards the Speaker because he was implementing the standing orders, nor towards you, Mr Deputy Speaker, in your capacity as Chairman of Committees, but to the author of that sessional order; otherwise, we would have been shooting the messenger, rather than the responsible person.

Mr Taylor: I do not have any problem in shooting the messenger on this occasion.

Mr THOMAS: We should shoot them all. We will not take prisoners. We can now aim at the persons who are responsible for it. With this sessional order the Executive has perverted the business of the Parliament so that it is failing to perform one of its most important functions. We need to consider the functions of the Parliament which are twofold: The first is to work out which party has a majority and to form a Government; the other is to scrutinise the legislation that Government and other members wish to put forward to the House. Members opposite - the Leader of the House in particular - are very conscious of the fact that the House should be a place where a Government is formed and take that very seriously. However, the Government does not take seriously in any sense the fact that the Parliament has a responsibility to scrutinise legislation. The Leader of the House seems to feel that this Chamber is just another organ of Government and it should do as it is told. We are not an organ of Government; we are a Legislature, and we have a right and a responsibility to scrutinise the legislation that the Government and other members wish to place before the House.

In considering my grievance about the sessional order we need to consider the events that took place on 20 August when the Industrial Relations Amendment Bill was debated. I do not wish to go into the merits of that debate or to rake over old coals that arose out of it. We need to consider the consequences of the events. The Leader of the House moved some days earlier that that debate would terminate on 20 August 1993 at 4.30 pm, come what may. That meant that at that point all remaining matters on that Bill, including amendments initiated by the Minister for Labour Relations, would be placed before the Chamber and put to a vote. Presumably it would be carried because the Government had the majority, and that would be the end of it.

This Bill took away an employee's right not to be disadvantaged in his or her employment because of the entitlement to the benefit of an award. It took away the right of people in this State not to be dismissed from their employment because of the entitlement to the benefit of an award. That is a very important right and a very important element in our industrial relations system that has existed in this State for a very long time. Irrespective of whether members think that that right should be taken away or whether it should be protected - there are strong views on this side of the House about that - everyone would agree that it is a very important right. To take away that right is one of the most profoundly important things a Parliament can do.

One has to ask: How did that proposition come before the House? It came before the House by way of an amendment which first appeared on the Notice Paper earlier that morning. The first time that members of this House, who were of a mind to follow the debate closely, knew what it involved was when they looked at the Notice Paper upon their arrival in the Chamber on that Friday morning. Parliament commenced at 10 o'clock on that day. That is when that amendment was before us for the first time. In the context of the fact that the debate was to close at 4.30 on that afternoon, I suggest to members that that was perverting the functions of this House.

A very important element of considering propositions for laws is that people should have the opportunity to consult with various people whose advice they might like to obtain and

to consider the propositions before the Parliament. The responsible Minister introduced this legislation before an adjournment and said, "This legislation will be around for a couple of weeks, so you have an opportunity to talk with your constituents and other people who have a view about which you might like to consult. You will be able to come back and put a point of view."

Mr C.J. Barnett: It was on the Table for five weeks.

Mr THOMAS: The Leader of the House has corrected me by saying that the legislation was on the Table for five weeks. This provision was not on the Table for five weeks; it was on the Table for about five or six hours. Nobody would have had the opportunity to engage in any consultation on a very important matter. This lack of consideration of legislation comes about when we have a provision such as the one in the sessional order. The sessional order provides that the Minister is able to move to gag the debate within a nominated period. In this case it was at 4.30 pm on that Friday. The Minister is then able to say that nobody is able to speak on that matter in excess of five minutes and the debate is not able to take longer than 20 minutes. Unless a member catches the Speaker's eye and becomes one of the four for whom time is allocated, that person is unable to put forward some points that he or she thinks are very important to the debate. Apart from that, only the amendments put forward by the Minister are voted on.

We have the farcical situation of all amendments being collated. I suggest that members who are interested in this debate look at the *Hansard* for that week. It reads like a Notice Paper, not like a series of debates. We might as well have done a scissors and paste job on the relevant pages in the Notice Paper and stuck them all together as the record of what had happened. The Opposition did not have the opportunity of placing its amendments before the Chamber for a vote.

One of the underlying assumptions of the sessional order is that the Government is the Government because it has the majority and, therefore, its amendments are carried. At least one person in the Chamber is an Independent who can cast her vote for either side. On occasions people have voted differently from party discipline. The sessional orders and the standing orders of the House should not assume necessarily that people will vote along party lines. It may well be that somebody wished to vote for Opposition amendments, but not even they were able to be put. The only amendments put during the Committee stage were those put forward by the Government. The fact that the sessional order is constructed in such a way that it both constrained debate and favoured the Government is a disgrace in a Parliament which must conduct its very important functions as a Legislature.

Finally, the point which illustrates the folly of having such a hard and fast guillotine clause is that one of the final amendments did not even make it to the Notice Paper. The Notice Paper in fact was gibberish until a correction arrived which was distributed around the House as a loose piece of paper and which most members would not even have noticed until the Chairman read it out when he was putting the amendments. Most members would not have known what they were voting on. Only the most conscientious who had taken the time to examine the Notice Paper would have noticed that the proposition before the House had changed markedly since the House rose at one o'clock the previous morning. Even those who had done all of that would not have been able to know what they were voting on unless they found that piece of paper which was circulating loosely in the Chamber. That is what happens when guillotine clauses such as this are included in the standing orders.

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [4.41 pm]: The member for Cockburn, in making a case against the use of the sessional orders takes quite an idealistic view of the Parliament. I agree with him that there is a case for idealism and debate about high matters of principle. However, as a member of a former Government, he must understand very well that the Government of which he was a member took a pragmatic view and used a series of devices which effectively precluded debate within this House. The more pertinent question is what is the correct balance between the responsibility of an Executive to run the business of the State and the responsibility of

this Parliament to have fair and reasonable debate. He referred to the rights of the Parliament and of members. A right is not something beyond some clearer definition, although I agree with him that members of Parliament clearly have a right and a responsibility to debate legislation. That right should not be abused; it must be used carefully and properly.

The sessional order is not exactly the same as a guillotine. As I understand it the guillotine is a fairly sudden decision to move or to indicate that a Bill be put. An arrangement may be made that a Bill is to be put within an hour or so, or according to whatever the understanding may be. However, the sessional order sets out a procedure whereby the Government may lay down certain times for debate. The sessional order is not about restricting debate in this House, but about allowing for sensible time management. I can accept some of the points made by the member for Cockburn concerning the debate on the Industrial Relations Amendment Bill. I can also understand that the content of that Bill contained heartland issues for the Labor Party about which many members feel very strongly.

It is also important that we keep our minds on the facts. In that case, the Bills had been in this House for five weeks. Ample time had been provided for public debate and scrutiny. Indeed, the intent of that legislation was an issue before, during and after the election campaign. It was not as though in any sense the intent of that legislation was sprung on this House or the Opposition. At the time the sessional order was invoked, 16 speeches had been made by members opposite in the second reading debate. With due respect to them, even they would concede privately that much of what was said was repetitive and did not cover new ground.

Mr Kobelke: Absolute nonsense!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am trying to respond with reasoned debate to a reasoned argument. A full week of debate was devoted to this legislation, on which the Government could have sought a cognate debate, but the Opposition chose not to do that. Following a full week of debate the Government said it wanted to deal with the legislation within the lower House in one further week. To accommodate that we allowed an extra day and night of sitting; in all, a full week and an extra 10 hours. The Government also felt that if it was so important the Opposition could have forgone private members' time for that week. It was the Opposition's choice to debate, for example, television coverage of Parliament. The Opposition is on weak ground when it claims the issue was critically important.

The Government used the guillotine in that situation with some regret, particularly in relation to the way those circumstances evolved. However, it was legislation for which we believed we had a clear mandate; it had been in this House for over five weeks and more than two weeks' debating time was devoted to it.

Mr Taylor: Do you intend to use the guillotine in relation to workers' compensation?

Mr Thomas: Some very important amendments were slipped in at the last moment -

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I see the point but I do not think the member for Cockburn can mount an argument that insufficient time was provided to scrutinise the Bills - they were available for five weeks. I accept that amendments were introduced late and on that point the Opposition has an argument. However, it is my observation that that is not new in this Parliament. It is regrettable that has happened from the point of view of both the Opposition and the Government.

Mr Thomas interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Can I finish? We will have another debate on this later. The sessional order, which will remain in place, will probably be used again. It is not intended it be used in the workers' compensation legislation debate. However, if there is filibustering of that debate and it goes in circles and does not progress, the Government will consider using it. The sessional order will most likely be used in the last two weeks of this session. Surely it is better to lay down a program. I am prepared to speak to the Opposition Leader of the House and work out an agreed program for handling legislation

we may need to get through this House by the end of year. Rather than repeat what happened last year and in previous years under Governments of both persuasions, it is far preferable to allocate a particular Bill, say, one day's debate; another half a day; and another two hours, thereby setting down a program for dealing with the legislation. Last year 26 Bills, some of which were not simple mechanical Bills but major pieces of legislation, were passed through this Parliament in its last three days of sitting. One of them was the freedom of information legislation. There was no time management. Some Bills were debated and some virtually not debated at all. We propose to use that sessional order to manage those last couple of weeks if we have a crunch period, which we are hoping to avoid but which various Governments have been unsuccessful in doing.

Mr Ripper: Do you not agree that we spent days, if not weeks, on the freedom of information legislation?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: A fair amount of debate took place on that legislation, but the following Bills were passed in this House in the last three days of its sitting: The Alumina Refinery (Worsley) Agreement Amendment Bill, the Appropriation (Consolidated Revenue Fund) Bill, the Appropriation (General Loan and Capital Works Fund) Bill, the Bushfires Amendment Bill, the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill, the Credit Amendment Bill, the Disability Services Bill, the Electoral Amendment (Political Finance) Bill, the Equal Opportunity Amendment Bill, the Freedom of Information Bill, the Indian Ocean Territories (Administration of Laws) Bill, the Iron Ore (Hope Downs) Agreement Bill, the Land Tax Relief Amendment Bill, the Legal Aid Commission Amendment Bill, the Loan Bill, the Morley Shopping Centre Redevelopment Agreement Bill, the National Rail Corporation Agreement Bill - a fairly major item - the Onslow Solar Salt Agreement Bill, the Payroll Tax Amendment Bill (No 3), the Payroll Tax Assessment Amendment Bill (No 2) the Pilbara Development Commission Bill, the Reserves Bill, the Royal Commission (Custody of Records) Amendment Bill, the Salaries and Allowances Amendment Bill, the State Government Insurance Office Privatisation Bill, and, surprisingly, the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Amendment Bill (No 2).

Mr Ripper: A tribute to the skills of the member for Kalgoorlie.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Twenty six Bills went through in three days. In response to the grievance by the member for Cockburn I hope that he will sensibly, as he has argued today, consider that if we have a crunch period at the end of the sitting we will reach a sensible agreement about time management. I distinguish that from perhaps the very heated situation which applied around the industrial relations debate.

The Opposition is trying to run a bit of a line here that somehow in this House the Government is restricting debate.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Members have listened to me for a little while, they should give me another two minutes, that is all I have. They have raised the matter of time for questions without notice and the fact that the Speaker had to close down question time. What was not reported - I am very critical of *The West Australian* - was that in the four minutes before question time was terminated the Speaker had called members opposite to order at least 14 times, as recorded in *Hansard*. There were probably another half a dozen times that *Hansard* did not pick up. That was forgotten. The Leader of the Opposition accused the Government of not answering questions. What *The West Australian* did report on that occasion was that, at the end of the parliamentary session last year, 221 questions remained unanswered. We have given a commitment that any question asked on notice by 1 December will be answered before the end of the year. We will stick to that.

Mr Taylor: You are already two months behind.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Yes, but the questions are being answered. I assure the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that I will address that problem and make sure that Ministers answer questions more promptly. Some Ministers have been slow.

Mr Kobelke: What about the Ministers who don't answer questions?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member for Nollamara should ask good questions. This Government is prepared to answer questions.

The use of sessional orders and guillotines has a long history in Parliaments throughout the world. The guillotine has been used in the House of Representatives since 1918 and in the Senate since 1926. It has been used widely and it has been used by Governments in this House. I think it would be a step forward for this Parliament to have better time management. The way to achieve that is through a sessional order similar to that which we now have in place.

Mr Taylor: The way to achieve it is through cooperation.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I accept that. We could operate a little better. However, the industrial relations legislation is not conducive to goodwill and harmony. I hope that we will achieve that towards the end of this session.

GRIEVANCE - WOMEN'S REFUGE, MIDLAND AREA ESTABLISHMENT

MRS van de KLASHORST (Swan Hills) [4.53 pm]: I rise to speak on behalf of a group of women in the Swan Hills area who seek not to gain money but to spend it. An article in the local newspaper this week headed "Woman endures six years of beatings before leaving" reported the rather tragic case of a woman who left her home. It states -

"He used to clean his gun and point it at me," she said.

"It got to the stage where I thought, 'if I don't leave, I'm going to be carried out of here in a coffin'."

The group, known as the Koolkuna Eastern Region Women's Refuge Group Inc saw a need three years ago for a women's refuge in the Midland area. They therefore worked together for a year to plan how to right the wrongs being done to women in the area. In October 1992, they formed a committee and set out to raise funds from the supported accommodation assistance plan and other funding areas to build a refuge. They rented a home in Midvale which has now been open for a year. Women who have been battered go to the refuge. I have had a tour of that home and met one woman who had suffered damage to the side of her face following a beating the night before. The rented premises in Midvale have established that there is a need for a women's refuge in the area. Eighty females and 178 children resided in the temporary refuge in the last financial year and stayed for varying times, but a total of 101 women were turned away because the refuge was full. The group has organised staffing. It has raised funds and received Government funding for three full time support workers, four relief workers and one part time bookkeeper who does more than her share of work on a voluntary basis.

Mr Ripper: Was that funding provided by the previous Government?

Mrs van de KLASHORST: It was. Over a year ago, the women spent some time hunting for a block of land in Swan View or Midvale. They have been given a block of land and, although I do not intend telling the House where that block of land is, it is close to shops, schools, transport and a doctor and it is in a fairly aesthetic area for the women.

The next step was for them to approach Homeswest and the Department for Community Development about plans. A firm of architects has drawn up two sets of plans already. The first set was for the building of their dreams; it was for a large building which had everything they wanted included in it. When they took the plans to the various departments, they were told that the plans were too grandiose and that they needed to be scaled down to fit the budget. Members should remember that it took two years from the time the committee was first formed to get to that stage. They had permission from the local authority to erect the building. They had public consultation and I was involved in allaying some of the fears of the local community about the siting of the refuge in that area. They have also received Government permission and are ready to go ahead with the building.

Unfortunately - this is why I have raised this matter today - they have run into a problem. I seek the assistance of the Minister for Community Development to solve the problem

and get the refuge built. They have the funding and the plans have been approved. However, a couple of departments - I believe the Department of Planning and Urban Development and the Department for Community Development - have advised the women that the buildings as shown on the plans that have been approved are now not viable to build. Apparently, the philosophy behind the setting up of a women's refuge has changed. My research has revealed that information received from the eastern seaboard indicates that the latest philosophy for women's refuges is that separate units should be provided rather than larger units with a central area, although the committee feels that the way it has been running the refuge in the temporary premises for the last year has been satisfactory. Apparently, when the women arrive at the refuge, they are often exhausted - as I said, one whom I saw had been severely battered on one side of her face. When they arrive at the refuge with their children, the refuge workers take care of the children and the women often sleep for two or three days. They are also often in need of a doctor when they arrive. The women who run the Koolkuna refuge believe that a central area is essential for taking the children from their mothers and looking after them until the mothers can take responsibility for them again. They want a building with a central area so that this can happen.

They also need a large central area in which children can play and be seen by their mothers. Women also like to talk among themselves; a large central area is necessary for that sort of networking to take place. Therefore, the Koolkuna Eastern Region Women's Refuge Group has sought my assistance and I am seeking the Minister's assistance to have the original concept reinstated. The women feel that one year of preparation and two years of fundraising is sufficient for them to be convinced that this is the right way to go. They could not face another two years of waiting for any new plans to be approved. This would be detrimental to their operations.

The house they are renting has been partitioned to make its operations more effective. However, it is not big enough and the owner has told the women that he now wants to take back the building to sell it. If this happens, the women will have to move into further temporary accommodation while they build and then will have to move again. They believe that they should be able to build according to the plans that have been approved. They are willing to adjust the plans in some small ways. However, they feel it would not be fair for them to have to start again after all the work they have done. I raise this in the grievance debate to ask the Minister's assistance for these women so that they can achieve some or most of their aims.

MR NICHOLLS (Mandurah - Minister for Community Development) [5.00 pm]: I thank the member for Swan Hills for raising this issue with me in the grievance debate. I am aware of the effort that the member for Swan Hills puts in to help groups within her area, not only that to which she has referred, but also groups dealing with issues ranging from youth through to seniors.

It is important that we look at the history of this matter, because while I accept the comments made by the member, the history of this project should go on record. It will also balance some of the misunderstanding that may have occurred. First, the group which is known as the Eastern Region Women's Refuge Group resulted from a meeting in 1990, which was coordinated by the then Department of Community Services. At that time, two groups were competing to put projects in the same area. Obviously, there was an intent, but because there were competing interests the view was taken that both groups should join together to coordinate their efforts. That, I understand, was the foundation for the emergence of the group. A lot of work was then put in. The then Department gave a lot of support, as did the previous Government in its efforts to help the group as it moved towards establishing a service.

The member for Swan Hills raised the issue of the identification of land. I understand that in July 1992 a large block of land was identified in Greenmount. Although the land was a very large block, it was seen to be a reasonable site and was earmarked for the development. However, in August 1992 the agency itself found an alternative block of land, one that offered other benefits. Because another block of land was identified, the efforts that were being made to pursue the original block ceased and the process of

obtaining that alternative block started. That was in August 1992, so we are talking about a year ago. In January this year, there was a recommendation from the SAAP and CAP joint officers group to approve the \$70 000 to purchase the land. When the recommendation was made, the processes needed to be undertaken included going to the local council to get the plans approved. The Shire of Mundaring supported the project, but also made it clear that some weight should be put on any concerns raised by residents. The process was pursued and in March this year approval was granted for the refuge to be located on that site, despite some local opposition.

I make the point that when providing facilities such as safety houses or other facilities which, although needed by the community, highlight some of the negative aspects within the community, such as family violence, we are often met with resistance. It is difficult for people to accept that a facility should be located near their place of residence.

Dr Edwards: There seems to be a resistance from Government regarding the funding too.

Mr NICHOLLS: I will touch on that, but I want to highlight the unfortunate fact that people who live close to a site proposed for facilities such as refuges often resist the establishment of such facilities in their area, even though the wider community may wish to have such facilities provided.

I understand that the draft plans mentioned by the member for Swan Hills were sent to Homeswest as part of the joint officers group. The estimated construction cost was \$276 623 and the site works were \$18 700. That is a substantial cost. When we talk about approval, we are not talking about approval by the joint committee that provides the recommendation; we are simply talking about approval under the building guidelines, the local government guidelines. As I understand it, the problem faced by the group was that the alternative block was a large site. It had to be subdivided and the deed of trust or the title to that land was accessible only as from July this year, so we are talking about a few months ago.

The issue raised by the member for Swan Hills about the change in direction has been raised with me by a number of people in the community. To put it in context, there is a belief that small cottages grouped close together are better than large institutions. I do not have the expertise to know whether that is the right direction, but I would definitely support it. It seems to me that if we can provide people with a facility in which they do not feel they are in a boarding house or a large institution, that may help them not only deal better with the trauma, but also come to terms with reestablishing their lives. But as I said, I do not have the expertise to comment on that.

The other issue raised was the need for funding for the facility. A few weeks ago I went to Canberra to meet Brian Howe to talk specifically about SAAP and CAP funding, simply because of the long time it takes to go from lodging an application to getting funding. There are some options that we can look at, not only with funding issues, but also defunding issues, when the services or programs funded are not being delivered in an accountable or an acceptable way. Where they are being defunded, the money is being tied up in those projects for far too long, because we cannot redirect that funding to new projects or new groups.

Mrs van de Klashorst: They gave me to understand that the funding had already been allocated.

Mr NICHOLLS: In this particular case, the funding is already there but the plans must be approved by the joint officers group. My understanding is that there has been a meeting and that agreement has been reached between the group and the committee that although there will be a scaled down version of what was required, the facility will be able to cater for the demands that are perceived to be in that area.

I would like to touch on the other point that was raised, namely, the need in the area. We have a number of refuges between Midland and the city. Some of those refuges are capable of taking in people in need and we want to make sure that wherever possible we utilise those facilities rather than simply build new ones and leave existing facilities underutilised. There is a fine line between providing the facilities required and making

sure that current facilities are fully utilised. I accept the member's view, and I admire the tenacity with which she has followed up this issue and others. I hope the group will be able to pursue its aim of establishing a refuge to help the people of Swan Hills.

**GRIEVANCE - KALGOORLIE-BOULDER RACING CLUB, SKY
CHANNEL TELECASTS, WA TURF CLUB SUBSIDY**

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.11 pm]: My grievance is probably best described as one that is close to my heart, but it would be fair to say the Government's role is one of assistance rather than direction. I am proud to be the patron of the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club, which starts its annual round on Sunday with the Boulder Cup, followed by the Hannan's Handicap on Wednesday and the Kalgoorlie Cup on Saturday week. The racing club, under the chairmanship of Brian Pascoe and previous chairmen, has done well in recent years and probably would be regarded as the best administered club in the State and the one that thrives more than any other. Much of that has to do with the positive approach taken by the club's committee over a number of years, to the extent that over the racing round period in this centenary year of Kalgoorlie-Boulder it is virtually impossible to get a hotel bed anywhere in the area. We believe this round will be the biggest and most important since the early days of the goldfields. The racing club also is one of the joint sponsors of the world two-up championship which is under way at present and will conclude on Monday.

My grievance relates to the Sky Channel coverage of the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club's race meetings. In May the club decided it would pay out \$1 300 a meeting to have Sky Channel telecast its race meetings this season, leading up to and including the Kalgoorlie Cup. That operation has been most successful. I refer to a letter written by the secretary-manager of the club, Mr Geoff Brabazon, to the chief executive of the Western Australian Turf Club in which he asked the Turf Club to consider subsidising the cost of the Sky Channel telecasts of the Kalgoorlie races. The club did that on the basis that the WATC had already decided to support the telecast by CFM Technology of the mid week provincial race meetings, particularly at Northam and York. I am told those telecasts go only to a selected number of metropolitan outlets in Western Australia whereas Sky Channel telecasts go to every TAB agency, hotel and club which has the Sky Channel facility, and also throughout Australia on appropriate occasions.

I am told the decision to introduce Sky Channel telecasts of the Kalgoorlie races has led to an increase in betting turnover of \$80 000 to \$100 000 a meeting. I contrast that with the subsidized CFM telecasts of Northam and York meetings where the increase in turnover is in the vicinity of \$20 000 to \$30 000 a meeting. The Sky Channel telecasts of Kalgoorlie meetings have provided the WATC with an opportunity to enhance its on course income at Belmont Park meetings after the completion of Eastern States races. The telecasts also provide a medium for betting every 15 to 20 minutes rather than every 35 minutes as is normally the case.

Mr Trenorden: It is asking a bit much to expect the Turf Club to think about these things!

Mr TAYLOR: No, it is not.

Mr Trenorden: I am being sarcastic. The Turf Club executives have never properly set their minds to that matter.

Mr TAYLOR: I agree with that; but I point out to the member that sarcasm does not show in the *Hansard* report. The decision to subsidise Northam and York in order to push those meetings may be correct, and I do not knock it, but it is absolutely illogical for the Turf Club to subsidise them at a cost of \$1 000 a meeting if it is not prepared to subsidise the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club. The WATC has given no good reason why it is not prepared to subsidise the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club's telecasts and it has been left to the Kalgoorlie club to make the decision. Up to Thursday, 17 June the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club had paid \$7 000 to have its entire meeting covered by Sky Channel. Turnover increased from \$210 000 to \$313 000. The extra profit was

accepted by the WATC; it is the body making the extra profit, yet it is saying to the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club that it is not prepared to support it on this issue. The annual racing round commences on Sunday with the Boulder Cup and the club has decided to have that meeting covered in its entirety by Sky Channel. The same will apply on Wednesday for the Hannan's Handicap meeting and on the following Saturday with the Kalgoorlie Cup meeting. The turnover at those meetings will easily surpass the turnover produced by either the Northam or York meeting on a Wednesday or Thursday. All the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club is asking for is equal rights and treatment from the WATC.

Mr Trenorden: They should demand the WATC do some forward planning and thinking instead of just looking after its own patch.

Mr TAYLOR: I am pleased to hear the member for Avon say that because it is exactly the case. The WATC committee would do well to come en masse to the annual Kalgoorlie racing round to see how it should be done.

Mr Trenorden: Don't hold your breath!

Mr TAYLOR: They will not, of course. It was only in recent years when Bob Peters was Chairman of the WATC that a chairman of that club decided to attend the Kalgoorlie-Boulder racing round.

The Minister for Racing and Gaming, Hon Max Evans, has had discussions with the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club, and the club is pleased with his response. He has been quite supportive on this issue, and if he were in a position to take much firmer action I have no doubt he would. The attitude of the Turf Club, as suggested in a letter of 12 August and a more recent letter, to the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club is that it is basically not interested in taking this matter further. The WATC keeps putting off the Kalgoorlie-Boulder club to the extent that the WATC said in a letter that it would be pleased to respond by 14 October 1993 to enable the matter to be placed on the agenda of the Western Australian Thoroughbred Racing Industry Council. It will be all over by then; there will be effectively no racing at all at the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club and the club will have to wait for the 1994 season. It is most inappropriate.

The Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club has got off its backside and promoted itself, and in so doing it has promoted the community of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. Every time Sky Channel shows a race throughout Australia it gives further publicity to the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, and that is a most positive step. It has led to a quite significant increase in betting turnover for Kalgoorlie-Boulder race meetings, and that has been most important for the WATC. The Turf Club would take a slightly different view of that, but I am astonished that it continues to take the position it has.

Mr Trenorden: It tends to forget it is the peer body in racing in Western Australia; it tends to think it runs Ascot and Belmont, and that is it.

Mr TAYLOR: The WATC really has a much wider responsibility; its responsibility, as the WATC should see it and as the industry sees it, is to the industry as a whole. Just because the club happens to be successful, it should not be penalised. The WA Turf Club has adopted the attitude that because of the success of the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club, it will not support and cooperate with it on this issue. That is the nature of the agreement. This matter is not directly related to any decision the Minister can make. Nevertheless, we look for the support of the Government in the case of the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club.

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe - Minister for Resources Development) [5.21 pm]: The member for Kalgoorlie - in his electoral capacity - has outlined well the situation, as I understand it, the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club faces. I join with the member in expressing congratulations to the club for its initiative. The people of Kalgoorlie do not spend a lot of time talking about things - they get things moving.

Mr Taylor: As an indication of how important this matter is, my Aunt Dorrie will be attending her sixty seventh consecutive annual round in Kalgoorlie. They take it seriously up there.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Indeed, the business people and others associated with the club get on with things in a rather entrepreneurial manner. They should be commended for taking the initiative with the Sky Channel coverage; the member is right as this promotes racing in Kalgoorlie as well as the area in a wider sense.

As the member indicated, this is not really a decision for Government, although I accept the point that if both sides of the Chamber express support for the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club, that might have some persuasive effect on the WA Turf Club. As indicated, provincial clubs at Northam, York and Pinjarra receive the \$1 000 subsidy. The WATC argues that these clubs run weekday meetings and do not compete with its meetings on Saturdays. It argues that the Kalgoorlie races are held on Saturday and compete with those held in Perth; it claims an increase in turnover at Kalgoorlie could be at the expense of turnover in Perth racing. However, it is a difficult matter to resolve.

I understand that the Turf Club also argues - I do not know the validity of this - that the Kalgoorlie round should be allowed to finish so that an assessment can be made. Also, a Deloitte report is due to be released shortly on country racing, and it would be reasonable that that should be assessed.

Nevertheless the member for Kalgoorlie has made a strong argument that the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club can feel with some justification that it has been poorly done by. The member correctly indicated the role of the Government in this area. The Racing Restriction Act provides authority for the WATC to make decisions affecting racing in Western Australia. The same Act indicates that the Minister for Racing and Gaming has no jurisdiction to overturn any decision of the Turf Club in those matters. The Totalisator Agency Board collects money from betting operations and distributes it to the codes in Western Australia. Last year \$30m in total was distributed, with \$16.5m allocated to the WA Turf Club.

I can add little more to the points made by the member for Kalgoorlie. I certainly sympathise with him. The comments from the member for Avon indicate that a fair amount of sympathy resides on this side of the House. The Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club has been innovative as it has built up and maintained its racing round for a long time. It has reached the next step and has shown a level of innovation which should be envied and duplicated by other race clubs. Apart from expressing sympathy and support, I indicate that Hon Max Evans, the responsible Minister, will be talking to the WATC on this matter. Ultimately, it is its decision. Members of this House would prefer to see a better distribution of funds so that the club is supported in its good measures to promote racing in the region.

GRIEVANCE - ALBANY AIRPORT, NAVIGATIONAL AIDS AND SAFETY PROCEDURES, CHANGES

MR PRINCE (Albany) [5.25 pm]: My grievance is directed to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport and relates to Albany Airport. I have consulted the member for Stirling on this matter because the airport is within his electorate. It is about nine kilometres from the centre of my electorate, but I raise the matter as it affects my electorate as much, if not more, than the member's.

I refer to the navigational aids and safety procedures adopted by the Albany Airport, as these are intended to be amended, changed or discontinued by the Civil Aviation Authority. Currently a navigational aid known as distance measuring equipment - commonly called DME - is installed at the airport. This device is domestic in nature. I understand that it operates on a frequency which is the same as, or similar to, that to be allocated to pay television. Consequently, the equipment must be phased out and replaced by a distance measuring device of an international nature - known as DMEI. The cost of installation of the new equipment is high. The Albany Airport is run by the Shire of Albany. The other piece of navigational equipment installed is a radial measure for aircraft approaching the airport, known as VDR; it is often collocated with the DMEI equipment. The cost of replacing both installations is \$400 000 or \$500 000, provided suitable equipment can be located which is not new - brand new equipment is much more expensive.

The problem with the beacon navigational aids is that the Shire of Albany has been negotiating for some time with the CAA for assistance with the equipment. For reasons which are not clear, even though a decision was made some time ago, 15 or 20 similarly affected airports throughout Australia will have their equipment replaced free of charge - in a sense, it will be replaced by the CAA and not the airport operators. Albany is not an airport so blessed. The Civil Aviation Authority has access to some used equipment, and I understand that some may or may not have been used recently at Kalgoorlie which is available. The Shire of Albany has the difficulty of progressing negotiations with the CAA to reach a reasonable solution. The equipment is to be phased out, and the new equipment phased in by October 1995. If the shire must cover the high cost of the changeover, it must make arrangements such as seeking Government assistance.

The essential nature of the navigational equipment can be understood by realising that I am told - I have no reason to doubt it - that, from a meteorological view, Albany is the cloudiest airport in Western Australia. That is brilliant for the comfort of living in Albany as opposed to Perth in the height of summer, but it is not so brilliant for aircraft taking off and landing there. The commercial operator at Albany Airport is Skywest which has a daily flight which arrives at about 7.30 am and leaves at 7.30 pm. Therefore, the takeoff and landings are often in the dark and navigational aids are essential for the safe operation of that and non-commercial users of the airport. By the way, for some reason best known to the company, on Tuesdays and Thursdays the flight arrives at 11.00 am but flights always leave at the same time in the evening. Therefore, the beacons are required. The non-directional beacon at the airport is about 40 years old and has a long history of unreliability.

From a navigational and safety point of view it is essential that the upgrade is undertaken, but the cost is extremely high. I am told that Albany Airport records approximately 6 300 aircraft movements a year, which represents approximately 15 000 or 16 000 commercial passengers, and between 15 to 18 aircraft movements a day by about eight or 10 aircraft. It is not by any means a busy airport, but it is busy enough to require decent navigational aids. I urge the Minister to use whatever influence he can to persuade the Federal Minister responsible for the Civil Aviation Authority to expedite the negotiations for the supply of equipment at a reasonable cost to enable the airport to continue to operate as it does.

Of somewhat greater concern to me is a matter which relates more to safety. Currently Albany, along with other airports small in size, are required to operate under a mandatory traffic frequency proposal for pilots approaching, landing or taking off to use a common frequency to advise other aircraft in the vicinity of what they are doing. A document prepared by Skywest Airlines entitled "MTAF Means Safety. A position paper on proposed airspace changes" dated September this year states on page 2 -

The changes to Australian airspace procedures which are proposed for implementation on November 11, will result in a number of airports in the south west of this State being downgraded in terms of safety.

Presently, airports such as Albany, Esperance, Kalgoorlie, Meekatharra, Carnarvon and Geraldton are classified so that pilots of approaching and departing aircraft are required to use a mandatory traffic advisory frequency (MTAF) to advise other aircraft in the area of their intentions for take-off or approach. This simply means that pilots are required to use their radios to communicate with each other on a common frequency to achieve aircraft separation and avoid mid-air collisions.

Under the CAA proposals, airports such as Albany, Esperance and Meekatharra will lose their MTAF status early next year, meaning that pilots of approaching aircraft will no longer be obliged to communicate with each other to advise their flight path, method of approach and current position. Aircraft separations would be based upon the "see-and-avoid" principle, where pilots simply look out for other aircraft.

This downgrading in status for these airports creates a safety risk which is both unnecessary and easily avoidable.

The Shire of Albany has written to me about this most important safety matter. Skywest Airlines is equally concerned and has supplied me with a comprehensive document on the subject. I seek leave to table both the letter from the Shire of Albany dated 5 August and the letter from Skywest Airlines of 10 September for the rest of the day's sitting.

[The paper was tabled for the information of members.]

Mr PRINCE: I bring to the attention of the House and the Minister representing the Minister for Transport that the change in managing aircraft reporting which will come into the Albany airspace area is likely to lead to a significant diminution of the safety of aircraft in and out of Albany. That is simply not acceptable. I urge the Minister to use whatever efforts are needed to persuade Senator Bob Collins, the Federal Minister for Transport and Communication, and the Civil Aviation Authority to undertake a review immediately of this proposal and to reverse it.

MR LEWIS (Applecross - Minister assisting the Minister for Transport) [5.32 pm]: I have had discussions with the Minister for Transport and been given certain information by him which verifies what the member for Albany has been saying. It is a pretty sorry state that most of the responsibility for airport control has now been shifted to the Eastern States - I think to Brisbane. It ignores the vast airspace over this large State of Western Australia. It is very worrying to me because when I was the Liberal transport spokesman in Opposition I made many overtures to try to stop the transference of that control to the eastern seaboard. They fell on deaf ears and the State is now being served up a fait accompli; not only is it of fundamental importance to air safety, but also it will remove to the eastern seaboard a training facility and a skilled work force that currently resides in this State. Those people will be transferred over time to the east coast which will not leave Western Australian with the cover we would want to see.

It is true that the navigational aid equipment - it is a beacon - which is known as DME(A), clashes with the frequencies of television transmissions. On that basis it must be accepted that a compromise must be reached and perhaps we should look at new equipment. The problem is that it is difficult to get a decision from the Civil Aviation Authority. The equipment that is currently operating as a beacon to guide that extensive air traffic into Albany, which is one of the cloudiest airports in this State, will be phased out on 31 December 1995; so an urgency is developing to ensure adequate equipment is put in place to at least maintain the ability for aircraft to navigate their way on that beacon in that cloudy area. Other types of equipment is available. A DME1 is international equipment which costs \$300 000; that is, about \$100 000 for the installation, \$190 000 for the cost of the unit and the installation and commissioning and \$110 000 for a building to house it. The difficulty the member for Albany has highlighted about the Albany Airport is that the CAA is not prepared to make a decision on the equipment. Another worrying factor is that equipment which has become available from the upgrade of the Kalgoorlie Airport could be transferred at a reasonably cheap cost in the short term, but no decision has come from the CAA in Canberra. The Government recognises that it must inquire into and get some decision on what the CAA will do with regard to the safety of air traffic operating out of Albany. With regard to the mandatory traffic advisory frequency, as the member for Albany stated, it is a requirement for all traffic when entering the Albany, Karratha, Port Hedland airspace to report their position.

Mr Riebeling: It does not work; we have near misses up there.

Mr LEWIS: It does not work because it is all operating from the Eastern States.

Mr Riebeling: The pilots log themselves in and say, "I made a mistake please suspend me."

Mr LEWIS: I accept that, but some form of mandatory advice is better than none - especially when aircraft are flying in obscured airspace, as occurs over Albany. I do a little bit of flying these days and I get particularly nervous when I am in a light aircraft and it goes into light cloud on an approach to outback airports.

Mrs van de Klashorst: Albany is not "outback".

Mr LEWIS: I am talking about some of the country strips and it is a bit scary. Notwithstanding that stations are probably outside the controlled air spaces of major airports, it is certainly intimidating. Mandatory reporting is better than no reporting. I am concerned that mandatory reporting will cease from 11 November this year. It is certainly incumbent upon the Government to take up the grievance of the member for Albany.

Mr Graham: I offer to the Minister my genuine support and that of the member for Ashburton.

Mr Taylor: And mine.

Mr Graham: It is a serious diminution of air safety standards and it frightens the hell out of those pilots. I have had pilots who have flown for 20 or 30 years coming to see me about this. They don't support a system that has never been in play anywhere in the world with this type of control.

Mr LEWIS: I thank the member for the interjection. The Government will certainly take up this grievance and refer it to the Minister for Transport. I believe that tomorrow he is seeing the Federal Minister, Senator Collins, and I will ask him to make this point well known to the senator on the basis of the bilateral support across this Parliament. We are quite concerned and we will certainly do our best to do something about it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Grievances noted.

MOTION - SELECT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

Wittenoom Town and Environs

MR GRAHAM (Pilbara) [5.41 pm]: I move -

- (1) That a select committee of the Legislative Assembly be established to -
 - (a) review, consider, report upon and comment on previous studies of the Wittenoom townsite and environs, giving particular attention to studies which relate to public health and any associated risk from airborne blue asbestos fibres;
 - (b) review, consider, report upon and comment on the efficacy of those policies and standards that have been used to determine the existing policies and decisions with regard to the future of the townsite;
 - (c) review, consider, report upon and comment on the implications of changing those policies and standards referred to terms of reference (b);
 - (d) assess the various options for the future of Wittenoom, based on the investigation conducted under terms of reference (b) and identify a preferred option; and
 - (e) recommend any changes, including possible legislative, administrative and policy changes, which may be required to give effect to the preferred option referred to in terms of reference (d).
- (2) That the committee have power to send for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to move from place to place and to report from time to time, if it deems necessary.
- (3) That the committee present its final report by 2 December 1993.

A controversy has surrounded Wittenoom and the future of the townsite of Wittenoom for some 15 or 20 years now. This is not a new problem but it is a difficult one. A number of studies have been conducted by different groups and organisations and all have revolved around the fundamental question of the risk to public health from airborne blue asbestos fibres. The select committee process of this Parliament is an appropriate vehicle with which to examine this particular issue. As with many select committees in

this place, it allows for contentious matters to be examined in a non-partisan or apolitical manner, and I hope this will be the case with this select committee. The processes of select committees also allow all parties to put their views forward.

I am well aware, as the local member, that the residents of Wittenoom have very strong views regarding the future of their town, as do opponents of any development. Those people will be given the opportunity to put their case to the select committee and produce whatever evidence they have to support their respective cases. It will be a difficult select committee, because of the very nature of the terms of reference. However, the people in Wittenoom and the residents of the Pilbara are looking for a clear signal on the future of the town of Wittenoom, because this question hangs over the future development and clouds future operations in the tourism industry. I commend the motion to the House.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Deputy Premier) [5.45 pm]: This is one of those matters in Parliament that sometimes are quite successfully negotiated or discussed behind the Speaker's Chair. When the member for Pilbara advised me he was going to be brief, I did not realise he would be that brief. He is certainly a man of his word.

The question of Wittenoom has been something that has vexed successive Governments. There is no doubt at all that the legacy of the mining of blue asbestos in the gorge adjacent to that town has left the State of Western Australia facing a very serious problem. We should never underestimate the seriousness of that problem. Although the member for Pilbara might have spoken only very briefly about this motion, if members would care to refer to the terms of reference outlined in the motion I think they would understand the intensity of feeling that he has for this matter. It is appropriate that there should be in this Parliament some scrutiny of the policy adopted by successive Governments with respect to the Wittenoom issue.

I am aware that the coalition's promise on Wittenoom was perhaps one of the first that was broken by the Government. It was made clear in the coalition's policy document that we would do something about returning the town of Wittenoom to being an open town. Since then I have been appointed the Deputy Premier and given responsibility for the portfolio for Commerce and Trade. I am not quite sure how I managed to have the legacy of Wittenoom come under my portfolio.

Mr Taylor: You were too busy squabbling about what you were or were not going to have that you did not notice that you ended up with Wittenoom.

Mr COWAN: That must be the case; nevertheless, I was given responsibility for dealing with the policy on Wittenoom. One of the first things I did was to seek a comprehensive briefing from all those departments involved in the management of Wittenoom as Government policy stood. I was surprised to learn that included a great number of departments: The Health Department, the Department of Land Administration, the Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare, the Building Management Authority, the Department of Conservation and Land Management, the Department of Minerals and Energy and the Tourism Commission. The response from all those departments was that we had to exercise caution and follow the policy that had been applied some years earlier, which was that those people who chose to live in the town of Wittenoom could do so but that the Government would offer no encouragement whatsoever to any person who wished to live in that town. The problem of course is that Wittenoom is the closest settlement to perhaps one of the greatest attractions Western Australia has to offer, the gorge country of Karijini national park. That is certainly the closest access point to most of the gorges, and there is no doubt at all that people will want to visit Karijini national park. If I could be so bold as to preempt matters, I would hope that the member for Pilbara, as convention has it, will chair the committee -

Mr Strickland: When we were in Opposition and they were in Government they did not let me chair the committee I got up.

Mr COWAN: That is right. There are precedents where it has not happened. I am suggesting that because the member for Pilbara has the experience, it is likely that it should happen. I put the proposition to the member for Pilbara that in any examination of this matter by the committee it would be appropriate that not only should he examine

those matters relating to the town of Wittenoom but also issues such as the mine dumps and the mine tailings that exist in the gorge country, because although people want to visit that area not all of them will want to walk the gorges. Some of them prefer to drive, and the only gorges one can drive are those very heavily contaminated by tailings from the old minesites and from the tailings dumps. To present a recommendation that deals with the town of Wittenoom, while it would satisfy the terms of reference, I do not think it would satisfy this Parliament and the investigation this Parliament expects of this committee. As a consequence, I ask the member for Pilbara and the other members who have indicated their willingness to be nominated to this committee to examine not only the aspect of the town of Wittenoom, but also the impact of the tailing dumps on the gorges which are close to the national park because they will be the greatest impediment to tourism in the national park. The committee would be doing its duty to the Parliament and the State of Western Australia if it is prepared to make a recommendation which will provide for something to be done to the tailing dumps at the Wittenoom and Yampire Gorges to ensure that they are safer areas for tourists to visit.

Mr Graham: I am happy for the committee to do that and I would suggest that terms of reference (d) and (e) allow for the committee to take your concerns on board. They refer to assessing options for the future of the town and recommending the possible legislative, administrative and policy changes required.

Mr COWAN: I hope that is the committee's interpretation of the terms of reference. While the committee will be performing a valuable role in the examination of the town of Wittenoom, it is important that it look at the overall aspect of that region and the potential for nature tourism in the Karijini national park. That will mean dealing with the asbestos tailing dumps and identifying, and perhaps making a recommendation on, a suitable access point to the park from its northern side. While most members would regard this as a motion to establish a select committee to inquire into the town of Wittenoom, I would like to think that through its terms of reference - I agree with the member for Pilbara that the proposed committee's terms of reference can be interpreted in a way that the committee must look at much more than the town of Wittenoom - it can examine the various aspects of tourism and the implication of the asbestos tailing dumps on the gorges that can be accessed by motor vehicle by tourists who prefer not to walk but to see things from the seat of a vehicle. In addition, the committee must consider the question of access to the Karijini national park.

The Government supports this motion on the clear understanding that members interpret the terms of reference in the way I have outlined to the House. I hope this committee will bring down a report which will dispel some myths about the boundary and, if it looks to the future which, in that area, is tourism, it will produce something that is of value to the State. The committee must give consideration to the tourism potential of Karijini national park and it must identify the area from which people can gain access to the park from its northern side.

Question put and passed.

Appointment of Select Committee

On motion by Mr Graham, resolved -

That the following members be appointed to serve on the select committee -

The member for Albany (Mr Prince), the member for Dianella (Dr Hames), the member for Maylands (Dr Edwards), the member for Murray (Mr Marshall), and the member for Pilbara (Mr Graham).

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

MOTION - WORKERS' COMPENSATION, CHANGES CONDEMNATION

Debate resumed from 15 September.

MRS HENDERSON (Thornlie) [7.31 pm]: Since I moved this motion last week, the Minister has tabled his legislation and there may, perhaps, have been an expectation that

it would resolve some of the issues I raised in the motion. Unfortunately, it does not do that at all but adds to the confusion and to the administrative chaos that seems to be the bent of this Minister with regard to workers' compensation. In the remarks I made last week on this motion I drew the attention of the House to a series of press releases by which the Minister announced major changes to workers' compensation in a very ad hoc way, appearing to have no concern about the impact of such statements on people's lives and on the families of people who have been injured at work. Following those announcements by the Minister he indicated he would introduce legislation in this House which would retrospectively apply the various announcements he made. I went through those announcements and the changes they foreshadowed in some detail last week. I do not propose to go back over the same material; however, the most recent announcements the Minister, made by press release again, create yet another category of worker. There are now at least five different categories of injured workers, each subject to different requirements and obstacles in their capacity to claim any of the benefits and entitlements which are rightfully theirs under the system.

The Minister for Labour Relations has said constantly that his aim is not to take away the benefits of injured people, but is to establish a system that works in a more conciliatory and efficient way. Unfortunately, in every respect the announcements he has made do not fulfil those aims. For example, he mentioned several times in his press releases that one of the major problems with the existing system is delay. In my view it is the responsibility of a Minister to acquaint himself with the facts before making those kinds of statements. It is very clear that the Minister did not do that. Although he constantly uses phrases such as "long delays in the system", had he taken the trouble to look at the system closely he would know that the situation is quite different. The major inquiry into workers' compensation conducted by Mr Guthrie, which was initiated by the previous Labor Government, resulted in a series of recommendations, a number of which had already been implemented by the previous Government and a number of which remain to be implemented. Those changes have had a significant impact on the procedures and delays at the Workers' Compensation Board. When an application is lodged to have a minor matter dealt with, the maximum delay between lodging the application and the matter being dealt with in chambers is between four and six weeks. I am advised that in recent times no delays are involved at all. Therefore, if someone went to the board about a dispute involving a person, whether a person is receiving weekly payments or not, the matter could be dealt with the next day. The maximum delay at the moment for full trials is approximately two months. Of course, most people need two months in which to prepare their case, and it would be an injustice to ask them to get the documents and medical evidence required to support their claim in less than two months. It is wrong to suggest that a delay of two months between applying for a court hearing and its being heard is a delay at all. Despite the fact that the Minister's most recent report prepared by Mr Chapman actually alludes to the changes I have mentioned, and alludes to the fact that the statistics and the rate at which matters are heard in Western Australia are very good, the Minister is determined to press on with the changes. I briefly refer to the Chapman report which states at page 8 -

... 90% of all claims filed settled without the need to proceed to a formal hearing.

When 90 per cent of the disputes in a system that is designed to resolve disputes are resolved without going to formal trial, it must be seen as a successful system. I do not know how much more successful a system could get than 90 per cent of its claims being settled by conciliation. No other State in Australia comes anywhere near that rate in dealing with matters. In South Australia, for example, in 1992-93 approximately 40 000 claims were made to work cover and, of those claims, 51 per cent were resolved without going to a full trial. The maximum delay between those cases being lodged and their being heard in the conciliation process was two months. In Western Australia the rate for the same period, 1992-93, was 95.7 per cent. That is an enormous difference. In New South Wales for the same year the success rate by conciliation was 75 per cent, compared with Western Australia's 95.7 per cent. The average delay in New South Wales for

claims to be heard was three months. As I mentioned previously, the maximum delay in Western Australia is six weeks. On the basis of those figures no-one could say that the Western Australian system has inherent delays. That means the Minister had another reason for wanting to change the system so radically, and it was not because of delays in the system.

He said another reason was to get rid of conflict and to put in place a less adversarial system. It is interesting that Mr Chapman, who was asked to report on non-adversarial systems, and not to compare adversarial and non-adversarial systems and come up with the best option, said it is commendable that 90 per cent of claims are settled in the very legally oriented processes adopted by the board. He said that replacing these processes with informal processes based on conciliation without legal representation could easily result in a similar or better success rate in resolving claims by mutual agreement. This system has been set up for more than 100 years and has been refined and fine-tuned so that it is operating at the best possible level. It has the highest success rate in Australia by a long way, and representatives from other States are coming to Western Australia to look at our system to determine whether they should emulate it. In those circumstances, why does the Government want to dismantle the system, when its own report states that the best that can be hoped for in a new system is that it may result in something similar or better? If the Minister's report cannot tell him why the new system will be much better, then in my view there is no argument to support the claim that the system should be dismantled.

The first reason given by the Minister in support of his new system is that it will reduce delays; and we have shown clearly that that is not accurate. The second reason is the Minister's so-called desire to reduce conflict. There is no system in Australia that does not have an adversarial element to it. It is physically impossible to have such a system. The third reason given by the Minister is that it will reduce costs. The Workers' Compensation Board in this State costs \$1.6m per annum out of a total amount of money involved in workers' compensation claims of \$300m. How can anyone say that is a costly system? The Victorian system, to which the Minister aspires, costs \$24m, and even given that the Victorian population is at least three times that of Western Australia, that is still almost eight times more expensive than our system. My advice - and I would be interested if the Minister has any advice on this - is that the delays in the Victorian system at present are much greater than the delays in our system. People are waiting for up to six months to have their case heard by the new conciliation officers, whereas people in Western Australia can have a matter heard within six weeks without any difficulty.

Another issue which is of extreme concern is the basic rights of people who unfortunately suffer an accident at work and are injured. The new system announced by the Minister will have a conciliation process, followed by a final process before the court. The first step of the conciliation process will not involve either party being represented by legal counsel. The Minister may think that he can get a lot of mileage in the public arena by doing a fair bit of lawyer bashing. Over the last four months, we have seen a constant tirade about entrepreneurial and other lawyers and about the Law Society of Western Australia. However, at the end of the day a person who has been injured at work will have to go through a conciliation process to determine whether any damages can be recovered from an insurance company, and we can be sure that the representative of the insurance company will obtain legal advice before that conciliation process is entered into. A lawyer may not be sitting at the insurance representative's elbow, but that person will certainly have obtained legal advice. We can be sure that insurance companies will retain legal counsel to advise them. We can be sure also that representatives from insurance companies will be experienced and will probably do nothing but attend conciliation conferences and deal with these matters. They will know exactly what questions to ask and what offers to make.

However, workers who have sustained an injury at work will not have been in that situation previously and will not have anyone to advise them about how much information they should give or hold back in regard to any future action they may wish to take. Therefore, there will be an imbalanced situation where the insurance officer will

have all of the advice, experience and expertise, and the ordinary injured, blue collar, manual worker who sits across the desk from that experienced person will have no chance whatsoever to negotiate a fair outcome. That is the reason that, after all the rhetoric from the Minister, this matter really comes down to pitting individual workers against people who have more experience and expertise. I know that the Minister has a blind, naïve faith that insurers are fair and decent people. I am sure many of them are. However, the prime goal of many insurers is to reduce the number of pay-outs and to settle for the minimum amount possible. Injured workers in that conciliation process may not only lack the confidence to know what to say, but also lay all of their cards on the table, when the insurers will not reveal their position, and if those injured workers later wish to take further action because they are not happy with the outcome of that process, they may have prejudiced their case by what they have said at the earlier hearing. That is a clear example of how people's rights will be taken away.

If workers' compensation matters could be settled by conciliation, they would have been settled by conciliation. The fact is that the vast majority of workers' compensation claims are not disputed; a person sends a claim form to the insurance company, the insurance company accepts the claim, it sends back the form, and the matter is resolved. Only a small proportion of claims is disputed, and to imagine that the ones that are disputed will suddenly be magically settled across the table because the insurer and the worker are put together in one room is pie in the sky stuff and does not concern itself with the fact that people who act without advice may prejudice their future livelihood. This is a serious matter, because the outcome of a workers' compensation claim may determine an injured person's capacity to live a decent life for as long as it takes for that person to work again, if at all.

It is interesting that my advice - and I will be interested in the Minister's comments on this - is that all of the submissions to the Chapman inquiry, with one exception, recommended that the Workers' Compensation Board be retained. I am told that the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, the Insurance Council of Australia Ltd, the Law Society of Western Australia, the National Insurance Brokers Association, the Self Insurers Association, and the Trades and Labor Council of Western Australia recommended that the board be retained, yet the Minister decided to get rid of the board. How can that be called consultation? The three inquiries that the Minister had were shams. The first inquiry, which was conducted by his colleague Mr Trenorden, was a 14 day inquiry into workers' compensation. What a joke!

Mr Taylor: He did not even make the report available before he announced the decision.

Mrs HENDERSON: Yes. He did not make the report available until I mentioned in the Parliament that it had not been made public and had not been tabled, so he then rushed around to get a copy and quickly tabled it.

Mr Kierath: Everyone else had a copy.

Mrs HENDERSON: Did they? It just was not sent to members of Parliament. I guess the member thought we were the least important in the scheme of things. That report was not sent out until the day I raised the matter in the Parliament. The second report was a two week report. All of the submissions in the third report, with one exception, recommended that the Workers' Compensation Board be retained. However, the Minister had already set his agenda. He had already decided to abolish the Workers' Compensation Board. He wanted to get lawyers out of the system, despite the fact that that would disadvantage those who were the least confident, articulate and informed.

Mr Kierath: Have you read the Chapman report?

Mrs HENDERSON: I have just quoted from it. It is a pity the Minister was not listening.

Mr Kierath: Have you read it?

Mrs HENDERSON: It is obvious that I have read it because I have quoted from it. I have read every bit of it, and I notice that it states that the Minister's comment that the present system causes delays is wrong. This person was not prepared to prejudice his

good name by saying the things that the Minister wanted him to say about the current system being inadequate and slow. The Chapman report clearly revealed that over 95 per cent of all claims are settled very quickly.

Who will be most disadvantaged by these changes? Let us look at those people who are suffering the greatest number of accidents. Mostly they are blue collar workers. The most common injury is a back injury and the Minister's announcement will have the most serious effect on people who injure less than 30 per cent of their body and who will not be able to claim at common law. The Minister has said that he will make up for that by changing the second schedule. He has foreshadowed that he will change that schedule by taking into account all back injuries. The second schedule does not differentiate between the people who can no longer work because of damage to their back, who will never be able to get any other job and who may be aged 18 years compared with the people who are 60 years old when they injure their back and who might have only five more years in the work force. The lump sum schedule gives an amount according to the extent of the injury. The Minister says, "I have introduced this new benefit of \$60 000 for a back injury."

Mr W. Smith interjected.

Mrs HENDERSON: If the member wants to make a speech, he should do so.

Mr W. Smith: I am going to.

Mrs HENDERSON: The Minister's schedule gives people \$60 000 if there is a 60 per cent impairment of the back. I am advised that even one of the most serious back injuries suffered by people, where they need an operation to fuse vertebrae, does not amount to more than 20 per cent or perhaps up to 25 per cent. To get the impairment as high as 60 per cent people would need to be in a wheelchair. Let us look at a person who is a part time nursing assistant who suffers a back injury that includes a prolapsed disc in the lumbar area of the spine. That person might be grossing \$10 000 a year. As soon as she - most nursing assistants are women - becomes fit for light duties, the workers' compensation weekly payments cease and she would never be able to prove that she had economic loss of \$10 000, the new hurdle that she must get over in order to claim any kind of common law damages.

Mr Kierath: Is she earning the same amount of income?

Mrs HENDERSON: Here is someone who can get a lump sum -

Mr Kierath: How much is she earning?

Mrs HENDERSON: If I can finish my example, the Minister can speak.

Mr Kierath: How much is she earning?

Mrs HENDERSON: I have just told the Minister: \$10 000.

Mr Kierath: How much is she earning on light duties?

Mrs HENDERSON: She is earning less than that, obviously.

Mr Kierath: How much?

Mrs HENDERSON: Let us suppose that she is earning \$5 000. It would not matter. If I can finish my example, the Minister can respond. This worker was earning \$10 000 originally. She returns to light duties and might be earning only \$5 000. Unless she were able to show that for 13 years she could not work at her former occupation, it would be almost impossible for her to accumulate \$100 000 of economic loss, whereas, people who were earning \$50 000 a year would need to show only that they could not work for two years in order to get over the \$100 000 threshold.

Mr Kierath: What is the top up in workers' compensation?

Mrs HENDERSON: The Minister should just listen, and then he can respond. Under this new system the person must get over the \$100 000 threshold of economic loss to claim common law benefits.

Mr Kierath: That is only at common law. Do you know that she can top up with workers' compensation?

Mrs HENDERSON: She could not get in -

Mr Kierath: She can top up.

Mrs HENDERSON: Why does the Minister not make his speech?

Mr Kierath: She goes back on light duties and they make up the difference.

Mrs HENDERSON: The light duties affect her capacity to get damages at common law.

Mr Kierath: The member is saying that this person will be \$5 000 worse off.

Mrs HENDERSON: I am saying that if this nursing assistant goes back on light duties and if she was earning only \$10 000, that affects her capacity to claim at common law. As soon as she goes back on light duties she is no longer entitled to weekly payments.

Mr Kierath: But she can use up her prescribed amount, and top up the other \$5 000 a year.

Mrs HENDERSON: Yes. She can use her prescribed amount until she goes back to work. She can no longer get anything for her economic loss unless she can show that she would have lost 13 years of income as a result of her injury.

Mr Kierath: You do not understand.

Mrs HENDERSON: I know exactly what this is about. The difference is that the Minister has sought to introduce a system that benefits people on high incomes who can get \$100 000 worth of economic loss.

Mrs Edwardes: No, it is not.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs HENDERSON: That would be the case for the Attorney General who is shaking her head. She would have to show economic loss for only one year to enable her to get over the \$100 000 threshold. The Minister has established a threshold that is so high that a person on a low income, a manual worker, a part time worker, most of whom are women, would have to show long years of being unable to work. In most cases their doctors would not be able to make that prediction. Their doctors would want to say, "You should have this operation and then we will see how it goes." Two years after the operation those people might go back and get some other form of treatment. In any event it is highly unlikely that the doctor will be able to say at that point, "No, you will not be able to work in that occupation or any other occupation for the next 12 years." That is what these people would need to enable them to get over that \$100 000 threshold to qualify to claim some common law damages for loss of future economic earnings.

Those are the people who will be most disadvantaged and suffer most from what this Minister has done: The ordinary, low paid, part time manual workers. That is in line with other things he has done. He may think it is smart politics to go in the public arena and do a bit of lawyer bashing. However, the people who will suffer are the little people, the ordinary people, the people who injure their backs at work - local members of Parliament will be seeing those people by the dozen - the people who are on weekly payments for a year and whose insurers then put pressure on them to see the insurer's doctor. They will then get a certificate showing that they could be a lift controller, a car park attendant or in some other job of which there are very few. Their weekly payments would then be cut back. They are the people who are most disadvantaged by this legislation. The Minister has not taken the trouble to check whether the existing system is working. He has thought that to use broad generalisations about lawyers dipping in and taking too much of the money is good enough to cover the sorts of changes that he has made, which have created five different categories of injured workers.

How are those workers supposed to know their rights when they depend on, firstly, whether they lodged a writ by 4.00 pm on a particular day; secondly, whether they are 30 per cent bodily impaired; thirdly, whether they have \$25 000 of economic loss as a result

of an injury; and, fourthly, whether they have \$100 000 worth of economic loss - this is in another section. These are the things that place people into different categories. This is not a simpler, more efficient system; it is a more complicated system that will turn out, as it has in Victoria, to be plagued by delay, to cost much more than the old system and to result in severe injustices to the ordinary person. The Minister stands condemned for the way in which he has treated the workers' compensation area. It is an area of responsibility which, in my view, he should have taken seriously. He should have been prepared to conduct proper inquiries, not the 14 days stunt, not the whitewash that produced a report that was already written before the inquiry was instigated. I commend the motion to members.

MR BROWN (Morley) [7.58 pm]: The changes that have been brought to this House are effectively brought at the behest of the insurance industry and are against the best interest of the ordinary men and women of this State. There is no doubt in my mind that when one looks at the totality of the changes that are proposed by the Minister for Labour Relations, one will find that they complicate the process, create delay and, more importantly, frustrate workers in being able to bring successful workers' compensation claims. The only major group which wins out of that process is the insurance industry; it is not workers and it is not employers. It is indeed at the behest of insurers that these changes have been brought forward. It is interesting to note that they will have a profound effect on the same group of workers who will also be significantly affected as a result of the Workplace Agreements Bill recently debated in this House. Injury rates are highest among blue collar workers, particularly those in high risk industries. The rates of injuries in the mining, construction and parts of the manufacturing industries are much higher than in the white collar or professional areas. In those areas are many people from non-English speaking backgrounds and many other people who are not sufficiently articulate to be able to properly represent themselves and who require representation. One need only carry out a proper analysis of the accident statistics to see that the people on the lowest incomes, the most vulnerable, who in many instances are women and young people in the work force, will be disadvantaged by this Bill and affected the most by the changes.

As I said, essentially this Bill has been brought forward at the behest of the insurance industry. In the course of producing this Bill and in talking up the issue, considerable discussion has taken place between the Minister and the Insurance Council of Australia and insurers. The many clandestine meetings that have taken place between the Minister and insurers in plotting and bringing forward this Bill needs to be seen to be believed.

Mr Minson: That is a gross misstatement.

Mr BROWN: Let us hear the Minister contradict that.

Mr Kierath: I have not had any clandestine meetings; in fact I have met on only two occasions.

Mr BROWN: We will hear what the Minister says about this.

Mr Minson: It is wrong.

Mr BROWN: My information is that on 14 July the Minister had a discussion with Tony Carter of the Insurance Council of Australia urging the council to place a very large advertisement in the newspaper supporting the Minister's position because at that stage, he was under pressure and wanted the Insurance Council, his mates -

Mr Kierath: Who had the meetings?

Mr BROWN: My understanding is that the Minister had the discussion with Tony Carter from the Insurance Council on Wednesday, 14 July and that he wanted the advertisement placed in the paper shortly after that in order to get the Government off the hook. On 15 July, Carter presented a draft advertisement to a meeting of the Insurance Council of Australia workers' compensation insurance group. That is the little group formed to look at the changes and to massage the public in order to ensure these changes will occur. At the behest of the Minister, Carter reported to that group that it was very important to run a full page advertisement to ensure that the Minister's position was bolstered. The

Government was coming under pressure and it needed support for its position from the Insurance Council. At a meeting on 15 July, or shortly thereafter, Tony Carter presented the group with a draft advertisement, containing a statement that there were no windfall gains for insurance companies. It said, "We from the Insurance Council of Australia wish to make it clear to the public of Western Australia that there is no windfall gain in this Bill for insurers." As a consequence of that there was great hostility at that meeting because a number of the insurers - not the majority - said they were not prepared to be parties to that advertisement because it was an absolute unadulterated lie and they were not prepared to be parties to it, nor pay for it, nor to have the name of the Insurance Council of Australia attached to it. What happened as a consequence of that?

Mr Kierath interjected:

Mr BROWN: The Minister can stand and deny it. I am more than happy for him to do that.

Mr Johnson interjected:

Mr BROWN: I am not talking about individuals, but about what happened at these meetings. As a result of these discussions, the final form of the advertisement was not agreed on. When a half page advertisement appeared on 17 July, it referred to the Insurance Council of Australia, but it was not endorsed by it. Its own members would not agree to the Insurance Council of Australia putting its name to something it did not believe to be either accurate or a faithful representation of their opinion. My understanding is that the Minister's behind the scenes people includes people such as QBE Insurance Limited, which I understand is incurring heavy losses and needs the support of the Minister and the Government to ensure it negotiates its way through a difficult position. The inner clique also includes, I understand, Vick Evans from the State Government Insurance Commission, Harry Neesham from the Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission and Phil Burgess from CEE Underwriting. Those people are known for their generosity to workers, for their egalitarian values and the way in which they have been supportive of workers' claims over the years!

I also understand that, within the ranks of the Insurance Council of Australia, some of the more principled players objected in principle to the radical change in the common law arrangements. Some of the principled players, unfortunately not the majority, would not have a bar of it; they certainly did not support the retrospective effect of this legislation under any circumstances. On ethical grounds, they were not then, and are not now, prepared to be parties to any claim that the insurers would not make a windfall gain out of this Bill. From that and from the way in which the Minister was scratching around for support shortly after these changes were first mooted it was obvious that some of the more principled insurers who run reputable businesses - despite the fact that the proposal would increase their profitability and make for them windfall gains, and that they would be able to report to their peers about what a great job they were doing as a result of benefits being denied to injured workers - were not prepared on ethical grounds to support it. My support goes to those people.

In the short time available I will talk about some of the changes which are to be made to the workers' compensation legislation. Three or four weeks ago we debated the Workplace Agreements Bill. That is theoretically a Bill which brings together employers and workers in order to negotiate fair and reasonable arrangements. At the time we debated the Bill, we talked about the need for a conciliation process. We said it was appropriate because the employer and the worker cannot be left to negotiate. We said there was a need for a conciliation process or an arbitration process in particular. We were told at that stage that workers do not need any of that or that they do not need third parties in the conciliation process because it is foreign to the workplace and it encroached on the employer-employee relationship. That was the view then. The view now is a little different. This Bill proposes that conciliators be appointed. However, there be conciliators who will not only listen to the views of the employers and the employee, but also have a wide mandate to investigate anything they think is appropriate and do anything they like and bring that all to the conciliation conference. This is a Government

of consistency! It has a consistent view of the way in which things ought to be done! Four weeks ago we were told that a conciliation process was not necessary because it would intervene in the process. However, this legislation proposes that they be appointed. The conciliator will not be a conciliator in the traditional sense; that is, one who sits and listens to both sides of a story and then tries to bring the two views together. No! Conciliators under this Bill will have a much wider mandate.

The Bill proposes also that the conciliators will not be independent. They will be appointed by the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission with the approval of the Minister. The Minister will be doing a lot of work! He will be controlling the implementation of these Bills. If he does not have to bring anything back to the House, he will be very busy for the next three years. He will be deciding the minimum wage and leave entitlements, and approving conciliators and review officers. Under this Bill he will also approve the appointment of all of the medicos. Obviously, he is worried that he will be done out of a job. The McCarrey report has recommended that departments be chopped up and gotten rid of. He is worried that he will not have anything to do so he has given himself all of these roles in the Bill. What is proposed by the Government in this legislation and what has the Minister foreshadowed?

Mr Kierath: Can I offer you a redundancy package?

Mr BROWN: The Minister can offer it; he could offer anything he likes. I will tell him a story about offers. I knew an employer advocate who was of similar character to the Minister. When workers came to him to negotiate pay and entitlements and to tell him about how bad they were going, he would listen for three or four minutes. He would then put his hand in his pocket and pull out 20¢, throw it across the table to the worker and say, "You are going bad; there is 20¢ for you." On most occasions the worker was so embarrassed that he would not take it. He met his match one day when a big asbestos worker came to see him. In those days, that industry was still operating. This worker had about five kids and took everything that was put his way. When he was thrown the 20¢ across the table, he picked it up and put it in his pocket and waited for more. However, nothing else came his way. I learnt from that. If I am made an offer and there are no strings attached, I will have a good look at it.

Mr Osborne: Wait until 1997.

Mr BROWN: The member for Bunbury might have trouble down there if his problems with the hospital are not resolved.

Dr Hames: Don't forget the boundary changes to be made down there.

Mr BROWN: Why? Is the Government going to rig the boundaries?

Mr Blaikie: What would you know about that?

Mr BROWN: I would know nothing about that coming from a pure organisation.

This Bill proposes conciliation officers. If the Bill and the Chapman report are compared - they do not coincide - they both propose conciliation officers. Conciliators are not new to Australia. Conciliators have been involved in the industrial relations area and in various other courts for many years. However, the interesting part about those conciliators is that they are attached to an organisation or a court as distinct from the administration; that is, they are not attached to the bureaucracy because of the need to separate the administration and the arbitrary or judicial function. Therefore, it is very important that the administrative arm is separate from the conciliation arm. However, this legislation does not propose that that be done. The Bill proposes a separate division and director, but they will be part of the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission administering the scheme.

Mr Kierath: What about the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission at the moment? What is that part of?

Mr BROWN: It is tied administratively, but it operates totally separately.

Mr Kierath: The same here.

Mr BROWN: It does not say that at all. In any event the appointment and the promotional process in the legislation are quite distinct from the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission because the Minister appoints the judges and members for a period and they are subject to reappointment. These people are employees approved by the Minister.

Mr Kierath: They are employees of the director.

Mr BROWN: Approved by the Minister.

Mr Kierath: No.

Mr BROWN: Yes. That is what the Bill says.

Mr Kierath: I will show you that it does not.

Mr BROWN: I will show the Minister that it does. I read the provision because I wanted to see whether it complied with that which Chapman recommended and it does not. The Minister opted for a different view in his Bill to that which Chapman recommended. He recommended that they be direct ministerial appointments. The Bill says that they will not be direct ministerial appointments - that they will be appointed by the commission and approved by the Minister. One could question, therefore, their independence and impartiality, not because the people who will be appointed will be corrupt or anything else; they might be people of the highest principles. However, if they work in the administrative structure, albeit once removed but nevertheless part of it, they will be subjected to the normal pressures that occur in any organisation. That is very serious.

Mr Kierath: Do you think the Public Service is independent and impartial?

Mr BROWN: The Public Service's role is to serve the Government of the day.

Mr Kierath: Do you think the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission is independent and impartial?

Mr BROWN: In theory it is. I have been a member of that commission. One should ask about the meetings that take place before the meetings and about the balance. One might learn something then. I know that some excellent people work in the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission; I have dealt with them. However, I am concerned about the role to be played by conciliation officers because they will be making very significant decisions. They may not seem significant, but an injured worker, a person who has been off work with the claim not being immediately accepted by the insurer, can under this Bill wait for 14 days. Three days after the accident the injured worker puts in his claim; he then waits 14 days. He can wait another 10 days before going before a conciliation officer. It is possible for that injured worker to wait for over a month. That might be fine for somebody who has a reasonably discretionary income, but for a person who has no discretionary income, a worker who lives from week to week and does not have any sick leave entitlements -

Dr Hames: How long do they wait now?

Mr BROWN: They wait that time now.

Mr Kierath: They will not have to wait longer.

Mr BROWN: I am worried because currently if there is a dispute the worker can go through the Workers' Compensation Board; he can go through a conciliation process. That board has greater areas of discretion than it is proposed that the conciliation officers have. It appears that the conciliation officers will have only a fairly low level job; they will not be the final arbiters.

Mr Kierath: They are only trying to conciliate. If neither of the parties likes that, they can go elsewhere.

Mr BROWN: I understand that. The difficulty I see in terms of the conciliators' role is one of independence. If they do not have that independence, their capacity to look at the case through truly independent eyes is compromised. If there is no agreement at that level, it can go to the next stage, the review officer stage. But that involves further delay

and that delay is crucial for a low income worker, a person who survives from week to week. My concern with that issue is about independence and autonomy.

Time will not permit me to go through all my other concerns, but I will talk of some of them very briefly. The next stage in the process involves a review officer. The Chapman report said the review officer will have a critical role, because he will make a determination whether payments will be made. In his report, Chapman said that if either side wanted to be represented by an advocate or by a legal practitioner it had the right to be so represented because the review officer stage is a crucial area of determination. The Bill does not pick up the Chapman report. The Bill says the injured worker is not entitled to legal representation unless, first, the parties agree or, second, the review officer considers it appropriate. The review officer can consider it appropriate only if he considers that matters of law are to be determined.

If the issue of where injuries occur and the profile of injuries is considered, one sees that the workers who are most susceptible to injuries work in those industries where there is a high incidence of injury, and cannot be represented before a review officer; that is a clear denial of justice. It is not only the simple question of coming together at that stage and trying to conciliate or negotiate even in the most informal setting. Even in such a setting, the injured worker would have difficulty in understanding the position being argued and arguing his position when specialists have reported on the nature of the injury, particularly if the injury is compounded by the worker having a previous injury or disease, where the injury is a recurrent one or has been aggravated. One needs to be able to comprehend the relationship between the injuries and how the last injury incurred at the workplace has affected a worker's total capacity and so on. How one can expect working people, particularly those from industries that are most at risk, to be able to argue coherently those issues, I simply do not know.

We are also told that the proposed system will be a speedier one. In this speedier system, the worker goes to a conciliation officer and has a few meetings. If he does not reach agreement with the conciliation officer, he goes to a review officer. The review officer says, "This is rather difficult. I do not quite understand this, because it involves some questions of law, so I will send this up to the compensation magistrate, who can determine the question of law for me." So he sends it off to the compensation magistrate, who determines the question of law. After that has been done, he sends it back and the review officer says, "I have a few problems understanding the medical problem. I am not quite sure of that, so I will send it off to a medical panel." It is said that this is a coherent and comprehensive system, but there are four processes, four tribunals, to be dealt with to solve one claim, even before we get into the appeal process. If we do not like the decision, there is no appeal against the medical board, but there is an appeal against a compensation magistrate. On a question of law, we can take that on. Yet this is said to be a coherent system! I just cannot understand it.

Finally, we come to the issue of medical panels. The Chapman report recommends that medical panels be established by consultation with the commission and the Australian Medical Association and one of the specialist organisations. The Bill makes no such provision. The Minister will approve all the medicos, not those groups. The Minister will do all of that. What does that mean? First, we will have this new director. He or she will form the medical panels. I understand that the member for Dianella will speak in this debate. He knows that there are quite profound differences between rheumatologists on the one hand and orthopaedic specialists on the other. If I am the director and understand a little about the profession, I can appoint any board I like. The member for Kenwick, for example, may be appointed as a rheumatologist and the member for Thornlie may be appointed as an orthopaedic surgeon. From each I will get a different answer. What sort of a system is that? What sort of coherent system is that? We cannot get any more incoherence than that.

The other thing to be noted is that these people call themselves specialists. They think themselves special in that they know more than anybody else in their areas, but they disagree with each other anyway. One of them actually said to a colleague of mine who is a lawyer, "Did you notice where my office is? What do you notice about the building?"

The building I am in has no lifts so the workers who come into the building have to walk up two flights of stairs to get to my office." The specialist would then make a decision about whether they were fit to work. We have been told that the Bill has been designed in the workers' interests, but this is an insurers' Bill.

DR HAMES (Dianella) [8.30 pm]: It amazes me to hear members opposite raising all these arguments against the new system and trying to make the old system sound as though it was the most wonderful system ever invented. I do not know what direct experience the member for Thornlie has with workers' compensation other than what she has been told, but I am surprised to hear members such as the member for Morley carry on as though the previous system was wonderful. It was anything but wonderful. One of the main reasons I wanted to get into Parliament, and one of the main changes that I wanted to see made, was the workers' compensation system. That was not from a politician's point of view but from the viewpoint of a general practitioner involved on a day to day basis with patients who had so many problems with the existing system that I went to the extent of joining a group called the injured persons' action group. It was a fairly radical group, but nevertheless it was formed because of the severe difficulties people were having with the workers' compensation system.

An Opposition member: Are you still a member?

Dr HAMES: Yes, I am. I do not want to discuss that group's views because some are quite radical. Nevertheless the group was formed because of the severe problems with the system. I want to deal with some of the details and members opposite cannot say I am looking at this from a politician's point of view. They must admit that I see this from exactly the same point of view as the member for Morley - on behalf of injured workers, because they were the ones who were coming to my surgery with injuries, and whom I was helping to deal with workers' compensation issues.

I will go through some of the problems that I found with the old system and remind members opposite who have forgotten, what a terrible system it was in parts - not the whole system. One patient, whom I will call John, injured his back at work. He was covered by one insurer. He recovered from his injury but later injured his back again and suffered a severe prolapse of a disc in his lower back. He was unable to work and required surgery. For two years the insurance companies fought each other over who was responsible.

Mr Brown: Will this Bill fix that?

Dr HAMES: It does; I will come to that.

The man ended up becoming addicted to narcotics because of the severe pain he was suffering. He is still on a methadone program. In the end his father paid for his operation out of a superannuation payout because the insurers were still fighting over who was responsible.

Another patient, Mrs A, injured her ankle at work and the specialists initially argued over whether it was a genuine injury. She was sent by the insurance company to an insurance doctor and, in a move which I must admit surprised me because I do not have a great deal of time for insurance doctors, he diagnosed what was wrong with her. He said she would continue to have pain. She was still working at that stage but the work regularly aggravated the pain. She was doing outside work at a golf course and had to take days off work regularly because of the pain. Again the situation arose where there were two insurers - an insurer from when she first had the injury and a subsequent insurer. Every time I wrote on the blue workers' compensation certificate - which for those members who do not know is called the progress certificate - that she had aggravated the pain, the first insurance company would immediately stop her payment and write to me asking what was the new injury aggravating her ankle.

Dr Watson: This will make it worse.

Dr HAMES: It will not make it worse. If members opposite listen, they will find out why these changes will not make the system worse.

Other problems we had were with employers who refused to put in a workers' compensation claim because they did not believe the worker had really injured himself at work. Insurance companies said that the injury was not caused through a work related injury, and refused to pay. To fight that system, an injured worker had to find a lawyer and pay legal costs and go through the long procedure of trying to prove that it was a work-related injury. Another problem was the insurance doctors. I know a few insurance doctors for whom I have absolutely no time whatever. They see only insurance patients, and invariably when a patient is sent to an insurance doctor the doctor writes a report saying either that the person has recovered sufficiently from the injury to be able to work or - the member for Morley made this point earlier - the person is fit for a job which does not exist. That was invariably the case with these insurance doctors. Alternatively they said the injury had been caused by a pre-existing arthritic complaint and had nothing to do with the work injury.

The next point I want to raise is the difficulties caused by the prolonged wait to settle a case. I cannot believe members, such as the member for Thornlie, can say that it is a quick and efficient system and that a worker can get to court within six weeks, and that is it. The member for Thornlie obviously has no experience whatever with the current system, because it is just not like that. When she talks about the big percentages of workers whose cases are settled quickly, she must remember that the big percentage of workers who return to work quickly do not have any problems. Their cases are settled because there is no dispute. The problems arise when there is a dispute; then it is not settled quickly. The person has to go and see a lawyer and once a lawyer applies to go to the court - the member is right - there is a quick settlement of the case under the present system now that it has been speeded up. However, a lawyer may not apply to go to court for anywhere up to three years.

The system is just dragged out with dispute after dispute and arguments between insurers and lawyers. I spend half my time in the evening writing letters in support of patients who have been injured. I write to their lawyers to represent their cases where there is a dispute. They do not go to court quickly; if they did I would spend a quarter of the time that I do writing medical reports for patients that have been injured. I cannot think of one patient whose case has been settled within six months of seeing a lawyer. It just does not happen.

Having discussed the need for change and the problems with the previous system, I want to comment on the reasons for the 30 per cent cut-off and why that is an essential part of this legislation. I must say I did not come to this Parliament thinking there was a need for a 30 per cent cut-off because I had no knowledge whatever of the financial circumstances which led to that. I must say also that I was not very happy when I first heard about it. I would like to read to the House some extracts from speeches in Parliaments in South Australia and New South Wales. I point out also that in both cases Labor Governments were in control in those States and the legislation that was introduced removed the common law provisions from workers' compensation Acts. I refer first to a speech by Hon C.J. Sumner, the Attorney General of South Australia, in Parliament on 25 February 1986, in which he states -

Whenever the subject of workers compensation is discussed there is one thing that has the agreement of all parties and that is the need for reform. Over the four years between 1980 and 1984 workers compensation premiums in Australia increased by approximately 160 per cent.

Further on he states -

There are of course other pressing reasons both social and economic for undertaking these much needed reforms. Victoria has recently introduced its 'Workcare' scheme that has reduced premiums in that State by \$600 million per annum. The new Victorian accident compensation commission has estimated that the reforms have cut the premiums in Victoria to over 50 per cent. If we do not take similar action in this State our competitive position will be severely eroded.

It also proposes a major revision of the benefits paid to injured workers.

Members opposite should listen closely because this could be our own Minister introducing a Bill. It continues -

It seeks to overcome the current inequitable system where inadequate compensation depends on a worker having to prove negligence under the common law. The prime emphasis is to compensate injured workers according to their needs and not on a basis of having to prove fault.

This is a Labor Attorney General introducing his workers' compensation Bill. It continues -

In its review of this matter the Government recognised early in the piece that there were basically only two major parties involved - the employers who were paying escalating premiums and incurring the losses, and the workers who were being injured and receiving inadequate compensation.

Mr Graham: What about the mining industry?

Dr HAMES: The member should listen. His Labor Party mates in South Australia have virtually abolished common law in that State. The comments continue -

It is believed that the combination of all these measures, together with the much reduced role of the court system and the common law will assist in the early return to work of injured workers.

The Government recognises that a balance be struck between the legitimate rights of workers to fair levels of compensation and the economic ability of industry to pay the cost of that compensation.

That was a South Australian Labor Government, the Bannon Government, introducing the removal of common law under its workers' compensation Act.

I move now to the New South Wales Parliament on 13 May 1987. This was the Unsworth Government and the Minister responsible for the legislation was the Minister for Industrial Relations and Employment, Mr Hills, the member for Elizabeth. These comments go to the heart of that system -

Major reform of the present system was made imperative because of its failure to provide fair and equitable benefits to injured workers at a cost the community could sustain. In brief, the system as we know it now is virtually out of control. This lack of control has resulted in the escalation of legal and medical costs, and in the prolonged duration of claims.

The system in New South Wales was the same as ours until recently. It continues -

It has developed because of increasing diversion of resources, both human and financial, to the litigious nature of dispute settlement rather than to rehabilitation and meeting the ongoing needs of genuinely incapacitated workers.

If there is an overwhelming theme in discussions about accident compensation systems, it is that common law fails to meet the needs of the seriously injured and diverts scarce resources from those requiring care to vested interests. The system of redemptions and common law encourages an overuse of the medical and legal professions, resulting in unnecessarily high service costs.

The last extract from the Unsworth Government's Bill is -

As a result of those discussions, and detailed examinations of various reform options, a benefit structure has been developed that ensures equity and fairness, while correcting abuses, excesses and inequities apparent in the present system. This could only be made possible through the abolition of the right to apply common law and redemptions provisions.

Members will recall that there was a complete abolition of the rights of workers to sue under common law. It continues -

I have already described the adverse effects on the system arising out of common law and an increasing use of redemptions. On this important point the actuaries have said:

It should be noted that a system which retains elements of common law and redemptions has little potential for controlling costs unless it is accompanied by a major reduction in benefit levels to workers generally.

The Government would not and could not accept a position where benefit levels to those genuinely in need would be reduced, by eliminating common law and redemptions, the Government not only has removed a major disincentive to rehabilitation but also has enabled an increase in benefits under the table of maims.

Does that not tell members exactly what our Bill is to do? Yet under the Labor Governments of those two States the common law provisions were removed. It was a Liberal Party Government in New South Wales, at a later stage, which reintroduced the ability for workers to go to common law -

Mr Kierath: Members opposite choose to forget that, because at all forums they alienated common law totally. It happened in South Australia and in New South Wales. Members opposite should be ashamed of themselves.

Dr HAMES: I thank the Minister for his excellent interjection. Earlier, when the Minister referred to the issue of reform to workers' compensation bringing in 30 per cent impairment level under the American Medical Association schedule, I had concerns. So, with another Government member I went to Sydney to speak to people about workers' compensation changes in that State, and how they were working. We met with the Australian Medical Association, a leading orthopaedic surgeon, and people at WorkCover, to discuss the success of the conciliators in New South Wales. The success rate was up to 40 or 50 per cent of disputes settled at the first meeting. We had meetings also with the Law Society in New South Wales and with a senior representative of a major legal firm there. He pointed out that when the legislation was first introduced in New South Wales in 1987 there was an absolute uproar in the legal profession. His firm was among the firms that kicked up the most fuss. He said that now the situation has settled down there was no opposition by lawyers. They realise it is a better system and that workers are better off than they were under the previous system.

Having decided that the dispute resolution had serious flaws, and there was a requirement of 30 per cent impairment, still I was not happy with the American Medical Association text and the restrictions it applied to the access to common law. Although I was made aware that was the system in both Victoria and New South Wales, still I was not happy. The amputation of a leg below the mid-shin in the American schedule is listed at only 28 per cent, so those people with that impairment would not be able to go to common law. I did not think that was fair. I thought it was unfair also that no account was taken of potential loss of income. For instance, the concert pianist issue was raised before. If I were to lose a finger, I am sure I could carry on speaking in Parliament and this would not affect my income - perhaps it would be the case if I lost my middle finger, as the member for Pilbara indicates, which would be a sad loss! However, a concert pianist would lose the ability to earn his or her income.

The American schedule indicates that all lower back injuries are deliberately kept at less than 30 per cent impairment. The range is from five to 20 per cent.

Mr Riebeling: They are nasty over there.

Dr HAMES: I agree. It is not reasonable. I know that as a doctor a large percentage of my patients have significant lower back injuries, and it is only reasonable that they should be able to have access to common law.

Under the American schedule the loss of one eye represents only a 25 per cent impairment. A significant injury from which a person recovers completely, such as the loss of a spleen in an accident, would not allow access to common law under the American schedule. It must be remembered that the American schedule deals only with impairment and takes no account of disability. We want to take more cognisance of the different degrees of impairment which can result in significantly different degrees of disability. If someone has an injury which requires the removal of a spleen or has a

gunshot wound in the abdomen, from which the person can completely recover and will not be impaired from working, under the American schedule that person would not have access to common law. Again, this is not reasonable.

Mrs Henderson: You should address the matters to the Minister.

Dr HAMES: These issues have been addressed. If the member for Thornlie bothered to study the second schedule and the announcement, she would see that they have been addressed. If the member pauses for a moment, I shall refer to the matters which have been addressed.

Under the American schedule severe facial scarring is regarded as an impairment of less than 30 per cent, and the 85 per cent loss of the ability to speak is only regarded as 30 per cent impairment. The complete loss of anal control by which people could mess themselves at any time are regarded as being 20 to 25 per cent impaired under the American system. Older members of Parliament, like me, will be interested that with a complete loss of sexual capacity, if the person is under 40 years of age it is regarded as a 30 per cent impairment; if the person is over 40, it is only 20 per cent! Therefore, having determined the nature of the problem, let us go through, for the sake of the member for Thornlie, what has been done. As stated before, a better dispute resolution procedure will be introduced; I will not go into the detail of that at this stage as I will do that during a later sitting.

The new schedule refers to back injuries being 60 per cent impairment, necks 40 per cent and a pelvic injury 60 per cent. Contrary to the member for Thornlie's comments, and referring particularly to the person to whom she referred, it includes people with significant back injuries. The second schedule shows that the injury has a maximum impairment of 45 per cent, not the proposed 60 per cent. Someone with a typical lower back injury who is unable to work with fusion on one or more levels, and disc lesion at another level - stiffness and sciatica is a typical severe back injury - would be regarded under the second schedule as having 35 per cent impairment and would have access to common law. The schedule goes to a maximum of 45 per cent and the amended proposal is for 60 per cent impairment. That debunks the member for Thornlie's comment.

The amendments include the introduction of a provision which allows access to common law for the loss of income of \$100 000. The concert pianist would have no difficulty in proving greater than \$100 000 income loss. The average labourer, typically the sufferer of back injuries, in many cases can never work again. If that person is unable to work for two or three years, the lost income will easily reach \$100 000. If a brickies labourer does not come into the 30 per cent impairment category, he will have access through the over-\$100 000 lost income category.

Mrs Henderson: He won't.

Dr HAMES: Even if he does not come into that category, he will still have the rapid dispute resolution procedure and access to workers' compensation payments which are far higher in Western Australia than those in other States. The member for Thornlie should take out the figures and compare those for this State with what is paid in other States. If a worker does not come into the \$100 000 lost income mark, he would be fit enough to go back to work. If this person does not have a severe back injury as listed in the schedule, he can return to work and earn an income and claim the difference in lost potential income under the workers' compensation system.

Mrs Henderson: What are the chances of getting a job as a car park attendant?

Dr HAMES: The member referred to that situation. At the next opportunity I will go through each of the cases to which the member referred one by one, and I will tell her what will happen in each case under the new system. Also, we will adopt the second schedule rather than the American schedule. The second schedule takes into account disabilities, not just impairment. That is a major difference. For example, the loss of one foot under the American system is regarded as 28 per cent impairment, but the figure is 60 per cent under the second schedule. The loss of one eye increases from 25 per cent impairment to 50 per cent. The loss of power of speech rises to 75 per cent impairment.

Mrs Henderson: But they do not get access to common law.

Dr HAMES: I vaguely remember in the past, when trying to interject on the member for Thornlie, her telling me in polite terms to keep quiet; perhaps she could take her own advice.

Severe facial scarring will increase under the second schedule to 80 per cent impairment. The nearest reference I could find to loss of sexual function was the loss of genitalia; this is regarded as 50 per cent impairment under the second schedule. That still does not cover many other areas, and a gap exists between the depth of the American Medical Association report and the second schedule. The Australian Medical Association is examining the American fourth edition model and trying to relate disabilities to the second schedule rather than just impairments.

I came into this system with no basis of supporting or otherwise the 30 per cent limit. I have now satisfied myself that the financial imperatives of bringing in this program are undeniable. Labor Governments in other States recognise that and have done the same thing, only in a more severe fashion. For members opposite to speak in such contradictory terms to what Labor Governments have done in other States does not say much for their integrity. In New South Wales the lawyers kicked up a stink and the unions did not raise a fuss. That was because the Labor Party introduced the reforms in that State, not the Liberal Party. The fuss in Western Australia is that the Labor Party wants to go against the Liberal reform. If members on that side of the House, like the member for Maylands, who has as much experience as I, and the members for Morley and Pilbara, stopped criticising for the sake of criticism and looked at the provisions of the Bill in a rational fashion, they would realise this is a good system that will work.

MR GRILL (Eyre) [9.00 pm]: I support the motion before the House so ably moved by the member for Thornlie. It gives us some opportunity to comment on the absolutely extraordinary performance of the Minister for Labour Relations in respect of the changes that he intends to bring about to the workers' compensation laws of this State. Any fair minded commentator would have to conclude that the performance of this Minister has been epitomised at almost every turn by amateurism and unprofessionalism in the way he has performed with this piece of legislation. No-one should be under any illusion that anyone on this side of the House is against some reform of the system. As the Minister said, the reform process was put in place by members on this side of the House when they were in Government. We are not opposed to reform and we would concede that certain aspects of the workers' compensation legislation deserve some reform, but not the sort of ad hoc -

Mr Kierath: Will you accept any of the stuff we put forward? Will you praise us?

Mr GRILL: Yes, but not for the Minister's overall effort or the way he has gone about it. Not only is the Minister's effort epitomised by amateurism and, unfortunately, by certain cowboy attitudes, but also these proposed changes have been accompanied by broken promises and volte-face by this Minister. That has occasioned within our community and among injured members of our community considerable trauma, and a widespread worry and concern about their future.

Mr Kierath: Mostly because of the misinformation your side has peddled.

Mr GRILL: That is not the case. A number of good Liberal supporters have come into my office - blue bloods to the backbone - for instance, a mother concerned about her son injured in the mining industry.

Mr Tubby: Liberals going into your office!

Mr GRILL: She did not walk out of my office a Liberal; she was already half convinced by the time she came in. People have been traumatised by these proposed changes.

Mr Omodei: You mean because of your misinformation?

Mr GRILL: It is easy for the Minister for Water Resources to say that, but I do not think even he believes that. The Minister may be able to tell me if they are wrong, but reports in the Press indicate that a number of his members are concerned with the seemingly

arbitrary nature of many of these changes and the way in which the Minister has endeavoured to implement them by scant press releases introducing changes to this very sensitive area of the law retrospectively. Over the past couple of months we have seen a process of throwing into confusion the law in relation to workers' compensation and the attendant right to common law damages. This confusion has prevented lawyers and others from advising injured workers and relatives of injured workers about their rights. The law of this country should never be in that situation, but it is and it has been for some weeks because of the amateurish way in which changes to this legislation have been handled. The Government has been ham-fisted to say the very least, and that is being kind. In many respects the processes have been absolutely detrimental to injured workers and have embarrassed, I am sure, a number of people of good intent on the Government benches; people who want to be able to say that they have improved the lot of the average working person in this State. I do not think anyone on that side of the fence who looks at this legislation in totality can say that overall it is an improvement.

Mr Kierath: Of course it is.

Mr GRILL: The Opposition will concede that some aspects are an improvement, but taken overall they are a giant step backwards. Not many people in the Government ranks are very proud of what has happened over the past few months. They might put on some bravado and laugh.

Mr Bloffwitch: You started off okay.

Mr GRILL: We cannot always be praising people on the other side.

Mr Pendal: We like it better when you hate us; it is when you love us that we worry.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You looked chic in your garden.

Mr GRILL: Mr Barnett is a bit over sensitive, a bit red in the face. I do not believe that members on the other side want to be branded as uncaring and brutal, but that is the way they are being branded. In terms of pure politics they have made a gift to us. It is not a gift we will reject. The way in which these so-called reforms have been handled to date will come back to visit the Government at election time and we will make use of it because they have branded themselves uncaring and brutal to the work force of this State. The Minister has also put a stamp on himself in the way he consulted people on this legislation. This Minister has proved that he has very little ability in effective consultation with a large section of our population. He immediately placed himself offside.

Mr Kierath: The TLC and the Workers Compensation Board unanimously endorsed dispute resolution.

Mrs Henderson: How can you sleep in bed at night after telling such untruths?

Mr GRILL: The Minister has a great capacity for self-delusion. It might sound a bit unkind, but he has also shown a propensity for being downright dishonest in the way he has presented his arguments. He has distorted some fundamental facts of this matter.

Mr Kierath: Tony Cooke agreed publicly with three things: The dispute resolution system, the increase in the prescribed amount and the use of second schedule. He had the decency to congratulate the Government in those three areas.

Mr GRILL: The initial picture the Minister painted was so dark in that first very brief press release, and the ancillary statements accompanying it, that anything would be an improvement on that, but it is certainly nothing about which the Minister should feel very happy or proud, nor is it something for which the Minister deserves any congratulations. There have been some improvements and the Minister has had to change his attitude on a range of matters, but in the process the Minister has been prepared to mount cowardly attacks on people within our community whom he thinks he can make scapegoats for this legislation. Two groups of people in our society are easy targets. Paramount among those groups is probably politicians. We are easy targets. We are like bugs walking along the pavement. If anyone wants to squash us they can squash us, and a lot of cowards within our community take that advantage. The Minister has not done that.

The Minister picked out the next easiest target group, that of lawyers, and tried to make them the scapegoat for this draconian and radical legislation he wants to bring down. I say that it was done largely in ignorance. I do not think he understood the ramifications this would have. That is why he has had to ameliorate it and change his mind. That is why his rhetoric has changed, and why he has some fairly unsophisticated members on the backbench lined up to offer some sort of praise for him. The faces of his colleagues behind him show they are not particularly happy with him. They do not think he has done a very good job. He has embarrassed them very badly indeed, and it is good to see they have forced some changes on him. He cowardly attacked that first group, the lawyers, who are easy targets, and the things he said about them were untrue. The percentage of claims that they were taking was misrepresented. The Minister talked at times of 40 per cent, but his own figures, which I will go through in a minute, prove that the actual figures and the ones the lawyers continually put forward indicate that their take is between five per cent and seven per cent. The Minister's figures indicate six per cent.

Mr Kierath: No, they don't.

Mr GRILL: The Minister will have a chance to argue it in a minute because I will go through it with him.

Mr Kierath: Between 60 per cent and 50 per cent, and the average across the board is 33 per cent of the damages at common law going to lawyers. That is the real problem.

Mr GRILL: We will get onto that in a minute. The group I think he was particularly cowardly in attacking was the double dippers. The picture he tried to paint was that ordinary working class men and women injured at work, who took advantage of their common law rights, were somehow double dipping.

Mr Kierath: I never said they were double dipping; I said the lawyers were.

Mr GRILL: Then in one statement after another the Minister proclaimed the fact they were double dipping.

Mr Kierath: I said the lawyers were.

Mr GRILL: He was dishonest and he continues to be dishonest.

Mr Kierath: The Law Society of Western Australia said that I accused them of double dipping. How come they get it right and you get it wrong? Even the Law Society asked why I accused lawyers of double dipping, and I explained the situation to them, as I will later on, that basically they used the workers' compensation schedule of fees to do all the ground work before they went out into the common law system.

Mr GRILL: If I am wrong in that respect, I will apologise to the Minister. However, the clear impression that came across to me and to most of the populace was that he was accusing workers of double dipping.

Let us look at the fundamental nature of the legislation this House will be asked to amend in the fairly near future. Workers' compensation benefits, on the one hand, have not been around for all that long. They were initially a feature that came out of New Zealand, but common law damages claims, on the other hand, have been in place for a long, long time indeed. Workers' compensation insurance is a form of no-fault insurance, and that fact has been lost sight of in this debate and by the Minister himself on a number of occasions. The Minister has actually had people documenting some of the statements he has made in that regard, and the Law Society has put together a fairly comprehensive statement on these matters and these proposed changes to the law. Pages 2 to 6 of this document detail the misstatements the Minister has been making over a period and detail where he has obfuscated the fact that workers' compensation insurance is no-fault insurance. He has done this with travel claims, and tried to give the impression in the media that somehow travel claims have something to do with fault. Although they are covered by workers' compensation insurance they have nothing to do with fault. I do not want to read out the sections but it is here in pages 2 to 6, and I will table the document in due course. The Minister, possibly unintentionally but I believe deliberately, obfuscated that fact for his own purposes when it suited him.

In this legislation the essential safety net, which has always underpinned our society and grown in stature over the years, is being taken away from us. That essential underpinning is being diluted, and that safety net will have gaping holes in it through which some unlucky workers will fall. When they fall they will become part of a subclass or substrata within our society. Most of us have subscribed to the view that we belong to an egalitarian society in Australia; not a class-ridden society like one we might find in the United Kingdom, parts of Europe or parts of Asia.

Mr Bloffwitch: Where do you fit into it?

Mr GRILL: I would like to believe I am part of that one homogeneous group, but that particular ideal is one that is fast slipping away because of the lack of concern that people like the Minister for Labour Relations show towards ordinary working class citizens of Western Australia.

The member for Geraldton and others might believe that, in heading towards a much more efficient society, it is quite okay to do away with the jobs of some people and let them fall into that substrata which will miss out on workers' compensation rights and common law damages rights. If members opposite believe it is okay to have that sort of substrata in our society, we will see how it comes back to bite them in due course. The social ramifications of having such a substrata are horrendous and will lead this country down the path to ruin. People on this side of the House do not believe the workers' compensation system or the ancillary common law damages rights that attend it are perfect, but we do not believe that this Government has grounds for making it less perfect. However, that is the direction in which we are heading.

The holes that I talked about in the safety net are the following: There will be a gaping hole with travel claims, which will be substantially abolished as a result of this proposed legislation. The Minister has endeavoured to give the impression in the media that somehow the abolishment of travel claims under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act will be picked up under common law; that people will be able to make third party vehicle claims, and those particular claims will compensate for the fact that travel claims will be abolished under the workers' compensation Act. That is not the case. It is misleading to say that, because complementary legislation will put in place a threshold for third party damages claims which will ensure, at least for loss of amenity, loss of enjoyment of life and other claims, apart from economic loss, that we will not have a claim for anything under \$15 000.

I suppose many things could be said about the ad hoc way in which this Minister and this Government have gone about endeavouring to amend the workers' compensation laws of this State. I do not think very much praise can be heaped on the Minister for his actions to date. To some extent he has tried to ameliorate the situation. However, the steps he has taken towards amelioration have been ad hoc and although, if the Bill is passed, they may improve the situation to some extent, they will cripple what is a pretty good system in this State.

Some members have tried to compare the situation prevailing in this State with those in other States. The situation is not the same. The situation in Western Australia is unique to this State and the situation in New South Wales is unique in that State. The same can be said about all the States. We have a good workers' compensation system operating in this State which can be improved, and the Opposition believes in improving it. The legislation introduced by the Government is not the way to do that.

DR TURNBULL (Collie) [9.21 pm]: I oppose this motion and support the changes to the workers' compensation system which are proposed in the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Amendment Bill.

The member for Dianella spent 30 minutes giving a very factual and clear account of certain aspects of the Bill which has been presented to this House. I will confine my remarks to the proposed increase in prescribed payments for loss of earnings from \$88 232 to \$100 000 and the ability for an injured worker who is totally and permanently disabled to apply for an extra \$50 000. At the moment injured workers can apply for an

additional \$50 000 if they have become totally and permanently disabled, but a section of the principal Act states that they cannot have any assets and that includes their home. The changes will remove this impediment.

Workers' compensation is a very important part of this State's industrial system and it is a vital component of the smooth running of industry. Most employers make a genuine effort to ensure that they provide a safe workplace and they comply with the duty of care provision of the Act to ensure that the workplace will not create any hazard for their employees. Despite this and the genuine effort taken by both the employers and the workers injuries occur every day in workplaces. As a doctor in Collie for more than 25 years I had patients suffering from workplace injuries coming to me constantly. I agree entirely with the member for Dianella that medical practitioners have a great deal of difficulty in coping on behalf of their patients with the existing workers' compensation system.

The accidents which occur in the workplace are not necessarily caused through negligence. The existing workers' compensation system provides the opportunity for someone to be blamed for negligence. Approximately 78 000 accidents resulted in workers' compensation claims last year and in the majority of cases it could not be determined whether the employer had been negligent. Approximately 75 000 of those cases were covered by workers' compensation insurance without resorting to common law. Many of them were covered for a totally by no fault being accepted by the company.

The member for Eyre was correct when he said that workers' compensation should be a no fault situation. The proposed changes to the legislation will take us closer to that aim. Unfortunately, under the current system, if a worker becomes a drain on the workers' compensation insurance system and the case goes on for more than four weeks there is a pressure to try to prove negligence. In many cases injured workers cannot prove negligence and this puts an enormous amount of stress on them. There are many reasons why negligence cannot be proved. For example, the company's workplace may be a diverse one and the protocols to which employees must adhere are not clearly defined. There are many grey areas.

I can recall many cases where my patients have had to receive the statutory prescribed payment because they could not consider suing their employer. A Silver Chain nurse who had worked for many years in Collie seriously injured her back about three years ago, but she could not claim negligence. Therefore, she is receiving a statutory prescribed payment. To date she has had three major operations and the statutory prescribed payments relating to loss of earnings are running out. She is very pleased that the legislation is retrospective and that her case will come under the new increased total payment of \$100 000. I could mention two or three other cases in which people have been seriously injured and are running out of their statutory prescribed payments and, as the member for Eyre said, they are left to become what is known as underprivileged people. The member for Eyre said that these people who are never able to work again will find that their economic circumstances are not as good as they should be. That is not something new. The existing system has affected thousands of people in that way. The provisions of the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Amendment Bill will, in a small way, alleviate the situation for those workers who have become disabled. Unfortunately, as already happens, some of them will have to take a job with less pay than they received previously and others will have to move out of the work force.

The Opposition members have adopted a very unfortunate attitude to this Bill. They have whipped up fear everywhere. They and union representatives have gone to all the workplaces and spread exaggerated stories about what will happen. The comments by the spokesperson for the Opposition indicate that she has not bothered to fully understand the consequences of this Bill and how the majority of workers will be advantaged by it. It must be recognised that those who are off work for less than four weeks - which is 87 per cent of all cases - will be better off under this legislation. Workers who cannot prove negligence will be in an improved situation. People assessed under the second schedule for disability and incapacity will be in a better position. The Opposition has

introduced a motion which only adds to the fear and despair it is trying to engender among the general work force. Unfortunately, the media feeds on controversy and fear of the unknown. The Opposition's attitude is only adding to the disturbance and disquiet many people in the work force are experiencing. I sincerely hope that by the time the vast majority of people in Western Australia are properly informed and understand the truth about this legislation, people injured in the workplace will recognise that this Bill will be to their advantage.

MR KIERATH (Riverton - Minister for Labour Relations) [9.33 pm]: I thank members for their comments. I must say from the beginning that workers' compensation has always been a controversial issue and it has been my one wish - it has not proved to be possible - to have a rational debate on the matter. No better example of the irrationality of many people in this place was apparent than last night when I tried to read a second reading speech. Some of the comments by members opposite and their tactics revealed their true colours. They are incapable of engaging in a reasonable and rational debate on controversial issues.

The former Labor Government took three years to get one workers' compensation Bill through the Parliament, and that was my first bleeding in the legislative processes involved in workers' compensation. We met something like 27 different vested interest groups in workers' compensation. I saw then some of the irrationality involved, as certain of those vested interest groups were not interested in the welfare of injured workers or the employers of those workers, but were interested only in looking after their own patch in the workers' compensation system. Someone derogatively said that the trouble with workers' compensation is that there are so many snouts in the trough. That is true to a certain extent, and even members opposite must acknowledge that many people have a vested financial interest in this area which clouds their judgment. It is a great tragedy that we cannot sit down and discuss these issues calmly and rationally. I can understand the enthusiasm of members opposite because they feel workers' compensation is an area in which they have some God given and divine right to know all things and to be the only authorities. It is interesting to look at their track record.

The former Minister for Productivity and Labour Relations publicly stated that the Labor Government was considering the introduction of thresholds. The inquiry that initiated this was established in May 1991, and the Minister not only took on a report that recommended the introduction of thresholds, but also commissioned the payment of funds to have the thresholds actuarially costed. If the Minister were not serious about that proposal, why would she have wasted approximately \$50 000? Of course, this Government knows that even before the State election, the previous Labor Government knew these moves were required to rescue the no fault system because it was in danger even at that time. The previous Government preferred not to make that decision before the State election, but to wait until after the election. I do not know what would have happened had the Labor Party won the election; we might well be now debating similar legislation. Members opposite cannot come to grips with that.

The member for Thornlie accused me of taking my responsibilities lightly. I can assure the House that I have never taken my responsibilities lightly, especially in the case of workers' compensation. In fact, with so much misinformation around and in the absence of rational debate, the weight of responsibility sometimes seems mighty heavy especially when I am under attack from many of the vested interest groups. I have taken my responsibilities extremely seriously. I am always prepared to own up to any mistakes I have made, and it is true I desperately wanted to adopt the Trenorden recommendation of 26 weeks' payment of average weekly earnings for injured workers. I made a statement to that effect. Members opposite now talk about the 26 weeks, and I will admit that in a couple of speeches in this place, between quite a few barbs, they indicated some support for it. However, not once did they publicly support my stance on 26 weeks. Even I, under all that pressure when everybody lined up against me and said 26 weeks of average weekly earnings was not feasible, had to back down in the face of the opposition. I do not retreat from that one iota. The Opposition could have supported me in the public arena on that issue, but not once did it do so. It was prepared only to play games and try to score cheap political points. The Opposition members are not interested in the genuine

welfare of injured workers. They had the opportunity to support the Government on that issue and they could have bucketed the Government in other areas. They had the opportunity and the responsibility to offer that support. We heard continuous criticism from the Opposition. In the face of that criticism, the Government had to review that decision. I make no bones about that because I was a lone voice on that issue. I hoped that the Opposition would support me. Opposition members can blame themselves for the reduction from 26 weeks to four weeks. Had the Opposition wholeheartedly supported and endorsed that proposal, the Government could have told the other parties that on this matter there was bipartisan support, and that members had crossed the boundaries of political parties and were united on that issue.

Members opposite cannot help themselves. Now that they are in Opposition, they are so desperate to score political points that they will take any opportunity that comes their way. Having confessed that I had to retreat from that original position because I was the only voice that was putting that point of view, the next best thing was to try to ensure that the majority of workers would have access to compensation. It is true, as the member for Collie said, that nearly 90 per cent of injured workers are off work for less than four weeks. Under the new system, those workers will have access to full average weekly earnings for that four week period. The 10 per cent of workers who take more than four weeks off because of an injury will be better off for the first four weeks because they will still have access to full average weekly earnings during that period, but after that period they will be in the same position that they are in now. They will not be any worse off. Members opposite have gone silent because they know that is the truth. One would think from the bleating of Opposition members that those people will be worse off, but I have established that they will be better off. Members opposite, rather than carp and criticise, should have a decent bone in their body and congratulate us for that. I could accept the bleating of members opposite if that was not as much as they wanted, but it is a vast improvement on the existing system.

Mr Trenorden: You must admit they have beaten you into submission.

Mr KIERATH: I have already blamed members opposite for that. I said the reason we had to retreat from 26 weeks to four weeks is that members opposite would not support us. Had members opposite supported us, we would have been in a strong position to have 26 weeks. However, members opposite abandoned the people whom they were claiming to represent, and that is the reason we had to retreat from that position. It is all the fault of members opposite. The blame rests on the shoulders of the member for Thornlie and she must accept responsibility for that.

The member for Thornlie claimed falsely that there was no clamour for changes to common law. I should ask the member for Avon what happened during his inquiry. What did most of the people who came to see him, apart from a few with vested interests, say about common law?

Mr Trenorden: Two of them did not know anything about common law. The remainder wanted action on common law.

Mr KIERATH: We found out that members opposite were not telling us the truth. Members opposite were prepared to camouflage the truth. We found out that most people had a common belief that the real problem was the explosion in common law claims and that something had to be done about that. Most of them had asked the former Government to do something about it but it refused to do something about it. It is interesting that the member for Thornlie was quick to claim that the Chapman inquiry had a narrow charter. The Chapman inquiry had far wider terms of reference than the Guthrie inquiry over which the former Minister for Industrial Relations presided. The Guthrie inquiry set out to try to improve the existing system. We wanted to find the best system available. All of the submissions to the Chapman inquiry indicated that the problem in the existing system was its adversarial nature. The member is right; I did say that I wanted a system that did not entrench adversarial conflict. That is the same theme that we have tried to import into our industrial relations policy. We want the parties to get together to work things out, and only when they cannot work things out should they look at alternate forms of dispute resolution.

The member for Thornlie asked who requested that conciliation officers be involved. That is interesting, because the unions in their submissions asked for an alternate dispute resolution system. In fact, there is an element in here that I do not think members opposite understand. Under the new system, trade unions can run a case through their workers' compensation officers. I will use the Miscellaneous Workers Union as an example because it actually suggested that we look at an alternate dispute resolution body. Its officer, Mr Peter Brash, worked in the former Minister's office, and he departed the scene only when there was a change of Government. I understand that when the Miscellaneous Workers Union gets into this system it will be able to have him or a similar person represent its members, right up to and including the review officer stage.

Mrs Henderson: Wow!

Mr KIERATH: That is what they wanted previously. We listened to what the unions had to say, and when they made good suggestions we were prepared to consider them. They asked the former Government to do that, but it did nothing. The irony is that this non-Labor Government is giving those people some of the things that they asked the Labor Government to do but which it was not prepared to do. That is why members opposite are upset. We were prepared to listen to people and to take on board their views.

The member for Thornlie stated also that I have blind faith in insurers. I assure this House that I do not have blind faith in insurers, and with all due respect to the insurance profession I have never had blind faith in the insurance industry. I want to reassure the House about that fact. If I can stop for a moment and reflect upon the changes that we will make by imposing the threshold and the restrictions, we will save up to \$60m. We will give back \$46m of that to injured workers in improved benefits and the remainder will go towards lowering premiums. We have said all the way along that our two goals are to better compensate injured workers and to lower premiums. There is a finite premium pool. We will deal out the savings in better benefits and lower premiums.

Mr Trenorden: And extra jobs.

Mr KIERATH: Yes. Another misleading statement made by the member for Thornlie was that 23 of the 24 submissions to the Chapman inquiry supported the retention of the Workers' Compensation Board. That is not true. One submission called for the removal of the board, but that does not mean that the other 23 submissions supported the retention of the board. That is an example of the misleading and disgraceful misinformation tactics that have been used by the member for Thornlie throughout this debate. The member should listen to what the people who made submissions had to say. Although they acknowledged the improvements to and some of the advantages of the board, they said that the problem was the legal delays in the system. The member for Thornlie should open her eyes to all of the facts and not be selective. I know the member for Thornlie had selective amnesia in Cabinet, but she now has selective recall of facts. The member for Thornlie said that a person who hurts his back and cannot work again cannot be compensated. Currently, a person who injures his back where no negligence is involved cannot be compensated under common law. In fact, the only time that such a person can be compensated under common law is if negligence is involved. The member for Collie gave some figures to demonstrate that only 3 000 out of 78 000 workers' compensation cases involve common law. Therefore, in excess of 90 per cent of workers' compensation cases do not involve common law.

For the first time a vast group of people will have access to a benefit for a back, neck and pelvic injury - 75 per cent of manual handling claims are for injuries in that area - and to a statutory benefit under the second schedule; whereas previously, most people injured in that way would not have been able to access common law because no negligence was involved. We have had to handle this sort of misinformation in this debate. It is disgraceful misinformation that is designed to do nothing more than frighten people who have had the misfortune to listen to what the Opposition and its supporters have had to say.

The member went on to make the most disgraceful comments of all. I can only assume that this was done out of ignorance of this issue; I certainly hope they were not deliberate. The member commented about a person who was earning only \$10 000 a

year, who had an injury and went back to work and earned \$5 000. The member said that in this case that person would not be able to access the prescribed amount. The funny thing is - I hope the member for Thornlie is listening - that if people are not fit for full duties, they can still access the prescribed amount to supplement their income. The difference in the original earnings of \$10 000 a year and the \$5 000 payment for light duties will be paid out of the prescribed amount. The prescribed amount has been increased to \$100 000. The member said in her example that the worker was off work for a year. If we take \$10 000 from the \$100 000, it leaves a balance of \$90 000. If we allow, say, \$10 000, or it could well be \$20 000, for medical expenses, it leaves a balance of \$70 000. If that \$70 000 is divided by \$5 000, that person will be able to top up the money without exhausting the prescribed amount for 14 years. Again we see a total misinformation campaign - I hope it is not deliberate - to try to frighten people.

That is the difficulty we have had to face in this issue. Under workers' compensation legislation, without proving any fault at all, people have access to \$100 000 - without getting lawyers involved, and without going to court - there is virtually automatic access. The second economic gate was designed to take people past that limit. Beyond that, people can go through common law. We believe that is a fair way of compensating people who do have an injury that is under the 30 per cent limit and who might have their ability restricted to earn income.

The member for Dianella used the example of the pianist with two fingers missing. It is true that in that situation that person would be covered by the \$100 000. People who are in professional sports and who are injured are covered. Any people in unusual circumstances will be covered. Most people under the age of 40 or 50 years who have a serious injury that affects their economic earning capacity will be able to establish future economic loss of \$100 000 or more. We have covered most people.

I would like to address some of the comments of the member for Morley, which are about as outrageous as were his actions when he was the secretary of the Trades and Labor Council. He of all people, at least now that he has come to this place, should have been fair in his comments. He made claims that we were doing something at the behest of the insurance industry. I think I have covered that in my comments to the member for Thornlie. Basically \$59m will be saved by improvements in the changes that will be made; \$46m will go back to better benefits; the remainder of \$13m will go to lower premiums. The member for Morley also mentioned clandestine meetings. I can assure this House that I have never had clandestine meetings with the insurance industry.

Mr C.J. Barnett: They have had a few.

Mr KIERATH: That is right. Lots of people come to my office to meet me to seek my help, including the TLC, the employers and many unions. One of the more militant building unions came to me today to seek my help on a certain problem. It is true, I meet all sorts of people. I did meet the Insurance Council of Australia on one or two occasions; but I have never been present at a meeting where any newspaper advertisement has been discussed. I have never formally requested it in any manner, shape or form. Is it not interesting that the member for Morley can make such outrageous accusations, not come up with one shred of evidence and then retreat as fast as his little legs can carry him?

The member went on to talk about the conciliation and review procedures and tried to make some extraordinary relationship with the industrial relations legislation. The two do have something in common: They do try to bring the parties together and leave out that third party involvement that tries to force the parties apart. That is the similarity. The member for Morley also made some claim about a four tier system. The conciliation and review stage is an administrative system. Beyond that, it is a legal system. We do not have that confused at all. In fact, we have drawn the boundaries very clearly. I will give this assurance to the House: I cannot guarantee that conciliation officers will work but I can guarantee that at the moment we do not have conciliation officers. If we have to put on five or six conciliation officers and they do not meet the system, we will be able to take them out at a later stage. When we talk about a premium bill in excess of \$200m, the cost for five or six conciliation officers is very small indeed.

I had many other things to discuss, but I will chop this out as most members will raise them during the debate on the Bills that we will discuss before this House very shortly. In Opposition, workers' compensation was the most difficult issue that I had to handle. In Government, workers' compensation has been more difficult and more controversial than industrial relations.

Mr Trenorden: We are not going to bring it in every session of the four years we are in Government, are we?

Mr KIERATH: No. We will bring the legislation back next year to deal with risk sensitive premiums. I have already flagged that matter.

Mr Trenorden interjected.

Mr KIERATH: That is right. We intend to have one big bite and try to get most of the legislation right first up. It has been tough for me and for our respective parties politically. We know that what we are doing is right. At the end of the day the workers will have better benefits that will take the delays out of the system and there will be a better system for everyone who is involved. That is what has driven us through this - and I make no apologies for that. I have been subjected to some of the most vicious name calling that I have experienced in my life. Some of the members opposite have only to read the *Hansard* record of the second reading speech - I challenge them to do this - to see the things that have been recorded as being said. However, that will not deter us from our mission at hand. The member for Fremantle can call me all the names in the world that he likes; but we on this side of the House know that we are right. We know that it is tough.

I accept the member for Eyre's accusing me of using cowboy tactics. One lawyer, Ross Lonnie, accused me of being the John Worsfold in this matter. He said that I play it tough, and I guess I do. I do not shy away from that. I know that at the end of the day we will have the best system in Australia. That is what has driven us through all of this. I know it has excited the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission. For the first time that organisation sees that we can get a system that is aimed fairly and squarely at the primary parties - the injured worker and the employers. Everybody else is of a secondary nature. Rather than acting in an ad hoc way, we have announced our intentions. We have been able to consider the comments of those who have come forward and put constructive views. We have been prepared to take those on board. We believe that at the end of the day we will have the best package available in the whole of this country.

Division

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (19)

Mr M. Barnett
Mr Bridge
Mr Brown
Mr Catania
Mr Cunningham
Dr Edwards
Dr Gallop

Mr Graham
Mrs Hallahan
Mrs Henderson
Mr Hill
Mr Kobelke
Mr Riebeling
Mr Ripper

Mr Taylor
Mr Thomas
Ms Warnock
Dr Watson
Mr Leahy (*Teller*)

Noes (25)

Mr Ainsworth
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr Blaikie
Mr Bradshaw
Mr Day
Mrs Edwardes
Dr Hames
Mr House
Mr Johnson

Mr Kierath
Mr Lewis
Mr McNee
Mr Minson
Mr Nicholls
Mr Omodei
Mr Osborne
Mr Pandal
Mr W. Smith

Mr Strickland
Mr Trenorden
Mr Tubby
Dr Turnbull
Mrs van de Klashorst
Mr Wiese
Mr Bloffwitch (*Teller*)

Pairs

Dr Lawrence
Mr McGinty
Mr D.L. Smith
Mr Grill
Mr Marlborough

Mr Court
Mr Cowan
Mr Board
Mr Shave
Mr Marshall

Question thus negatived; motion defeated.

LOTTERIES COMMISSION AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr C.J. Barnett (Leader of the House), read a first time.

Second Reading

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the second reading.

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [10.02 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to confirm the intention and general understanding of instant lottery games conducted by the Lotteries Commission of Western Australia to prevent windfall gains to some Western Australian players who have tickets which they claim to be winners. The need for this amendment has arisen because of a decision of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in May this year that the State Lotteries of New South Wales was bound to pay a claim for an instant ticket which, according to the New South Wales Court of Appeal, contained ambiguous wording. The District Court of New South Wales had earlier found that the applicant was entitled to an instant prize of \$20 000 on one of three games contained in an instant ticket he had purchased.

In the game in question, the applicant matched three pairs of numbers. The instructions on the ticket were "Match three numbers and win". In a two to one majority decision, the court found that, despite the intention of the New South Wales State Lotteries, which it accepted, the instructions "Match three numbers and win" had been fulfilled by the ticket and it was found the applicant was entitled to be paid. As a result of this judgment the Lotteries Commission of Western Australia and all lotteries jurisdictions in Australia have received many claims amounting to very substantial sums from players claiming to hold winning tickets. Some of these tickets contain wording similar to that used in the New South Wales' case. Other claims are on tickets containing different types of games with different instructions.

This amendment to the Lotteries Commission Act seeks to make clear in legislation what is a winning ticket and to avoid the possibility that the Western Australian Lotteries Commission could be directed by the Western Australian courts to pay what would be a "windfall" to players who may have retained tickets which are in fact losing tickets according to the rules and intentions of the game. Such payments, which could be very substantial, would have to come from income intended under the legislation to benefit hospitals and arts, sports, charitable and community groups. At a time when sources of funding for such bodies are very limited, it is of great concern that payment could be directed from such worthy causes to pay these windfalls.

As a range of different instructions are on each instant ticket game, depending on the type of game, this Bill seeks to specify precisely the meaning of each form of instruction and the requirements which must be met in order for a prize to be paid. The Bill also makes clear that this interpretation of a winning ticket applies whether the ticket was issued under the present Lotteries (Control) Act, 1954, or before, or after, this present amendment. The Government does not believe that any player is entitled to receive a windfall gain at the expense of other players who have played according to the rules and at the expense of the beneficiaries of the Lotteries Commission's profits under the Lotteries Commission Act. This view is shared by the Governments of Queensland, New

South Wales and Victoria, which all announced their intention to introduce legislation to deal with this most serious threat to the lotteries industry throughout Australia. The public of Western Australia can be assured that the Lotteries Commission will continue to offer games of the highest integrity and that all legitimate winners, under the rules of the game, will be promptly paid. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Ripper.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No 1)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR HILL (Helena) [10.07 pm]: In general terms I wish to address some of the issues already canvassed by my leader and some of my colleagues. I will also discuss some of the issues in my electorate which are worthy of comment and which have not been addressed by this Budget. Stripped of the rhetoric and general comments contained within the Treasurer's Budget speech, this Budget can be accurately described as one which gives to the Government the appearance of marking time. One can only wonder why the Government introduced a Budget which has no vision, but which is a reflection of at least some of the policies its predecessor introduced, which continue and, thankfully, some of which are supported, but the priorities of which have been reordered to a large extent. Nevertheless, it is a Budget lacking direction. As has been said by other speakers, the introduction of this Budget was this Government's first opportunity to make a major economic statement. It was an opportunity to provide a sense of direction in Western Australia by outlining its vision for the future and its plans for its four year term in Government. It was the first major opportunity for the Government to put its stamp of direction on this State for the remainder of its term and to indicate how it will expedite economic growth and development in this State. However, the Government lacks leadership and the Treasurer has not been able to demonstrate vision through the presentation of this Budget. Clearly, the responsibility for that rests squarely on the shoulders of the Treasurer and, to a large extent, on the shoulders of the Ministers because they are responsible for presenting to the Treasurer the policies and general directions that each of the departments and agencies will pursue. The Budget is an indication of a lack of vision by the Government. Before the last State election, we heard all sorts of rhetoric from the State Government with its commitment to assist business and its desire to focus attention on the small business sector. However, its commitment to the needs of small business and the business community generally is minimal. In fact, it is negative.

The State Government made a number of promises prior to the last election that would impact on small business. Its most publicised promise was that it would eliminate payroll tax within its first term. Of course, that was contingent upon the election of a Federal coalition Government and that did not occur. It said in the dying days of the State election campaign that if the Federal election did not go the way it hoped it would, and the Keating Labor Government was returned, it would have to consider its fallback position, which was that payroll tax would be phased out in approximately eight years. This Budget increases the threshold for payroll tax marginally, certainly by nowhere near as much as the promised increase in the payroll tax threshold by the then Labor Government -

Mr Bloffwitch: But it promised it; you never moved it at all.

Mr HILL: If the member got the wool out of his ears and listened, he might understand. We made the promise prior to the election, but we did not gain Government and therefore can not fulfil the promise. The increase in the threshold by this Government falls far short of our commitment. In fact, it falls far short of the increases in the payroll tax threshold that we implemented consistently year after year while we were in Government. If the member for Geraldton did a bit of research, talked less and listened and thought more, if he is capable of that, he would know that that was the case. The

payroll tax threshold was increased much more dramatically in the last few years of the Labor Government than it has been in the initial Budget of this Government.

The point I am making is that the Government came into office promising that it would phase out payroll tax in an eight year time frame; that is, two terms. That promise cannot possibly be fulfilled if the Government continues with the changes to payroll tax that it has undertaken in this Budget. This was its first opportunity to meet that major commitment to small business and it has failed to do so. I do not believe that we will see payroll tax phased out during this Government's term of office, even if it serves for two terms.

Although there has been only a marginal adjustment to the payroll tax threshold - the base threshold will be increased marginally from \$375 000 to \$450 000 exempting an additional 500 businesses - it is welcome. However, the total payroll tax take has increased by \$16m. There was room for the Government to go further. It could have increased the threshold by much more because it relies very much on the revenue growth that will occur naturally with economic growth in this State. As business picks up and businesses grow, there will be an opportunity for this Government to reap the rewards through payroll tax. However, there will be an increase in the payroll tax take of \$16m during this financial year. As I said, there was room for the Government to move even more than it has been prepared to do and it has failed in that respect. As I said initially, I do not believe the Government is serious about its commitment to phase out payroll tax in two terms.

In his second reading speech on the Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No 1) the Treasurer said that no other taxes and charges had been increased and that the only increase in revenue would be the increases in the statutory levies from four per cent to five per cent. The statutory authorities include the State Energy Commission of Western Australia, the Water Authority and country water boards. He said that, apart from the normal review of departmental fees and charges to more accurately reflect the cost of providing services, the only new revenue raising measure was the increase in statutory levies. The people who bear the burden of that increase are the consumers, largely the business community. Soon after coming into office, the Government increased sewerage and drainage charges by a sleight of hand. At the time it announced a reduction in water rates, through a change in the rate of the dollar, it increased substantially sewerage and drainage charges for all businesses in Western Australia. As a result, small businesses have every reason to feel disillusioned about this Government and its commitment to small business. It has not demonstrated a commitment at all.

However, it is interesting that, under the reference to the statutory levy in the Budget speech, the Treasurer said that the increases announced earlier this year reflected the costs of providing services. I wonder whether that is a new direction of this Government to ensure that the costs of providing services will be met by the users; in other words, a user pays system across the board to industry and consumers at large. We will await with interest developments in future Budgets to see whether that occurs.

The other major promise made by the Government during the election campaign was to institute a parliamentary inquiry into land tax and that, before such an inquiry was established, the Government would ensure that land taxes were frozen. We have already seen substantial increases in land taxes for many companies. Obviously, as a result of the recent announcements, some businesses will receive reductions in land tax, but others will receive substantial increases. So much for the freeze on land taxes! Land tax rates will go up for many businesses, so the pledge to freeze land taxes pending a parliamentary committee of inquiry is yet another broken promise. I asked the Premier and Treasurer by way of interjection in a debate last week whether there would be a parliamentary inquiry. He hedged his bets. He said that he had to consult his deputy, the Minister for Commerce and Trade, to determine what action he would take. In response, by way of interjection, the Minister for Commerce and Trade said that there was an inquiry within the Small Business Development Corporation, an inquiry of a fairly minor nature, into the effect of land tax and land valuations on small business. There was no suggestion of a major review of land tax such as the Government pledged before the last

election. I repeat that the pledge was that there would be a parliamentary inquiry into land tax. The Treasurer refused to support that when challenged to do so across the Chamber by way of interjection. I have asked questions on notice about when we can expect a parliamentary inquiry to be established; there have been no answers to them. That is not surprising, given that some questions have been on notice for some months because the Government has failed to answer them.

Several major issues are of concern to the small business community in Western Australia. I have mentioned payroll tax, which by and large does not affect small business; it affects only some 10 per cent or less of the business community. I have mentioned also the broken promises in that respect, the statutory levy increases indicated in the budget, land tax rates, the increases in land tax rates for many small businesses, and the failure to freeze those land taxes. Most significantly for small business, the Government has failed to honour its commitment to increase State Government taxes and charges. It decided this year to increase dramatically sewerage and drainage charges. It did not do so in this Budget. Its proud announcement in this Budget is that there are no increases in taxes and charges. That is so, because it put in most of its increases in advance of the Budget.

Given the lack of direction by the Government in presenting the Budget, one must ask what are its policies, what is its direction for the remainder of its term. As I said, this was its first major opportunity to show some leadership in this respect and to show that it has a sense of economic direction for Western Australia. It was going to set about in a decisive way addressing what it believes are the needs of the business community. But we have not seen that. Leadership is needed to provide stimulus to the business sector. It is that sector that will secure the long term future of Western Australia. That stimulus should be directed towards the manufacturing sector.

Since the 1960s we have seen tremendous economic growth in Western Australia. That economic growth has been driven largely by rapid development in the resources sector and the export of our resources. The State's foreign exports grew from \$232m in 1960 to in excess of \$14b last year; that is a monumental growth. It has happened during a period of successive Governments of different political persuasions. That growth in our exports and our economy will occur regardless of which party is in Government. The reason is that we are largely dependent upon the resources sector and we will continue to see, at least in terms of the value of the export of our resources, an improvement in that area. We have achieved a great deal, with about 10 per cent of the nation's population exporting somewhere in the vicinity of 30 per cent of the nation's exports.

Our Government was unashamedly supportive of industry in recent years in terms of picking winning sectors of industry that we believed had the capacity to meet the challenge to transform the economy into a more diversified economic base. There is no doubt that our Government faced that challenge. All Governments in Western Australia, indeed in Australia, have had to face that challenge and acknowledge the need to move away from our dependence on the resources sector, a dependence on exporting primary products. We have been successful exporters of primary products over the years and fortunately our elaborately transformed manufactures have also increased dramatically in recent years. Our export of ETMs rivals - I suspect it might even be in front of - the export of rural products from Australia; I am talking of Australia as a whole, but I think my statement applies also to Western Australia.

We have a large history as a net exporter of primary products. This presents challenges to us. It also presents some inherent vulnerabilities in our economy. The rate of export of raw materials is declining and has declined. In the past 12 months, it declined by about nine per cent Australia wide and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has predicted that in the next 12 months there will be a further reduction of about three per cent in our export of commodities. Fortunately, at the same time we have seen a reduction in the Australian dollar and that has meant some benefits to our exporters. In dollar terms, our exports have increased rather than decreased, even though the demand for our commodities internationally has declined. There has been an improved return for the resources sector, in particular. We are subject to large cyclical

fluctuations in our commodity prices, which has an adverse impact on us. The impact is on not only the resources sector, but also the manufacturing sector. We do not have a strong manufacturing sector in Western Australia, but what we do have is growing rapidly.

If anything positive has come about as a result of the recession, it is that our manufacturing sector has had to become more focused on its opportunities for export. It has had to look at overseas markets in a much more serious way than it has in the past. As a result, we have seen a dramatic rise in exports from our manufacturing sector. But there are challenges for the Government. There were challenges for our Government and there remain challenges for the current Government in overcoming the problems that are inherent in the cyclical fluctuations of commodity prices. The Government must try to sell the message of internationalisation to a far greater extent. Our Government embarked upon that process and the current Government has continued to support those policies - at least, that appears to be the case - in the presentation of its Budget, particularly the Commerce and Trade section of the Budget. I have received that impression also from the comments of the Minister for Commerce and Trade at various business forums that I have attended and at which he has spoken. He has continued to support the policies of the previous Government in that area.

We must change our methods of attracting investment to this State and indeed this country. If we look at the ways in which countries in South East Asia have attracted investment over the years we see they have quite unashamedly given enormous incentives to industry to locate there. They have offered a range of tax incentives and tax holidays, created free trade zones, offered assistance with energy and water costs, and been prepared to waive land taxes and charges where appropriate. In each case those concessions have been provided with strings attached. In the case of Malaysia, for example, companies are required in certain areas of industry to use up to 80 per cent local labour. The product which goes into the manufacture of the final item is required to be sourced locally rather than from overseas. There is a flow-on effect to other industries and an opportunity for employment of local people in those industries. We should seriously look at the incentives that have been provided in a number of South East Asian countries, such as Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and others. We have to convince not only State and Federal Governments and their bureaucracies, but also the community at large. All of us as politicians, not just the Government, must get out and sell that message in the wider community to convince Australians that we are not selling off the farm by attracting foreign investment. That is the only way we will have sufficient capital to expand value adding in the manufacturing sector. We must focus on that and we must continue to enhance market development, including market identification and leverage.

I will refer to the leveraging possibilities that go with the countertrade policy that we established in Western Australia, and which thankfully is being continued by this Government. It is pleasing too that the Government has, at least for the time being, rejected the McCarrey report's recommendations in the area of commerce and trade. Or has it? The McCarrey report referred in relation to commerce and trade to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and quoted that body at length. It seems to me that at least in that section of the report, and probably others, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry was the author of the report. There is very little substance in that section of the report, and indeed in the report in general. As someone who has had ministerial responsibility in this area in the past and knows something about it, it is clear that Mr McCarrey and his colleagues did not go in depth into the services that are provided by the Department of Commerce and Trade. He has not been able to address thoroughly all the services provided by the department.

I could go on at length about some of the examples that have been highlighted by McCarrey, but I will point to a couple. McCarrey says that trade development and promotion should be reduced because it is ineffective. He says we should retain our overseas offices, and I agree with him in that respect. The Program Statements in the Budget papers demonstrate that this State and its businesses have received substantial

benefit through trade promotion and development. The report refers to the Department of Commerce and Trade's coordinating participation by a total of 219 Western Australian companies in 19 international exhibitions. It goes on to say that over 270 applications for support under the export market support scheme - that is just one scheme - were processed in the last 12 months. This resulted in direct sales of nearly \$12m, and sales and contracts under negotiation for a further \$59m were reported by companies which benefited from these activities. This is the area that McCarrey says is not effective and should be reduced significantly.

McCarrey goes on to say the new materials area, aerospace and defence, should be phased out and closed entirely. He says the industry attraction incentive packages should be examined on a project by project basis. There is nothing new in that; they always have been. However, McCarrey is very critical of what he described as the previous Government and the Department of Commerce and Trade picking winners. That is precisely what he is suggesting should happen. He suggests the picking winners philosophy should be continued through industry attraction incentive schemes. He goes on to say that the waste management and recycling areas of the department should be phased out entirely. I am sure Mr McCarrey will be aware, if he did his research thoroughly, of the 1992-93 report of the Department of Commerce and Trade which points to the fact that considerable opportunities have been identified for economic growth and job creation based on recycling and reprocessing usable material. The report goes on to say specifically that the Department of State Development, as it then was, helped establish a 6 000 tonne a year recycled tissue plant at Canning Vale, a 3 000 tonne a year moulded fibre packaging plant at Palmyra, a materials recovery facility, and a plastics recycling facility at North Fremantle. It also established a waste paper recycling system throughout all Government departments and agencies. Yet McCarrey says there is no role for this division of the department and it should be phased out despite the fact that it is obviously giving enormous assistance to new industries which are creating hundreds of jobs. Those industries have enormous potential for exports from this State.

I have read the report and found it to be very flimsy. I have also asked a series of questions of the Deputy Premier and Minister for Commerce and Trade on these very matters. On the question of promoting industry I asked him - I received the response today - whether he supported the McCarrey report's view that the department had been unsuccessful in promoting industry, and he said no. When I asked about waste management and recycling and whether he supported the McCarrey report's view that these programs were counterproductive and should be ended, he said a subcommittee had been set up to review and consider the recommendations of the McCarrey report. He hedged his bets a bit on that, but I suggest that industries in Western Australia do support those programs and have been the beneficiaries of those programs. The employees now working for the companies to which I refer will be grateful for the assistance of the previous Government and the then Department of State Development. There have been enormous benefits for them and for the State of Western Australia with the potential exports from those industries. Without doubt, it has been demonstrated that McCarrey does not know what he is talking about, and the Minister has said that he does not support the recommendations of McCarrey on those matters.

I have referred to a number of areas on which the Government should focus, to encourage economic development or to ensure we broaden the State's economic base. However, we see no evidence in this Budget of any stimulus for those areas, for the manufacturing sector or for the export areas of manufacturing. Those important issues have been neglected.

I turn now to the programs in the Department of Commerce and Trade - for example, the industry attraction, assistance and support program. The allocation to this item in the Budget reflects a reduction of more than \$2m, even though this is an area in which the Government should show some leadership. I am not talking about a large budget; it is a fairly small budget. Therefore, in percentage terms that reduction is large. The allocation has been reduced from \$13.3m to \$11.2m; it is a substantial reduction. A further substantial reduction in real terms has occurred in trade development although there has been a slight increase in funds. Trade services is another fast growing area of

the department internationally. It is one of the fastest growing areas of world trade and accounts for around two thirds of Western Australia's employment and gross domestic product. This part of the department's budget has been recognised by past Governments as an area of tremendous expansion. In the year 1990-91 the Labor Government was able to attract 1 500 new full fee paying overseas students to Western Australian education institutions. That was achieved by cooperation between the State Government and the institutions. The fees paid by those students have increased substantially. In 1987 they amounted to \$7m and in 1991 they totalled more than \$40m. The trade services program has the potential to create and foster future commercial, political and cultural links with the important South East Asian market. This is an area which increased dramatically during our term in office. It has expanded so that it caters not only for educational services but also health and other services. Trade services was a program dear to my heart during my term in the Ministry of Sport and Recreation. Our aim was to see if we could do more trading in the area of coaching and sporting expertise. Opportunities also exist for an environmental service. This Budget has not recognised the enormous potential of this program.

I turn again to countertrade. This is an area in which international trade is practised by more than 110 countries globally. More than 20 per cent of world trade is now undertaken through countertrade. Our nearest neighbour, Indonesia, is one country that works very hard in this area. Again, the Government has not focused on this aspect in the Budget. I will be asking questions about that during the Estimates debates. As stated in the Budget papers, countertrade was used to achieve around \$12.6m in additional exports from Western Australian companies last year. This aspect is very significant because potential exists for a great deal more than that. Of course, those activities support the smaller manufacturing industries in Western Australia.

As to market development, I referred earlier to the direct sales that have taken place as a result of trade promotion overseas in the last 12 months. As a result, direct sales amounted to \$12m after participation by Western Australian companies in exhibitions. Contracts are under negotiation for a further \$59m. Those sorts of services provided by the State Government over recent years are very important for the manufacturing sector, the service sector, and for small business in Western Australia.

International relations obtains some focus in the Department of Commerce and Trade historically because of the service the State Government offices provide offshore. We have not seen any substantial increase in dollar terms in the Budget in this area either. There is enormous potential for the State Government to make a real impact, and to demonstrate to the business community throughout Australia and in South East Asia that it is serious about these programs, but the Government has failed. It has not given any stimulus to economic development. The Government has not demonstrated the vision that should have been demonstrated in its first Budget.

I want to touch briefly on an issue which is very important to me and to the community of Midland and its surrounding districts. In the planning process - not only town planning but also economic development - the State Government must demonstrate a clear commitment to the economic, social and cultural development of regional centres in Western Australia. That can be done in a variety of ways. The Government should demonstrate that commitment in the Midland region more than any other region because of its tremendous potential for employment growth. The expected large population growth in the near future will impact on the social fabric and cultural development of the area. The Government must take into account the region's needs and its capacity for development. It also needs to take into account the views of the local community. Last year, when addressing a gathering of business people in the Midland area, I indicated that I thought it proper for the Government - I was talking about the Labor Government - to examine the possibility of establishing a Midland development authority. At the meeting I was pleased to receive the support of the Shire of Swan, representatives of the business community, and the leaders of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The view did not receive any local publicity, but it was taken up by members of the chamber of commerce, who now claim the idea. I do not mind others claiming the ideas

are theirs so long as the goals are achieved and as a community we can work to that end. I hope that in years ahead during the term of this Government - if not, it will happen with our Government in four years' time - we will see the establishment of a Midland development authority. I have discussed the issue with my colleague the shadow Minister for Planning, and he is committed to that end. He has communicated with the Shire of Swan and indicated his support for the proposal. I will be working with the shadow Minister to see whether we can bring legislation to Parliament in the next 12 months to establish a Midland development authority.

Such a body would be important in developing a strategy for the regional centre with its distinctive characteristics as a major suburban centre giving attention to the townscape and the civic design. That would be an important consideration for the development authority, along with the use of underutilised and not utilised Government land in Midland. I refer to large tracts of Westrail land. The Midland Saleyards are inappropriately located. Many people in my community would not hold that view, but I support, as I have done in the past, that view about their location. This land could be better utilised by small business provided the saleyards were retained in the Midland region. It is currently used only about three days a week. The proposed development authority and the community could give consideration to this issue. Perhaps the Government has locked us into a position with expenditure which precludes our making that change.

It is estimated that an extra 140 000 people will live in this region during the next 30 years. Therefore, we must consider the social and cultural infrastructure and the appropriate measures required for economic development and employment opportunities. Also, we must maximise the use of underutilised land in the area. The development authority would go a long way to ensuring that those things occur.

[The member's time expired.]

MR BRIDGE (Kimberley) [10.53 pm]: Mr Acting Speaker -

At suburban railway stations - you may see them as you pass -
There are signboards on the platforms saying, "Wait here, second class" . . .
Yes the second class were waiting in the days of serf and prince,
And the second class are waiting - they've been waiting ever since.

That is an apt description of the way Budgets affect the people of our nation. That poem is an appropriate reminder in the 1990s of the sentiments expressed by the late and great Henry Lawson about 100 years ago. The words of wisdom expressed then about politics indicate that deficiencies could be found in the provision to deal with the needs of all people of the nation. It refers to the community acceptance of that class of people, and how they were not provided for by this country. Platforms carried signs which spelt out that the category of citizens had to locate themselves in a certain part of the railway station. One hundred years down the track there is no great difference.

People today, through the processes of Government, are committed to ensuring that there will always be that category of people. The leaders and decision makers of this country have not been able to grasp a fundamental point: If one is to change the course of a nation, one must look at plans which are different from the norm. We can be clearly reminded of that situation by reflecting upon last Tuesday's *The West Australian*. I do not know how many members read the "Focus" section of that edition, but an article contained an illustration which showed people in the 1930s marching for work. The other side of the illustration said that in the 1990s people are lining up for jobs in Perth. In the 60 years between little or nothing has changed.

The Budget before the House is consistent with countless other Budgets which have had little or no capacity to change major issues and provide for the needs of all people in our society. While we talk about rationalisation and cost efficiency, nothing will change. It sounds very good for us to speak in the community about cost cutting measures and efficiencies; however, this theory in practice does not deliver. In my time in politics I have not seen a Budget from any Government in this country which has fulfilled any

desire for fundamental change. I am not prepared to say that this Budget should receive special condemnation; its only condemnation is that it does not pick up the issues about which Henry Lawson correctly wrote. It requires a vision, strategy and lateral thinking to make these changes, but those ingredients are not required if Budgets are to be formulated in line with normal practices over countless years. This Budget repeats Budgets presented by countless Governments. These Budgets set the parameters within which the economic future of our country is determined. In assessing where we are going, we must consider our responsibilities. The infrastructure needed for the changes of the magnitude required will need the commitment of the Government, not the private sector. For example, any member in the Legislative Assembly could say, "I am going to build a major complex in an important part of the city."

The provision of that infrastructure attracts tenants which creates activity, opportunity and investment, which then generates revenue. Governments have failed abysmally in the past in the provision of infrastructure. This Government talks constantly about infrastructure being the responsibility of the private sector, but that is quite false. Private enterprise is in the business of making money out of its investments, not of providing infrastructure for the general public. Part of its commercial responsibility is to ensure the best returns for investors. This Government has not understood that the provision of infrastructure in wide-ranging projects will tip the scales towards change. I am keen to promote the Kimberley pipeline project. There was not too much criticism in this place about that project; in fact, members showed a lot of support and interest. The public at large were fully behind it, and rightly so. With a scheme of that kind we were looking at not only the provision of water, but also the means by which that major infrastructure development could occur. That scheme would have generated other activities. For example, if we commit to that project thousands of jobs would be created during its construction. That in itself is good, but when one looks at the other beneficial aspects associated with a scheme of that kind, one would see changes that would need to be planned for in the long haul. We can all say that those sorts of schemes are too difficult, uneconomical and cannot be justified, but by taking that view that is the picture that we continue to paint for this nation. We must be prepared to commit to major projects in this country the likes of which are not contained in this Budget or in previous Budgets.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What do you think about the gas pipeline to the goldfields?

Mr BRIDGE: That is a great project because therein lies an opportunity for the very things I have been talking about. The Government should not consider that that one project is enough. If we do not commit to major infrastructure projects in this country, and if any of us is alive in 60 years' time, we would probably read a similar news story to a recent article which is entitled "60 years apart, but the unemployment picture is still grim". This article compares unemployment in the 1930s with the 1990s. An article in 2050 will probably tell the same story. We need a commitment from the Government to a large scale project where the Government not only calls on the private sector to invest but also is prepared to match that investment. I told the Leader of the House in response to his interjection about the gas pipeline that it was an exciting project. However, it needs to be understood that that project is predominantly being developed by private enterprise. It should not be left at that. The Government has a responsibility to allocate funds towards the provision of major infrastructure.

Mr Omodei: Has the member for Kimberley read the report on the Kimberley water pipeline? It says -

Given the South West's capacity to meet its predicted long-term water needs until well into the 21st Century, the board concludes that there is no existing or emerging need to consider large scale water transfer into that region. Therefore, although a Kimberley pipeline and desalination of sea water . . . remain long-term options, they are not relevant at present.

The Government spent a lot of money to get that opinion.

Mr BRIDGE: I am not disputing what is contained in the report. That does not alter my viewpoint. That report contains similar sentiments to thousands and thousands of other

reports prepared in the past 60 years. At the end of the day the unemployment picture has not changed. It is an absolute disgrace. As a citizen of this country I am not happy looking at a newspaper article that says nothing has changed in 60 years. I do not give a damn what these reports say. They say that we should not embark upon large scale developments, but that is what is necessary to change the equation. I differ with the Minister for Water Resources; even though it might be the opinion of experts in a report compiled by experts, it does not alter, target or tackle a situation which was evident in this country when Henry Lawson was writing articles 100 years ago.

Mr Omodei: This report was commissioned by the Labor Party when it was in power. If I were the member for Kimberley I would be promoting the use of Kimberley water in the Kimberley; that is a step in the direction the member should go.

Mr BRIDGE: That is not true. The Minister must understand that the Kimberley pipeline scheme was always going to benefit the Kimberley, the Pilbara and other parts of the north west. There is no way that that scheme would not bring such a benefit; but in realistic terms we had to look at a market for the delivery of water. In order to argue for its viability in any cost analysis we had to argue that in order to get the scheme up and running there had to be a market for the water, so Perth was the target. However, we were not looking exclusively at Perth, but in the long term the ability to draw upon the requirements of the City of Perth gave some credence and justification to arguing its economic viability. We will never be able to argue for any Government to commit to a scheme like that. It is not a small project; it is bigger than the gas pipeline from the Pilbara to the goldfields and even bigger than the Snowy Mountains hydro-electric scheme. In order to give the scheme political and financial credibility we talked about Perth as a receiver of water, but logically the Kimberley would have been first cab off the rank, so the benefits of that scheme would have flowed immediately into the Kimberley and progressively into the Pilbara and other areas in the north west. It would have been great had the financial viability of the scheme been such that we did not have to draw upon the market of Perth consumers. Who knows, that might well have been the case, but one could never have gone out there and championed a scheme like that. One would have had no support at all. The Minister might note that was the reason that scenario had to be attached to the development of that scheme. That is the thing those people failed to understand. Even the wisdom of those experts could never grasp that scenario, and I could never understand because I spent countless days trying to explain that to them.

Mr Osborne: Engineers have no capacity for vision.

Mr BRIDGE: I am amazed that they have never picked up on the simple logic that if we have a scheme up and running we have a benefit for the Kimberley. That is where the source is and that is from where the scheme will emanate. People seem to have lost that view of bringing water into Perth because it is easier to bring it in the other way.

Mr Omodei: To be fair, I respect your right to support that project, but the members on your side of the House attacked me vehemently because of the water charging processes we embarked upon this year. You are talking about a cost of water 10 times the equivalent of what we are charging now, and you are saying that the project should be tied to the market. Therefore, there are some inconsistencies between what you and your colleagues are saying.

Mr BRIDGE: The Minister must understand what I always said, and it is very convenient for people not to have done that. I always said that by going through the various stages of the cost analysis of the Kimberley pipeline scheme, we would dramatically reduce the costs. That is exactly what happened. The Minister knows from his reports that when we started off it was estimated that water could be delivered to Perth at a cost of \$10 a kilolitre, which was ridiculous and well out of the question no matter how great the scheme was. Then it became \$5.70 a kilolitre, then \$4.20, then \$3.45; then, as the Minister might recall, the land lease company talked about an open channel system and they got the cost down to 70¢ and 90¢. Therefore, no-one can conclude or be convinced today that we could not bring that water down from the north within those bounds of costs. I was never prepared to accept that the figures we were first given were correct.

Mr Omodei: I will do a deal with you. If you resign from the Labor Party we will go into partnership.

Mr BRIDGE: And build the scheme?

Mr Minson: What an unholy alliance that would be!

Mr BRIDGE: If there were any likelihood our alliance would be capable of completing that project I would be happy to join forces with the Minister. I reckon he and I building that scheme could do more for this country than anything we could ever do in this Parliament. If he would like to take it up as a serious challenge and commit himself to the scheme, I will be in it right up to my neck.

Mr Osborne: You are attracted by the opportunity of quitting the Labor Party.

Mr BRIDGE: I was talking about cost analyses I have never liked. Over the years I have never liked microeconomic reforms, a buzz phrase I do not understand. I always figured it was a bit like what Henry Lawson thought about. He talked about reducing costs, and at the end of the day talked about reducing and taking away and nothing else. I have never liked the gung ho economics which were evident around this country 15 years ago. If we went seriously into the commercialisation of this State's Water Authority, I predict that we would find a justification presented to the Government of the need to remove some basic and necessary services in a social and community context. For example, take the Government's decision to remove the free allowance for water. That fits into that category. When we talk about commercialisation of the Water Authority there is no place and no justification for the Water Authority to maintain that sort of service, because it just is not consistent with a commercial approach to its responsibility to deliver. They are the sorts of things that follow our decision to go very strongly into commercialisation and corporatisation, and that is the penalty a lot of people must endure. That goes back to Henry Lawson's ideology. I have never been a great fan of the philosophy of microeconomic reform. I am not saying this to the members opposite just because I am in the Opposition. I said to my colleagues when I was in Government and talked about it constantly in the seven years I was a Minister. I have never copped microeconomic reform and never will, because it commits us to a course of action which causes pain to a lot of people who can ill afford to pay. I do not care which Government is in power, that is the end result. It is like a person who says that a rose by any other name will smell just as sweet.

Mr Osborne: Your macroeconomic reforms were talked about too.

Mr BRIDGE: It was good that they were only talked about and not applied. Once they are applied it is no good. We have agreed about the wisdom of the Kimberley pipeline, and I am happy that a Minister in the Government is willing to leave to join me and commit himself to implementing that scheme. That is a demonstration of his interest, and it is commendable of the Minister.

Mr Omodei: I am not leaving the ministerial position, no.

Mr M. Barnett: The member for Kimberley is famous. I was in Korea two weeks ago and his scheme was mentioned by a Korean construction company involved in the project in Libya.

Mr Osborne: Our friend Bernard Chang in Singapore wants us to pipe it the other way, to Singapore. That might be an idea.

Mr BRIDGE: A scheme like this is not unique in those countries. They have seen them over the years. The Libyan pipeline is not an exclusive scheme and there are countless others. I suggest the Minister responsible for this area take on board the things we have talked about tonight, because there is no doubt in my mind that that sort of scheme must be undertaken at some stage in the future of this country. It was my view and it will be the Minister's view that the sooner the better in terms of the economic benefits that will flow.

There is one other issue worthy of comment in respect of the Budget, and that is the earmarking of funds to deal with the Mabo issue. What I would have liked to see in this

Budget - I note that the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is present - is some clear recognition that highlights the Year of the Indigenous People. This is a special year of which there should have been some fairly significant recognition through innovative schemes or the provision of some funds to enable people to look at some schemes.

Mr Minson: They do not get a specific allocation but they are coming within the Budget itself. Of course, the other one is the Premier's taskforce, which I hope will report to him before the end of the year.

Mr BRIDGE: While those schemes might have some good features, they are normal Government initiatives.

Mr Minson: I have one which I would like to solve and it is at Rottneest. If I can solve it I will have at least achieved something.

Mr BRIDGE: The Budget does not mention that this is the Year of the Indigenous People and it does not highlight the importance that should be attributed to it. If the Government is able to put in place other measures it should do so because there is still time and it is important that they be implemented.

It is important for members to understand that the Mabo issue is about a group of people's rights at law. Therefore, it is wrong to make public statements that are at odds with that basic issue. Uncertainty causes confusion and the last thing we want to generate in the community is uncertainty about the Mabo decision. If people are told often enough that there is confusion, difficulty and uncertainty about an issue, they will believe it. It is wrong that people overseas are being told that there is uncertainty about the Mabo decision in this country. While it might suit some people to promote that view for personal reasons -

Mr Kierath: Will you tell Keating about it?

Mr BRIDGE: I have told him, but I do not think the Prime Minister is doing any damage in that regard.

Mr Kierath: You have to be kidding.

Mr BRIDGE: He is not promoting fear. I have no evidence of Mr Keating saying publicly that the Mabo issue is confusing and is creating uncertainty in the community.

Mr Minson: He has said that everything will be wonderful and we will live in a lollipop state. Under his proposals, in whom will the land be vested? We must bear in mind that the Mabo decision was about a piece of land which was vested in an individual under certain terms and conditions. All the talk about the Mabo decision relating to everyone else is nonsense.

Mr BRIDGE: One could not escape that situation if one read the High Court's judgment.

Mr Minson: The land cannot be vested in a race or a community. It will not work.

Mr BRIDGE: The Minister does not understand the situation.

Mr Minson: I do understand it.

Mr BRIDGE: The Minister has not understood the High Court's decision. A set of rules to deal with that decision is being compiled. The High Court has not caused the problem.

Mr Minson: Of course it has.

Mr BRIDGE: The decision the High Court handed down on the Murray Island case was the right decision. The High Court discovered that terra nullius related not only to the Murray Islands, but also to the whole of the nation. Members cannot say that although the judges, in their wisdom, said that the phrase "terra nullius" is fiction, and the Murray Island land should be replaced with native title, it cannot be applied to other parts of Australia. The High Court's decision is very clear. A set of rules must be established to clearly set out the parameters of ownership and the protection associated with that.

Mr Trenorden: To do that, we have to pay. How many Australians, including Aborigines, have done any reading on this issue?

Mr BRIDGE: I have.

Mr Trenorden: I know you have, but how many people outside this Chamber have?

Mr BRIDGE: I have no reservations about the High Court's ruling. It will be hard for members in this House to agree on this issue because whenever politics comes into an issue there will be differing points of view. However, if members put Australia first and accept the High Court's judgment and put in place a set of rules they will remove any uncertainty surrounding the Mabo issue.

Mr House: You should seek an appointment with the Prime Minister and tell him that because that is exactly what some people have tried to tell him.

Mr BRIDGE: I have already written to the Prime Minister.

Mr Trenorden: Where did you address the letter to in Ireland?

Mr BRIDGE: It is important that members understand that I have personally written to the Prime Minister and I have received a personal response from him.

Mr Trenorden: What did he tell you?

Mr BRIDGE: He is interested in my argument because I think he understands that if the correct set of rules are put in place there will be no concern about associating ourselves with the High Court's judgment.

It is the Ministers and Government members who will, at the end of the day, determine the rules. I will not have the capacity to determine their structure. If Government members want me to talk to them about this issue, I am prepared to do that.

Mr House: You will have a great deal of ability to control a fair part of the debate and many people will agree with what you have already said. You have to convince the Prime Minister to take that direction.

Mr BRIDGE: I am keen to convince the Prime Minister to take that direction and that is the reason I am communicating with him. It should be encouraging to all Western Australians to know that the Prime Minister has at least responded to my correspondence. It is a significant step. I have extended an invitation to the Prime Minister to visit Western Australia and I understand he is considering it.

Mr House: I do not know about that, but you should ask us about it.

Mr BRIDGE: I wrote to the Prime Minister because I am confident that we can resolve this issue. In conclusion, an approach based on lateral thinking is the ingredient upon which a different Australia will be developed. Otherwise we shall sit around here and glorify our little endeavours and projects running here and there. If one had a wheelbarrow with no wheels one could cart enough stuff in it to keep these tiny little schemes, which make us feel so great, going. However, at the end of the day we shall not change that situation. I hope that in years to come not only the Government in office but also future Governments will prepare themselves to take on that sort of stewardship and leadership. At the end of the day that will be the difference between what we have seen in the past, the contents of this Budget and the contents of future Budgets. With slight modification this Budget is almost word for word, detail for detail, the same as the Budgets presented for countless years. I referred to the work and protest of people such as Henry Lawson, who wanted their messages to be heard. I want my message to be heard in this place. I am not trying to be smart and it is not rhetoric when I talk about a scheme dear to my heart. It is about a nation capable of being given some direction.

Mr Omodei: Have you read the Budget? You have not referred to it once in this speech.

Mr BRIDGE: Yes, I have read the Budget. I looked at all the dollar signs and the only one that attracted my attention was an amount of \$1 alongside the Kimberley water resources development - one lousy dollar. When I saw that amount associated with this scheme, I closed the book.

MR RIEBELING (Ashburton) [11.33 pm]: Like most people on this side of the House, I was not expecting this type of Budget. In fact, it is quite significant for what it does not contain rather than what it contains. I had intended to refer to the McCarrey report

tonight but the member for Cockburn apparently lost his copy of that report and borrowed mine. Perhaps when he makes his speech tomorrow, his comments on the McCarrey recommendations will be assisted by my copy of that report.

Mr Trenorden: He sold his for \$15.

Mr RIEBELING: They are very rare. I thought the Budget would provide a blueprint for development in my electorate of Ashburton, which most people in this House acknowledge as one of the most productive electorates in this State, if not in Australia. It is part of what this Government considers as vital for the development of this State and recovery from the slump which the State and Australia are in.

Mr House: Talk about the development of the swimming pool in Roebourne.

Mr RIEBELING: It is just about finished. The Minister will be happy about that.

Mr House: They are digging their own.

Mr RIEBELING: It will be open in the next couple of weeks. I thank the Minister for his interest and I will comment further later in my speech.

The Budget contains some development initiatives, and I congratulate the Government on those developments. The first major development project I have been able to locate in this Budget is the \$6.6m allocated to the Dampier Port Authority to extend the Moth wharf in Dampier. This project has been on the drawing board for some time, and I congratulate the Government on deciding to proceed with it. It will greatly benefit the smaller companies endeavouring to set up a base with the offshore oil industry, such as Mermaid Marine Group Pty Ltd, Brambles and a number of survey type companies which are conducting extensive research off the shores of the Pilbara coast. This development will greatly assist those companies to access the offshore oil industry and take advantage of what is rapidly becoming this State's second most important industry - the offshore petroleum industry. I am sure this Government recognises the importance of that industry, and that is why that infrastructure has been approved and put in place. I am yet to determine how the \$5m will be repaid from the debts; however, I am sure the Government has worked that out with the Dampier Port Authority.

I applaud the Government for expenditure on three other smaller projects. The first expenditure is \$125 000 allocated to the Karratha College for new computer systems. The computer system will enable this education facility to provide a better service in the highly technical area of expertise that the college provides to the students and the population of the Pilbara area. The Government is to be applauded. Another area of expenditure, about which I do not know as much but I will find out shortly, is \$129 000 on a new electrical system for the Roebourne Regional Prison. I believe that must have been allocated because of a deterioration of existing stock or equipment. If it is required, that is a good step. A smaller commitment is made to the purchase of a patrol boat for the two fisheries officers who have been based in Karratha since January this year. An amount of approximately \$50 000 is allocated for building a boatshed. I applaud the Government for making these commitments and I hope they will achieve all that the Government hopes for them. However, there are numerous areas in which expenditure could and should have been taken up, and money spent on infrastructure which would have provided this State with income which is badly needed in areas that can produce massive amounts of money.

Before raising some concerns in my electorate, I shall cover some general points. Firstly, during the election campaign, and since, the public were inundated with statements from members opposite regarding the poor state of the economy. It was claimed that it was in such bad shape that we were approaching bankruptcy through our continuous use of Bankcard. Those statements have been repetitive in the 18 months I have been in this place. Therefore, one would have expected certain things to be part of this Budget; but they are not.

Mr Osborne: There was no need for a royal commission, was there?

Mr RIEBELING: The Premier said that there was, actually. Perhaps the member has not read the Budget documents; unfortunately, I have. One would have expected the debt

levels, so often referred to by members opposite, to be reduced in the Budget papers. However, page 3 of the Consolidated Fund Estimates document contains a summary which outlines that debt has increased by approximately \$200m. That is amazing! The rhetoric of members opposite during the past 18 months, especially during the election campaign, was that their prime function in Government would be to reduce debt. This Budget does not reflect that undertaking. This is one of the major misstatements within the Budget, of which numerous examples can be found. I hope this point may sink in to members on the other side, although I do not hold much hope. One would expect to see the percentage of debt compared to income to be reduced. However, for the first time in three years that figure has increased.

Another area to note is the type of investment this Government is making. An area which is a basic requirement for the long term good health of the State is the amount of money spent on education. Therefore, it was surprising that the full time five-year-old program, which was to be expanded under the previous Government's policy, has been curtailed. Some 14 000 students who would have entered this program this year will not be included. This reduction in allocation is disappointing in two ways: Firstly, many parents and students would have benefited from the program next year and, secondly, the program will be available in the private schooling system. Therefore, the Government is saying that the private system can have the option of the five-year-old program, but two-thirds of the State's school system will not have that opportunity. That is an indictment of this Government. If the Government had chosen to spend its money on education, it could have mounted an argument in support of its Budget. However, the Government has chosen not to spend that money on the future of this nation's children, and it will be condemned for that for many years to come.

Mr Osborne: We'll take it off the Port of Roebourne.

Mr RIEBELING: The Government has taken everything else. Perhaps funds could be taken from the Dolphin Discovery Centre at Bunbury.

Mr Leahy: We have always had dolphins at Monkey Mia.

Mr RIEBELING: Yes, perhaps they have just discovered them in the south.

A scandal has occurred with the Budget allocation to our TAFE institutions. As indicated by the Leader of the Opposition, although more money will be spent in the TAFE area, the Government take from charges and fees has increased by 84 per cent. Also, the amount of money contributed by the Federal Government has increased. Therefore, this Government has actually reduced its allocation to TAFE. This confirms my comments about the five-year-old program: This Government is committed to education in rhetoric but not action.

A further deleterious effect in the education system will be the Government's treatment of gardeners and cleaners. An allocation of \$39m has been made for redundancies for the two categories of workers in the next financial year. That is an attack on the education system. We have had loyal and faithful cleaners and gardeners who have done an exceptional job, and continue to do so, under adverse conditions for very low rates of pay. The Government has told these workers that they should work harder and that it will get rid of 25 per cent of them. That is an amazing indictment. The Government has picked on workers who are the lowest paid in the community and are least able to protect themselves. That is cowardly, and should be seen for what it is; namely, an attack on people who are least able to afford the loss of a job. The Minister does not care less.

The Education budget has been insufficiently increased to cover the effects of inflation and the natural increase in student numbers. This will impact on the size of the classes. I understand that the optimum class size is 26 students, but this optimum is not being met. Therefore, the standard of education delivered to children is not what it should be. If the Government decided that due to harsh economic times classes should be increased to 40 or 50 students, it should have said so before the election. In that case people could have judged whether they wanted such reduced services.

I now refer to the Budget's impact on my electorate regions. I have referred to the much maligned "The North" document which, as I have said, can be found in the fiction section

of any library around the State. I will refer to the document part by part, outlining the areas which I thought would have been addressed in the Budget. Firstly, page 12 of the document refers to the fishing industry. I am glad the responsible Minister is in the Chamber to hear my comments. The document was produced by both the Liberal and National Parties, and it indicates that the coalition believed that the industry would grow and that it would continue to establish fishing boat harbours and facilities to provide permanent and safe anchorages. It would also give early attention to dredging Johns Creek, Point Samson and the development of fishing industry facilities at Exmouth. Those were the two commitments. I have been looking for another commitment to be honoured in the Budget papers. The only thing I found was a statement on page 241 which suggests an increase in the presence of Fisheries Department inspectors in the Pilbara to establish a two-man office in Karratha. That occurred in January, well before the election. The Government has not put that in place at all. That did not answer my search for good information about the effects of the Budget in my area. I looked further into the documents and found that the full time employee levels in the department have been reduced by seven throughout the State. There has also been a reduction in the capital works program of about \$300 000, and that surprised me somewhat.

In the summary of the fisheries section of the Budget papers, item 200, last year's expenditure on new capital works programs was \$520 000 and this year's expenditure is to be \$218 000. I have not been able to identify where the \$218 000 is to be spent; however, I hope the Minister will be able to enlighten me that it will all be spent in my area. The chances of that occurring are somewhat slim; however, I hope the Minister will be able to tell me that I am wrong and that all of my fears will be put to rest. Money should be spent on our port facilities, especially the fishing port facilities. Not only do we need to spend capital like the \$6.6m on major port developments, we also need -

Mr House: Can I just tell you that the things you have identified - the dredging of the creek and the establishment of the fishing port - are not the responsibility of the Fisheries Department budget; they would come under the Marine and Harbours document.

Mr RIEBELING: I realise that. In the Government's document it appears in the fisheries section. I am highlighting that my search for that information has not proved successful. I have looked at the sections concerned with marine and harbours as well as those relating to fisheries. There should be a major investment of funds in the Johns Creek Harbour. This harbour was opened about 10 years ago by the Labor Government but I am not sure whether construction was started under the Labor Government. At the time the construction was adequate because of the size and the type of boats that used it. However, the industry in the north, as the Minister will know, has changed dramatically in the past 10 years and to be competitive now the boats have to be bigger, go out further and be able to stay out on the ocean longer. Because of that, the size of the construction that was built about 10 years ago is no longer adequate for the size of the boats. It causes a number of problems.

I had meetings with people from the Department of Marine and Harbours and fishing industry representatives six months ago at Johns Creek. We identified what needed to occur to make that small fishing port viable again. Because of the large size of the boats that operate out of the port at any stage, only one boat can load and offload its equipment and catch. The idea was that the existing wharf should be pulled down, a land backed wharf constructed and a dredging program instituted. That must be the same dredging program that was identified in the document "The North". The Government quite correctly identified what it would do in that area when and if it was elected. Now that the Government has come to office it must be held accountable for what was in the statement in "The North".

We heard that the Department of Marine and Harbours was coming to Point Samson to tell the fishermen some news. The fishermen arrived at the meeting to hear the good news of this Government about the wharf area. The good news was that the marine and harbours officer who had been servicing the wharf for some years is to be pulled out and not replaced. That is the commitment that the Government made to the wharf area. There was no good news at all; it was all gloom and doom. The fishermen of Point

Samson, Johns Creek, have been very disappointed with this type of response from this Government, especially when we consider it was identified in the Liberal-National Party document.

This particular Marine and Harbours officer really works at the coalface of the industry. His job is to maintain order and to ensure that everything on the wharf is in working condition. Some of his duties relate to maintenance matters. He maintains an orderly use of the wharf to ensure that when boats come in, other boats which are finished unloading move to make the job of loading and offloading easier. Some of the fishermen from that area have told me that if it were not for the good work of this officer who has been based there for a number of years, many fights would have developed. After two or three days' fishing the last thing that boat operators want to do is to moor their boat and go looking for a skipper to shift a boat to enable them to unload their catch. One of the main concerns of these fishermen is that no-one will be in charge of the orderly running of that wharf area.

The officer is also in charge of making sure that oil spills do not occur. When they do occur, he tracks down the perpetrator of that spillage and ensures that the bills for cleaning up go to the right people. One of the fishermen who was in my office supporting the cause of this officer had been pursued at some length for causing a spillage, and had no reason, other than respect for the officer's ability to do his job, to be in my office. It is a sign of the officer's unique character that the fishermen have taken such actions to see me and to organise a petition to support an officer who they consider is not well paid and whose job they consider helps them to produce wealth for the economy of this State. The petition will be presented in this House when it is brought back to me.

The officer maintains the signals and lights on the navigational buoys in the channels, as well as checking ropes and ties that are used on the boats. As most people would know, this area is prone to excessive tidal movement and without constant supervision of the moorings, damage can be done to the boats. This chap makes sure that that does not occur. He also ensures that the professional fishermen and the amateurs are correctly licensed and he does all the paperwork. He also discourages people from selling from the boats when he is on duty. As I understand it, he also operates the area where boats are taken to dry dock. Some of the operators who do not know how the equipment works were somewhat concerned at the loss of this officer's skill, and they were concerned that they would have to employ someone else to do the job. The smaller the boats, of course, the less viable are their fishing activities.

Mr House: How many boats operate out of that port?

Mr RIEBELING: About 15. The actual volume of fishing has increased dramatically over the past couple of years.

Mr House: What is the value?

Mr RIEBELING: I am told it is in the millions of dollars and growing. They now have access to what the Chinese long-liners used to have on a limited basis. That is another area on which I will speak later. They are restricted to only a certain tonnage each year because of the possible environmental damage and reduction of stock.

Mr House: In cooperation with some of those fishermen we are still doing some research into what that area can stand and how much can be proved up.

Mr RIEBELING: Their argument is that the Chinese used to take hundreds of tonnes and the locals can take only a couple. This man is one FTE out of a department of 303 FTEs and his career is a drop in the ocean to the department. However, that FTE is vital to the future of the Johns Creek fishing fraternity. I hope the Minister for Transport who is in charge of Marine and Harbours has another look at it and can adjust his budget in such a way that the impact on a small, but increasingly viable, industry will be minimised. I know the Minister is in another place, but I hope that message will go to him. Without the appropriate infrastructure in place, the impact may not be huge or immediately felt, but the viability of the industry will be somewhat tarnished by the removal of even this

one officer, so I am told. The people in the industry, not academics, have told me that this is the way to go and I believe they know what they are talking about.

The Budget documents contain no indication that the small ports in my region will receive any encouragement from the Government. In fact, as related in the Johns Creek incident, since the Government came into office, I have seen discouragement for small port areas. I wrote to the Minister concerning the possibility of a dredging program to the Onslow Creek area, which is Beadon Creek. Although the dredging program involved approximately \$1.3m, it would have allowed the loading of supply boats from the oil industry to access Onslow and Beadon Creek which would provide a huge economic boost to the Onslow townsite. However, despite assurances in the document "The North" which state that the port areas along the coast will be developed, the Minister, who I am sure has not read the policy document, said that adequate port facilities were along the coast and that any boats which wished to use them would use existing port areas. I strongly support major development and his advice to me flies in the face of the announced new project.

Mr House: You did not write to me about that.

Mr RIEBELING: No, I wrote to the Department of Marine and Harbours.

I refer now to the pearling industry. A simple statement in the document "The North" reads, "Support pearl and oyster farming in our Northern waters". That is an interesting statement. My comment is somewhat tongue in cheek, but I urge the Minister to endeavour to get a decision on the increase in the number of shells under which the company Flying Foam Passage is able to operate. I understand there are some hold-ups with our colleagues in the Federal Government.

Mr House: I made the recommendation to the Federal Minister at least three months ago. The matter is right in the court of the Federal Minister who has not yet made a decision.

Mr Hill: It has been with the Federal Minister for over 12 months.

Mr House interjected.

Mr RIEBELING: Yes. The industry is waiting for a decision and has been for some considerable time from the State Government also.

Mr House: Have you written to Federal Minister Michael Lee about the issue?

Mr RIEBELING: No, I wrote to Federal Minister Crean, to no great avail. Perhaps the Minister will have greater success.

Mr House: He was here today; did you talk to him?

Mr RIEBELING: No; the people in Flying Foam Passage are keen to get a decision on the matter. I wanted to let the Minister know that was the case. They are all eagerly awaiting the Minister's expected announcement.

Mr House: Just as long as when you hand your speech around the electorate they will realise it is not me holding it up.

Mr RIEBELING: When you make Flying Foam Passage the most productive pearling industry in the State I will applaud it greatly. It produces the best pearls, even though they are somewhat slower to develop.

I refer now to small business, an area in which the Government spent much time saying it was very involved. Under the heading "Small Business in the North" on page 14 of "The North" document the Liberal Party identified three main areas as being of greatest concern and I agreed with those three areas. I thought and hoped that the areas it highlighted would have been covered in this Budget. In fact, to my great sorrow they were not, despite the Government's telling the people of Ashburton they would be. The document states that many small businesses in the north also suffer housing problems and many are forced to live in substandard accommodation, often on site, while their businesses are established to a point where they can afford suitable accommodation. The Government said it would help these productive people find more suitable housing.

The first action of the Government was to rip \$5m out of the Homeswest budget to make sure the housing which was earmarked for the area was not provided. I hoped those funds would be restored, but I cannot establish whether they have been. I hope the Minister can tell me that the funds will be reallocated. I have great fears for this area which the Government said it wishes to be the most productive area in the State and that it would help this State become even more productive. If and when the next phase of the gas works occurs - I hope it is tomorrow - I hope this Government will encourage Woodside Offshore Petroleum Pty Ltd and the joint venturers to start up the new train so that important projects can get up and running again. If the next stage went ahead tomorrow, we would not have enough houses to accommodate the workers required to build the gas plant to produce the money. This Government must realise that to get royalties, infrastructure is required. The amount of money it puts into an area has some return component attached to it. The more infrastructure put in place the greater the return.

Mr Minson: Who do you think put all the money and effort in to your area in the first place?

Mr RIEBELING: Mainly Hamersley and Woodside.

Mr Minson: Under whose encouragement and guidance? I will tell you what: It was not your lot.

Mr RIEBELING: Was it not? What is the point of that? Is the Minister's argument that the Government should not be putting infrastructure in place?

Mr Minson: No.

Mr RIEBELING: My point is that if the Government wants more development in the Pilbara, it must be prepared to put in more infrastructure. It should not continue to rip more and more out and put less and less back. If that continues, the infrastructure that produces all the wealth of this State will collapse. If the Government wants that to happen, it should continue down the path it is going down presently.

I cannot identify in the Budget where any housing money has been allocated to the Pilbara. I hope the Minister will correct that impression and show me where the Government has provided money for housing. The Budget papers reveal that \$100m has been removed from Homeswest's capital works program. That is an amazing amount of money to be extracted from the economy of this State in one fell swoop. It will have a major impact on this State's performance over the next 12 months. I think it is a mistake and I hope this Government will recognise its mistake and inject more money into the welfare housing sector. Believe it or not, there are poor people out there and they require housing. If this Government thinks that those who are not housed will somehow disappear, it is incorrect. It should be putting more effort into the welfare housing area, not less, so that areas like the Ashburton electorate can produce the wealth that this Government so desperately needs.

The Budget papers reveal that an amount of \$8.4m has been allocated to the Government Employees Housing Authority, which houses most of the Government employees of this State, for the completion of 74 units of accommodation commenced last year. That is a big commitment! It is finishing the houses that we started to build! The Government's further commitment is that it will put a huge amount of \$2.5m towards commencing an additional 20 units of accommodation. That is not in my area; it is the allocation for the entire State to house State Government workers. That sort of commitment to the employees of this State is absolutely disgraceful.

Mr Taylor: It could spend that in your area alone.

Mr RIEBELING: I was going to say that if that entire allocation went to my electorate, it would supply about half the accommodation that is required. To spend that money on 20 new units throughout the State is an insult to the employees whom this Government claims it has in its best interests.

Mr W. Smith: Thanks to your Government.

Mr RIEBELING: No, thanks to the member's Government.

Mr W. Smith: How much money did you leave the State?

Mr RIEBELING: We will tell members of the Police Force about this Government's commitment to housing and we will see how pleased the police are with its efforts.

Mr W. Smith: I speak with them every day and they tell me how pleased they are with your mob!

Mr RIEBELING: Where does the member meet them - in a tavern?

The next area I want to cover is the insufficient industrial land being made available by this Government to meet the needs of the north. Obviously it is a burning issue because it cracked a mention in the Government's policy document.

Mr Blaikie: A very good policy.

Mr RIEBELING: It was a good policy, but it is not being followed. The Government will be able to use the same document next election because everything will still have to be done.

I wrote to the Minister for Lands about the fact that no light industrial land has been made available for new industry in Onslow. Not one block is available for the setting up of a new development which would bring employment, people and prosperity to the Onslow township. The Minister wrote back to me and said that he was aware of the problem and would deal with it in his good time. Unfortunately, that may be another 10 years by the look of things. There is a proposal for a major new industry in the Onslow area, the Onslow salt project. However, I am not sure whether this Government wants that to go ahead. The number of small businesses that that proposal would bring with it will be affected because of the shortage of land. It is an absolutely appalling situation and one which the Minister knows about but has decided to do nothing about. It is an indictment of the Minister and he should accept responsibility for the fact that if this project is held up, smaller businesses will not be able to set up businesses in the town.

[The member's time expired.]

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr C.J. Barnett (Leader of the House).

House adjourned at 12.18 am (Thursday)

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

SETTLEMENT AGENTS SUPERVISORY BOARD - POLICY STATEMENT

570. Mr STRICKLAND to the Minister representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Did the Settlement Agents Supervisory Board issue a "Policy Statement" in March 1992 that the board purports to pursue and apply the statement in its dealings with settlement agents?
- (2) Is there any legal advice received by the board advising that the statement is within the powers of the board, under the Settlement Agents Act 1981?
- (3) Were the board and its predecessor advised of two legal opinions, independently obtained, that the application of the policy statement was ultra vires the powers of the board?
- (4) Was the Minister's predecessor asked to require the board -
 - (a) to seek legal advice on these matters;
 - (b) to operate only within its Act?
- (5) Can the Minister assure the House that the board will operate, in its dealings with licensees and the granting of licences and triennial certificates, only within the confines of the Act, and not try or purport to extend its control or administration by "policies" or otherwise?
- (6) Have Ministry of Consumer Affairs investigators, acting under instructions from the board, targeted certain settlement agents for questioning, the matter in common between those agents being their structure of operation as unit trusts?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

The Minister for Consumer Affairs has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The board has neither sought nor received legal advice as to whether the statement is within the powers of the board under the Settlement Agents Act. It has, however, sought legal advice on the operation of trusts.
- (3) The board was advised of the alleged existence of two such legal opinions but has not sighted them.
- (4) I am not aware of what my predecessor was asked.
- (5) Before it issues a licence the board is required by the Settlement Agents Act to be satisfied that an applicant for a settlement agent's licence has sufficient material and financial resources to enable it to comply with the requirements of the Act. I am satisfied that in seeking to establish rules for a satisfactory financial position the board was acting in pursuance of this requirement. If there are other matters that the member wishes to draw to my attention I will investigate them and make a decision.
- (6) Investigations are being undertaken into alleged breaches of section 44(8) of the Act which prohibits the giving of any reward to any person for referring business to a licensee.

AUSTRALIAN NURSES FEDERATION - WORKPLACE AGREEMENT LEGISLATION, HOSPITAL NEGOTIATIONS

636. Mr TAYLOR to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Has the Minister advised the Australian Nurses Federation that under the Government's Workplace Agreements proposal, that such agreements can

be negotiated on a hospital by hospital basis, such that nurses at separate hospitals could receive quite different pay and conditions?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

While I have advised the Australian Nursing Federation that it is possible for each hospital to negotiate a workplace agreement I also advised that there is a problem because the Australian Nursing Federation's members are covered by the Nurses (ANF-WA Public Sector) Consolidated Award 1990, which is a Federal award. This means that these areas are not impacted by the workplace agreements legislation. I would hope, however, that they would see it in their interest to take action to amend their award so that they are not prevented from benefiting from the workplace agreement legislation.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TOURISM COMMISSION - PILBARA OFFICE- PILBARA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION INCORPORATION

663. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Has the Minister reversed the decision of the previous Government to incorporate the Western Australian Tourism Commission Pilbara office into the Pilbara Development Commission in order to develop a Pilbara tourism theme/strategy?
- (2) If so, why?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) The Tourism Commission has re-established offices in its own right in the regions of Western Australia in line with the coalition's pre-election policy.
- (2) The Government views the charter of the Tourism Commission as one of coordinating Government involvement in tourism throughout the regions and to give a Statewide perspective to tourism marketing and development. As part of this charter, the commission will maintain close liaison with the development authorities and commissions around the State, including the Pilbara.

NURSING HOMES - PATIENTS REQUIRING CARE; HOSPITAL BEDS

779. Mr M. BARNETT to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many patients are there throughout Western Australia who have been assessed as requiring nursing home care?
- (2) How many of these are currently occupying hospital beds?
- (3) Are the numbers outlined in (2) substantially different than the normal situation?
- (4) What is the Government doing to ensure that nursing home patients are not taking up beds in general wards, but provided with adequate and appropriate nursing home beds?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

- (1) Residential aged care is a Commonwealth responsibility. The Commonwealth determines the admission criteria for nursing home care, and maintains the central nursing home waiting list for Western Australia. The Commonwealth advises that, as at

6 September 1993, there were 506 people approved as requiring nursing home care and still awaiting admission to a nursing home.

- (2) Of these, 301 were occupying a hospital bed at the time of approval. In 1993 the average waiting time for admission to a nursing home for a client approved while in a hospital was 27.7 days.
- (3) Compared to 1992, these numbers are not substantially different.
- (4) Frail aged people who are approved for nursing home care while in a hospital have the option of going to a State Government nursing home. State Government nursing homes provide "care awaiting placement" services for people who are awaiting admission to a Commonwealth funded nursing home. It should be noted that some patients and/or their families are not, however, willing to accept a State Government nursing home place, often because of the inner city location and the perceived lack of amenity, and therefore wait as an inpatient for a Commonwealth bed to become available in an area closer to family and friends. A small proportion of hospital inpatients who are approved for nursing home care have difficulty getting admission to a Commonwealth funded nursing home because of their need for complex medical or nursing care or because of severe dementia related behavioural problems. Commonwealth nursing homes are often not willing to accept these categories of resident who have specialised health care needs. The State Government provides services for these residents through its State Government nursing home system.

In response to the above problems, the State Government has instituted discussions with the Commonwealth which would see the transfer of State Government nursing home beds in the metropolitan area to the non-government sector, for redistribution to areas of Perth that are currently "underbedded". Under these proposals, new or expanded nursing home facilities would become available in areas of Perth where current residential aged care needs have been identified. The State Government, however, has recognised that there is a small proportion of frail aged people whose medical or dementia related care needs require specialised nursing home care. The State Government will continue to provide services for these clients but would do so through the more cost effective method of purchasing the extra services required for these clients from high quality Commonwealth funded nursing home services currently operating in the non-government sector.

In regard to country areas of Western Australia, the State Government is proposing the introduction of a shared State-Commonwealth approach to the provision of nursing home services collocated with existing rural hospital services for small rural and remote communities whose aged population would not support a "stand alone" facility. This model of residential aged care recognises the need for a flexible approach in regard to the funding, size and location of aged care services in small communities and acknowledges the right of frail aged residents in these communities to access health care services in the locality in which they have lived and worked. This rural residential aged care proposal was supported by Ministers at the Australian Health Ministers' Conference in July this year and bilateral discussions will shortly be undertaken between the Commonwealth and the State Government to progress this proposal.

ROADS - TOM PRICE-NEWMAN CONSTRUCTION

787. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Has the Minister or the Minister's department taken any action to commence the arrangements for the construction and sealing of a tourist road between the towns of Tom Price and Newman for the purposes of opening up tourism opportunities in the Hamersley Range gorge country?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If yes, what actions have been taken?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

(1)-(3)

The Government is preparing long term strategies for all major roads in the State known as the Roads 2020 project. The Tom Price to Great Northern Highway link will be considered as part of this process. If the link is established along the extension of the Marandoo Access, the estimated cost would be \$20m.

TOURISM - PILBARA

Caravan Parks and Backpacker Holiday Camps, Private Sector Support

794. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Has the Minister or the Minister's department taken any action to support the private sector to develop suitable caravan parks and backpacker holiday camps throughout the Pilbara?
- (2) If so, what action has been taken?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes. Projects will be undertaken on application. Currently, the Western Australian Tourism Commission has not received any requests for such infrastructure.
- (2) Previously, the commission provided guarantees and the Pilbara has seen caravan parks developed. The commission will actively work with the private sector to develop all styles of accommodation.
- (3) Not applicable.

ENERGY BOARD OF REVIEW - RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPACT ON
PILBARA

803. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Has the Minister made any decisions regarding the recommendations of the Energy Board of Review that impact directly on the Pilbara region of Western Australia?
- (2) If so, will the Minister advise me of those decisions?
- (3) If not, when will the Minister make a decision?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1)-(3) An announcement concerning the Energy Board of Review recommendations will be made shortly.

ENERGY BOARD OF REVIEW - RECOMMENDATIONS, GOVERNMENT
CONSIDERATION

804. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Has the Government considered the recommendations of the Energy Board of Review?

- (2) If so, will the Minister advise me of the result of those considerations?
- (3) If not, when will the Government make a decision?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) An announcement will be made shortly.
- (3) Not applicable.

HOSPITALS - PORT HEDLAND REGIONAL
Surgical Registrar Allocation

814. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has a surgical registrar been allocated to the Port Hedland Regional Hospital?
- (2) if so -
 - (a) who is responsible for the wages of the registrar;
 - (b) what procedures/operations is the registrar able to carry out without supervision;
 - (c) is the allocation a permanent allocation to Port Hedland;
 - (d) what is the cost of the placement;
 - (e) what are the ongoing costs of the placement;
 - (f) from what hospital did the registrar come;
 - (g) who requested the placement of the registrar?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes, a surgical registrar has been allocated to Port Hedland Regional Hospital for six months. Negotiations are under way to have a permanent rotation of surgical registrars through Port Hedland Regional Hospital.
- (2)
 - (a) Port Hedland Regional Hospital.
 - (b) Surgical registrars are unable to undertake any operations without supervision other than those he/she would be qualified to do as a qualified medical practitioner.
 - (c) The allocation is planned to be permanent; however, this is yet to be confirmed with Royal Perth Hospital.
 - (d) Salary of \$118 353 per annum, plus location costs of \$2 000 - \$3 000.
 - (e) Salary, which is incorporated in the existing budget of Port Hedland Regional Hospital.
 - (f) Royal Perth Hospital.
 - (g) Port Hedland Regional Hospital and subsequently supported by the Health Department's regional office.

PLANNING APPEALS - MINISTER FOR PLANNING
February-July 60 Upheld

828. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) As the answer to question on notice 630 of 1993 indicated that the Minister had upheld 60 appeals to the Minister for the period 1 February 1992 to 31 July 1993, who were the 60 successful appellants?

- (2) In each case what was the matter of appeal?
- (3) What conditions, if any, were set in granting approval?

Mr LEWIS replied:

(1)-(3)

The information sought by the member would require considerable research and I am not prepared to allocate resources for this purpose. However, if the member has a specific question about an appeal, he can direct that query to me in writing and I will be happy to provide a detailed response.

HOSPITALS - PUBLIC *Contracting out Non-core Services*

841.. Mr TAYLOR to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Does the Minister intend to further explore the suggested potential economic and social benefits of contracting out the so-called non core services in Western Australia's public hospitals including -
 - (a) financial management and accounting services;
 - (b) payroll;
 - (c) purchasing and materials management;
 - (d) information technology;
 - (e) security;
 - (f) cleaning;
 - (g) transport?
- (2) If yes -
 - (a) how does the Minister intend to pursue this matter;
 - (b) for which services?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) The Health Department of Western Australia is developing guidelines for provider units considering making any of their services contestable.
- (b) The guidelines are applicable to all services listed in question (1).
- (3) Not applicable.

HOSPITALS - COUNTRY, CLOSURES OR DOWNGRADING

843. Mr TAYLOR to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

With regard to the Health Department study which recommended the closure or downgrading of a number of country hospitals what are the country hospitals suggested for closure or downgrading?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

I presume the member is referring to a so-called "hit list" prepared by the then Labor Minister for Health. I do not think it appropriate that I should release this report. I refer the member to my answer to his question 849.

HOSPITALS - COUNTRY HOSPITAL AND NURSING POSTS, CLOSURES

849. Mr TAYLOR to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

What country hospital and nursing posts has the Health Department recommended be closed on the grounds that they are not cost efficient or necessary to deliver a suitable service to the community?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

None.

HOSPITALS - MT HENRY AND SUNSET, BEDS TRANSFER TO NURSING HOME PRIVATE AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTIONS

851. Mr TAYLOR to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

What action, if any, does the Minister plan in terms of transferring Mt Henry Hospital and Sunset Hospital beds to the private and not-for-profit sections of the nursing home sector?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

Proposals have been put to the Commonwealth Government which would see the Health Department of Western Australia transfer State nursing home beds in the metropolitan area to the non-government sector over the next three years. These beds, which would include nursing home beds from Mt Henry Hospital and Sunset, would be redistributed to areas in Perth that are currently "underbedded". To the extent that the Commonwealth Government controls the funding of nursing homes in the non-government sector and the allocation of nursing home beds in the State, negotiations are being undertaken with the Commonwealth to secure its cooperation in achieving the privatisation of State Government nursing home beds in the metropolitan area.

HOSPITALS - METROPOLITAN, NEW BEDS, 850 CONSTRUCTION

857. Mr TAYLOR to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

(1) Is it the Government's intention to stand by the previous Government's development plan for metropolitan hospitals to build 850 new beds by 2001?

(2) If not, why not?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

(1)-(2)

The previous plan for metropolitan hospitals was developed in 1989 and the bed requirement figure was based on existing clinical practice and population projections to 2001. The 1989 plan continues to form the basis of the metropolitan hospitals capital works program. However, ongoing changes in technology, clinical practice, particularly day surgery and the recent developments in minimally invasive or "keyhole" surgery, patient management and community expectations mean that planning projections for hospital beds must be reviewed on a regular basis.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT

Review of Management Structure, Outside Consultants' Assistance

905. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

(1) Does the Minister support the McCarrey report that outside consultants be engaged to assist with a review of present management procedure?

- (2) Has the Minister consulted the Commissioner of Police on this matter?
- (3) If so, what is the commissioner's opinion?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr WIESE replied:

(1)-(4)

A Cabinet subcommittee has been set up to review and consider the recommendations of the McCarrey report. This matter will be considered in due course by the Cabinet subcommittee.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Single Enterprise Agreement

906. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Should a single Police Department enterprise agreement be negotiated as recommended by the McCarrey report?
- (2) Has the Police Union been consulted?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) If yes, what is their opinion?
- (5) Has the Civil Service Association been consulted?
- (6) If not, why not?
- (7) If yes, what is their opinion?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Review of Work Scheduling Practices, Outside Management Consultants

907. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister support the McCarrey report that outside management consultants review work scheduling practices with a view to an overhaul of the present practices?
- (2) If yes, why?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) Has the Minister consulted the Commissioner of Police in this matter?
- (5) If yes, what is the commissioner's reaction?
- (6) If not, why not?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Modern Management Techniques

914. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) As the McCarrey report stated that police management techniques are antiquated and modern management techniques ought to be adopted, will the Minister ensure that the advice given by Mr McCarrey is adopted?
- (2) If so, how?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Non-payment of Fines, Driver's Licence Suspension

915. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister support the McCarrey report that non-payment of fines should automatically result in the driver's licence suspension of the offender?
- (2) If yes, when is it going to be adopted?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Training Programs in Management Techniques, Outside Consultants

916. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister support the McCarrey report that outside consultants be engaged to train police officers in modern management techniques?
- (2) Does the Police Department have ongoing training programs for its police officers?
- (3) Does the Police Department have training programs in management techniques?
- (4) If not, why not?
- (5) If yes, were these programs judged inadequate by the McCarrey consultant?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

WATER AUTHORITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - McCARREY REPORT
Overvalued Assets, Excessive Depreciation, Profits Understatement

937. Mr THOMAS to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Did the Independent Commission to Review Public Sector Finances find that the assets of the Water Authority of Western Australia are overvalued in WAWA's financial statements and that this leads to a greater provision for depreciation than is appropriate and that this could lead to understating of profits?
- (2) Does the report give an example of about \$35.5m profit that may have been unnecessarily charged to depreciation?
- (3) Does the Minister support the commission that overvaluations have occurred?
- (4) If yes, will the Minister use the profits now recognised to reverse the increases in water charges as named earlier this year or accelerate the infill sewerage program without the need for an environmental levy?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1)-(4) A Cabinet subcommittee has been set up to review and consider the recommendations of the McCarrey report. This matter will be considered in due course by the Cabinet subcommittee.

WATER AUTHORITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - McCARREY REPORT
Irrigation and Drainage

938. Mr THOMAS to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Did the Independent Commission to Review Public Sector Finances anticipate that the task force reviewing irrigation schemes in the south

west will recommend that the distribution service be taken over by the farmers?

- (2) Did the commission recommend a similar transfer of rural drainage to landowners who benefit from the programs?
- (3) How much would the Water Authority of Western Australia save each year if the landowners who benefit from rural drainage paid for the program?
- (4) Will the Government accept this recommendation by the Independent Commission to Review Public Sector Finances?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1)-(4) A Cabinet subcommittee has been set up to review and consider the recommendations of the McCarrey report. This matter will be considered in due course by the Cabinet subcommittee.

HOSPITALS - PORT HEDLAND REGIONAL

Ward Closures

943. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the Port Hedland Regional Hospital closed any wards since March 1993?
- (2) If so -
 - (a) how many wards have been closed;
 - (b) for what purpose were the wards closed;
 - (c) for how long were the wards closed;
 - (d) were any of the wards closed permanently?
- (3) If not, is any downgrading of the hospital being considered?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

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

HOSPITALS - PORT HEDLAND REGIONAL, SIR CHARLES GAIRDNER

Medical Staff Working Hours

946. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Are medical staff at the Port Hedland Regional Hospital required to work similar hours to their counterparts at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital?
- (2) If not, what are the differences?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

- (1)-(2) Medical staff at Port Hedland Regional Hospital are employed under a different award - the North West Medical Officers Award. They work in different types of positions and there are no directly similar medical positions at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

HOSPITALS - PORT HEDLAND REGIONAL, SIR CHARLES GAIRDNER

Nursing Staff Working Hours

947. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Are nursing staff at the Port Hedland Regional Hospital required to work similar hours to their counterparts at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital?

(2) If not, what are the differences?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

- (1) Nursing staff at Port Hedland Regional Hospital work standard rostered hours according to their current award.
- (2) Currently there are no differences in the hours worked by nurses at Port Hedland Regional Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

COMMERCE AND TRADE, DEPARTMENT OF - McCARREY REPORT

Industry Promotion, Unsuccessful; Trade Promotion Elimination

953. Mr HILL to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Does the Minister support the McCarrey report view that the Department of Commerce and Trade has been unsuccessful in promoting industry?
- (2) Does the Minister intend to implement the McCarrey report recommendation that the Department of Commerce and Trade should not be involved in trade promotion?
- (3) If yes, how does the Minister reconcile this view with the Coalition policy on small business which states, inter alia, that a Coalition Government will ensure assistance is given to identify markets and develop promotion and marketing skills?

Mr COWAN replied:

(1)-(2)

No. A Cabinet subcommittee has been set up to review and consider the recommendations of the McCarrey report. This matter will be considered in due course by the Cabinet subcommittee.

(3) Not applicable.

COMMERCE AND TRADE, DEPARTMENT OF - McCARREY REPORT

Waste Management and Recycling Subprograms, Counterproductive

954. Mr HILL to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Did the Department of Commerce and Trade, during 1992, help establish -
 - (a) a 6,000 tonnes a year recycled tissue plant at Canning Vale;
 - (b) a 3,000 tonnes a year moulded fibre packaging plant at Palmyra;
 - (c) a materials recovery facility and a plastics recycling facility at North Fremantle?
- (2) Does the Minister support the McCarrey report recommendation that the waste management and recycling subprograms are seen as counterproductive and should be ended?

Mr COWAN replied:

(1) Assistance was provided in 1989, 1990 and 1991.

(2) A Cabinet subcommittee has been set up to review and consider the recommendations of the McCarrey report. This matter will be considered in due course by the Cabinet subcommittee.

COMMERCE AND TRADE, DEPARTMENT OF - McCARREY REPORT

Industries with Comparative Advantage in International Trade, No Support

955. Mr HILL to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

Does the Minister accept the McCarrey report view that Western Australian industries which have a comparative advantage in international trade should not be supported by the Department of Commerce and Trade?

Mr COWAN replied:

No. A Cabinet subcommittee has been set up to review and consider the recommendations of the McCarrey report. This matter will be considered in due course by the Cabinet subcommittee.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Management Methods, Improvements

962. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) As the report of the McCarrey commission states that senior police officers are aware of the need for improved management methods and there are examples of innovative approaches, how does the Minister intend improving these management methods?
- (2) In what areas are the improvements required?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Accommodation Changes

963. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) As the McCarrey report confirmed that head office and various suburban police stations were inadequate and below standard, what does the Minister intend doing about the area of police accommodation?
- (2) As the Minister stated earlier this year that the Minister would not proceed with a new headquarters planned by the previous Government and agreed to by the then Shadow Minister for Police, Hon George Cash, will the findings of the McCarrey report change the Minister's position?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Resource Management Procedure Review

966. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister support the recommendation of the McCarrey report that "Improved accommodation, secure communications, adequate equipment and assistance to review resource management procedure be provided in preference to increasing Police numbers"?
- (2) If so, when can it be expected that improved accommodation, improved and secure communications and adequate equipment will be provided to the police?
- (3) If so, when can a review of resource management procedure be expected?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Proceeds of Crime Unit, Resources

967. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister support the McCarrey report that the unit for confiscation of the proceeds of crime should be adequately resourced?

- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If yes, when can the unit expect these resources?
- (4) Should more specialised personnel be employed by the unit?
- (5) If not, why not?
- (6) If yes, when can the unit expect the specialised personnel?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Proceeds of Crime Unit, Specialists' Appointment

968. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister intend heeding the advice in the McCarrey report which states that senior police officers believe that considerable amounts remain uncollected from the proceeds of crime due mainly as a result of inadequate resources, and that the unit should be enlarged and specialists should be appointed?
- (2) If yes, what specialists does the Minister intend appointing?
- (3) Is this advice not inconsistent with the McCarrey commission's previous advice not to increase police personnel?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Equipment Funding

969. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) As the McCarrey report states that poor facilities and inadequate equipment are major handicaps to improving management techniques, what does the Minister intend doing to address the inadequate equipment problem?
- (2) As the Minister has previously stated that the police did not have adequate finances to purchase modern equipment, will the Minister now lobby Cabinet and/or the Treasurer to obtain the necessary funds?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Courts, No Planning and Communication

973. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister for Police support the McCarrey report when it states that there is no planning and communication between courts and the Police?
- (2) If yes, what does the Minister intend doing to rectify this situation?
- (3) Who is responsible for such planning in the Police Department?
- (4) Does the Minister intend taking action against this person as unscheduled costs have been uncovered as a result of the greater overtime costs?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

**MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE) ACT - SECTION 3T,
ACTUARIAL REPORT
*Premium and \$50 Levy***

974. Mr GRILL to the Treasurer representing the Minister for Finance:

- (1) Referring to the Premier's answer to question without notice 232 of 1993, which of the reports dated 17 February, 18 February, 17 March, 22 and 23 March 1993 dealt in detail with the matters contained in section 3T(1) of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act 1943?
- (2) Which actuary provided the report?
- (3) Does the report comply with section 3T(2) of the Act?
- (4) Will the Premier provide or table copies of each of the reports?
- (5) If not, why not?
- (6) What was the subject and detail of the report dated 15 April 1993?
- (7) What relevance does the report of 15 April 1993 have?
- (8) Did the actuarial report of 3 June 1993 contain any information or material not contained in the earlier report?
- (9) If so, what was the additional information or material?
- (10) Why did the Premier tell Parliament that the actuarial report was dated 3 June 1993 when the Premier answered question without notice 189 of 1993 and failed to refer to any other reports until question without notice 232 of 1993?

Mr COURT replied:

The Minister for Finance has provided the following reply -

- (1) All the reports, with the exception of the 23 March 1993 report, which served only to qualify the report of 22 March 1993.
- (2) Mr Dennis Barton.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) No.
- (5) The actuarial report is obtained under section 3T(2) of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act prior to consideration and assessment of the following year's premium requirements. As the report is not a public document I am not prepared to table the report.
- (6)-(7) The subject of the 15 April 1993 report was to consider and assess the following year's premium requirements in accordance with section 3T(2) of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act 1943.
- (8) No. It was a consolidation of all previous reports.
- (9) Not applicable.
- (10) Simply because the 3 June 1993 document was a consolidation of the other reports into a complete document.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
*New Reporting Methods, Consultants Employment***

978. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister support the McCarrey report recommendation that outside management consultants be employed to advise the Police Department on new reporting methods and systems?

- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) What is meant by the McCarrey report when it states that the reporting ought to be more formulated?
- (4) Why are the present reports not formulated?
- (5) Has the Commissioner of Police been advised of this recommendation?
- (6) If not, why not?
- (7) Does the Commissioner support the recommendation?
- (8) Does the Commissioner accept that present reporting methods are inadequate and not formalised?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Awards, Different Conditions, Operational Inefficiencies

980. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister support the McCarrey report recommendation that sworn police officers and public service staff operate under difficult award conditions which lead to operational inefficiencies?
- (2) Because of these inefficiencies, do times of shifts often not coincide, resulting in police being without administrative support?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

**FEDERAL AIRPORTS CORPORATION - PERTH AIRPORT CENTRAL,
SHOPPING AND RESORT COMPLEX PROPOSAL**

997. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) On what date did the Minister's office receive a briefing paper from the Federal Airports Corporation on its plans for a shopping and resort complex?
- (2) Why did the Minister decline several requests by the Federal Airports Corporation for a meeting on the proposal?

Mr LEWIS replied:

- (1) A media statement and brochure from the Federal Airports Corporation advising of its proposal for "Perth Airport Central" was received in my office on 28 April 1993, one day before its public release.
- (2) I have met with representatives of the FAC on at least four occasions and am not aware of any instance where I have declined a request for a meeting.

GOLDFIELDS GAS PIPELINE PROJECT - BIDS
Resources Development Project Team Assessor; Western Mining Consortium

1001. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Who was in the Department of Resources Development project team for assessment of bids for the Goldfields gas pipeline?
- (2) Will a consultant with international experience be engaged to assist in the assessment of the final proposals presented to Government following the feasibility study?
- (3) Did the project team recommend to the Minister that the Western Mining consortium be chosen as the most likely to proceed?

- (4) Was the Western Mining consortium bid potentially the most productive of State benefit?
- (5) If yes, what aspects of that bid, compared to the Australian Gaslight Company-Devex and Westralia Pipeline proposals, made it more productive of State benefit?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) Expressions of interest were assessed by -
 W.H. Power, Senior Manager, Department of Resources Development
 R.J. Vaughan, Senior Manager, Department of Resources Development
 R. Elsey, Chief Executive, Kimberley Water Resources Development Office
 I. Fraser, Director, Department of Minerals and Energy
 K.P. Kolf, Senior Manager, Energy Policy and Planning Bureau.
- (2) This is under consideration.
- (3)-(4) Yes.
- (5) The goldfields gas transmission joint venture was assessed by the team to be a highly competent group with a particularly well thought out proposal, integrating the proposed goldfields gas pipeline as a transmission system with the demand of the market.

STATE ENERGY COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - POWER CUTS, CANNING VALE

1002. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) How many power cuts have been experienced in the Canning Vale district in the past two years?
- (2) What has been the cause of these power cuts?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) 20 high voltage feeder outages over the past two years.
- (2) Vandalism - four. Some individual customers in the area supplied from low voltage networks have experienced a higher number of outages due to a high incidence of vandalism in certain streets.
 Plant failure - five
 Bushfires, polefires and lightning - five
 Vehicle colliding with pole - one
 Trees in wires - one
 Bird in wires - one
 Miscellaneous - three.

STATE ENERGY COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - POWER CUTS, SATURDAY 4 SEPTEMBER; SOUTH WEST GRID

1003. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) How extensive was the power cut experienced on Saturday 4 September 1993?
- (2) Has an inquiry been conducted into the cause of the power cut?
- (3) If yes, what are the conclusions of that inquiry?
- (4) On how many occasions in the last three years have there been power cuts in the State Energy Commission of Western Australia's south west grid?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) Approximately 150 MW of load was automatically disconnected, representing about 11 per cent of the total load at that time. The

disconnections occurred throughout the south west interconnected system, extending as far north as Geraldton and east to Kalgoorlie.

- (2) Yes.
- (3) The cause was a hydraulic mechanism failure which resulted in an instantaneous trip of generator No 6 at Muja power station. Automatic protection equipment disconnected some consumers to limit the extent of the power disruption.
- (4) There have been a total of 10 under frequency load shedding events in the past three years.

UFLS EVENTS FROM JULY 1990

Electricity Supply Division: Transmission Branch
South West System

No	Date	Units	MW	Time off	Time on
846	4/9/93	Muja 6	150	11.04 am	12.21 pm
826	23/6/93	Muja 6	120	8.50 pm	10.42 pm
819	28/5/93	Muja 7	60	1.30 pm	1.47 pm
803	30/4/93	Muja 6	25	11.45 am	12.15 pm
772	16/2/93	Muja 7	80	10.38 am	11.12 am
632	2/4/92	Muja 8	110	10.26 am	11.48 am
627	30/3/92	Mu 5, 6 & 7	320	8.02 am	10.01 am
524	23/11/91	Mu 5 & 6	180	3.25 am	5.41 am
347	6/12/90	Muja 6	100	10.53 am	11.25 am
305	19/8/90	Muja 6	145	6.21 pm	7.10 pm

GOLDFIELDS GAS PIPELINE PROJECT - STATE ENERGY COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, RIGHT TO BID

1004. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Energy:

How can the Minister continue to claim that the State Energy Commission of Western Australia had every right to bid for the Goldfields gas pipeline project when the advertisement calling for expressions of interest explicitly stated that the project would be conceived as and remain a wholly private undertaking?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

While the advertisement stated the intention for the goldfields gas pipeline to be a private undertaking, this did not preclude SECWA from becoming involved in some way. The goldfields gas pipeline will still provide the opportunity for SECWA to expand its markets in those regions.

CHEMISTRY CENTRE (W.A.) - PRIVATISATION

1005. Mr THOMAS to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Did the Independent Commission to review Public Sector Finances recommend that the Chemistry Centre be privatised and the project to construct new accommodation for the Centre be reviewed as a matter of priority?
- (2) Is the Chemistry Centre a participant in the AJ Parker Co-operative Research Centre in Hydrometallurgy?
- (3) Does the Minister support the Commission recommendation that the Chemistry Centre be privatised?
- (4) Will the Government review the project to construct new accommodation for the Centre?
- (5) How would the Government support the AJ Parker Co-operative Research Centre in Hydrometallurgy if the Chemistry Centre were privatised?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

The Minister for Mines has provided the following reply -

(1)-(2) Yes.

(3)-(4)

The Minister for Mines is reviewing the commission's recommendations as they relate to the Department of Minerals and Energy and will be making a submission to the ministerial committee set up to implement appropriate changes.

(5) The Government is committed to continuing support for the A.J. Parker Co-operative Research Centre for Hydrometallurgy. The impact on the A.J. Parker Centre, if the Chemistry Centre were to be privatised, would be addressed at the appropriate time.

RITZ DRYCLEANERS - GOVERNMENT LAUNDRY WORK DISCUSSIONS

1011. Mr TAYLOR to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

(1) Has the Minister and/or the Minister's department had either formal or informal discussions with the Ritz drycleaning firm regarding any proposals to undertake Government laundry work?

(2) If yes, what matters are, or have been, under discussion or consideration?

Mr MINSON replied:

The Minister for Health has provided the following reply -

(1) No.

(2) Not applicable.

ENERGY BOARD OF REVIEW - RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPACT ON PILBARA

1023. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Energy:

(1) Has the Minister made any decisions regarding the recommendations of the Energy Board of Review that impact directly on the Pilbara region of Western Australia?

(2) If so, will the Minister advise me of those decisions?

(3) If not, when will the Minister make a decision?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

(1)-(3) An announcement will be made shortly about the restructuring process. Arrangements for the Pilbara will be addressed in this process.

ENERGY BOARD OF REVIEW - RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERATION

1024. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Energy:

(1) Has the Government considered the recommendations of the Energy Board of Review?

(2) If so, will the Minister advise me of the result of those considerations?

(3) If not, when will the Government make a decision?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

Please refer to question 804.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TOURISM COMMISSION - PILBARA TRAVEL ASSOCIATION, JOINT PROMOTIONS

1027. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Tourism:

What are the programs being conducted by the Minister's department, in conjunction with the Pilbara Travel Association, to tap the Perth metropolitan and south west tourism markets?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1) Retail and information dissemination via Perth Tourist Centre.
- (2) Various promotions jointly with regions -
 - West Week Expo
 - Holiday and Travel Show
 - North West Tourism Exchange
 - Caravan and Camping Show
- (3) Media and travel agents familiarisation programs.
- (4) Pilbara Planner - distributed to selected travel agents who have an interest in selling the domestic - intrastate - product.
- (5) Proposed Bunbury Expo, 19 to 21 November 1993. The expo is a tourism mart in which the public are invited to view the industry's products on display. These displays will represent both country and metropolitan product and the Pilbara will be represented.

WATER AUTHORITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - PILBARA WATER RESOURCES INFRASTRUCTURE, PRIVATE COMPANIES' CONTRIBUTIONS

1028. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has any private company contributed to the water resources infrastructure in the Pilbara region?
- (2) If so -
 - (a) what is the name/s of the company/ies that have contributed;
 - (b) what particular infrastructure did the company/ies contribute;
 - (c) what is the value of the contribution/s?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Mt Newman Mining - Yule Turner and De Grey water supply schemes - \$13.7m.
Mt Goldsworthy - Yule Turner and De Grey water supply schemes - \$2.7m - Finucane pipeline and appurtenant structures - \$0.8m.
Hamersley Iron - Millstream Dampier pipeline - \$9.5m.
Cliffs Robe River Iron Associates - Millstream water supply - \$9.9m.
Woodside Petroleum Development Pty Ltd - West Pilbara water supply - \$9.9m.

HOMESWEST - ACCOMMODATION MANAGERS, WORKING IN PREVIOUS MINISTER'S ELECTORATE OFFICE CESSATION

1031. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has the practice of having Homeswest accommodation managers work in the previous Minister's electorate office ceased?
- (2) Is this practice occurring in any other electorate office?
- (3) When was the last occasion that an accommodation manager worked in the previous Minister's electorate office?

Mr LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) 20 August 1993.

HOMESWEST - CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

1033. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) When will Homeswest move to a cyclical maintenance program as recommended by the McCarrey report?
- (2) What will be the cost of this move?

Mr LEWIS replied:

- (1) Homeswest has a cyclical maintenance program subject to annual budget and need.
- (2) Not applicable.

HOMESWEST - KEYSTART TRUST STRUCTURE, FOUR COMPANIES AMALGAMATION; LOANS FUNCTION, SALE TO PRIVATE SECTOR

1034. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Will Homeswest consider amalgamating the four separate companies in the Keystart trust structure?
- (2) What would this amalgamation cost?
- (3) What savings might result?
- (4) What is the historical basis of the four company structure?
- (5) Is the Government considering selling Homeswest's loan function to the private sector?

Mr LEWIS replied:

- (1) Amalgamation is being investigated.
- (2) Not known.
- (3) To be assessed.
- (4) At that time it was considered appropriate to separate the activity of raising funds - Keystart Bonds Ltd - from the lending of funds to borrowers - Keystart Loans Ltd. The other two companies, Keystart Support Ltd and Keystart Support Subsidiary Ltd, were support arrangements in case Homeswest had to assist Keystart with a grant or loan if a temporary cash shortfall occurred. Keystart is financially viable and the support arrangements are not being used.
- (5) This recommendation has yet to be examined in detail.

HOMESWEST - HOUSING SERVICES DIRECTORATE REVIEW

1035. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has the review of the Housing Services Directorate of Homeswest concluded?
- (2) What were its recommendations?
- (3) Who conducted this review?
- (4) What is the timetable for implementation of the recommendations?

Mr LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A summary of the review is available for the member's inspection.
- (3) Two Homeswest employees - Bevan Beaver and Allan Fletcher.
- (4) The approved recommendations will be implemented over the next 12 months.

POLICE DEPARTMENT - McCARREY REPORT
Management, Lack of Accountability for Work During Shifts

1041. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Minister for Police endorse the McCarrey report's finding that there is a lack of accountability for work done during police shifts and a lack of performance measures to assess the success of shifts and consequently that management has little way of knowing the effectiveness of policing and what changes in scheduling are needed to achieve better results?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If yes, what does the Minister intend doing to rectify the situation?

Mr WIESE replied:

I refer the member to my reply to question 905.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

SWIMMING POOL FENCING REGULATIONS - CHILD DROWNINGS

271. Mr MARLBOROUGH to the Minister for Local Government:

In reference to yesterday's dorothy dixer, I ask -

- (1) Is the Minister aware that there has been only one child death in backyard pools in Western Australia since swimming pool isolation fencing was made mandatory on 1 July last year and that that death, in Kalgoorlie on 9 March, occurred in an unfenced wading pool?
- (2) Is he aware that before 1 July last year child drownings averaged about four a year in Western Australia?
- (3) Does he concede that mandatory isolation fencing, which he now intends to abandon, saves the lives of children?
- (4) Will the Minister resign if a single child drowns as a result of his decision?

Mr Kierath: That is disgraceful.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: It is not disgraceful at all.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Peel and other members to order.

Mr OMODEI replied:

(1)-(4)

The member for Peel would know full well that I have been on public radio discussing this matter in the past few days and yes, I did answer a question in relation to swimming pool fences. The question of statistics in relation to drowning in swimming pools could be debated until the cows come home. Members will know that marvellous things can be done with statistics. The member has failed to point out that although there was a drowning in a backyard swimming pool this year, the drowning previous to that occurred in an isolation, fenced pool. I have been listening to the community of Western Australia and a wide range of people -

Mr Marlborough: What nonsense! You listen to the swimming pool manufacturers.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OMODEI: I have not spoken to the swimming pool manufacturers for at least five months. I have spoken to many people in the community who are

concerned about the restrictive nature of the existing regulations on the fences. As the Minister, I am reviewing those regulations in line with the national standards for backyard fences and I intend to give the option to people in Western Australia to have either a swimming pool or a perimeter fence with self-latching and self-closing gates. That has been made very plain to the community and is in line with the majority of opinions that I have received since I became a Minister.

STATE BUDGET - REVENUE INCREASE 5.4 PER CENT

272. Mr BOARD to the Treasurer:

Is the Treasurer aware that the Leader of the Opposition yesterday stated that revenue in this year's Budget increased by 5.4 per cent compared with 2.4 per cent in her last Budget? Is this correct?

Mr COURT replied:

As with many of the statistics that the Leader of the Opposition quoted yesterday in her Budget reply speech, she got it wrong. The revenue increase last year was 5.9 per cent; in real terms, it was 4.7 per cent. This year it was 5.3 per cent; in real terms, three per cent. In other words, the growth was considerably less in revenue than that under the former Treasurer last year. So the figures are quite the opposite to those which the Leader of the Opposition was trying to have us believe yesterday. On the expenditure side, the Leader of the Opposition said that the nominal growth this year was 4.3 per cent under our Government; it was four per cent. Under her Government, the figure for last year was 4.5 per cent. She cannot get it right. She must compare apples with apples.

Dr Lawrence: We did.

Mr COURT: Well, why did the Opposition ask us a question today about how the figures were determined?

Dr Lawrence: We wanted to make sure of them.

Mr COURT: The Leader of the Opposition does not know how the figures were determined. During the election campaign, we were told that we were going to implement a \$880 household tax to fund a \$750m deficit this year. Members opposite had no credibility during that election campaign. I quote -

Labor provided no hard evidence to substantiate the claim which was flatly denied by the coalition. Coming on top of its scare campaign over the goods and services tax and the Kennett Government's industrial relations reforms, the claim was a badly calculated stunt.

Members opposite made up statistics to try to present an argument. They were the exact opposite of the situation and I suggest they check their figures.

SWIMMING POOL FENCING REGULATIONS - NATIONAL BUILDING STANDARDS, SELF-LATCHING AND SELF-CLOSING GATES

273. Mr MARLBOROUGH to the Minister for Local Government:

Yesterday the Minister claimed in question time that new national building standards must be adhered to in relation to preventing children drowning in swimming pools.

- (1) Is he aware that he has misled Parliament, because the national standards specifically support self-closing and self-latching gates only in houses where isolation fencing is impracticable to erect?

- (2) Is he aware that the national building standards strongly support the Labor Government's tough decision on 1 July last year to require mandatory isolation fencing and to allow self-latching and self-closing doors on homes only in exceptional circumstances?

Mr OMODEI replied:

(1)-(2)

I think the member is a bit of a slow learner. We took into account the national guidelines when drafting those regulations. I want the member to know that under the previous Administration, regulations were brought down in June 1992 and all pools after that time were subject to mandatory isolation fencing. Forty thousand pools existed prior to that time; they were subject to no regulation at all. By adopting a commonsense or rational approach, I am attempting to convince those 40 000 pool owners that they should have some type of fencing and, in this case, some type of perimeter fencing with self-latching and self-closing gates.

I believe that is a sensible approach. Low income people, pensioners and people who have children who can already swim have asked me why they need isolation fencing, and why they could not have the option. Members would know that in excess of one million people visit Kings Park in any given year, yet none of the pools in Kings Park has isolation fencing. None of the water bodies in this State has isolation fencing.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OMODEI: Is the member suggesting that the 200 000 or 300 000 people who visit my electorate should have temporary isolation fencing for the children in their care? That really is a nonsense.

CABLE, BARRY - CYCLING ACHIEVEMENT

274. Mr MARSHALL to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

Is the Parliamentary Secretary aware of the latest achievement of Barry Cable?

Mr TUBBY replied:

All members no doubt are aware that Barry Cable arrived in Melbourne today, just nine days after leaving the Perth General Post Office on Monday, 13 September. Barry Cable took up serious cycling less than two years ago and won a bronze medal at the Masters Games earlier this year. Barry Cable set out on this challenge because he is an achiever. He is a man who sets goals and, in doing so, is an example to all of us, both young and old, including those members of the Opposition who are interjecting. Barry Cable rode day and night, through very hot conditions on the Nullarbor to extremely bleak and chilly conditions in South Australia and Victoria. The completion of his ride also marks another milestone in Barry's life: He is 50 today.

Barry's marathon ride follows a career as one of the greatest footballers our game has known. Barry played 405 games for Perth, North Melbourne, East Perth, Western Australia and Victoria; he won three Sandover medals, four Simpson medals and the Tassie medal, was awarded an MBE, and was many times declared best and fairest for Perth and North Melbourne. He played in five grand finals for North Melbourne, three for Perth and one for East Perth. Barry was an all-Australian and was captain and best on ground when Western Australia beat Victoria in the first State of Origin match.

Mr Marlborough: Is he still alive?

Mr TUBBY: He turned 50 today. Barry Cable coached East Perth to a premiership in 1978, but a year later was almost killed in a tractor accident. He recovered, and, while still on crutches, went back to coach East Perth into the finals in 1980. From there, he coached North Melbourne to a minor premiership. Since then, Barry Cable has been skills coach with the Eagles and has become an integral part of the football development program in this State. Of all of Western Australia's great sportsmen, few have given their time as willingly for charity and the community as Barry Cable. Not only is he the most decorated footballer we have known, but also he is a man of exemplary character. He is a living example of Western Australian initiative and endeavour. On behalf of the people of this State, I ask that this House support this recognition of Barry Cable as a great Western Australian achiever.

Government members: Hear, hear!

POLICE - TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, CIB CAR

275. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

I refer once again to the circumstances surrounding the car crash on 6 September involving four CIB detectives, a matter on which the Minister is fully briefed.

Mr Kierath: Are you trying to chase another headline?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CATANIA: This is a serious affair.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CATANIA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am sure that, unlike members opposite, you realise it is a serious affair. Why did the Minister say on "The 7.30 Report" last night that he was unaware that the officers involved in the accident had refused to answer questions, when in Parliament yesterday afternoon the Minister was fully aware of the fact, as one would expect him to be following his briefing from the Police Department?

Mr WIESE replied:

In relation to the previous question, the only point left out was that Barry Cable is a Narrogin boy and we are very proud of him.

As to the car crash question, the member for Balcatta has been fully briefed on the matter and does not need another answer. Whether the CIB officers answered or did not answer the questions put to them, I understand that on legal advice perhaps two of the officers are not required under police regulations to answer such questions because they were off duty at the time of the crash. For that reason, they may not have answered questions being put to them by the internal investigation unit.

ROYAL COMMISSION - OUTSTANDING FEES, REPRESENTATION OF LABOR GOVERNMENT MINISTERS

276. Mr PRINCE to the Premier:

I have given some notice of the question which arises as a result of representations made to me by some lawyers.

- (1) Can the Premier advise the House how much is still outstanding in unpaid legal fees arising out of representation of Labor Government Ministers who appeared before the Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters?

- (2) Do the amounts charged by lawyers from the Eastern States differ substantially from those charged by Western Australian lawyers?
- (3) When will all the outstanding accounts be paid?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) There are still some outstanding fees in relation to representation of the Labor Government Ministers at the royal commission. Final costs are yet to be settled. As members will be aware, already an amount of \$12.2m has been spent on legal fees, the majority of which was in respect of former Government Ministers.
- (2) Charges rendered by Eastern States-based Queen's Counsel were generally higher than those charged by their Western Australian colleagues. I have the full details which I can provide. However, the Eastern States' Queen's Counsel costs each day ran from \$3 500 to \$6 000. The local QC charges ranged from \$2 500 to \$3 300 each day.
- (3) Under established procedure, all accounts for legal fees must be assessed by the Solicitor General, who provides the Premier with advice on the matter. Payments are made by way of ex-gratia assistance pursuant to Treasurer's Instruction 319 and require the Premier's approval. Where recipients of legal assistance have exceeded a ceiling of \$50 000, all such payments also require Executive Council approval. In view of this, it is not possible to specify the date when all accounts will be paid, especially as some may remain in dispute for some time.

POLICE - TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, CIB CAR

277. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

I draw the Minister's attention to his remarks reported in *The West Australian* today to the effect that police investigating the car crash on 6 September had tried "desperately hard" to find the four CIB detectives involved. Given that the Minister appears to have satisfied himself that the investigating police left no stone unturned in their inquiries, how does the Minister explain the fact that they failed to visit the homes of the detectives involved to determine if they were there?

Mr WIESE replied:

The information I have on attempts to discover the whereabouts of the CIB officers is that the investigating officers would have tried very hard to locate them. It appears from that information that maybe the investigating officers could have tried a little bit harder by visiting the homes of the CIB officers rather than telephoning. I share the concern expressed by Acting Commissioner of Police Frank Zanetti today on the matter.

POLICE - TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, CIB CAR

278. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the car crash on 6 September involving four detectives and the Minister's comments in Parliament yesterday when he criticised a reporter for refusing to provide police with the details of the patron of Sinatra's who used a mobile telephone belonging to one of the Criminal Investigation Bureau detectives. I ask -

- (1) Why did the police investigating team have to resort to approaching the reporter for information about the patron?
- (2) Why did the police investigating team fail to trace the patron, who may have vital evidence, through the number called on the mobile telephone?

Mr WIESE replied:

(1)-(2)

That is almost a ridiculous question. The police had endeavoured to locate as many of the patrons who were in Sinatra's that evening as they could. I understand there were about 30 or more patrons. In the questioning process, the police have not been able to locate all the people who were in Sinatra's at the time. It is fairly obvious that some of the patrons may not have been willing to come forward in view of the publicity that the incident has been given. Of course, when the police officers were aware of the accusations that were being made by the reporter it was obvious they would have to approach him with the understanding that he had information about the incident. It should be a great disappointment to everybody in this Parliament that they were not able to get this person to supply the information -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WIESE: It should be a great disappointment to everybody in this Parliament and in Western Australia that the police officers were not able to get the information from this reporter. He would not even disclose that the police officers' telephone was being used by somebody else in Sinatra's.

SOUP PATROL PROGRAM, GERALDTON - ESTABLISHMENT AND SOURCE

279. Mr BLOFFWITCH to the Attorney General:

Will the Attorney General outline the new soup patrol and the source of the supply of the soup that has been established in Geraldton?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

I have been approached by the Red Cross Society in Geraldton to provide services for the disadvantaged in Geraldton. It wanted to provide a soup patrol. Discussions eventuated between officers at the Greenough Regional Prison and the Red Cross Society in Geraldton to access the kitchen at the prison to provide 45 litres of soup. I am pleased to be able to advise and support - I am sure that if they tried members opposite would be pleased - the willingness of the prison staff and the participation of the prisoners to provide for those in need in Geraldton. I was pleased that this program was launched by the mayor last Monday.

POLICE - TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, CIB CAR

280. Mr CATANIA to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the car crash on 6 September. Is the Minister still satisfied that no stone has been left unturned in the Police Department's investigation of this matter?

Mr WIESE replied:

It would be far too premature for me to make that judgment. The police internal investigations unit and the police tribunal or the Police Commissioner - whoever will be hearing the charges against these officers - needs to be given an opportunity to complete the inquiry and to go through the investigatory period. I do not think it is appropriate for me to be making any prejudgment on this matter.

HOSPITALS - ST JOHN OF GOD, BUNBURY *Public Health Care Takeover, Residents' Opposition*

281. Mr TAYLOR to the Premier:

I refer to the recent survey in Bunbury which showed that 85 per cent of residents did not agree with the St John of God Hospital takeover of public

health care. When is the Premier going to take notice of the wishes of the vast majority of Bunbury residents and direct his Minister for Health to stop negotiations with St John of God Hospital and proceed with the construction of a Government owned and operated regional hospital in the Bunbury area?

Mr COURT replied:

It would be interesting to know what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition did when he was in Government. He did nothing.

Mr Taylor: You stopped work on the hospital site; it is now a big, flat patch of dirt.

The SPEAKER: Order! Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the question is being answered.

Mr COURT: The Government is currently negotiating with St John of God Hospital on a proposition whereby a private and a Government hospital can be operated in one facility.

Mr Taylor: It is going nowhere.

Mrs Hallahan: What about the fact that people do not want it that way?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COURT: If the Government cannot negotiate a satisfactory conclusion it will look at another option.

Mr Taylor: What is your other option?

Mr COURT: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition knows only too well that the private hospital will go broke if it continues. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition knows that Bunbury needs a new Government hospital.

Mr Taylor: Is that why you are doing it?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr Gallop: That is an interesting admission.

Mrs Henderson: Yes, that is a very interesting comment.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COURT: Surely the Government must consider a proposition which would enable the Bunbury people to get a better hospital and hospital services than they are currently getting. The Minister for Health is working out this proposal with St John's in full consultation with local people. If those negotiations cannot be concluded in a satisfactory manner the Government will consider other options. The Opposition should look at its track record in this matter.

HOSPITALS - BUNBURY, NEW FACILITY, SERIOUS SITUATION

282. Dr TURNBULL to the Premier:

Will the Premier elucidate on the very serious situation which is developing in Bunbury whereby if no suitable resolution is found, which includes the high tech facility located at the Bunbury St John of God Hospital, the Bunbury region and the people of Bunbury will lose out on the potential to have sophisticated medical services? Would the Premier elucidate also on how serious the situation is becoming with the undermining of the proposal which has been going on by members of the Opposition?

Mr Taylor: Does the member for Collie know that 85 per cent of people in the Bunbury area are not happy?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr TURNBULL: The situation is so serious that there is a distinct possibility that the people in the south west will be deprived of high tech medical services.

Mr COURT replied:

I thank the member for Collie for the question, and for the answer. The region can afford to have only one major hospital operating and the Government is trying to negotiate such a facility. Yes, members opposite are doing everything they can to undermine the proposal instead of putting forward some constructive proposal.

WATER AUTHORITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - WATER CHARGES INCREASE

283. Dr LAWRENCE to the Treasurer:

I refer to the lead story in the property section of this morning's *The West Australian* entitled "Property owners irate at rate rises". What does the Treasurer have to say to -

- (1) The Uniting Church in Australia (WA) Property Trust which says that the massive rises in water rates will hurt small CBD shop owners and tenants;
- (2) St Martins Properties (Aust) Pty Ltd whose Karrinyup shopping centre faces a massive 14 per cent increase in water authority charges which no doubt will be passed on to its tenants;
- (3) The owner and tenants of Plaza Arcade who expected a decrease and instead face an eight per cent hike;
- (4) The thousands of other small business people who have been swindled by this Government's promise to assist small business, but which has instead dramatically increased water charges?

The SPEAKER: I think it is unfortunate the word "swindle" was used.

Mr COURT replied:

(1)-(4)

I am not aware of the article in this morning's newspaper. However, in asking that question, the Leader of the Opposition confused water and sewerage charges. The great majority of businesses had cuts in their water rates, as the Leader of the Opposition knows. Some of the suburban properties - for example, a couple of shopping centres - incurred a major increase in their valuations which will affect their sewerage rates. Land tax rates for those in the central business district have been considerably decreased. I do not know the specific situation of the properties belonging to the Uniting Church. However, if the Leader of the Opposition wants me to obtain more details, I will.
