

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 24 September 1987

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

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

Speaker's Gallery

THE SPEAKER: I advise members that I have as my guest in the Speaker's Gallery today Hon Indrajit Gupta, who is a member of the Lok Sabha or House of Representatives of India.

[Applause.]

BILLS

Standing Orders Suspension

MR PEARCE (Armadale -- Leader of the House) [10.49 am]: I move --

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the "Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Amendment Bill (No 2)" to be introduced without notice and to enable that Bill and the "Electoral Distribution Bill 1987" to be taken to the stage that the second readings of those Bills are moved, on the day they are introduced.

I have discussed this measure with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The sole purpose of this measure is that given that there is to be a two-week break during the school holiday period, it will ensure that the Opposition has the maximum time in which to consider the Bills and the second readings so that they can be debated when the House resumes.

Question put.

The SPEAKER: To be carried, this motion requires an absolute majority. I have counted the House; and, there being no dissentient voice, I declare the question carried.

Question thus passed.

ELECTORAL DISTRIBUTION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Taylor (Minister for Health), and read a first time.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT ACT

Reporting Procedures: Ministerial Statement

MR PETER DOWDING (Maylands -- Minister assisting the Treasurer) [10.53 am] -- by leave: As members may be aware, departments and statutory authorities have just recently completed their first year of operations under the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act and have been engaged in fulfilling the annual reporting obligations imposed by the legislation. For many agencies, this has been a simple task as they have a long experience in preparing annual reports. However, for many others it is the first time they have either had to report or to do so in such a detailed way and, quite naturally, some have encountered difficulties in meeting all the requirements. This is also linked to the enhancement of the Government accounting system.

Treasury is implementing a series of bilateral discussions with departments regarding the ongoing development of GAS. There have been some problems with the ongoing development of this system as a proper management tool for both Government and its agencies; but the Government is clearly of the view that departments and agencies must move towards more purpose-based budgeting and that departments must start rescheduling their accounts to properly reflect this. Major advances are being made in this area in response to significant initiatives of the Government. A number of departments and agencies have difficulty moving along this path as quickly as they should, but I advise the House that this Government is firmly committed to progressing a comprehensive financial system which will clearly reflect proper accountability for the disbursement of taxpayers' funds.

In drafting the Act it was anticipated that there would be teething problems in the initial

years and that the achievement of a common high standard of reporting across the public sector would be an evolving process. Provision was therefore made in the legislation for the granting of exemptions in the case of certain requirements, and extensions in respect of the more precise deadlines that have been set.

The main area where exemptions have been sought is in respect of performance indicators. This was expected, as the production of meaningful indicators requires that corporate planning be well established and that proper management systems be in place. In many instances, this process is still to be completed. The Government has a deadline of December 1987 for the completion of corporate plans by all public sector agencies. Where exemptions have been granted, these have been for one year only and, in accordance with the Act, the agencies concerned are required to include in their annual reports details as to why they were unable to develop performance indicators and what steps were being taken to ensure their production in future years. It is pleasing to note that where exemptions have been given, there have been positive indications as to progress that will be made next year.

The Act also allows for the granting of extensions of time for annual reporting provided agencies apply within two months of the year end and the application is supported by detailed reasons. In cases where an extension is granted, the Minister must inform both Houses of Parliament within 21 days. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, a number of agencies have sought an extension of time in which they must report and members will be aware of this through the several advices given in recent days.

Notwithstanding the exemptions and extensions that have been given, the Government is pleased with the progress that has been made in this initial year of operation, given the magnitude of the task imposed on public sector agencies by the Government's decision to proceed with the legislation. Overall the number of exemptions and extensions granted are of only minor significance, when compared with what has been achieved in terms of improved accountability and financial management.

On motion by Mr Court (Deputy Leader of the Opposition), leave granted for the Leader of the Opposition to respond to the ministerial statement at a later stage of the sitting.

HEALTH AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie -- Minister for Health) [10.59 am]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill provides for a number of amendments to the Health Act 1911, including new provisions relating to the roles of the Perinatal and Infant Mortality Committee and the Pesticides Advisory Committee. The Bill also introduces comprehensive controls over therapeutic goods, pet food, and aquatic facilities such as spa pools and water slides. Penalties for breaches of the Act are increased. A number of minor amendments and clerical errors are also addressed in the Bill.

Since its passage through the Parliament more than 70 years ago, the Health Act 1911 has provided the basis for the control and regulation of public health matters for the State. Like other legislation it sets the standards that society considers appropriate in dealing with public health problems. When a person breaches the standards of behaviour that the Act sets, he must be accountable for his actions. He may be prosecuted for his actions and should be discouraged from re-offending. Unfortunately, the low penalties in the Health Act have not acted as a deterrent to offenders. Penalties presently range from maximums of \$10 to \$200. Breaches of regulations have been liable for only a maximum penalty of \$200.

The low penalties have also meant that two things have occurred. First, the low range of fines handed out by the courts under the present Act has offered little encouragement for persons breaching the Act to mend their ways. If they chose to disregard health standards or orders of local authorities they might find themselves paying a fine of only \$25 or \$50 if they were taken to court. Members will agree that a fine of that size would be regarded as merely a light "overhead" for some businesses, especially if it represented an alternative to costly structural work. As a consequence of the low level of fines being imposed by courts, local authorities have understandably been reluctant to initiate prosecutions. The amount of the fines has not changed behaviour patterns. Prosecutions have been costly and the time and effort spent on them have been unproductive in terms of reducing breaches of the Act and regulations.

Following advice from Parliamentary Counsel the Act has been amended to place all penalties in a schedule to the Act. The penalties are now grouped into seven groups ranging from \$500 maximum penalty to \$10 000 maximum penalty. If people continue to offend, they will also be subject to a daily penalty of between five and 10 per cent of the maximum penalty for the offence. In addition the Act specifies minimum penalties for first, second and subsequent offences. The aim of this is to discourage re-offending.

Penalties for regulations have been increased from \$200 to between \$500 and \$2 500. Penalties for breaches of regulations for overcrowding of public buildings have been increased to \$15 000. References to the commission of offences throughout the Act have been standardised and ensure that there is no doubt as to what constitutes an offence.

The Bill also introduces controls over aquatic facilities. Presently under the Act regulations can be made to cover matters related only to swimming pools. The regulation-making powers are enlarged to cover all types of aquatic facilities including lakes used for cable skiing, spa pools, swimming baths, swimming pools, water slides and wave pools. Where these facilities are operated on a non-private basis, controls can be exercised to ensure the quality and treatment of water and facilities is maintained. The regulations would also allow the closing of such facilities in the event that they posed a threat to public health.

Part VI of the Act is amended to deal more effectively with the approval of plans and specifications for public buildings. Approval of plans and specifications is presently required prior to the construction, alterations or extension of a public building. A public building is any building or structure in which numbers of persons are able to assemble and includes churches and licensed premises. This approval is necessary to ensure that the health and safety of members of the public using the building is protected.

Inspection of plans and specifications of public building developments is presently undertaken by the Building Management Authority on behalf of the Executive Director of Public Health. The Building Management Authority has indicated its intention to charge for such assistance. Presently the maximum fee which can be charged for inspection of plans and specifications under the Act is \$100, which is well below the actual costs involved. The amendment allows actual costs of inspection to be recovered from public building developers.

There may also be instances where outside engineering experience would be of assistance to the authority; for example in reducing the time required for assessment. This amendment provides that in these instances, certification as to the soundness of the building's construction should be provided by an approved structural engineer. Approval of the plans and specifications could be given accordingly.

Amendment of the Act is also necessary to allow the construction of a public building to proceed prior to the full approval being given in instances where the particular method of design does not involve the development of complete plans and specifications prior to construction or where other special circumstances exist. An example of this is the "fast-track" method used in construction of the Burswood Island Casino.

In the 1982 report of the Royal Commission into the Australian Meat Industry, Justice Woodward recommended the dyeing of pet food. Following on from this proposal an interdepartmental working party consulted with Department of Primary Industry representatives and pet food industry representatives to develop a set of guidelines. In order to implement these guidelines it is necessary to extend the Act's regulation-making powers to place controls over the slaughter, processing and sale of meat which is unfit for human consumption and which is intended to be sold as pet food.

No controls presently exist over the manufacture, sale and use of goods and devices which are designed to be of therapeutic value to humans such as appliances, drugs, nutritional supplements and cosmetics. This does not cover poisons or food. The potential for danger in the manufacture and use of therapeutic goods is a very real one. Part VIIA of the Act already provides controls over therapeutic substances. Division 7 of this part is repealed by the Bill and new comprehensive controls over therapeutic devices, goods, substances and cosmetics are introduced. These provisions are based on equivalent provisions in New South Wales.

Licences will be required for the manufacture and wholesale sale of therapeutic goods. Standards will be prescribed which may relate to the composition, quality and other properties of therapeutic goods and their manufacture and labelling. Standards may also prohibit or limit the quantity of a prescribed substance in goods and may place prohibitions

or requirements in relation to claims appearing on packages. Similar controls in relation to what representations can be made in advertisements will also apply. The amendment will also prohibit the sale of therapeutic goods by automatic vending machines and the door-to-door sales of such goods. The provisions will provide flexibility to allow orders to be made declaring goods to be or not to be therapeutic goods if doubts exist. Also specific goods, classes of goods or persons can be declared to be exempt from the provisions of the Act.

The Bill also introduces some very important provisions in relation to the role of the pesticides advisory committee. Its role of acting as an expert advisory body is clarified by these provisions. Its function in recommending pesticides for use is strengthened as is its advisory role in relation to the making of regulations.

This amendment clarifies and strengthens the regulation-making powers to regulate or prohibit the manufacture, labelling, sale and use of pesticides and to control the disposal of pesticides and used pesticide containers. It continues to provide control over commercial pesticide operations and will now also apply to Government bodies in the application of pesticides. The new provisions provide the power to make regulations recognising the national clearance system -- which presently operates on a non-statutory basis -- to ensure efficient and uniform control of pesticides by the various States of Australia.

Members will note that the definition of "pesticide" has been widened to cover plant growth regulators such as gibberellic acid which is used to improve berry development and bunch size in grapes. Controls are necessary to regulate this use. It is also envisaged that regulations will be made requiring persons using pesticides to submit themselves to medical examinations for the purpose of ascertaining the effect on their health of exposure to pesticides. Standards for the composition of pesticides will also be the subject of regulations under these provisions. All these provisions will bind the Crown. I think members will agree that these amendments are very timely and will serve to improve and strengthen the controls in this area.

Parts XIII and XIII A of the Act relate to the reporting and subsequent investigation of maternal, infant, perinatal and anaesthetic deaths. Committees are set up to inquire into these deaths for the purpose of establishing what went wrong with a view to establishing whether there were any preventable factors.

In order to undertake such investigations records must be made available to the committees and the cases discussed frankly by the committees. The present confidentiality provisions of the Act in relation to the committees are strengthened to ensure that documentation relating to matters before them is inadmissible in a court of law. Any person divulging information placed before the committee, other than to the Coroner, commits an offence which carries a penalty of \$2 500. The Bill also increases the number of investigators for these committees and also authorises the Chairman of the Perinatal and Infant Mortality Committee to notify medical practitioners who attend perinatal or infant deaths or still births about the committee's findings in relation to those cases.

Following advice from Parliamentary Counsel, a number of clerical errors and stylistic inconsistencies have been addressed in this Bill. The Bill also extends the time for laying of complaints in respect of breaches of food provisions from 90 days to 12 months.

I also say to the member for Murray-Wellington and indeed to any member of the Opposition who wishes to take an interest in this Bill that it is a very important Bill and is a little complicated in some respects; if members wish to take advantage of a briefing from the Health Department officials who are involved in this area, I will be more than happy to extend that privilege to them; if they contact my ministerial office, that briefing can be arranged before we actually debate the second reading of this Bill in this House.

With those remarks I have much pleasure in commending this Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bradshaw.

ACTS AMENDMENT (MEAT INDUSTRY) BILL

Second Reading

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas -- Minister for Agriculture)[11.10 am]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to amend the Abattoirs Act 1909 and the Marketing of Meat Act 1971.

In 1985 legislation was enacted to establish the Western Australian Meat Marketing Corporation under the Marketing of Meat Act. At the same time, the trading powers of the Western Australian Meat Commission -- established under the Abattoirs Act -- were reduced and now cover only inedible by-products of the slaughtering process.

An anomaly has arisen in the trading powers of the Western Australian Meat Commission in that certain by-products, which are the property of the commission, may have edible uses. The Bill amends the trading powers of the commission so that the commission may trade in lungs, spleens, glands, and other by-products of slaughtering owned by the commission and which are intended for human consumption. This provision will enable the commission to sell these by-products in their most commercial use as market conditions vary over time. When in Committee, I intend to move to amend clause 3 of the Bill concerning this trading provision in order to correct a drafting error.

The Bill also amends two areas of operation of the Western Australian Meat Marketing Corporation where changes to its marketing will enhance the corporation's performance. Firstly, under the existing Act, the corporation acquires lambs on delivery to abattoirs in accordance with a published price schedule. The Act does not specifically provide the power for the corporation to purchase lambs at auction or on farms. The Bill provides for the corporation to purchase lambs by these additional methods, and thereby provide further flexibility in its trading operations.

Secondly, under existing legislation the corporation is empowered to export various classes of livestock but not live lambs. The Bill extends the powers of the corporation to enable it to export live lambs.

The Bill provides also for some consequential amendments which are necessary as a result of amendments made during the passage of the 1985 legislation.

I commend this Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bradshaw.

ACTS AMENDMENT AND REPEAL (GAMING) BILL

Second Reading

MRS BEGGS (Whitford -- Minister for Racing and Gaming) [11.13 am]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill before the House amends the Acts which were affected by the introduction of the Gaming Commission Bill 1987. The amendments in the Bill are consequential, with the exception of some minor amendments made to the Casino Control Act. I propose to deal with each of the Acts in the order in which they appear in the Bill, and I will draw members' attention to the more salient changes to the respective Acts.

The Betting Control Act 1954 is amended to provide authorised officers of the Gaming Commission with similar powers to inspect bookmakers' records and financial returns. Sections 22 and 27 have been amended also to permit betting in relation to gaming permits issued by the commission under the Gaming Commission Act.

The Casino Control Act is amended so that the Casino Control Committee is merged with the Gaming Commission and its functions, powers, and duties are vested in or imposed on the commission. Section 13 of the current legislation prohibits the release of any information obtained in connection with the administration of the Casino Control Act. In effect, this also stops the exchange of information with other casino regulatory authorities in Australia. An amendment to this section provides for the exchange of information between the Gaming Commission and other casino regulatory authorities on the authorisation of the chief casino officer.

Section 21A of the Casino Control Act has been repealed and substituted with a section that provides greater powers of investigation and inquiry to the commission, the chief casino officer, or a member of the Police Force when so requested. The investigation may relate to any operation of the casino, including suspected corruption, or persons concerned in the management or operation of the casino complex. Where, as a result of the investigation, the commission considers it necessary, it may provide the Minister with a report and make recommendations as to the action that should be taken.

Under the present legislation the casino licensee is responsible for any breaches of the Act. However, the legislation did not anticipate that the licensee and the operator could be, and in this case are, two distinct corporate bodies. This defect has now been rectified by making the manager and the casino operator, in addition to the casino licensee, responsible for breaches of the Act.

Section 25 has been added to ensure the proper retention and maintenance of records and books of account. The amendment makes provision for the retention of such material for a period of seven years, and in a place and manner as approved by the commission. The present Act is silent on this matter, and while the Gaming Commission Act covers this aspect in some detail, it was considered appropriate to include this in the Casino Control Act.

The amendments to the Liquor Act 1970 are minor and consequential in nature and do not reflect any major changes to the Act. The amendments delete reference to the Casino Control Committee and substitute it with the Gaming Commission. Section 126(1)(f) has been reworded to prohibit gaming on licensed premises unless sanctioned by the Gaming Commission Act.

Parts IV and V of the Lotteries Control Act, dealing with lotteries conducted by a person other than the Lotteries Commission and police powers, have been deleted as the authority for the issue of such lotteries now rests with the Gaming Commission. The powers of the police have also been transferred to the Gaming Commission Act.

Amendments to the Police Act are consequential in nature, but the opportunity has been taken to review and update the penalty provisions to bring them into line with penalty provisions in the Gaming Commission Act. Also the areas dealing with gaming generally, slot machines, and cheating have been deleted from the Police Act and transferred to the Gaming Commission Act.

The Race Meetings (Two-up Gaming) Act and Soccer Football Pools Act have been completely repealed and have been incorporated into the Gaming Commission Act.

Section 212 of the Criminal Code, dealing with a trade promotion lottery and penalties relative to the conduct of unlawful lotteries, has been repealed and transferred to the Gaming Commission Act.

Generally the amendments in this Bill are consequential to the Gaming Commission Bill, but the opportunity has been taken to review and strengthen certain areas of the various Acts to ensure that gaming in this State is kept under strict control.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR BRIDGE (Kimberley -- Minister for Water Resources) [11.18 am]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to provide for the Western Australian Water Resources Council to continue with the same functions as in the present Act but not to include a "sunset" clause. It also provides for the present council membership of 15 to be retained in total, but modified in its composition to provide a more appropriate representation of water and land management interests.

The organisations now on the council that were not previously represented are the Conservation Council of Western Australia, the State Planning Commission, and the Mines Department.

The council provides advice to the Minister for Water Resources on general questions relating to water resources. Its objectives include --

to coordinate water resource matters which influence other planning, particularly those relating to land use; and

to prepare long-term strategies for coordinating the allocation and utilisation of water resources most effectively for all uses that have a benefit for the community,

including public and private water supplies, conservation of the environment, and recreation.

The council and its committees have a wide representation to ensure informed advice on diverse and complex water resource and land use issues. It is vigorously pursuing its purpose and undertaking a number of important initiatives. Current activities include --

promoting the efficient use of water resources through management of demand;

advising on any rural water strategy which will assist the farmers and Aboriginal communities in Western Australia by steadily improving their water supplies;

a study of ground water management strategies; and

the preparation of a public discussion paper on the strategic options for water use in the Perth to Bunbury region.

The Bill is a simple one, is relatively short, and serves a very worthwhile purpose, namely, providing for the continuation of a small but effective statutory council charged with watching over the community's long-term interests in its No 1 resource -- water.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Mensaros.

JURISDICTION OF COURTS (CROSS-VESTING) BILL

Second Reading

MR PETER DOWDING (Maylands -- Minister for Works and Services) [11.22 am]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Jurisdiction of Courts (Cross-vesting) Bill 1987 is to establish a system of cross-vesting of jurisdiction between the Supreme Courts of the States and Territories of Australia, the Federal Court, the Family Court of Australia, and the Family Court of Western Australia. The Bill is an attempt to resolve difficulties that presently exist in determining the jurisdictional limits of Federal, State, and Territory courts. It will not detract from the existing jurisdiction of those courts. The Bill will be complemented by reciprocal legislation of the Commonwealth, the other States, and the Northern Territory.

The proposal to deal with the present jurisdictional problems by cross-vesting jurisdiction between the Supreme Courts, the Federal Court, and the Family Courts had its origin as a Western Australian initiative, being first advanced by our Solicitor General in a paper he delivered to a symposium conducted by the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration in Melbourne in 1983. The proposal has steadily attracted increasing support as a practical remedy which should aid litigants. The Standing Committee of Attorneys General took up the proposal in 1985 when it became clear that more radical proposals were unlikely to gain sufficient support to be implemented. The present Bill is the result of extensive consultations between the Commonwealth, the States, and the Northern Territory in the Standing Committee.

The essence of the cross-vesting scheme, as provided for in the Bill and complementary Commonwealth, State, and Northern Territory legislation, is that State and Territory Supreme Courts will be vested with all the civil jurisdiction -- except certain industrial and trade practices jurisdiction -- of Federal courts -- at present the Federal Court and the Family Court -- and those Federal courts will be vested with the full civil jurisdiction of the State and Territory Supreme Courts. In addition, each Supreme Court in Australia will be vested with the full civil jurisdiction of the Supreme Courts of the other States and Territories. The scheme does not affect criminal jurisdiction, which continues to be dealt with by the Supreme Courts.

The reason for the proposed scheme is that litigants have at times experienced inconvenience and been put to unnecessary expense as a result of --

uncertainties as to the jurisdictional limits of Federal, State, and Territory Courts, particularly where the dispute includes matters within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Federal Court or the Family Court of Australia -- for example, trade practices and family law matters; and

the lack of power in some cases in any one of these courts to be able to deal with the whole of a dispute, so that multiple proceedings have been necessary in different courts.

Jurisdictional difficulties do the law and the community no good. They result in litigants being faced with the worry, delay, and additional expense which flow from the pointless need to search -- on occasions in vain -- for a court, or courts, with jurisdiction to resolve the dispute. The seriousness of these jurisdictional difficulties is all the more pressing because they occur in areas such as family law and trade practices, which touch the everyday activities of a great many people and corporations in Australia. We have thus been faced with growing frustration in the community and the legal profession with a system of courts with geographic and other jurisdictional limitations which get in the way of the efficient resolution of disputes. Despite decisions of the High Court which have had the effect of resolving many of the jurisdictional problems by expanding the jurisdiction of the Federal and Family Courts, problems still exist which require legislative action. This Bill is a significant step towards overcoming many of the problems which at present impede the efficient administration of justice in Australia.

The cross-vesting scheme seeks to overcome these problems by vesting the Federal courts with State jurisdiction and by vesting State courts with Federal jurisdiction so that no civil action will fail in a superior court through lack of jurisdiction. It will also ensure that no court will have to determine the boundaries between Federal, State, and Territory jurisdictions. The scheme, although simple in concept, introduces a quite radical change in the Australian judicial system.

The Bill seeks to cross-vest jurisdiction in such a way that Federal and State courts will, by and large, keep within their former "normal" jurisdictional fields. To this end, the reciprocal Commonwealth and State legislation make detailed and comprehensive provision for transfers between courts which should ensure that proceedings begun in an inappropriate court, or related proceedings begun in separate courts, will be transferred to an appropriate court for hearing.

The provisions relating to cross-vesting will need to be applied only in those exceptional cases where there are jurisdictional uncertainties and where there is a real need in the interests of justice to have matters tried together in the one court. The successful operation of the cross-vesting scheme will depend very much upon courts approaching the legislation in accordance with its general purpose and intention as indicated in the preamble.

Courts will need to be rigorous in the exercise of their transferral powers to ensure that litigants do not engage in "forum shopping" by commencing proceedings in inappropriate courts or by resort to other tactical manoeuvres that would otherwise be available to them by reason of the fact that State courts would have most of the jurisdiction of the Federal courts, and the Federal courts would have the full jurisdiction of the State courts. The courts themselves would also be expected not to take advantage of the legislation to aggregate business to their own courts in matters that would not otherwise have been within their "normal" respective jurisdictions. I have every confidence that the courts will approach the legislation in accordance with its spirit and purpose.

Under the cross-vesting scheme, no court will need to decide whether any particular matter is truly within Federal or State jurisdiction, since in either event the court will have the same powers and duties. This is because, in any particular proceedings, in so far as the matters involved are within Federal or Territory jurisdiction, the powers and duties will be conferred and imposed by the Commonwealth Act, and in so far as the matters are not within Federal or Territory jurisdiction, the powers and duties will be conferred by complementary State legislation.

To satisfy the interests of the Commonwealth, provision is made in the Bill to continue a special role of the Federal Court in matters in which it now has, apart from the jurisdiction of the High Court, exclusive original or appellate jurisdiction.

In particular, the Bill provides for the compulsory transfer by the Supreme Court of any "special Federal matter" unless it appears to the Supreme Court that, by reason of the particular circumstances of the case, it is both inappropriate for the matter to be transferred to the Federal Court and appropriate for the Supreme Court to determine the proceedings.

The expression "special Federal matter" refers to matters the Commonwealth considers to be of special concern, being matters that at present are within the exclusive jurisdiction of the

Federal Court. They are defined in the Commonwealth Act to include matters arising under the Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977; matters within the original jurisdiction of the Federal Court by virtue of section 39B of the Judiciary Act 1903; most matters under part IV of the Trade Practices Act 1974; matters arising under section 32 of the National Crime Authority Act 1984; and certain matters coming from tribunals, other bodies, and office holders under Commonwealth Acts.

The interests of the Commonwealth are also specially recognised in respect of appeal matters which presently lie within the exclusive appellate jurisdiction of the Federal Court. The schedule to the Commonwealth Act lists certain Acts such as the Bankruptcy Act 1966, the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, and various Acts dealing with intellectual property. Appeals in matters under the listed Acts will remain within the exclusive appellate jurisdiction of the Full Federal Court.

It has been agreed that the Chief Justices of State and Territory Supreme Courts and the Chief Judges of the Federal Court of Australia and the Family Court of Australia will monitor the operation of the scheme and report regularly to the Standing Committee of Attorneys General.

The Government attaches great importance to the purpose and intention of the scheme as described in the preamble to the Bill. After a trial period of three years, each party to the scheme has the right to withdraw from the scheme after notice to the other parties.

I emphasise that this Bill reflects the agreement of the Commonwealth, the States, and the Northern Territory following lengthy and detailed discussion in the Standing Committee. At their meeting on 5 March 1987, the Attorneys General reaffirmed their full support for these proposals. The Commonwealth Parliament has since enacted its legislation, as have the Parliaments of Victoria and New South Wales. It is hoped that the necessary legislation will be passed in all the remaining States and the Northern Territory before the end of this year. The complementary Acts will bring to a successful conclusion a lengthy and at times frustrating process of inter-Government consultation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Mensaros.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from 23 September.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup) [11.31 am]: One of the most incisive cartoons relating to the Western Australian Parliament that I have ever seen was drawn by the enigmatic Langoulant and appeared in the *Daily News* on 29 July. It is a magnificent cartoon with the words over the Minister for Planning stating, "For someone whose name is so close to peace he sure gets into the wars." There are many posters around him stating "Pearce vs Stirling Council", "Pearce vs PCC", "Pearce vs over 65s", "Pearce vs Teachers' Union", "Pearce vs western suburbs", and "Pearce vs watch this space".

On Tuesday of this week another cartoon appeared in *The West Australian* showing a tree representing local councils and the Minister about to pick up a chainsaw indicating that he is continuing his process of destruction of local government in this State.

On 12 April 1986, the same Minister was awarded the heritage vandal award of the year for his actions on the Swan Brewery and the Swanbourne Hospital. Those sorts of comments go on and on. In *The Western Mail* of August this year an article headed "Pearce image takes a battering" stated --

The recent slump in Bob Pearce's public image is a serious problem for him and the State Government.

It went on --

Pearce's poor public relations is a problem for Burke, . . .

Mr Brian Burke: Who wrote that?

MR CLARKO: It was written by Mike Southwell. The article goes on to state that his attitude would affect his leadership ambitions. It points out that the two main contenders for the position have been adjusting their styles of late and states that Parker has slowed down

his rapid style of delivery. He has also not been arrested lately in any demonstrations, and he now has a new hairstyle that is less radical. The article continues that the other contender, the member for Maylands, has become friendlier and more approachable. Becoming friendlier would not be one of the easiest things for him to do. He smiles like a grizzly bear frequently and for breakfast has a glass of vinegar and a bowl of sour grass.

Those sorts of statements were followed by a full-page article headed, "The Minister for Abrasion". We did not write these articles or the article headed, "Brash -- and he's not apologetic". It took two pages of the *Sunday Times* of 2 August for the writer of that article to deal with the gaffes of this Minister. The Press has quite properly highlighted the larrikin style of the Minister for Planning.

Why have I brought these matters to the attention of the Parliament? It is because the Minister for Planning's larrikin style of operating is interfering with the proper process of planning in this State. It is also playing a major part in the destruction of local government. These articles that I have produced are only a small number of the ones written about him in order for me to fit as much as I can into my time today.

Quintessentially, the planning process is about orderliness; it is not about larrikinism or about taking different courses of action every day of the week. The Minister presided over the introduction of new planning legislation introduced in late 1985 which is the most centralist planning document ever produced in this State. It gives the Minister more and more power. He will introduce another Bill some time in the next few weeks. That draft Bill has been widely distributed to all interested groups such as local government associations and development associations. It has been circulating for about six months. I have requested copies of that draft Bill for my use and for the use of my colleagues so that we can consider that major piece of legislation. Unfortunately, it has not been provided. Several councils and other groups have written to me raising queries and indicating their unhappiness with the legislation. However, I do not have a copy of the draft Bill to consider their views.

Mr Pearce: Be fair; I have offered you one.

Mr CLARKO: I will come to that. I will give the Minister time to reply to my comments.

I was referred to the Minister by the Chairman of the State Planning Commission when I sought a copy of the draft Bill. The Minister advised me that he was proposing a number of changes which he would discuss with me. I thought that was appropriate and I looked forward to the meeting. However, I am still waiting for a copy of the draft Bill. I accept that it may have been an oversight. I believe that the Minister should automatically forward all major reports and legislation on planning to the shadow Minister. Does the Minister agree with that?

Mr Pearce: I made it clear that I would be happy to provide you with a copy of the draft Bill. The reason I have not is that there is a meeting this evening between me, the Chairman of the State Planning Commission and others to discuss changes. I have been in this Parliament for 10 years and was a shadow Minister for six of those. Not once, including the time when the member for Karrinyup was the Minister for Education, was I provided with any discussion documents by your Government.

Mr CLARKO: I approached the Minister on a number of occasions.

Mr Pearce: We discussed matters, but I was never provided with a copy of the documents.

Mr Mensaros: The Law Society and others organisations receive copies of legal Bills which are not given to me. It seems to be the Government's policy.

Mr Pearce: I have no problem with providing you with a copy of the draft Bill.

Mr CLARKO: I intend to attack the Minister in this speech as aggressively as possible, as I know he can be aggressive.

However, I think it is in the interests of the people of Western Australia for us to obtain copies of documents. I advise the Minister to inform his associates of my feelings in that respect. I accept that much information is confidential and I accept also that the Minister should be able to make judgments about those matters. However, as a general rule, I think most documents should be provided to us.

The Minister could be described as being like a bull in a china shop or, if one likes, some mothers do 'ave 'em. Wherever he goes he turns around and knocks over another vase. He stands among the glass and reminisces about whom he has insulted. In education matters he

has insulted all of the top brass at the University of Western Australia, and at WAIT, now the Curtin University of Technology. This Labor Government has insisted that every building, road, and leaf be named after some former Labor politician, I suppose he aims to get something named after himself. At the moment we have the Pearce airstrip and the Pearce aerodrome. With his education hat on, he has criticised superintendents, principals, and teachers and has drastically changed the education system to the extent that it has almost ceased operating.

Of late he has even got stuck into his former buddies in the Teachers Credit Society and they have joined the long list of those who seek his resignation. I have not put in all the details of those who seek his resignation because the file is three feet thick. This reminiscing Minister dreamed up this new system called "Better Schools". He sent two or three of the remaining educators in Silver City to Mandurah to prepare the policy which has caught so much flak and crabs -- which is easy to do in Mandurah. Because of the unhappiness this policy has caused in education, as people have become more aware of it they have begun calling it the bitter schools policy. The Minister asks why the teachers should be bitter. He is the one who should be bitter with everyone demanding his resignation. The Minister for Education is now leaving the Chamber.

He has repeatedly criticised those involved in local government and he has gone out of his way to attack any mayor who seeks a course of action at variance with his policy. He usually throws out the great insult that it is because they are members of the Liberal Party. He called the councillors of the City of Stirling stupid and irresponsible with regard to the course of action they took in the Labor Party's Chinese restaurant affair. Yet later he admitted he had made a major mistake in the stance he adopted. That is the only apology I can find in this affair which was a most disgraceful situation. If anything was corrupt it was the business with the Chinese restaurant.

Dr Alexander interjected.

Mr CLARKO: The member for Perth does not know the full story except the skulduggery when members of his party tried to use planning to gain more profit for the Labor Party to help its campaigning, etc.

This Minister for Education attacked Mayor Tyzack of the City of Stirling and Mayor Cooper of the City of Wanneroo, and recently attacked the Deputy Mayor of Nedlands, Councillor Kyle, because he moved a motion which was passed almost unanimously by the Local Government Association at its recent annual general meeting. The Minister continually intrudes into the affairs of others and insults people. He signed the district planning scheme for the City of Perth in connection with the old Swan Brewery site. The scheme stated that the site shall not be industrial -- in other words shall not be used for a brewery. It also stated that a person who sought to have that site rezoned would have no right of appeal. The Minister signed that document but has subsequently jumped over the top of it, in his bull in a china shop style. He blatantly chooses to ignore the provisions of a scheme he agreed to.

When George Strickland, the Mayor of Stirling, spoke on the motion of no confidence at the Local Government Association's AGM, not surprisingly he criticised the Minister.

Dr Alexander interjected.

Mr CLARKO: The brat from Perth, the new member who has not yet put a crease in his parliamentary seat, has said that George Strickland is a member of the Liberal Party. This member said that the Labor Party's Chinese restaurant affair was right and proper from his point of view -- everybody else in Western Australia thought it was corrupt. George Strickland tells me that he is not a member of the Liberal Party -- and I have not read all the records of the membership of the party.

Dr Alexander interjected.

Mr CLARKO: One moment the member for Perth said that Mr Strickland was a member of the Liberal Party and the next moment he says that if he is not --

Dr Alexander interjected.

Mr CLARKO: I remind the member for Perth that he is not allowed to use the microphone for interjections. The people monitoring the equipment know that. If his voice is as weak as his argument, he should keep quiet.

Several members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: Members of the Government have abused George Strickland and said that he belongs to the Liberal Party, but he does not. Why not attack his argument rather than the man?

Mr Gordon Hill interjected.

Mr CLARKO: How many votes of no confidence have been passed on the Minister for Police and Emergency Services by the officers of the department he runs?

Mr Gordon Hill: None.

Mr CLARKO: The Minister is doing a disgraceful job. It is similar to his performance when he was Government Whip. He took \$7 000 to \$8 000 a year for being Whip and failed in that position on the one occasion that it counted. He could not get the members into the House and did not have the brains to know that he should not have granted pairs which would leave the Government with less than an absolute majority in the House. He took that salary by deception and he should give it back. Perhaps he should try to work out how to handle the Police and Emergency Services portfolio, which he is mucking up at the moment.

On 20 September the *Sunday Times* contained an article stating --

"Its a Labor plot", says the Lord Mayor.

It followed the front half-page article of *The West Australian* of 18 September which stated --

Corruption in Perth City Council, MP tells the House.

As well as having this larrikin Minister, the larrikin brat, the member for Perth, has joined him.

Withdrawal of Remark

Dr ALEXANDER: The member for Karrinyup referred to me as a larrikin brat. Whatever his opinion is, I believe that is unparliamentary under Standing Orders.

Mr CLARKO: I will help you, Madam Acting Speaker. I will withdraw that comment.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Lawrence): That is a reasonable response from the member; he has withdrawn his statement.

Debate Resumed

Mr CLARKO: I will say that the member for Perth is grossly immature and behaves in the style of the early Australians in the first few years of settlement on Sydney-side.

These prominent newspaper articles follow the deplorable speech made by the member for Perth last week. He admits without shame that he made those statements in the House because they could not be said outside. What he said was not worth saying anyway. He bitterly attacked the Lord Mayor, Mick Michael, personally and then attacked members of the town planning committee as a whole. Let us examine in depth what the member for Perth said. He accused various councillors of the Perth City Council of being corrupt, but he produced no evidence to support that claim.

Dr Alexander interjected.

Mr CLARKO: Madam Acting Speaker, I cannot continue with the member for Perth interjecting on my every sentence.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member has asked for my protection in the matter of interjections. If he is genuine in his request, I suggest that he does not respond to the interjections and I will protect him from them.

Mr CLARKO: I was not seeking your protection, Madam Acting Speaker. I was just arguing that the member for Perth should give me time for one sentence every time he interjects. I do not mind interjections from time to time but I cannot finish what I have to say if I have to answer every comment he makes. The member said --

... action is urgently needed to rid the city of this manipulation and corruption.

But he gave no details. He defined corruption as --

Action by individuals that subverts legitimate public objectives for private advantage.

That is not the ordinarily accepted view of corruption. He said that public objectives were --

... being systematically subverted by individuals seeking to promote their own financial ends.

Gaining an illegal financial advantage is what people understand to be corruption. It is quite clear he has accused numerous councillors of the City of Perth of making decisions which will give them a financial advantage. He explicitly stated that councillors of the city are corrupt, particularly those on the town planning committee. Since all committee decisions require the approval of the full council, he could be saying that all councillors are corrupt. Since he has chosen not to exclude any councillors specifically, I am of the opinion that he is satisfied that they are all branded as corrupt yet he has produced no conclusive evidence of corruption. His so-called research, which illustrates that in items involving pecuniary interests being voluntarily declared by a councillor or councillors concessions are more likely to be made than otherwise, does not prove in any way that the corruption has taken place.

He indicates support for granting to the redevelopers of the Boans site extra floor space so as to retain the facade of that old building, yet he finds it sinister when extra floor space is agreed to for other developments. I find that completely incongruous. It seems to me that he is asserting that those who agree with him should be able to support extra floor space for those things which they think are worthy, but it is corruption for other councillors to support extra floor space for those things that they regard as worthy.

This is so much sour grapes. Am I correct in assuming that this member, when he joined the City of Perth for a brief three-year period -- the shortest possible -- desperately tried to become a member of that town planning committee which he so strongly vilifies now? One would think that his academic qualifications in planning would have made him the first cab off the rank to go on to the committee, so I can only take it that despite his high academic qualifications, members of the City of Perth Council did not believe he had sufficient judgment or commonsense, or perhaps fairness, to go on to that committee. Perhaps they thought he might be corrupt and promote Labor Party things on that committee. The member now squeals under the protection of this House and attacks the decisions of the council, using no concrete examples or evidence to support his nebulous claim of corruption. He tries to develop the argument that the committee did not support the recommendation of the town planner.

There are approximately 1 400 councillors in Western Australia. Whenever councils meet they do not always agree with the items recommended by the town planner. People who have done a planning course have no God-given judgment. Thousands of recommendations by planners are refused by town planning committees. If the town planner were really the source of all knowledge and good judgment, there would be no need for town planning committees. They could be closed down and statements and recommendations by planners could be adopted. Obviously people in local government in this State do not believe that that is the case, and that is why we have town planning committees.

This grossly unsubstantiated attack is possibly designed to assist the Minister for Planning in his aim to take central business planning away from the Perth City Council, as Labor has done in Sydney and Melbourne. It makes it easier for Labor to make its deals, because this Government is considered by the public at large to be in bed with a whole series of major developers.

To move away from the new member for Perth -- there is no foundation to his claim -- he said nothing specific in his speech. He said nothing new about the Palace Hotel. What he said was written in the newspapers weeks ago, and everybody knew it. Everybody knew what he said about Boans. He did not produce any evidence about a developer going to a councillor and saying, "It will be to your financial advantage if you do this." He did not show that a person went around and got the numbers on the full council to do something corrupt.

Mr Brian Burke: Why did the newspaper put it on the front page if it is old news?

Mr CLARKO: If I were to say now that the Premier was corrupt because of certain things, and I rattled off a few points, I would probably get a headline out of that, too. If one calls a prominent person corrupt, it is almost certain to attract a headline, even if there is nothing to substantiate the claim. The member for Perth has produced no evidence. That is why we have called for a Royal Commission. We are happy to look at this. I bet what the member has said so far has embarrassed the Premier. The people the member for Perth has attacked are friends of the Premier's on the Curtin Foundation.

Mr Brian Burke: Who?

Mr CLARKO: I do not have to name them. Who on the city council is a member of the John Curtin Foundation? Everybody who reads *The West Australian* knows.

Mr Brian Burke: The Lord Mayor is one of the vice patrons, and there is Rod Evans.

Mr CLARKO: The deputy chairman is Rod Evans. I do not want to criticise those people. I would not criticise them in the way the member for Perth did. He made a speech in which he referred to the Palace Hotel and Boans, and made vague suggestions that something might be happening. He is saying, "Just because a man does not vote means nothing." We come into this Parliament to exercise our vote. That is what counts. With members opposite it is the brutality of numbers.

The Minister is using his aggressive style, which is causing great problems for those people associated with planning and local government. This new chum has come in making unsubstantiated claims which have gained him newspaper headlines, but he has nothing more.

The Minister prides himself on being a debater. When one debates, conviction does not matter. Sincerity does not matter, a real belief in what one is saying does not matter. The more skilled a debater one is, the more one can take the other side. This morning's paper contains an article concerning a fellow in Melbourne who, for \$5 for 20 minutes, will provide the opposite point of view, whatever it may be. I wonder if the Minister might have money in that project.

A Press release of 30 January 1987 contained the following --

The redevelopment of the old Swan Brewery would be subject to all the normal planning requirements, Planning Minister Bob Pearce said today.

Further on the Press release continued --

Mr Pearce says that claims to the contrary by Opposition Member Jim Clarko were totally untrue.

The Press release went on to say --

Nevertheless I am sure that these approvals will be forthcoming . . .

The Minister is giving a reminder to anybody on the State Planning Commission with whom he has not had Friday night's tea that they must go very quickly in the direction in which he is going.

He says he will follow the normal planning process. This is a Press release issued by the Minister on 30 January 1987. Does any member interested in the subject believe that this matter is following a normal planning process? The Minister steps in and gives guidance to various people that the Brewtech Brewery should be built on this site. It is totally at variance with the scheme which the Minister has signed. I ask the member for Mt Lawley whether he thinks it is following normal planning requirements in regard to the Swan Brewery site.

Mr Cash: No; that is why we asked for a Royal Commission.

Mr CLARKO: Nobody believes it. I do not believe the Minister believes he is following normal planning requirements himself. He said that on 30 January. The Lord Mayor was forced to write to him and point various things out to him.

In the *Daily News* of 30 July 1987 the Lord Mayor is reported as follows --

The Lord Mayor, Mr Mick Michael, reacted strongly to comments by Mr Pearce on Tuesday that some councillors had a vendetta against the State Government. Mr Michael sent a scathing letter to Mr Pearce, saying the Minister's comments were a "gross misjudgment for a senior minister."

The article continues --

Mr Pearce was particularly critical of a town planning committee member, Cr Rod Evans, for "trying to take on the Government at every opportunity".

I cannot remember the previous cases when the Deputy Lord Mayor has taken on the Minister. I cannot see how he has taken every opportunity. There has been only one opportunity.

Mr Pearce: With your experience in local government, have you ever known of a town

planning committee of a local government authority making Press releases about a recommendation which it will make to a full council meeting?

Mr CLARKO: That would be less unusual than the Minister interfering in the decision on this brewery matter when the City of Perth's town planning committee was in the middle of referring its decision to full council. The Minister came in and said, "I have taken it away from you." That is contrary to what he said in his Press release of 30 January.

Mr Pearce: Do you know that Rod Evans is on the John Curtin Foundation?

Mr CLARKO: I understood he was.

Mr Pearce: You were making great play about the Curtin foundation previously.

Mr CLARKO: I just said that things must be getting difficult for the Premier. He has two supporters of his party and the new member for Perth --

Mr Brian Burke: We can never win because one minute you say, "Well, the John Curtin Foundation, that must mean that these people are special friends."

Mr CLARKO: I think they would be, would they not? They give the Labor Party plenty of money.

Mr Brian Burke: Not necessarily; but the next minute you say, "Oh, the John Curtin Foundation, that's where you put people you are going to kick."

Mr CLARKO: I did not say that at all; I said it must be embarrassing for the Premier that friends of his party are being attacked by the new member for Perth. I think it is a great pity that Terry could not come back because he did not do that sort of thing. He did not stand up and give long speeches alleging corruption when there was no evidence. I have given the House one example today of that particular situation, but this Minister has apologised for a couple of his gaffes. An article in *The West Australian* of 25 August reported that Mel Bowler, acting General Secretary of the Civil Service Association, advised a stop-work meeting of the department's staff of the loss of 150 jobs -- that is not many, unless one happens to be one of the 150. Gloom and doom in silver city; it is very tarnished silver now. The article reads --

... Mel Bowler said a letter from the Minister, Mr Pearce, apologising for the release of the news to the Press, had been accepted.

That is another admission by the Minister of a major gaffe. On 28 July, less than a month earlier, the Minister issued a Press release apologising for a remark he made about the ages of opponents of the Swan Brewery redevelopment plan. The Press statement read in part as follows --

I was embarrassed to see my remark in print and all I can do now is offer an apology.

The Minister has confirmed that he made these errors to which I refer. The Minister made that remark about old people when a group of them were in the gallery; he called them "the blue rinse set". That is an insulting remark and on reflection the Minister should think and should realise that he cannot go around insulting people. The Minister has planning in shambles because of his *modus operandi*. The Minister has broken what is considered to be the normal quintessence of orderliness.

Several members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: It is not by me; these comments were made in the newspapers. The Minister has admitted them himself; that is why I quoted these articles. *The West Australian* had the heading "Pearce says he's sorry for age barb". I am saying the Minister makes mistakes; he has said he has made mistakes. That makes me right. The article I quoted a moment ago is the one headed "Pearce apologises to the CSA". The Minister apologised and admitted he was wrong. The *Sunday Times* of 2 August -- these are all just within a few days -- had an editorial headed "'Shoot from the lip' minister".

Several members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: I have no influence with the Editor of the *Sunday Times*; they said that the Minister is the shoot-from-the-lip Minister. I will not take the time of the House in detailing all the little things said about the Minister in the article; they are not kind. It is interesting that when the Premier spoke he referred to his meeting on Tuesday with Lord Mayor Michael and several of his councillors. He then said with something of a grimace that they had come in and given the Minister a serve at that meeting.

Several members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: It is on everywhere. Why is it on everywhere?

Mr Pearce: As it is with the Perth City Council, so it is with criminals -- they are not enamoured of the police. You are seeking to support a whole range of very strange decisions made at local government level and the granting of a total planning power for local governments.

Mr CLARKO: My biggest problem has been to separate the main articles from the mountain of clippings I have on this subject. I have had to prune my speech to fit the time allocated to me. I will not deal with all of the matters in my files because I do not have time. I did not write the articles; other people did and the Minister has, in certain cases, agreed with them that he was wrong. An editorial in *The West Australian* of 25 July -- they do not put an article on the Minister on page 42 of the paper -- said that Mr Pearce should show more concern for public attitudes.

Several members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: The Minister pays attention to the opinion polls that suit his particular line; he calls any of the polls which do not follow the Government's line "bodge" polls.

The West Australian of Tuesday 22 September has a headline, "Council upset by criticism"; I will not go through the article because it is on the same line. This article moves away from planning and talks about the Simpson disclosure and his investment with the Teachers Credit Society and the State Energy Commission. The article said that Mr Pearce's disclosure understandably sparked a strong reaction from the Chairman of the R & I Bank, Mr David Fischer. From what I know of David Fischer, he is not the sort of man who easily goes to the Press and says something about a Minister of the Crown. He would do so very reluctantly indeed. The list goes on. *The West Australian* of August 15 says --

The Local Government Association attacked the commission, saying it had gone against promises by the Minister for Planning, Mr Pearce, that any development on the brewery site would follow normal planning procedures.

That goes back to the Press release to which I referred earlier. If one looks at the local government associations, they are all at war with the Minister. The Perth City Council, the most influential and wealthy in Western Australia, is against the Minister for Planning; the City of Stirling, the most populous city and the City of Wanneroo, the second most populous, are both against the Minister. The list goes on. It is a great shame. I could be moving a motion of no-confidence in the Minister and calling on him to resign as others have suggested, but knowing the parliamentary process as I do, I would not waste my breath. Instead I am trying to put these things in front of the Minister; just as he had the courage to apologise on several occasions for the many blues he has made, I think he should look at himself in the mirror and try to work out a new style for himself in this field of planning. He should try to do something promptly about it. I admit that it is probably very much to our advantage that he carries on as he is -- that is, like a bull in a china shop. His crude political partisan position, however, is not good for planning. The Minister must cease making these outlandish statements. *The West Australian* of 29 July had the headline, "Pearce accuses PCC of vendetta". It is a long article. In the same paper Bill Bailey says something about it in his column, as does the editorial, but I cannot deal with all of those matters because it would take too much time. I am sure the Minister has been spending quite a bit of his time lately saying to his Press secretary, "Let's get some good full page story in the Sunday papers telling people about me; telling them that I am really a very nice guy. All of these 'shoot from the lip' comments that I make almost daily disguise the fact that I am really a lovely fellow at heart, and can be found on Cockburn Sound sailing with my son and playing the guitar." He might even write poetry as well. This approach is designed to encourage a compliant journalist to write a soft full-page article, like they do about Paul Keating, saying, "At heart I am really a lovely fellow, I am an ordinary Joe Blow, and there is nothing I like more than nice things."

Mr Court: Can you play the guitar and sail at the same time?

Mr CLARKO: I do not know. My main object is the new planning Act. In many ways this Act is an extension of the legislation passed in late 1985, which was so centralist --

Mr Pearce: It all comes out of the O'Meara report.

Mr CLARKO: It does not all come out of the O'Meara report.

Mr Pearce: Most of it does.

Mr CLARKO: Most of it does; thank you. We are not in the public debating field, we are in this House.

That legislation gave the Minister more power than any Minister for Planning ever had before. I refer members to a full-page article in *The West Australian*, with a nice photograph of the Minister. It must have been taken when the Minister was playing the guitar. He has a friendly smile. I suppose that was when he attended Kelmscott High School. The article says --

The latest moves by the Government to introduce a revamped Planning Act could spark the biggest debate of all.

The Perth City Council is cynical, to say the least, of the Government's motives behind some sections of the proposed Act, which is still in its draft form.

The Council, in a submission to the commission, roundly criticised sections of the Act, saying it would reduce the autonomy of local government. This is despite assurances by Mr Pearce, that "there would be no substantial changes of the existing power relationship between local and State Governments".

Mr Pearce: The bottom line is that local government does not have that autonomy in planning matters now. If you want to assert that they should have it, use this opportunity to do so, because you will not get many people outside the council to agree with that.

Mr CLARKO: I regard this aspect as being very important. I earnestly hope that in future I will get a copy of major legislation as soon as it is reasonably possible. These town planning law changes which *The West Australian* wrote about on 18 June -- obviously they had the information -- are admirable in many ways. The article by Ted Barker says that the new legislation is designed to improve efficiency, speed planning procedures, reduce delays and eliminate duplication. Nobody would disagree with that. As the Minister knows, when legislation was introduced a couple of years ago along these lines, I strongly supported it and accelerated the process of administration. There may be a gap between what is said in the introduction to the particular draft legislation -- a couple of pages of summary deals with things of this nature, and nobody would dispute that and the rest of the draft Bill.

Several councils have written to me querying and expressing concern about section 18 relating to the powers of the Minister. Not only members on this side of the House, but also those people in the community with any knowledge of planning, believe that the Minister has created a cabal of people who are Labor Party activists. I am sure if we did the same thing the Labor Party would be the first to label them all Liberals.

Several members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: The Minister labelled George Strickland a member of the Liberal Party, when he is not, and then the Minister corrected himself.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CLARKO: This legislation deserves serious consideration. Many people believe that the Minister has been overzealous in the methods he used to introduce a number of matters. I was listening to Lionel Bowen this morning. He said that it was dirty pool for the Federal Liberal Party to be supporting a process in which regulations would not be allowed -- a process which had never been used before in the history of the Federal Parliament. Some of the other things the Minister has done have never been done before either.

Ministers should have only such power as is vital to protect the planning needs of Western Australia from an overall State viewpoint. They should not be making decisions about matters which are essentially for local decision-making. When planning schemes are to be signed by Ministers, that is the time for them to decide not to sign but to do something else, not shortly afterwards, as the Minister did with the Perth City Council and the old Swan Brewery site.

I fervently hope that the new planning Bill will not place too much power in the Minister's hands, or in the hands of the State Planning Commission, or too little power in the hands of local government. The proponents of the new draft planning Act assert that it will last beyond the year 2000.

Mr Pearce: It will, too.

Mr CLARKO: The only way that will happen is if the members opposite continue to occupy those benches, because I doubt if that legislation will properly encompass the particular principals that I have tried to outline.

Mr Pearce: When your Government --

Mr CLARKO: Will the Minister let me finish the sentence? I am sure there will be things in that legislation which I will strongly support, but I am very wary about steps which might be taken -- not only by a Labor Government -- to place too much power in the hands of a Minister and/or the State Planning Commission.

I have used this example before and I will use it again: In the days of Sir David Brand Western Australians believed that there was a real need to set up heavy industry. The site chosen was the shores of Cockburn Sound. If the matter had been left to the local council -- Kwinana at that time was semi-rural with holiday homes etc -- it probably would have been totally opposed to any proposition that the area suddenly be swamped by heavy industry. That is an example of where the State interest must prevail. Notwithstanding that, I believe the project was messed up. I do not believe there was any need for the industrial area at Cockburn to occupy all the beaches and shores as it did. The limits could well have been restricted, with minimal access by rail links, to retain as much of the bay shores as practical for public use. I am not criticising the member for Perth, but, whether it was planners or industrial developers, those bureaucrats made a gross mistake for which we will pay for ever.

A member interjected: That was Liberal control.

Mr CLARKO: I think it was on other bases. I conclude on that note.

MR SCHELL (Mt Marshall) [12.18 pm]: I wish to discuss the financial and economic burdens faced by my constituents in the electorate of Mt Marshall. In most areas of this electorate this season has been kinder than in past years, and in other areas of the State. In particular, Katanning-Roe and Narrogin, it is quite dry this year and possibly drought will be declared. I do not believe that will happen in Mt Marshall, although some areas are dryer than others, and not everybody is out of the woods. I believe that we are faced with a better year than we have had in the past.

I wish to mention the Yilgarn. The northern sectors of this shire are faced with reasonably dry conditions and possibly very poor crops. Certainly in the western side of the electorate -- Wongan Hills, Ballidu, Dalwallinu, Goomalling, and Cunderdin -- the situation looks slightly rosier than it has in the past.

I attended the Dowerin field days last month and there was an air of optimism among the farmers there. A great number came from my electorate, although there were people from all over the State. This optimism was brought about by the higher wool price we have enjoyed over the last couple of months, and at that stage the season looked good. Now wool prices have come back and the year will end on a dry note, and the optimism has reduced a little. However, I am hopeful we are facing better times.

At the field days the Minister for Agriculture said Western Australian farmers could be justly proud of the fact that any gains they are making are not through subsidisation, as is the case in the United States and the European Economic Community. He is right, but he forgot to mention the huge burden faced by primary producers and country business people with high indirect taxation and interest rates. We have experienced for a number of years and continue to experience the Government rip-off of fuel tax. This tax combined with other indirect taxes has to be paid regardless of the producer's or the businessman's income. If farmers and business people can keep their heads high in this environment, they can be justly proud because the Government is certainly not helping to make the burden any lighter.

We have had a lot of problems with regard to the weather and overseas markets in recent years. We cannot control them, but indirect taxation is an area in which the Government can do something for producers and business people. Our present Federal Government continues to ignore this problem, and this creates a major drain on our rural economy. Our State Government is following the Federal Government's example. The Treasurer said in his Budget Speech --

... the sudden and dramatic decline in our terms of trade, brought about by weak prices and falling demand for many of our major agriculture and mineral exports, had caused severe damage to the national economy.

I agree with the Treasurer, but why did he only mention this? Does the State Government continue to condone the drain on our industry by indirect taxation and high interest rates? Members would not have to be trained economists to work out that if the Government lowered and phased out many of the indirect taxes facing farmers and tried to do something concrete about interest rates, the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation would become redundant. This would save a lot of taxpayers' money. It would have saved a total of \$100 million or more if the Government had taken the initiative three years ago and faced this problem squarely.

Four factors affect the viability of the farming industry. Firstly, as the Treasurer stated, there are the world markets. There is not a lot we can do there except perhaps in the wool industry where Australia is the major producer and we can achieve something. Management is another area which has become an important factor in farm viability. Only the farmer can make the decisions in this respect. Thirdly, we have no control over the weather, and if we did one can imagine the debacle there would be in this place in trying to work out on which days it should rain! The last point, which is the most important as far as Governments and the nation are concerned, is the input costs which I have already mentioned. Governments can do a lot here. If the costs can be realistically controlled the industry can handle the other problems comfortably.

In the Mt Marshall electorate, being a farming electorate, if the farming industry is stable the same will apply to the business community. If we can overcome the problems in the farming area, business will follow suit and that in turn will affect the whole community in the electorate. It will also have direct implications for the economy of the rest of the State.

Several weeks ago I was at the office of the Minister for Water Resources and picked up this document called, "A rural Water Strategy". This is a very good document which outlines the strategy the Minister has presented to the State in the last few months. Again I congratulate him on it. He is certainly getting accolades for this throughout the rural community, and in my electorate from the shires and particularly the rural water councils. He is also getting accolades from the other political parties, particularly the National Party, and I am sure the Liberal Party would agree it is an excellent document.

Mr Pearce: The Labor Party thinks it is pretty good, too.

Mr SCHELL: I am glad to hear that, but I believe this confidence will be short lived if the Government does not take the bull by the horns and act quickly on the Minister's strategy. If positive action is not forthcoming people will soon class this Government and the Minister with all Governments which have done nothing.

Mr Cowan: In other words, do you think well enough of it to do something?

Mr Cash: We support the Minister, and the Government must take action.

Mr Pearce: The reason we have to take action is because in the long years during which this State was governed by your lot they did not take any action. I spend my life going around the State looking at schools which were allowed to run down for 20 or 30 years by conservative Governments. We are trying to catch up in four or five years, particularly in rural Western Australia.

Mr Cowan: You have to add nine years of Labor Government to that.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SCHELL: I am happy to hear the debate across the floor on this matter. Water is a problem which does not come to the forefront in this House enough.

Mr Pearce: Go to Southern Cross and see who extended that school. It was left as a run-down dump by the Government you wish to represent. We fixed that up and I opened the extensions.

Mr Cowan: It was started before you came into office.

Mr SCHELL: The availability of water has always been the greatest problem facing rural areas, as in all other areas of the State. Rarely have past Governments given it the priority it deserves and, from the Treasurer's Budget Speech, it appears he does not intend to change this although his able Minister has provided a framework for doing so.

I commend the Government on the announcement of the go-ahead for the capital works on the Harris River Dam. That is a good start. This newspaper clipping from yesterday's *Daily*

News which is headed, "The drought finally breaks in Bindi Bindi", starts off by saying, "Hallelujah and praise the Government! That's the cry coming from the small wheatbelt town of Bindi Bindi." The water taps there will be turned on after a 100-year drought.

Mr Pearce: Who was in Government for most of those 100 years?

Mr SCHELL: I congratulate the Government on making a start. I believe these two areas are good areas; they have been prominent as regards water needs for a long time.

Water resources development in this dry State needed a far higher priority by the Government and a far higher profile by the Treasurer himself, particularly in his Budget Speech. I believe this coming year will be a good year for action because of the dry winter and poor run-off in the State. I issue a challenge to the Government of Western Australia to declare 1988, our bicentenary year, a year of fresh water in Western Australia. The water problems in this State will be aggravated even further this year because of the poor run-off. I have heard, and it has been in the news, that there is a danger of water restrictions in the city.

Farmers will continue, for a long time to come, to cart water over long distances. It will not only happen in the area to which I have referred, but it will happen in many areas. For goodness sake, let us give these farmers some light at the end of the tunnel to end their misery of having to cart water. My experience of carting water is only short. During my teenage years I helped my Dad at the end of summer to cart water to augment our home water supply. It was a boring job and I can imagine what it is like for the farmers who cart water year in and year out when there is no light at the end of the tunnel.

Mr Bridge: I will give you and the rest of the National Party members some sound advice. The very calls you are making have been canvassed by the Government. It has had in place for 20 years a well-developed water strategy. If you are dinkum about looking after the interests of the country people, you should get behind that strategy and sell the package around the State. Do not reflect on what is happening in a negative sense.

Mr SCHELL: That is what we are doing. I do not know whether the Minister was in the House when I commenced my speech.

Mr Bridge: No, I was not.

Mr SCHELL: I referred to the rural water strategy as being an excellent document, but then I said that the Government should give it a bigger profile and should get behind the Minister. Members of the National Party and the Liberal Party are behind the Minister.

The next subject to which I will refer is education.

Mr Pearce: I hope you blush when you do, if you have anything less than praise for the Government's activities.

Mr SCHELL: The National Party supports the Minister for Education, but it would like to give him some constructive comments in the development of the strategy. People in my electorate have never been so concerned about education as they are at the moment. I guess it is a sign of the times. Education has become more important in our society than it was in past eras. Country people are aware that if their children do not receive a good education they will not have the chance, in this hard world, to reach their potential.

I will refer to some of the problems facing country children and I would like the Minister to listen and take note of them. I know that some of the proposals in the strategy will help many people, but in other cases with the problems of distance and sparse population it will not help some problems. I intend to air my grievances in order to give urban-based members some idea of the problems facing country people.

Because of the vast distances and sparse population, many children in the country have to travel great distances on school buses and attend very small schools. One of the problems involved with this, particularly with young primary school children, is that the children become tired. It is also a problem faced by the teachers because the children have a lower concentration span in the schoolroom because of tiredness. With schools that have a small number of students a problem exists with the development of competition between children. However, it does not come to the fore so much at the primary school level, compared with the secondary level.

Many schools in the country, including some in my electorate, have only one teacher who teaches all grades from preschool to year seven. In most of the schools in my electorate teachers have to teach more than one grade, and it can have a detrimental effect on the

children's education. I believe it can be improved by the more suited teachers being appointed to the country schools. This is the responsibility of the Education Department, and I guess it is a problem that can be adequately addressed by the Better Schools programme in which parents and the communities will have some input into the selection of teachers. The teachers appointed to country schools must be able to communicate easily with the parents. It is a problem for a teacher to live in a community with the parents of the children they teach. Every day problems arise in schools in my electorate, and personality clashes between teachers and parents can be extremely bitter.

Before I was elected to this House I was the president of the local parents and citizens association for a couple of years, and I experienced problems of this nature within the school. The selection of the right teacher will lead to children receiving a better education.

I make one point about the lower primary school levels in country schools. Children with the right teachers have personalised attention and, as a result, they receive a better education than perhaps they would receive if they attended larger schools. It is important to create incentives to encourage the right teachers to apply for positions in the country. This must be the responsibility of both the local people and the Education Department.

The communities have a responsibility to encourage teachers to work in the country. I am a firm advocate in the excellent benefits of people who live in small country communities. It is an ideal existence. People who live in these areas should try to promote their community and by doing so it would not only encourage teachers, but also it would encourage nurses, doctors and people in other fields to work in the country.

A Government member interjected.

Mr SCHELL: I would like members of the Government to visit my electorate with me.

Dr Watson: I have done that.

Mr SCHELL: Yes, the member for Canning has done that, and I appreciated it. It would give members an opportunity to see, at first hand, the problems faced by country people and the way in which they approach them.

The major problem in education arises when children reach high school level. Competition becomes more important in every area and communication by students with the outside world becomes important. Also, there are fewer secondary schools than there are primary schools in the country, and travel becomes a greater problem. Another major problem is that a great economic cost is incurred to country people because some children have to live away from home to attend school.

In the past, particularly in the farming sector, education in the upper secondary level was not considered by many people as important because most sons followed their fathers onto the farm and the daughters either worked as receptionists or shop assistants in the town or went to the city to become a teacher or a nurse.

The education needs of country children are no different from the education needs of city children. No longer do the majority of sons follow their fathers onto the farm; and even if they or their sisters do, a far higher standard of education is required.

The great economic crisis we have faced in agricultural Australia has shown that there is a need for a higher level of agricultural studies by farmers. Certainly, it is important that agricultural education, along with other areas of education, is given a priority in country schools.

Many students have the opportunity to attend non-Government boarding schools, high school hostels in large towns or the city, or an agricultural high school; but a number of students, for economic or religious reasons, cannot leave home but still have the need and potential for higher education. In the more remote areas of my electorate there are only two alternatives. One is for children to carry out their studies by correspondence, and the other is to undertake a supervised correspondence course, which is a relatively new idea. It is better known as mixed mode. This is where a small group of year 11 or year 12 students can get together at a junior high school and do their correspondence studies under the supervision of a teacher. An example of where this would be of benefit is the town of Mukinbudin, where the school P & C association, the shire and I are lobbying the Minister for a mixed mode concept. This has been given some consideration in the coming Budget, and I hope it will receive the benefit it deserves.

In cases such as this the Government has a responsibility to do everything within its resources to bring the opportunity of higher education to those children, and as the member for that area I intend to bring any problems I have in this area to the notice of the Minister and the Government, because I consider education to be one of the most important problems I have to face in this job.

Mr Pearce: With regard to the problems of country areas and high school education, we have to face up to the problem now of very small district high schools as opposed to country high schools. What would you advise us to do in those circumstances?

Mr SCHELL: Each case must be judged on its own merits. In the Mukinbudin situation, the parents of 17 schoolchildren have committed them for mixed mode education if it is introduced. Only two of these students will go to Merredin agricultural high school, from what the P & C and the headmaster have ascertained. There are various economic and religious reasons why the parents will not let the children go away from home into another environment. This is something which we must look at. I do not agree with the attitude of some of the parents, but the situation exists and we have a responsibility to the children -- not the parents -- to see that, within the powers of the education system of this State, they have the opportunity to register for the higher levels of education.

Mr Pearce: I run a consistent policy of spreading that mixed mode, and I appreciate your remarks in support of it. It is being criticised by some people who say we should close the small district high schools altogether and leave them as primary schools, bussing kids to nearby senior high schools. That will not work everywhere, but it will in some areas.

Mr SCHELL: It may do that, but it must be borne in mind that high school education involves after-school activities which are particularly important, and these will be eliminated completely, particularly if students have to be bussed great distances. Admittedly there would not be the same tiredness amongst teenage students as with the little ones, but the effect would still be detrimental. I sincerely hope that the proposed Better Schools programme takes into account all the problems I have mentioned here today, and I ask for the Minister's guarantee on this.

One area where the Better Schools programme should help is in the area of priorities for expenditure in country schools. One school in my area is having to raise money through the P & C association to purchase necessary library and reading books for primary school children while money has been allocated for TAFE pottery courses which have very little application or interest in the district. School boards must have a greater say about the priority of needs for all areas of education funding to their respective schools.

Non-Government schools, particularly those providing high school education, play a large part in the education of young people from the Mt Marshall electorate. Many parents believe that the non-Government schools which cater for children who have to go away from home for further education offer the best discipline and the best supervision available in today's society. Many parents in my electorate make great sacrifices to pay for their children to attend these schools.

The National Party fully supports the submission on increased funding for non-Government schools submitted by the Parents and Friends Federation of Western Australia, and it would like the Treasurer and the Government to look very carefully at this.

I commend the Government for its changes and improvements in the funding of non-Government schools for building programmes as included in the Budget. Bearing in mind the roles played by these schools in the education of children, they deserve much more. There are 66 000 children attending non-Government schools in Western Australia, saving the State Government more than \$14 million a year. It makes good economic sense for the Government to encourage non-Government schools to continue playing their part in the education system.

The numbers at these schools are increasing at the rate of 10 per cent per annum. If those numbers could be increased even further with a little assistance, admittedly the savings to the Government per head would be less, the Government would save even more on education, or be able to spread the education dollar even further. This would also demonstrate that the Government defends the right of parents to choose the form of education best suited to their children. I am sure this Government must agree that all children are entitled to an equitable share of Government funds for their schooling.

For a number of years the general aviation industry of Western Australia has faced a serious downturn. I worked in this industry for a number of years 20-odd years ago. At that stage it played a greater part in the economy of this State than it does today. Although this is a Federal matter, it is of great concern to this State because of the reliance of remote areas on transport. This is particularly applicable to light aircraft in the general aviation category. The recent waiving of air navigation charges, handling and movement charges outside primary airports has been a boost to those operators who make many movements in and out of remote airfields daily. The rebate on the recently-announced fuel tax on Avgas to all operators who work out of private airfields has helped the agricultural operators and stock-mustering firms particularly. The industry is deeply concerned about the future supply of training and recreational aircraft. A world shortage of this type of aircraft has occurred as a result of the major US companies -- Cessna, Piper and Beechcraft, which have traditionally supplied 80 per cent of the world's recreational and training aircraft -- no longer manufacturing this range.

The existing ageing fleet of training and recreational aircraft in Australia is rapidly becoming uneconomic to maintain and operate. The serious lack of supply of replacement aircraft has not only affected private flyers attached to the aero clubs and flying schools throughout Australia; the majority of Australian airline pilots also graduate through this same system, and I have been led to believe that there will soon be a shortage of pilots. We should look at this problem seriously; it is important that we have the right aircraft to train these pilots.

This vacuum caused by the withdrawal of the American suppliers provides an excellent opportunity for the development of an Australian light aircraft industry to supply not only the requirements of this country but also the world market. We already have under development in Australia a number of aircraft with potential in this area. However, a number of other countries are also aware of the shortage of this type of aircraft, and if Australia is to capitalise on this situation, action must be taken immediately. It would be in the interests of this State for the State Government to encourage the Federal Government to start the development of a light aircraft manufacturing industry in Australia -- preferably in Western Australia.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr SCHELL: That is not an unbiased opinion. Initially the development of a single-engined aircraft of up to 200 horse power with a maximum seating capacity of four would fill the gap in this area. As the industry developed, so more sophisticated aircraft could follow.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for your ruling yesterday on my grievance debate regarding the PCB incinerator at Koolyanobbing. I was probably sailing a little close to the wind, but I was talking on a slightly different subject. I will not pursue it now, but the locals in that area are very worried; they need people to talk to them. They are worried about their town and the area of the shire becoming a dumping ground for waste chemicals. Another factor involves the prevailing winds if the chemical vapour is found to be detrimental in the future. The National Party will make a submission to the Environmental Protection Authority on its findings, and I believe a public meeting is to be held in Southern Cross next Tuesday.

That leads me to the matter of the Health Amendment Bill which reached its second reading stage in this House today. I am very interested in finding out, among other things in the Bill, about the changes made in the Bill to the Pesticides Advisory Committee. I have not yet studied the Bill but certainly I am interested in that aspect of it.

Mr Taylor: If you are interested in the Bill, you might like to speak to officers of my department about it. I would be happy for you to ring my office to arrange a briefing with my department.

Mr SCHELL: I would be happy to take the Minister up on that offer, and we will be in touch. But perhaps a future amendment to that Bill could deal with the dangers that exist from waste furnaces, both in built-up areas and in agricultural areas. I wonder if this has been considered by the Minister.

Mr Taylor: Could you explain that, please?

Mr SCHELL: I refer, of course, to the Koolyanobbing site and the exhaust from waste furnaces of this type. I believe that the exhaust fumes could be a danger to the community, particularly if the furnaces are based in agricultural areas where we have an export market to consider; we must also look at built-up areas. I will leave the Minister with that thought.

I hope members of the Government have taken note of the comments I have made this afternoon regarding water resources, agriculture, education, and especially the general aviation issue, which I believe to be very important. There is unlimited scope for the development of the vast regions of this State through improvement in those areas. It is also important that all Australians have the right to a high standard of living and an equal opportunity for education, wherever they may live.

Sitting suspended from 12.53 to 2.15 pm

MR CRANE (Moore) [2.15 pm]: I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of the sitting.

[Leave granted.]

Debate thus adjourned.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT ACT

Reporting Procedures: Ministerial Statement

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch -- Leader of the Opposition) [2.16 pm] -- by leave: Today the Minister assisting the Treasurer made a statement about the Financial Administration and Audit Act's annual report. Members know that members on this side supported the overall thrust of the Financial Administration and Audit Act when it came before Parliament in 1985, although we pointed out a few problem areas; for example, the Western Australian Development Corporation and Exim were not made accountable to Parliament. The ministerial statement indicated that departments and agencies are improving their annual reporting performance. That is a good thing, although the Minister kept referring to "temporary exemptions" granted to some bodies. Obviously this programme has run behind schedule in some areas.

Interestingly the statement also says --

The Government is clearly of the view that Departments and Agencies must move towards more purpose based budgeting and that departments must start rescheduling their account to properly reflect this.

Certainly this is a good move but the question must be asked: Why only departments? Why not introduce programme budgeting in the Government's own Budget because end-of-year accountability -- good annual reporting -- is obviously necessary, but so too is budget accountability at the beginning of each fiscal year.

I think the speech I gave to Parliament in my response to the Budget, together with that given by the Leader of the National Party, indicates that we are of the view, having arrived at those positions separately, that it is time the Government lifted its game significantly in respect of its own budget reporting and accountability. While the Government is moving towards improving the reporting of departments, so too should the Government be applying those standards to its own budget reporting. I again call on the Government not merely to look at departments in relation to the Financial Administration and Audit Act but also to itself and its own good housekeeping. The Government should really be properly accountable for its actions via a proper reporting process which enables us all to judge the Government on its performance.

ELECTORAL DISTRIBUTION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie -- Minister for Health) [2.22 pm]: On behalf of the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform, I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The metropolitan region scheme boundary adopted by Parliament in June as the perimeter of the metropolitan area in the Acts Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 1987 excludes Rottnest Island. It is appropriate that Rottnest Island should be included in the metropolitan area for electoral purposes in order to allow the Electoral Distribution Commissioners to include the island's residents on the roll of an adjacent district. It is a little disappointing as I would have liked them included in the Kalgoorlie electorate, but it looks as though that will not happen. Without this proposed change to the Act, the residents would have to be enrolled in a non-metropolitan district.

All that is required is the addition of Rottnest Island to the definition of the metropolitan area

presently in section 1A of the Electoral Distribution Act. It is important that Parliament decide this matter before the proclamation of the Acts Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 1987.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Mensaros.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL (No 2)

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR PEARCE (Armadale -- Leader of the House) [2.24 pm]: On behalf of the Minister for Labour, Productivity and Employment, I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act was introduced in 1984. The Act requires the Commissioner for Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare, to also be the permanent head of the department responsible for the administration of the Act; in this case the Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare.

Subsequent to the introduction of that Act the workload of the commission and the department has increased to the extent that the statutory responsibilities of the commission and department cannot at present be effectively fulfilled to the standard required by this Government. This workload is expected to remain for some time, especially when considered within the context of the work being engendered with the implementation of the new legislation, its promotion and the review being undertaken in respect to all current regulations under the Factories and Shops Act, Machinery Safety Act, and the Construction Safety and Noise Abatement Acts.

Add to this the increasing involvement of the commissioner as the Western Australian representative on the National Occupational Safety and Welfare Commission -- currently the chairperson of two major committees -- and the need to sustain this interest, it became apparent that some delineation of roles was necessary.

Therefore, to ensure that the formulation of regulations, restructuring of the department and successful education programmes are introduced, it is proposed to allow the separation of the functions of commissioner from those of permanent head of the department. The amendment before the House achieves this objective.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' HOUSING AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR WILSON (Nollamara -- Minister for Housing) [2.27 pm]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Three of the major public sector unions have been pressing for a number of years to be represented on the Government Employees Housing Authority so that they have a direct say in the operations of the authority. Currently, there is one union member of the authority who represents the interest of all tenants. This membership is rotated in turn, on a three-yearly basis between the State School Teachers Union of WA, the WA Police Union of Workers and the Civil Service Association of WA. These three unions represent over 80 per cent of the tenants occupying GEHA accommodation in areas of the State.

The other membership of the authority is presently made up of the following --

Chairman -- who is the nominee of the Chairman of the Public Service Board.

Members -- Under Treasurer or his nominee; Director General of Education or his nominee; General Manager, State Housing Commission, or his nominee.

During discussions on the question of expanding the union membership it became obvious that the total membership and method of appointment to the authority should be reviewed.

The review resulted in the Government deciding that the chairman need not be the nominee of the Chairman of the Public Service Board. It was also considered that the Commissioner of Police should be represented on GEHA, as the Police Department is second only to the Education Department in the number of employees occupying GEHA housing.

The Government agreed with the request by the three unions that they be included in the membership of the authority, as it would enable them to directly represent their membership and bring to authority meetings matters of concern. Consequently it is intended to expand the authority membership from five members to eight, by including all three of the major affected unions: The Teachers Union, the Police Union and the Civil Service Association, and also the Commissioner of Police or his nominee.

Further, the chairman will be no longer representing the Chairman of the Public Service Board, but an independent person with suitable experience and qualifications. In addition, the current legislation requires appointments to the authority to be made by the Governor in Executive Council. The Government proposes that all such appointments now be made by the Minister.

Because of these changes it is necessary to make minor amendments to certain other sections of the legislation, and I refer to the proposed changes to sections 11 and 12 which relate to leave of absence, termination of appointment and quorum requirements.

Section 19 is to be amended due to the fact that the relevant section of the Education Act 1928 was repealed in 1979. Amendments proposed to section 28 will empower the authority to determine the tenancy where a tenant owns property within proximity of the GEHA accommodation and in which the person could reside.

The final provisions in this Bill provide for a sunset clause, in accordance with Government policy. This will ensure that the legislation will be reviewed in 1992 and every five years. Subsequently, a report on the need for the Act to continue in operation will be laid before each House of Parliament.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Williams.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR CRANE (Moore) [2.30 pm]: I would be the first to admit that at times I can get pretty rough in this place, but I hope I am always fair, and at other times I can give credit where credit is due. I open my remarks in the latter vein. I am sorry the Minister for Water Resources is not in the House at present because what I want to say particularly concerns his portfolio.

The day before yesterday -- as was mentioned in the news -- the Minister announced the Government's intention to relieve the drought in Bindi Bindi with a water supply costing \$105 000 for the town. This situation has been going on for many years. The first approach from Bindi Bindi was in 1940, which is a fair while ago, and many members may not have been around at the time. Despite persistence, we have been continually refused any assistance for Bindi Bindi because it is only a small town. Not many people live there now, although there used to be considerably more. The other day when I was flying to Moora to go to Bindi Bindi one reporter asked me how many people lived in the town. I said I thought there were 12 people and one kangaroo. I was mistaken because when we got there we found a dozen people all right, but the kangaroo has a joey, so there are two kangaroos.

I say in all sincerity to the Treasurer and the Minister for Water Resources, who has just entered the Chamber -- and I expressed my feelings at the meeting after he made the announcement -- that we are most appreciative of the fact that the Government has agreed to put in a water supply for Bindi Bindi, which has been in existence for 113 years -- a long time in the State's history. There would not be many areas which have been in operation that long. We also thank the Government for showing the compassion which is necessary at times, recognising that there is always another dimension to be considered -- a dimension that perhaps does not measure up in dollars and cents but which is important for people. This Government recognised that where no previous Government has been prepared to do so, and

I thank it most sincerely for what it has done, not only at Bindi Bindi, but also for the rural water strategy which was outlined recently by the Minister. It will do the same for many other water-deficient areas in the country, which areas perhaps would not receive the recognition they deserve without such a strategy.

We must always remember whether there are great numbers or only a few of us that we are all people and deserve to be recognised as such. Sometimes the smallest communities make the greatest monetary contribution to the State's economic future. Bindi Bindi has been doing that for over 100 years -- since the days of horses and bullocks. At last we have a Government which has the courage to recognise the dimension I speak of, and I sincerely thank the Minister and his Cabinet colleagues for making the decision and having the courage to go forward with it.

In speaking of water, I can only add to the remarks made earlier today by the member for Mt Marshall. Other areas are water deficient, and he mentioned the fact that there is no light at the end of the tunnel when one has to cart water. All the stock do is drink it, and then one has to start carting again.

Many years ago I used to walk two and a half miles home from school, saddle up a horse, and drive our team of horses four miles to Mr John Joyce's well at Bindy, which was the old Bindy Bindy well, pull the water out of the well by bucket, water the horses, and drive them home again. I did that after I had walked to and from school. I recognised, because I experienced it, what a shortage of water is all about. I used to go along the road past the school down to the old homestead at Bindy, pull the water out of the well with a rope and bucket, and water the horses.

Mr Brian Burke: Why didn't you fill your bucket from the tap?

Mr CRANE: Because the Minister had not been there and provided the tap.

I mention that in passing. I still remember walking to the school and seeing my brother George carrying a water bag because there was no water at the school. I know many other members have done the same thing -- the member for Greenough, for example. What the member for Mt Marshall said was quite true, and we commend the Government for the initiatives it is taking.

I have had a lot of calls from the people of Wanneroo regarding the licensing of their water bores, and the Minister will be aware of this. There has been a tremendous influx of people into the area, and a great demand for water from the Gngangara mound. I do not believe any Government has really taken a serious step towards providing the water needs for that area other than by putting down additional bores and creating greater pressure on the Gngangara mound. It is not a criticism of the Minister but of all Governments and what has been happening since the area has developed so rapidly. The pressure is so great on the Gngangara mound that people are being refused permission to withdraw water for the needs of their properties.

It is time that we as a Parliament, and this Government, looked seriously towards the future water needs of the metropolitan area. We were able to bring a gas pipeline from the north west without any problems, and I see no reason why we could not have the courage to do as was done with the building of the Coolgardie pipeline many years ago, and bring water from the Fitzroy River -- not necessarily the Ord as some people suggest. It can be done. It is only a matter of rolling up our sleeves and spitting on our hands.

Mr Brian Burke: You are right; it can be done, but it is not just a matter of rolling up your sleeves and spitting on your hands. You also have to raise some funds.

Mr CRANE: That is true. A few years ago the Snowy River scheme was undertaken in the Eastern States. It was a big scheme and a good one. It employed a lot of people. I believe we should look at the possibility of doing something like that in Western Australia, and bringing the water down for the metropolitan area. We have not built a decent dam in the metropolitan area for quite a while, so we must look at other areas. That is one suggestion I make.

Mr Mensaros: My understanding is desalination would be cheaper.

Mr CRANE: If it is cheaper that is perhaps a sensible alternative, but in the end water must be brought to this area because we cannot pull any more out of the ground without penalising the landholders who want to use it for their own needs, and that includes the market gardens.

I refer now to the rubbish at Mindarie. This has been of considerable concern to the people there for a long time. I believe that we, as Western Australians, have not been forward thinking in the disposal of our rubbish. I raised this matter in the Parliament about 10 years ago and suggested that we should look at the possibility of establishing plants that would recycle all of the rubbish in the metropolitan area. Plants of this nature operate in other parts of the world; and I think it is tomorrow that at last the Wanneroo Shire Council will send a delegation to Rome to investigate the plant Sorain Cecchini. I mentioned this plant when I spoke in this place about this subject many years ago. That plant should be investigated thoroughly because the people of Quinns Rock, in particular, do not want another rubbish dump built near their townsite with the resultant pollution into the water and through the soil.

It is time that we, as a Parliament, examined this problem thoroughly and took positive steps -- to bite the bullet as it were -- to provide for the disposal of rubbish in the metropolitan area. Almost one million people reside in the metropolitan area now, and I do not believe that this problem should be confined to any particular local authority. It can be done collectively by all the metropolitan councils and the proper plant, with its associated advantages, could be installed.

Another area to which I refer today concerns the stockholders in the northern part of my electorate. I refer to the combined military manoeuvres of the Australian and American forces last week. While I am 100 per cent in support of such cooperation in combined manoeuvres, there must be some responsibility in the way in which the manoeuvres are conducted. I have received a lot of complaints of stock bursting out of yards because of low-flying aircraft which need not have been in that area. There is a large area of Crown land north of Lancelin where the gunnery range is, and I cannot see that there is any need for the delta-winged fast aircraft to fly low over the sheep and cattle yards which were full of stock. In any event, I cannot see any reason for them flying over the properties.

One farmer had his stock in a yard and they scattered in all directions and flattened the yard. Anyone who has handled stock will appreciate that while it might be funny in the movies, it is not too funny to be the person yarding up the stock. This happened on a number of occasions and some responsibility should be shown. The aircraft should be confined to the areas which have been set aside for these exercises. At the same time, a twin-rotor helicopter landed on one of the properties. The farmer was not sure whether it was an Australian or American craft, but the problem of quarantine arises. What steps were taken to ensure that there were no seeds or diseases brought in by the aircraft which landed indiscriminately in farmers' paddocks?

The same could be asked about the amphibious vehicles that came ashore on the beach. Were they American vehicles and had they been properly inspected to ensure that they were not bringing diseases or plant species into Western Australia? These are matters of concern to the farmers. As far as the economy is concerned we ride on the sheep's back -- we have done it in the past and we are doing it again. We must be ready to take all steps to ensure that all precautions are taken. I will take this matter up further by writing to the appropriate authorities. I have already said that I do not oppose the manoeuvres. As a matter of fact, I think we should support them. It is something we should encourage, but there must be some responsibility in the way in which they are carried out.

The other day I received a telephone call from one of my constituents who, unfortunately, over the last couple of years has lost his eyesight. He now has to use the services of the Braille Society and the library set aside to help blind people. He told me that because of the lack of funding he will now have to pay for the use of the machine which he uses for his talking books. I suppose that it is a tape machine. The charge will be about \$40 a year; and it does seem hard that people who are the victims of blindness will be subject to this charge. Some people are, unfortunately, born blind and we have a responsibility to care for them. I have written to the Treasurer about this matter and have asked him if he would make available more money to help that particular library.

Mr Taylor: They have also written to me on that matter, although it does not directly affect my portfolio. I am going to visit the people concerned in the next few weeks.

Mr CRANE: Thank you. I will convey the Minister's remarks to the person concerned.

I spoke today with the library, and it is not altogether its fault that some of the material available is not of interest to the person who contacted me. The language used by some of the modern authors is not acceptable to people who are a little more discerning in how they

describe certain activities. I would not say that they are straight-laced people. He told me that he particularly likes Edgar Wallace, and good stories about history. Perhaps we should concentrate a little more on that type of book. If more money is available a wider choice of books could be made available.

I am pleased to hear that the Minister for Health is concerned. I will visit the library also because there may be other ways in which we can help. I understand that many volunteers read the stories onto the tapes, and that is wonderful. The volunteers are doing that sort of work at their own cost and this type of thing needs to be encouraged. If people know about this sort of thing, other volunteers may come forward.

I must raise another matter which has been brought to my attention but it is extremely distasteful to me. It is a matter which concerns Government expenditure; that is, what people consider to be a misuse of Government cars, particularly chauffeur-driven vehicles. A lot of money could be saved in this area, and I ask the Treasurer to take particular notice of my comments in this regard.

It has been brought to my attention -- I must say this in the Parliament because it is the place to raise such matters -- that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services was, at one stage, having a chauffeur-driven car travel 90 kilometres to his home at Bindoon in the morning to take him to work and then to take him home in the evening. It resulted in the driver travelling 360 kilometres per day, and it was not considered reasonable.

Some members in this place have, over the years, acquired a reasonable amount of wealth, but there was a time when we were not wealthy. I well remember when I used to take a two-bob piece out of my pocket, look at it, turn it over, and put it back into my pocket. That is the reason I acquired a little bit of wealth. I was careful with what I did with my money, remembering that it was, of course, my money. It is even more important when handling other people's money that we are even more careful. I would like the Treasurer to initiate an investigation into the use of Government cars. I understand that there are ministerial drivers who are on stand-by, waiting to be called after Parliament rises to drive the Ministers home. This is all right up to a certain point, but we must remember that the drivers could be on double time or perhaps even more. I am told that some of them earn more money than I do. That does not worry me because perhaps I have a little bit stacked away.

The point is that a lot of money is wasted in this regard. I remember a matter being raised in this House when Sir Charles Court was Premier. He had a Holden SLE available for his use, and he used to drive it home for dinner at night and back to work. Of course, we can understand that Sir Charles would drive the vehicle himself because he was such a young, active, and healthy person. Perhaps the present Ministers are not young, active or healthy enough to do that. Ministers do need drivers at various times; for instance, whenever they have to go to the country late at night, they are very busy, or they need to be driven home. On a number of occasions I am called to northern parts of my electorate and on more than one occasion I have left Eneabba after midnight and had to drive to Perth, having sat in Parliament during the day. I know it is a strain on a person and I appreciate that Ministers are carrying an additional burden. On such occasions it is only fair that Ministers should have drivers but at other times they should be able to drive themselves, particularly when drivers are asked to sit up during the night, being paid double time or whatever at the taxpayers' expense.

It is not very pleasant for me to put this forward but I am doing it because I believe we have a responsibility to guard the public purse. That is our responsibility to society. The Treasurer may not have been aware of these matters and I am not accusing him of anything. I realise how busy he is and that he cannot know all that is going on.

Mr Brian Burke: I would much prefer to have Ministers driven by paid drivers than running the risk late at night of driving themselves home or from a function to another function or in other circumstances where they might endanger themselves or others, just through the fact that they have been working long hours. I do not take any issue with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services being driven home or with other Ministers being driven to different places, nor with the Opposition. I have made cars available to senior members of the Opposition for the same reason; in the private sector they would have that advantage and they should have it here.

Mr CRANE: I think the Treasurer missed my point. I do not disagree with much of what he said but a line has to be drawn somewhere and this matter needs thorough investigation. It is

quite blatant. If one goes to the side entrance when the House rises it is like stepping into Hay Street because there are so many cars pulling into the car park. I can remember the time when Ministers would go to their own cars and drive themselves home. I agree that when they are going to a function they cannot be expected to find parking places, etc. and they need a driver on those occasions. Everything must be looked at on its merits. I have been asked to raise this matter in Parliament.

Mr Brian Burke: Some Ministers in the past have had drivers drive them home to country electorates and on weekends the drivers stayed at motels ready to drive the members from their homes to Parliament after the weekend. I do not criticise that.

Mr CRANE: I am afraid I do.

Mr Brian Burke: I wish you had at the time because they were members of your party.

Mr CRANE: It was not brought to my attention and I was not aware of it. I do not condone that practice by members on either side of the House. It is no good justifying this by saying that someone else did it in the past. We need a thorough investigation to ascertain what has been done, when it started, and who are the offenders.

Mr Brian Burke: I do not think it is wrong because if a Minister driving back from the country had an accident and was killed because he was under considerable pressure, you would be the first one to say, "Gosh, there should have been a driver to drive him home".

Mr CRANE: When I have driven to Perth from Eneabba a few times I have been under pressure.

Mr Brian Burke: You do not have the pressure a Minister has in his official capacity.

Mr CRANE: Perhaps the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee should look into this matter. It needs to be investigated and stopped. Never mind about the driving, what about the overtime drivers are receiving while they are sitting at home waiting for a telephone call asking them to pick up the Minister?

I was very disappointed yesterday to hear of the interference with the Premier when he was driving back to Parliament House after lunch by the crowd gathered to protest against the Australia Card. Although I am and always will be a supporter of stopping the introduction of the card, I do not support the kind of behaviour in which the Premier -- it does not matter who the Premier is, he is a person holding a very high office -- is harassed. It was absolutely wrong. I understand the police were on the scene more quickly than the Premier thought they were but under pressure a few minutes can seem a long time. Sometimes people get confused. The police acted promptly in going to the assistance of the Premier. I have a high regard for the police. I find it rather strange that people could coincidentally carry an egg along St George's Terrace and be in the right place at the right time.

Mr Brian Burke: I think they would have thrown it at me had I spoken at the rally.

Mr CRANE: Had I been there, I would have been the first to stand in front of it even though I might have copped the egg.

Mr Brian Burke: Thank you.

Mr CRANE: I did not approve of it. It was a disgrace and an insult to the office of Premier.

I was very pleased to read in the newspaper the other day the comments made by the Chief Justice when he blasted some members of the legal profession. I am continually hearing from people who have not been served adequately by the legal profession. They have been described as people who charge like wounded buffaloes and never get off their backsides to do anything. I know that many members of the legal profession do not fit that description; just as policemen, prostitutes, and parliamentarians are always condemned although we are not all bad -- perhaps just most of us. The same applies to the legal profession -- it is a fact and members must admit it. As the Chief Justice said, a day in court can be ruinously expensive and a citizen seeking justice would be better off going to a television station or organising a demonstration than going to court. This is a sad state of affairs which we need to address. I hope we have the courage to do something about it. He has given us the lead and we should take up the cudgels because there is no doubt that legal representation is denied to many people who deserve it. Either they cannot afford it or they cannot afford the repercussions. As the Chief Justice said, perhaps it is worth looking at the contingency system in America. I do not know about that but we must address this problem. I have a number of cases on my books of people who have been badly represented by the legal

profession. There has been absolute professional incompetence, yet those people are not required to make retribution for their incompetence, or laziness, or whatever it happens to be. I am sure that other members of Parliament must have received the same kind of representations at times. It is not something which affects only those members on this side of the House, but all the people of Australia, and we must concern ourselves with Western Australia. Therefore I hope we can give it some serious consideration and take up what the Chief Justice, Sir Francis Burt, has started, to see whether we can put some justice back into the legal profession. It is conspicuous by its absence at the moment.

The other evening in Parliament I heard the member for Canning speaking about the effect passive smoking has on us. I would like to commend the member for Canning for what she said. It is pretty well known in this place that I would like to see smoking curtailed as much as possible. If people want to smoke, recognising the dangers inherent in smoking, it is their prerogative to do so; but I do not believe that gives them the right to cause discomfort to other people. In this place in the dining room a person cannot smoke when having his lunch or evening meal yet, for some reason or another, when we go there for supper it seems to be quite permissible. That is inconsistent and I hope the Joint House Committee is able to solve this problem.

Recently I was on a world trip, during which I went to America. In America when you go into a restaurant you are always asked, "Smoking or non-smoking?" There is always that option. I have never had that happen to me in Australia, although perhaps there are some places which do so; I do not know. But at every restaurant I went to in America I was asked that question, and many restaurants in Europe were the same. I believe we ought to ban smoking in public places such as dining rooms, restaurants, and aircraft -- I believe it is banned on public buses now -- because those people who do not smoke have a right to breathe free, clean air. They have their rights as much as the others do. I would support any legislation which banned smoking in restaurants or in any public place. I hope we all give the member for Canning support in what she said the other day about passive smoking, because she was quite right. She has researched the matter correctly and needs all the support she can get. I can assure her that she will have all the support she needs from me on that matter.

Another member opposite raised a point the other day in her speech in this debate concerning the conduct of Senator Jo Vallentine, pointing out that she pays very little attention to her parliamentary responsibilities as a Senator. In support of what the member for Pilbara said the other night I would like to read a letter which Senator Vallentine wrote to the shire council of Moora in reply to the council's letter to her asking for assistance on a matter of extreme concern to council. She wrote back in the following terms --

Dear Mr Wame,

Thank you for your letter supplying information about the 2% of Personal Income Tax for Local Government agreement, and asking for my support on this matter.

As you may know, I was elected to the Senate on the single issue of nuclear disarmament. This is my mandate from the 50,000 people who voted for me in Western Australia, and I feel that it is in this area that I must concentrate my efforts.

Mr Speaker, is it not a pity that parliamentarians who seek election to the Federal Parliament do not bother to read the Federal Constitution? There would be very few people who would not know that Senators are elected to the Federal Parliament to represent their States. An equal number of Senators are elected from each State for that very reason, and their first responsibility under the Constitution is to safeguard the interests of the States they represent. It is an indictment of all political parties that this has changed over the years and that we now see Senators who are elected merely supporting the political party to which they belong. That in itself is contrary to the Constitution and to the responsibilities of Senators, because they are elected first to represent and look after the interests of their States.

That Senator Vallentine could have the audacity to write to a local authority in this manner is in extremely poor taste and is indicative not only of the conduct she has shown in this Parliament -- and in America, where I understand she was arrested -- but also, it does not match the responsibility we would expect an elected member of Parliament to show when travelling in other countries. I therefore support the member for Pilbara in her comments about Senator Vallentine. The fact that Senator Vallentine is presently fighting on the same side as I on the issue of the Australia Card makes no difference at all to the responsibilities

she holds in representing the people of Western Australia. I hope that all political parties will take particular note of what I have said. Perhaps we should be electing Senators to represent Western Australia irrespective of parties. Let them have nothing to do with it, and then we may get back to true representation for the States.

I was disappointed the other day to hear the comments made by the member for Perth against our Lord Mayor. I thought they were most untimely and unnecessary, particularly as the member has been in this place only five minutes. As a matter of fact, we can still see the water dripping on the deck from the wetness behind his ears. Yet he stood here under parliamentary privilege and abused someone who is not paid, really, for the task that he is performing and who is endeavouring to do to the best of his ability the job entrusted to him. It is unfortunate that this so-called parliamentary privilege is abused in the way in which it is abused. I was extremely disappointed in the member's remarks, which were absolutely unnecessary.

I will conclude my remarks on a much happier note. Today it became evident that I must be a billionaire, because I received in the mail today a note for 50 billion marks from a dear friend in Germany. I will describe how this came about because I believe it is worthy of mention. On my recent trip around the world I went to Munich particularly to visit Captain Hans Bertram. He was the aviator lost on the Kimberley coast in 1932 and my father was instrumental in taking a launch out, searching for him, and bringing him in. I had never met Captain Bertram but felt I always knew him. A film about his story was made recently, called *Flight to Hell*. The story has been told also by Barbara Winter in the book *Atlantis is Missing*. I went to see Captain Bertram, who is 81 years of age, because I wanted to show him my father's log book of the whole search as I knew he had not seen it. I took him the log book and he spent the afternoon reading that log, written in my father's own hand, and it cleared up some points for him. A few areas were missing; for instance, as to how he was eventually located. I do not believe the people of Western Australia have appreciated fully the valuable work done by the Kimberley Aboriginal people in finding Captain Hans Bertram and his mechanic, Adolf Klausmann.

It was always assumed that Klausmann went mad as a result of the privations, and subsequently died. Mr Bertram told me that Klausmann died only seven years ago. Unfortunately the two men met only once and as, on the occasion when they did, Klausmann lost his mind again at seeing his old friend and remembering what had happened to them, they never met again. It was a great story. The ABC made a film of it a couple of years ago. Unfortunately, in its own ineptitude, it made a couple of glaring errors. For instance, when taking the float off the aircraft, it took the starboard float instead of the port float. More care could have been taken in making that film. The names of all the people were changed except for Bertram and Klausmann, which was absolutely unnecessary. Constable Marshall, who was the first white man to reach the aviators, was called Constable Maxwell. My own father, Captain Crane, was called by another name which I do not now remember. Names which are part of history were changed.

When I came back Hans Bertram asked me to convey his sincere thanks to Sir Norman Brearley, for his assistance in making a float available for that aircraft so that it could be floated off the Kimberley coast. I telephoned Sir Norman at lunchtime today. He is 97 years of age but is as clear as a bell in his mind. He appreciated the remarks from Bertram in thanking him. I would like Western Australians to know that I have invited Bertram to come here next year. It would be appropriate, because of the part he has played in the history of Western Australia, for the Western Australian Government to invite him here next year. He would come and stay with me. There would be no cost to anybody. In return, he has offered his villa in the Tyrol for my family to stay in.

This is part of our history. In the bicentennial year it would be appropriate for us to invite people like Hans Bertram to visit the State. Such people have played their part in the history of the State, and ought to be remembered for the contributions they have made. Hans Bertram sent me some photographs that were taken when I was with him. I have them here, and if any member wishes to see them, they may. Hans Bertram is a fine old man. He is a very fit 81 years of age. He made me a personal presentation of his book, *Flug in Die Hölle*, which means *Flight into Hell*. When he autographed the book he wrote, "I am still a dinkum Aussie." He thinks very dearly of the Australian people because, as he said himself, he virtually died here and was reborn.

He never fails in his appreciation of the Aboriginal people who found him. Those

Aborigines actually chewed the food for Bertram and Klausmann, who were too weak to chew it themselves, and put it into their mouths for them to swallow. That is how weak these two men were when they were found. About six years ago the Aboriginal who actually found them died. I will check the library for newspaper cuttings and send them to Bertram. His feelings for those people are genuine. There were tears in his eyes as we said goodbye. He feels very strongly for this country. Although I have invited him to come back here, and am prepared to care for him, I would like him to receive an official invitation from the Western Australian people. He is one person deserving of such an invitation, and I hope that it will be forthcoming. This is an occasion steeped not in politics but in compassion. I hope we can issue an invitation to him.

MR D.L. SMITH (Mitchell) [3.15 pm]: Entering into a Budget debate is always difficult. It is an occasion when we, as backbenchers, have the opportunity to launch far and wide on any issue of concern to us. Country members like myself often find a great need to resort to an explanation of how the Budget is impacting on our local electorates and on the special problems within our electorates. This year I have the additional problem of speaking in the course of a by-election. I do not want to dwell on those problems because it might be that my speech will be read closely by the Opposition, and I may find it difficult canvassing the South West Province on issues I have raised. I also face the problem that the member for Moore, in his speech before me, engaged in some criticisms of the legal profession. As a former member of the profession I feel obliged to use part of my time to respond briefly to some of the remarks he made.

The remarks that he quoted by the Chief Justice were not so much a criticism of the legal profession, in my view, but a criticism of the legal system in which legal practitioners, and the judiciary itself, have to operate. Those systems are not determined by legal practitioners or the judiciary. By and large those systems are determined by Parliament. When parliamentarians criticise the legal profession, the judiciary, or the judicial system, they are really criticising themselves and previous Governments for not sufficiently modernising the system to ensure that justice is both acceptable, and promptly and properly delivered by the judicial system.

It is not true to say that most legal practitioners are either rapacious or incompetent. It is true to say that there are some legal practitioners who are rapacious and incompetent, and when there are pressures on the system obviously that is going to be more acute than it otherwise might be. In Western Australia at the moment we have an acute shortage of legal practitioners. To some extent, in recent years, we have tried to change the system and force-feed the profession with new graduates. When I sought admission as a legal practitioner, on completion of my law degree, I had to be articled to a senior legal practitioner for two years. That senior legal practitioner provided advice and training for me in the course of my work. In my early years of practice I would look to the senior legal practitioners to advise me on the preparation and conduct of cases, or the preparation of conveyancing if that was my field.

Today, with the pressure on the legal profession, that two years has been shortened to one, and there is an increasing tendency on the part of universities to explode to meet demand. In my view, those institutions are now taking on people who, in previous years, may not have been considered to have a high enough academic standard to be admitted to the law courts. During their university course they are no longer obliged, as they used to be, to cover most of the units. They have a range of options, and can complete the university degree without having studied some of the critical subjects they will need if they are to be general practitioners. When they go out into the profession they find themselves being articled for only one year, with firms whose emphasis has to be on efficiency and cost management, where the senior practitioners are under such pressure themselves that they really cannot devote the time and attention to the guidance that practitioners of old used to give.

That, in turn, is leading to a situation where junior practitioners are being called on to do work which, in previous years, junior members would not even have contemplated. It is leading to a situation where people do not have the training and experience to handle the work which they are handling. The answer is not, as the member for Moore was doing, to criticise the profession, but rather to look at the way in which we are providing the training for the legal profession, and the systems in which we are asking them to operate.

We as a Parliament have a primary responsibility there. Certainly the Chief Justice has a responsibility when he sees deficiencies in the way in which the system is operating to bring them to our attention. Without wishing to flatter our Chief Justice, Western Australia is truly

privileged to have had the benefit of his services over the years. His was an outstanding contribution as a Queen's Counsel in his private practice, and his work as a judicial figure in this State has been exemplary. Whoever is elevated to fill his position in the future will, I hope, use him as an example. We have been extremely fortunate in the way he has chosen not to go off to the High Court bench, something which he is more than qualified to do, and has chosen to devote his talents to Western Australia.

To return to the matters more closely concerned with my electorate, I find that in the Budget the items allocated for the south west are not as great as I have been used to seeing. I get the impression from Ministers that they think the south west has had enough, and certainly the claims of pork-barrelling from the Opposition indicates that it believes the south west has had too much. The truth is that the south west for many years under previous Governments never received the expenditure and the resources it has received during this Government's term of office, but it has a long way to catch up. What has been done in the last four years has only gone some of the way towards achieving what needs to be done, and we have an enormous way to go.

I am pleased with a number of items in the Budget, and perhaps the most pleasing one is not one that involves an extravagant cost. I refer to the provision of a school nurse for the College Row school. One of the things that has become apparent to me as a country resident and has been emphasised since I have been a member of Parliament is the sad situation in which parents find themselves when they have children who are disabled in any way, in particular if they are retarded or spastic. This situation is ever so much more difficult for parents who are unfortunate enough to reside in the country, and I do not exclude Bunbury.

If we look at the concentration of services that are provided for parents of children in this situation, we find that to a quite unrealistic and unreasonable degree those facilities and expenditures and places for research are centralised in the city areas. When country areas do get something, it is only when the needs of the city have been met; the country does not get it as a matter of priority. I am pleased that during our period in office we have seen some advances in this respect.

A coordinator has been appointed to the Irrabeena team in Bunbury, which has allowed for the better coordination of services provided by that organisation. The team has also been strengthened by the appointment of a specialist paediatric physiotherapist and a specialist paediatric speech therapist. They have strengthened the team quite remarkably. But there is still a complete absence of any relief or permanent care for the children in this situation. The parents of these children are simply left, by and large, with the aid of visiting services. The services provided by the Irrabeena team, as well as the PLEDGE team and the Slow Learning Children's Group, have to fend for themselves. I ask the Government that in anything it does in the future in this area it looks at the provision of those services in the country and makes sure that more money is spent and more services are provided in the country.

I do not leave that call to be answered by the Government alone. Organisations like the spastic welfare group which, for years, have had quite substantial contributions given to them from country areas, have not provided any substantial welfare facilities outside the metropolitan area. As a matter of priority such groups should look at the provision by themselves of some facilities in the Bunbury area. Although this is nothing to do with the Government or me, we have been fortunate in Bunbury in that a specialist paediatrician has recently established a practice there, and he seems pleased with the way it is going. Certainly I am pleased that he is there providing a service for the group of children I have been mentioning.

The second area of this year's Budget that gives me great satisfaction is the allocation for family centres at Eaton, Whitfords, and Karratha, as well as the provision of playgroup grants. Although Eaton is in the Dardanup Shire, it is really a suburb of Bunbury and it has lacked a community facility for some time. With the allocation for family centres, we will be able to provide facilities for some four-year-old education, although it will be outside the education system. We will also be able to provide a home for the Eaton playgroup, which has been doing excellent work in inadequate accommodation. The playgroup grants which were initiated by this Government for the first time in 1985-86 are an indication of the best form of Government spending, and it is expenditure which is not by the Government alone, but seeks to unite the expenditure of Government money with community effort.

We have in our various communities, parents, particularly mothers, who get together and organise playgroups. Often they are left to find, first, accommodation for their playgroups,

and secondly, the money themselves to meet the rent for the accommodation. I was very pleased when, in the 1985-86 Budget, the State provided \$225 000 for that purpose, with a maximum grant of \$25 000. I was pleased that one of those grants was made to the Australind community group in the Harvey Shire. I was most dismayed last year, when I had been working to get some groups to look for similar capital funding, to find that the item had been deleted in the 1986-87 Budget. However, this year the amount has been increased to \$300 000 and I am certain at least two groups in my community will be filling out the application forms as soon as they are available.

I am very pleased to see in the Budget a final provision for the Clifton Park and Australind high schools. It always worries me a bit when I speak to Ministers about whether Mitchell and Bunbury are being pork-barrelled and I am told that the things for which they have been asked to provide funding are in the Australind townsites, which falls within the Murray-Wellington electorate. But Australind is more a suburb of Bunbury, and although it happens to be in the Murray-Wellington electorate I believe it should also be looked after by the representatives of Bunbury and Mitchell.

The Clifton Park High School is one example of what education capital works should be all about. The school oval, the basketball nets, and the cricket pitches were all down and prepared prior to the foundation of the buildings being laid. When I visited the site recently I was very pleased to see that the school will be ready to open in 1988 with all its buildings and playing facilities in a proper condition for the children to use. The whole of that project was supervised by the Building Management Authority; no private architect was involved.

Turning to my own electorate, one of the reasons I have been pressing for that primary school to be established is that 100-odd children from Clifton Park attend the Eaton Primary School, causing some overcrowding for a number of years, so the establishment of this school will ease the overcrowding at the Eaton Primary School.

The second thing I am pleased about is the funding made available for the completion of the Australind High School. However, it has already been publicised in the local Press that I was not at all complimentary about some aspects of the Australind High School, specifically the oval and the change rooms, as well as other facilities, not having been prepared in advance so that they would be ready for use when the school opened. They were not included in the first stage of the project, and no money has been allocated in this Budget for the second stage of the high school to be completed. I do not know who in the planning sense was responsible for the absence of work on those facilities in the early stages, but I believe that in future this sort of work should be attended to immediately. I also had some criticisms to make of the appearances of the building. However, in the end, appearances are really a matter of personal taste and while I do not move away from any of the remarks I have made, I will not repeat them.

Ongoing funding is provided in this Budget for the completion of the Australind bypass which will divert much of the Perth-Bunbury traffic away from the Eaton, Clifton Park, and Australind areas. That will be of enormous benefit. The Government's decision to proceed with that work meant a bringing forward of the Department of Main Roads' plans by about seven or eight years. However, I believe, because of the traffic densities in that area, it will be said in years to come that the decision was made at exactly the right time.

I am also pleased about the increase in funds for the South West Development Authority. Whatever one may say about the politics of development in the south west, one can say unreservedly that the establishment of the authority has been one of the great pluses, both in terms of its constitution, its staff, and the leadership of Dr Ernest Manea. I believe that the authority deserves every penny of the increased expenditure it received this year and I hope it sets an example for the great southern authority and the mid-west authorities which will follow it.

It was pleasing to see provision made for the appointment to Bunbury of a State departmental officer responsible for employment and training. While great strides have been made in the south west as is obvious from the Australia Bureau of Statistics figures in relation to employment and unemployment, we should be concerned about the circumstances of the unemployed. Under the present Minister, we in the south west have been able to establish a hinterland joblink programme, a group apprenticeship scheme, a YES programme, and an enterprise scheme. An officer will now be based at Bunbury to coordinate those projects. I believe that is recognition by the Government that it is not only concerned with development and providing jobs, but also concerned with helping and caring for the unemployed.

I noted also in the Budget that provision has been made for the purchase of the police station site at Capel. This Government, before it was elected in 1983, promised that if it was elected police stations would be provided at Capel and other centres in the south west. I have been greatly disappointed that, despite representations to previous Ministers, to the previous Commissioner of Police, and to the present commissioner, that the response has always been that the decision on the deployment of police, whatever the Government's preference may be, remained a decision of the commissioner. I had the impression that he may decide not to base police officers at Capel for some time. However, after the decision to buy the land and to provide the funds in next year's Budget for the construction of the police station, and then to base two policemen at Capel, it seems to be all happening for the people of the Capel and the Boyanup region.

Another area of concern to me is that of Homeswest accommodation. I understand that, because of the demands being made on the resources of Homeswest by the Karratha and other areas of Western Australia, that Bunbury has had to accept a reduction of 50 per cent in its programme this year. If one considers the reduction in the waiting-time figures that we have been able to achieve in the Bunbury region in the last four years, and the improved standard of housing that we have been able to provide away from the Homeswest area under the purchase schemes, Bunbury is getting its fair share this year. However, with many of the developments that I anticipate will occur in the next 12 to 18 months, I hope the Minister will restore the programme next year to somewhere near the 1985-86 levels.

Another area that has not, in my view, received the attention it should have received, nor the thanks of the community, has been the funding by the State Government to assist SCM Chemicals Ltd to relocate its chlorine production plant and the first stage of its chloride treatment plant away from Australind at Kemerton. It is not generally understood that the total cost of that assistance to the State, including assistance for the change from the sulphate process to the chloride process, will be in excess of \$15 million. Initially, the State was willing to contribute only \$8.5 million to the change from the sulphate to the chloride process to prevent the pollution of the peninsula and to prevent the dangers being caused to the estuary and to Geographe Bay by the continued use of the sulphate process. However on top of that, and as a result of community representations, the Government made its decision to increase its funding from \$8.5 million to relocate the chloride process, including the chlorine production side of it, to Kemerton.

The farmers in the area were generally concerned about the fact that there may be some liquid discharge into the Wellersley River and further representations were made about that. The Government decided it would contribute to a pipeline from Kemerton to the coast at a further cost of about \$2.5 million to avoid that possibility occurring. I think it is of great credit to the present Treasurer, the Minister for Environment, and, in particular, the Minister for Economic Development, Mr David Parker, that all of that has been achieved.

They also know that I am never satisfied. At one stage I was told that we might be able to persuade SCM to relocate the sulphate part of its process also at Kemerton. That would have completed the plan to protect the estuary and the Collie River and would have removed the impression that Australind and Clifton Park are an industrial area, rather than being one of the best locations in Western Australia in which to live. Negotiations today have indicated that that would involve a substantial additional expenditure by the State Government which is beyond its capacity to provide when, at the same time, it is providing about \$15.5 million for the work which I previously indicated. Although I believe it is a retrograde step that the sulphate process remains at the present site, and that it will be necessary to increase the size of it to accommodate the increased products going through the chloride part of the plant at Kemerton, I believe I will have to accept that the Government has done more than could be expected and accept also that we have not finished with it yet.

However, I am still concerned that part of the liquid effluent will have to be discharged into the Collie River even though, from reports and investigations carried out to date, that effluent appears to be harmless. I would have preferred the existing pipeline from the opposite side of the estuary to be left in place and used to discharge the effluent into the ocean and not into the Collie. There is an ongoing need because of the pollution of the groundwater beneath the Australind site for that water to be pumped up as well and, under the current arrangements, it appears necessary to pump that water into the Collie River. As I said, I would prefer it to continue to be pumped across the estuary into the ocean or onto the dunes on the opposite side of the estuary. Because it is of a far lower concentration and a different chemical composition, it would not have the same adverse effects on that area that the previous sulphate effluent was having for some time.

The other matter I want to mention relates to the provision in the Budget of a Government information service. Information about the services provided by the State Government has been lacking in the south west for some time. Information can be provided to the public about the services the Government provides and the people can provide information to the Government about how to improve its services. However, it is a bit disappointing that the scope of that person's work will embrace some of the work previously done by the Citizens Advice Bureau on a voluntary basis. I would not like a situation to develop where the very valuable work and services provided by the CAB in Bunbury were affected by the provision of that service. There is an opportunity for Government to provide additional funding for the CAB by extending and circulating the wheel to use a lot of the research and information available from the CAB. That information could be provided to the Government information service on a continuing basis. A fee could be paid which would overcome some of the current financial problems the CAB has and would ensure that the quality of its service, especially in relation to counselling and provision of emergency relief provided by the Commonwealth Government, could be improved.

I am pleased that one item is still in the Budget but disappointed that it was also there last year and has not been used; that is, the Government's undertaking to provide \$1.5 million as a contribution to the establishment of an entertainment centre in Bunbury. It has not been expended because the Bunbury City Council and the community have not yet decided what kind of entertainment centre they want and where it should be located. Those decisions quite rightly should be made by the local community in the form of the Bunbury City Council and not imposed from outside by the Government, but I urge the council and everybody associated with the planning of the project to expedite matters so that we can take advantage of that funding and have the facility at a very early date.

It is also pleasing that a child psychiatrist has been provided in Bunbury by the Government for the first time. The only disappointment is that it has been necessary to place that child psychiatrist in the same premises as the psychiatric team based at the Bunbury Regional Hospital, as a result of a Budget decision by the State Government in 1985-86. In my view because the work of that child psychiatrist is not related directly to the psychiatric team, in the sense that it will deal with the counselling of parents and children, it should be located away from the team where parents will have ready access to the service. It is also of regret that there is no provision in the current Budget for the day hospital to be provided by the Bunbury Regional Hospital which might have improved the present accommodation of the psychiatric team.

I mentioned earlier that one of my areas of concern is for children who suffer from spasticity or other problems. Another problem is the lack of mental health services provided for people in country areas. It is of great regret that again there seems to be an enormous centralisation of all the resources of the State and Commonwealth in relation to mental health in the metropolitan area and very little is provided in the country. The present State Government has started to break that down by providing teams at Bunbury and Geraldton, but that is not enough. There is no half-way house facility, nothing that could be described as a psychiatric bed, and no facilities in country areas such as the Richmond Fellowship provides in the metropolitan area, although it has an outlet at Albany.

I am concerned about family members of a person suffering from schizophrenia who may for whatever reason require hospitalisation. In the Bunbury region we are still left with the situation where the only option is to turn up at the home with a policeman and paddy wagon, take the person into custody and then to the metropolitan area, instead of having a psychiatric team and an ambulance available to properly provide for such people in Bunbury in an proper small psychiatric unit. I hope the Government will consider providing that kind of facility in the near future.

The other area I am pleased with is the increase in expenditure in the Water Authority budget for sewerage in the south west. I know that the costs involved in the provision of sewerage have meant that Governments have had to rethink the sewerage problem in much detail. I am pleased that the Bunbury area will benefit from what might be one of the last major provisions for that item. The area which pleases me most is that enough money is provided for the establishment of a small sewerage plant for the Burekup townsite. Under the previous Government a residential subdivision was allowed in Burekup in an area with a clay base and this has created enormous problems for the people who built homes on that subdivision with regard to waste disposal and the problems relating to the service. I hope that within 12 months we shall overcome that problem. However, we shall still have the problem,

traditionally I guess, of where it will go and I have already received a number of protests objecting to its location anywhere near the residences of the writers of the letters.

I want briefly to raise a few other matters removed from the Budget; it is perhaps a summary of some of the more minor problems currently affecting my electorate. The first is the item associated with the relocation of Telecom management staff from the Bunbury area to the metropolitan area. As a result of a report apparently produced by a Telecom manager in the middle of this year a decision was made to consolidate all the country management teams of Telecom into one region and relocate it in Perth. In my view that ranks as one of the greatest contradictions and worse decisions by any management team of which I have heard. Telecom boasts that it is a modern organisation and is in a position to compete if competition comes. It will compete in the area of telecommunications which is supposed to have resulted in the notion of a global village where people can work in a management sense in remote locations away from major operations. Yet we have this example of the organisation that is supposed to provide telecommunications services in Western Australia centralising its operation in Perth. When the management team came to Bunbury to explain the situation it was asked why it did not relocate the whole management of Telecom's operations in Canberra or Sydney. They replied that that was stupid and it would be impossible. They asked how the people in Canberra would know what was required in Perth and how could that be done effectively. We in the country are wondering how they will manage our operations in any way that brings customer satisfaction and gives their management team a proper understanding of the conditions of the work force, the needs of the system and consumers, if they are as remotely located as proposed.

More disconcerting to me was that I was fortunate to find, after it had fallen off the appropriate truck, a copy of the report and I was appalled that any major organisation, whether Government or non-Government, could have based a decision on a report as skimpy as that. It did not deal in any way with the issues of the functions of each of the management teams and how they would be better performed in the metropolitan area with reduced staff levels. It did not deal in any way with how the relocation of that management team and staff would impact on costs in terms of the management of contracts and engineering works in country areas or responding to those problems.

In fact, it did what I would have regarded almost as a kindergarten exercise; it simply totalled up the number of customers in metropolitan Perth and said, "We are able to deal with those customers by using a certain number of management staff, and if we divide one into the other, we get a certain ratio, and because when we do that in relation to the country regions we get a number which is twice as high, and the only difference is geography, therefore ipso facto the country operations must be inefficient and we must do something to change their mode of operation and relocate them to the metropolitan area." Only a metropolitan-based manager or someone who has been trained in the metropolitan area could come to a conclusion of that kind on such scanty evidence.

More importantly, if one reads the submission to the State manager which has been provided by the Telecom staff in country areas, especially in Bunbury, one finds that there was absolutely no degree of consultation with the country staff whose jobs were affected; the best that they were asked to do was to meet with the person who was doing the study, for a period of four hours -- not altogether, I might say, but in a series of meetings. When it was pointed out to the person who was conducting the interview that he was not taking any notes, so how could he remember what was being said to him, he reluctantly started to take some notes. In my view, that was indicative that they were not the least bit concerned about getting advice about their decision from the people who were actually doing the management jobs in the country; they had already determined in advance to do what they eventually decided to do. The Treasurer, fortunately, in his usual way, responded to an approach by a committee which has been appointed to oppose that relocation, and he has taken the issue directly to the Prime Minister. I understand that the Prime Minister will be asking the State manager of Telecom to review that decision. I will be asking for a meeting of that working party or committee with the State manager, to be held next week at the latest. I hope that when a proper analysis is done, it will be recognised that there are alternatives which will provide the sorts of savings which Telecom may be looking for and may require, so that most of the management team can remain in Bunbury.

This is yet another example of the fact that the people who have most to lose from privatisation and deregulation are country people. It really pains me that people opposite, who claim to represent country electorates, persist with calling for privatisation and

deregulation in the way that they do. One has only to look at what has happened to Westrail and the impact of its charges on country towns to recognise what can occur when that sort of deregulation occurs. I think Telecom at the moment is running scared of privatisation and making these sorts of decisions, which must impact on country areas.

The other matter that I want to raise briefly in the time left to me is the recent proposal that the State Engineering Works be relocated at Bunbury. As members will know, a decision was made to close the State Engineering Works and offer its assets for sale by tender. A group known as ARM, in conjunction with the local foundry owner, Mr Martella, the owner of South West Foundry, put up a proposal whereby they would tender for both the physical assets and the intellectual property of the State Engineering Works and then put a joint venture together to be known as South West Foundry Pty Ltd, and pay off the debts, if any, of the existing South West Foundry and relocate it at Bunbury.

I thought that project was going along marvellously and that I had the cooperation of the Minister and Cabinet to make sure that every opportunity was given for that group to tender, as they were, in my assessment of what I know of the tenders, the best and most appropriate tenderer. From the point of view of the south west, it was a marvellous suggestion, because this area is in the middle of the biggest mining region in Western Australia bar none in terms of the variety and quantity of production -- although the iron ore area might have a higher degree of production -- yet we get very little industrial or engineering rewards for being the centre of that region. In the south west we have the Boddington gold mine, the Alcoa refinery, the Worsley alumina refineries, power production, Greenbushes tin, and the mineral sands mining project, yet out of all those things we do not get anywhere near our appropriate share of producing the inputs that go into them.

We have here a wonderful way to improve our infrastructure and establish in Bunbury an industry which would be very complementary to the needs of the mining industry and to the existing infrastructure. However, we found -- which in my view is becoming fairly common -- that private competitors and political parties seem to get together to try to sabotage the intention of one of the other tenderers. This situation began by an article in *The West Australian* on 3 September 1987, which said --

Engineering works sale under fire.

The State Opposition has accused the Government of leaving State Engineering Works workers in limbo while bungling the sale of SEW assets.

Mr Richard Court was quoted in the article as saying --

...the Government's sale of the SEW was proving to be a classic case of how not to privatise Government industries.

Mr Court said the Government would be closely questioned next week on the SEW issue.

I was intrigued to read that, because that article came out on a Thursday morning when Parliament was still sitting. I wondered why, if there was so much concern, Mr Court was going to leave it to the next week to try to raise the issue. The answer was provided for me when I picked up the *Sunday Times* on the following Sunday, 6 September, and found that the front page article was headed "Row brews on Govt deal". The subheading was "Voting ploy accusation". The emphasis in the article was that the State Government was really being rushed into a decision on the basis of the by-election.

We have been very careful in Bunbury not to give any publicity to the proposal at all because we did not want it to be another one of those things that we try to put together and then at the last minute it falls over, or to have any publicity given to it which might jeopardise it. I do not have the time to give details, but the truth of the matter is that the article was, in my view, deliberately misleading and calculated to harm the interests of Mr Martella and the tendering group. In my view, this was done with the partnership of the Liberal Party -- if not the direct partnership, the partnership in spirit -- and the persons quoted in the article. The deliberate intention was to sabotage the tender. If any further proof is required of the seriousness of that situation, in an article in *The West Australian* on the following Monday by Kent Acott, Mr Court said this --

He said that four Ministers were now involved in the sale, legal action had been taken against the Government and the plant was to be sold with the skilled workforce being treated as an after-thought.

Mr Court knew that the weakest part of the case for that relocation at Bunbury was the fact that we could not cater for that work force in full, and yet there was the item that he was using to argue in relation to the matter; he was raising the very issue which had been emphasised in the *Sunday Times* article, and which was our weakest point. That situation, combined with the newspaper publicity -- which was quite wrong and misleading, but I do not have time to explain why -- resulted in the financial backers of Mr Martella getting cold feet and starting to put up counter-proposals, at conditions which the Government could not meet; and as a result, the whole project was lost to Bunbury. It is a great tragedy for the south west and the people of Western Australia that we have people of the kind opposite who are willing to sabotage projects of that kind for short-term political interests, and for no other purpose. I thank members for their time.

MR WIESE (Narrogin) (3.59 pm): When the member for Morley-Swan rose to speak earlier in this debate, he commented that Thursday afternoon seemed to be an unfortunate day and an unfortunate time to speak in this House. He may well be right. I think it is probably even worse to commence a speech during the afternoon tea time. I suffer with that disability plus the disability of following the member for Moore in this debate. That is a pretty hard act to follow. I wish to commence my remarks on the Budget by referring to an item which raises the largest amount of State taxation revenue from the people of Western Australia. I refer, of course, to payroll tax. Payroll tax would have to be one of the most unproductive and counterproductive taxes imposed on the people of Western Australia by any State Government. It is imposed on businesses and it relates directly to their wages bill. Once the employer's wages bill reaches a certain level he is then hit with a tax that immediately adds four per cent or five per cent to his wage costs. In other words, the employer is penalised for expanding his business and employing more people.

Worse still, if he is running a new business -- perhaps trying to break into the export market or manufacturing goods in Western Australia that would otherwise be imported -- he finds that when he reaches a certain wage level his wage bill immediately goes up, with a consequent effect on his profitability and competitiveness. It is hard to imagine a more unfair or stupid tax than payroll tax, which discourages employers from expanding, from taking on staff and from doing all those things which the Government today is telling the people it really wants the private sector to do.

During his Budget speech the Treasurer sang the praises of the Government; he said the Government had done a marvellous job in raising the exemption level once again this year. I agree that the Government has raised the limit substantially since it attained office in 1983 but the Treasurer neglected to tell us that from the 1983-84 financial year to the end of this financial year payroll tax collections in this State have risen by almost \$100 million, from \$267 million to \$365 million.

Mr Brian Burke: If, for example, in the period when that increase occurred an extra 50 per cent of employment occurred, although their rate of payroll tax has actually reduced, the expansion of the economy has increased the collections.

Mr WIESE: I understand that very well, as I am sure the businessmen of Western Australia understand that they are now paying almost \$100 million more than they did in 1983-84. The Government cannot walk away from that situation.

Can members imagine how many extra people could be employed in the private sector if it were able to devote that extra \$100 million to providing jobs for Western Australians? The Treasurer also announced an increase in the exemption level from \$250 000 last year to a level of \$275 000 this year. He commented that this was an increase of 10 per cent. He was absolutely correct. However, once again the Treasurer neglected to tell the public that the Government's take from payroll tax this year will rise from \$325 million to \$365 million. That is an increase of \$40 million since last year, or an increase of 12.25 per cent. The Government, far from being generous to employers and encouraging them to employ more people, is biting business a little bit harder. It has raised the exemption level by 10 per cent but it has raised its overall payroll tax by 12.25 per cent. So much for the Government helping and encouraging private industry and small business.

Before moving away from the area of payroll tax I wish to touch on another factor which has come to my attention over the last month or so and which I believe is an anomaly causing a great many problems for a small section of our community, especially that part of the community in the country that employs seasonal workers. They have high seasonal wages bills in one section of the year and smaller wages bills in the second half of the year. I also

want to touch on the manner in which a succession of Treasurers over the years have announced the basic exemption level, and the changes and alterations to payroll tax in this State. Some members might not be aware that payroll tax is assessed on the weekly wages paid by the employer. These are averaged over a monthly period. For example, if an employer averaged less than \$4 800 a week in his wages bill, he was not liable to register for payroll tax purposes and he would not pay payroll tax. If an employer had a wages bill that exceeded \$4 800, he was required to register and was liable to pay payroll tax. That is, if his wages bill exceeded \$4 800 in any one week of the financial year.

That has been the case since the Pay-Roll Tax Assessment Act introduced the requirement to register once the level of wages reached that sum, although I would ask members to remember that it is a weekly figure, not an annual figure. I have read through every debate that has taken place in Parliament on that Act since 1971 and in all that time there has been no reference by any Treasurer to a weekly figure. Over the last 16 years there have been 12 debates in this House on payroll tax and not once has a weekly figure been mentioned. Quite understandably many employers of seasonal workers whose annual wages bills never exceeded the annual exemption level which was announced, believed that they had no liability to register and therefore no liability to pay payroll tax. Parliament has recognised the problem that the seasonal employers faced and in 1976 amended the Act and introduced section 11D, which allowed an employer to request the commissioner to reassess the payroll tax based on the total annual wages paid rather than the weekly wages. The result was that an employer who, for instance, may have paid \$5 000 in payroll tax in the first six months of the financial year and paid no payroll tax in the second six months of the year, was able to use section 11D of the Act to claim a rebate if, at the end of the 12 months, his total wages bill was less than the annual basic exemption figure. The anomaly arose because the commissioner can only apply section 11D to previous years' returns; he cannot go back more than the most recent financial year.

In the cases which have come to my notice, this has caused a very unfair and very unintended situation, whereby the Commissioner of State Taxation is able to refund the payroll tax assessed in 1985-86 because the annual wages bill paid was well below the annual exemption figure, but for the four years prior to that he is unable to apply section 11D even though the annual wages bill was well below the annual exemption level. For these years the employer is being forced to pay substantial payroll tax assessments. In one case it is over \$8 000 and in another over \$11 000. I am assured by the deputy commissioner, who handles the payroll tax area of State taxation, that there are many other similar cases.

Several times, when the Treasurer has brought in these amendments, Parliament has very precisely spelt out a detailed example of the situation I am talking about. Parliament has spelt out its intention that the employer whose wages bill is affected by these seasonal fluctuations should not be disadvantaged. That position has been restated several times. Despite this, the commissioner is assessing employers who would never have been liable to pay payroll tax because of section 11D and because their annual wages bill has never reached the exemption level. They are being forced to pay payroll tax despite Parliament's intention as stated when the various amendments have been introduced. This is a gross injustice, and I believe the Treasurer and the Minister for Budget Management should act immediately to correct this dreadfully unfair situation. They should take the necessary steps to identify the people who have been affected and who have paid these retrospective assessments. They should ensure that steps are taken to see that the will of the Parliament is carried out and the payroll tax reimbursed.

I turn now to other areas affecting my electorate of Narrogin, and the first relates to the operations and the functioning of the Narrogin district office of the Department of Agriculture. In recent years a great deal of money has been expended on purchasing land and establishing a major Department of Agriculture facility in Katanning -- the Animal Breeding and Research Institute. It is beginning to appear that as well as being the major establishment for all future sheep breeding and production research, and the base for research officers working in these fields, the institute may also become a centre for other areas of departmental activity. While I congratulate the Government for its continued support of the institute and for finally waking up to the importance of sheep and wool to the economic make-up of this State, I warn the Government and the department of the dangers of concentrating all their efforts and expertise in a single area and a single establishment to the possible detriment of the industry as a whole.

The Government would be well advised to have research officers and research work

scattered all around the agricultural areas of the State. As any sheep breeder will tell you, despite the fact that a certain type of sheep can succeed in one area of the State, it can be a disaster in another area of the State, and the management of sheep in one area can be completely different from the management of sheep in another area. If the Department of Agriculture concentrates all its efforts on Katanning, it may well find that the relevance of its work in other areas of the State will steadily decline. The present system of having officers in widely scattered district offices may have its drawbacks, but it does ensure that research work is carried out in a wide range of conditions on many different sheep types and is relevant to the problems encountered in each area of the State.

While talking about the Department of Agriculture and its operations, it would be remiss of me not to comment on the district office in Narrogin. Fifteen years ago, maybe even 10 years ago, the Narrogin district office would probably have ranked as one of the better departmental establishments in country areas. However, as time has moved on staffing levels have increased, public expectation of the departmental officers' efforts has expanded, and the need for increased facilities has grown. The Narrogin office has become quite inadequate for the demands now being made of it. The laboratory facilities for the large amount of routine soil and pasture work carried out there are very basic and are located in small, inadequate rooms in an old fibro wing attached to the major buildings of the facility. A large amount of field experimental work on all aspects of crop production is currently carried out in Narrogin, and likewise a lot of very relevant work on salt-land management is initiated from the Narrogin district office. This latter work is an increasingly important aspect of its research and I believe Narrogin should become the centre of major importance for work in this and related fields of research. Salinity and soil degradation are major problems, as several of the Government members would know only too well now having watched a film here in this House a couple of weeks ago. In that film David Bellamy highlighted the problems facing farmers all over the State and pointed to some of the work being done to find solutions to these problems. The work already being done in this field in Narrogin should be greatly extended, which would necessitate increasing the number of staff working in these fields of research and increasing the extension work done from the Narrogin district office.

I have mentioned the inadequate laboratory facilities at the district office, but there are other facilities which are either very unsubstantial or non-existent. The post-mortem room is cramped, dark and poorly drained, and is a thoroughly unpleasant place in which to work. The Narrogin departmental facility has no sheds in which to store machinery or vehicles, so expensive experimental machinery is parked completely unprotected in the open air. Everyone knows the effect of this sort of treatment on any machinery, but despite many years of submissions nothing has been done to provide storage for these machines.

It is time the Department of Agriculture started some long-term planning for the provision of a new departmental facility for Narrogin, possibly located at the edge of the town, and a little more suited to the expanding requirements of the agricultural industry in the region which is serviced by the Narrogin district office. Narrogin is ideally located for an expanded departmental facility. It is close to Perth, it is a major town, it has excellent amenities of every type, it is central to a major sheep producing area, and it is able to service the requirements of a large grain growing area. The department should be giving very serious consideration to moving some of its city-based staff out into the country which is, after all, where a Department of Agriculture should be. An expanded facility in the Narrogin region would provide the ideal opportunity for this to happen. In advocating the importance of the Narrogin district office to the large region it services, I will make a brief comparison of the Narrogin and Katanning regions serviced by the respective departmental district offices.

I am not trying to take anything away from the efforts going into the establishment of the Katanning facility. I am drawing the attention of the Minister for Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture to the size of the region serviced from the Narrogin district office. Narrogin has 1 352 farms whereas Katanning has only 1 032. The total farm area at Narrogin is 1.67 million hectares and at Katanning 1.507 million hectares. The sheep numbers are also interesting; Narrogin has 5.118 million sheep and the Katanning region has 4.583 million sheep. Narrogin produces 27 178 tonnes of wool and Katanning 22 889 tonnes.

Mr House: Are you talking about the shires?

Mr WIESE: I am talking about the region serviced by the Katanning and Narrogin district

offices. The case for improving and expanding the operations of the Department of Agriculture in Narrogin is a strong one, and I urge the Minister to take steps to ensure that the presence and influence of the department continues and expands in this large and important agricultural centre.

Mr Brian Burke interjected.

Mr WIESE: We are trying to point out that the move into the Katanning region was excellent and long overdue, but there are other large areas in the agricultural region which need similar servicing by the Department of Agriculture.

Mr Brian Burke: We are cutting back on expenditure because you are telling us to do so.

Mr WIESE: We are trying to tell the Treasurer that agriculture is, and will remain for a long time, a major contributor to the economic viability and success of this State. When the Government cuts back or does not continue providing a service to agriculture, it has an adverse effect ultimately on the welfare of this State and its people.

Mr Brian Burke: We have done more for agriculture than any Government in this State's history.

Mr WIESE: I hope the Government continues to do so and will look at Narrogin as the next centre for expansion.

The people of Narrogin were very disappointed to see once again in this Budget that the long awaited and oft-promised technical school did not get a mention. I share the disappointment of Narrogin people, but not just because Narrogin has been overlooked. I feel the disappointment of all the parents and children throughout the region because another year of graduating students will have to leave the country and go to Perth or the coastal centres if they wish to carry on their education and gain any sort of technical skills which they will need if they are to find satisfying and rewarding work.

I cannot help wondering how long this Government can carry on ignoring the oft-acknowledged needs of such a large region of the State. I acknowledge the remarks made by the Minister for Agriculture when he opened the annual field day at the Narrogin School of Agriculture. I believe the Minister was impressed by the standard of education provided at the school and the standard of work produced by the students. Those high standards reflect the enthusiasm and dedication of the staff and their ability to impart that to their students. It also reflects the excellence of the facilities at the Narrogin school, and I congratulate this Government and previous Governments for their foresight in providing such excellent facilities. The Minister's remarks show he was aware of the needs of the region for technical education facilities. Perhaps he considered some of the facilities at the School of Agriculture could be used by students of a technical school if it is established in Narrogin. I urge the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Education to sit down with local people who have devoted so much time and energy to the establishment of a technical facility to see whether that educational gap can be filled as soon as possible.

It would be remiss of me not to mention one of the most significant initiatives taken in this Budget -- the initial expenditure on the Harris River Dam. At some stage during the debate this afternoon the Minister urged members of the National Party to get right behind him and push the work he is doing. I am certainly prepared to get behind this Minister and encourage and push him because he is doing an excellent job in providing water and looking at the water problems facing country people. We may occasionally have to push him with a fairly large needle, but I am sure he will appreciate that because ultimately he is looking at the benefit of everyone in the country in providing water supplies.

It was a great achievement to get Commonwealth approval and funding for the Harris River project, and we all look forward to the day when water from that dam flows through the comprehensive water scheme which services the great southern agricultural areas. This year will emphasise the urgency of getting the dam completed. At present Wellington Dam is less than 50 per cent full, and the water quality is now approaching the 1 000 parts per million salt content level. Nobody is looking forward with much pleasure to drinking that water towards the end of this summer because in all probability we will be drinking water which is close to the limit set for human use by the World Health Organisation.

Because of the lack of run-off water, many farms will be glad to use that water for stock watering purposes despite the high salt level, because any water is better than none, and that is what many farmers will have in their dams and water storages after Christmas. I know the

Minister is aware of the problems and, judging by his past record, we can expect full and sympathetic cooperation from him and his department.

I urge the Government to use all its power and influence to persuade the Commonwealth Government to reinstate the 100 per cent tax deduction for all expenditure on water conservation and provision of on-farm water supplies which was removed several years ago. Surely the long-term answer to water problems being experienced on so many farms is to encourage the farmers to help themselves by putting down larger and deeper dams and roaded catchments so that what rain we receive in dry years is collected in the farm dams. The huge expenditure from the public purse which will occur this year in providing water sources for farmers to cart from their house and stock requirements can become a thing of the past. I urge the Government to push that message to the Commonwealth as hard as it possibly can.

Another matter in this year's Budget which I wish to comment on relates to a media statement issued jointly on 6 August by the Ministers for Small Business and Regional Development. The media release related to the appointment of a special rural advisory officer to be based in Merredin to provide help and assistance to non-farm businesses affected by the rural downturn. I have previously commended the Ministers for their initiative and I do so again today. I hope the experiment, which this appears to be, is an overwhelming success and they can see their way clear to expand this service to other regions of the State.

I refer to the Minister's statement that other measures will be taken to help rural communities and businesses. I refer to one of those measures which was specifically mentioned in the media release. It stated that proposals that the Federal Government locate the offices of some of its key agencies in regional centres would be put to the Federal Government. I take this opportunity to urge Government Ministers to commence work to put these proposals into practice as quickly as possible. There is urgent need for positive action such as this to be implemented.

In my maiden speech to this House earlier this year, I urged that this type of action should be initiated by the State Government. I again renew my plea. I am sure that if both State and Federal Governments looked positively at the means by which they could decentralise some sections of Government departments, the current downturn in country towns could be halted and even reversed. The services provided by many Government departments would be more relevant and accessible to people in country towns.

I urge the State Government to take immediate action in respect of the recent announcements by Telecom which have confirmed what has been rumoured through the country for some time. It is about to withdraw a substantial number of Telecom personnel from many of our country towns. All members would be aware of the end result of that type of action. Families will leave country towns, small business will be put under further pressures, and facilities will become even further under-utilised. Confidence in our country towns will be further eroded and, worse still, those of us who live in the country know only too well that the standard of services we receive invariably decreases. It is impossible to provide an equivalent standard of service from a distance of up to 200 kilometres from the point of service.

Telecom personnel who currently live in country towns are aware of the local problems and they are accessible to the subscribers. To remove them from our communities and place them 200 kilometres or more away in Perth or a coastal regional centre is a backward move. I urge the Government to take immediate action to halt the proposed move by Telecom. We cannot afford to lose any more services or people from our country towns.

I have a couple of small items I would like to raise in the Budget debate, one of which refers to a matter which is currently becoming more and more prominent and it is causing a great deal of worry to many people in the upper great southern area of this State. I refer to the proposal by CSBP and the joint venturer to establish a sodium cyanide plant at Kwinana and to transport the sodium cyanide by rail from Kwinana to Northam and to off-load it at Northam onto road transport and transport it to Boddington via Northam, York, Beverley, Brookton, and Pingelly.

Recently I attended a couple of public meetings at which representatives from CSBP and Westrail sought to assure people in the towns concerned that there would be no danger or risk to people in those towns from this proposal. The speakers stressed that stringent safety

procedures would be laid down and special care taken to ensure that the tankers did not pass through the townsites during busy times and when children were going to or from school. A great deal of worry was expressed about the dangers of sodium cyanide and a statement was made by one of the speakers that a person would, in actual fact, have to immerse himself completely in a drum of liquid sodium cyanide, with his mouth open, to suffer any ill effects from the exposure to the chemical. The meeting succeeded in persuading the speaker that sodium cyanide was a more dangerous chemical than that and that it was highly toxic if it is absorbed through the skin or if it contaminates the atmosphere.

Members can imagine that many people in the towns concerned expressed fears from that explanation and they are not fully satisfied that there is no danger. The people are extremely worried about the wisdom of transporting sodium cyanide through their towns.

Mr Marlborough: Are you aware of how cyanide is presently transported?

Mr WIESE: I am aware, and everyone in the towns concerned is aware, that it is transported in a pelletised form in drums and on pallets to where the chemical is used in the goldfields and at Boddington. The company is proposing to transport this highly toxic chemical in 18 000-litre containers. What I and the people in the areas concerned are questioning is the use of such a circuitous route from Kwinana to Northam and from Northam through five or six population centres to the mine site at Boddington. It is quite an insane route to use for transporting the chemical.

The reason for transporting the chemical along this route is because the Environmental Protection Authority has said that it is the best route to use for transporting liquid cyanide. The original proposal put forward by the joint venturers was approved by the Water Authority of Western Australian. The proposal was that the liquid cyanide be transported to the Boddington minesite by road from Kwinana to Byford, to Armadale, and on the Albany Highway to the mine site at Boddington. That was said to be the safest method of transporting the sodium cyanide.

Now the EPA has said that that route is not environmentally satisfactory and that the chemical will have to be transported by rail and road via a route that will pass through five or six populated centres despite the fact that a majority of people in the towns affected and I believe that there is a more appropriate, shorter, and safer route to use. The first route was that which I have already mentioned and which was approved by the Water Authority. The second route I am proposing is to transport the chemical by road to Mundijong, to North Dandalup, to Dwellingup, and through to the minesite at Boddington. It is a shorter route and it does not pass through any of the water catchments areas. It would mean that none of the liquid sodium cyanide would have to pass through the populated centres I have mentioned.

The Environmental Protection Authority should take note of the opinions of the people on that proposed route. It should re-examine its attitude firstly to road transport, and secondly to the roads to be travelled. It should decide whether it believes it is more important to consider the people being endangered, or the environment. It would appear that the Environmental Protection Authority places more emphasis on the safety of the environment than on the safety of the people in the towns along that great southern railway line.

Lastly, I refer briefly to a matter which has come up in the Narrogin region at very short notice. People are working to alleviate this problem, but I bring it before the House in the hope that we may be able to find a quick solution to the problem. It concerns what was an old sheltered workshop, now known as Numbat Industries. It is an incorporated body which employs at the present moment 15 handicapped persons, and at other times unskilled persons who are unemployed in the town. Six months ago this organisation leased an excellent building on which it believed it had taken out an option to purchase. It moved in, but due to an unfortunate set of circumstances it failed to obtain an option to purchase, and that building has now been sold. Two weeks ago I was involved in a desperate search for another facility in the town in which to relocate Numbat Industries. We located a building and initiated steps to sign a lease on the property. All of a sudden, without any notice, the lawyers handling the lease received instructions not to go ahead with it because the owner had problems which made it impossible for him to lease that building. To make matters worse, the bailiff moved in a week ago and served an order to vacate the building housing this handicapped workshop. We have been able to obtain five weeks' breathing space from the court, and we are desperately searching for some other building into which to move.

Due to a certain set of circumstances we have been able to gain a chance to get access to Commonwealth funding to the extent of approximately \$40 000 for a project to employ unemployed people in the town to build a permanent home for these handicapped people and this industry which employs and trains them. Unfortunately these funds will be available for only a limited period. The committee and myself are trying to locate a source of assistance to build a home for these handicapped workers. I appeal to any Minister who has been approached and who can offer assistance please to do so. It will be difficult for these people. The alternative is that Numbat Industries will have to close down. If members of the Government can help in any way, I appeal to them please to do so.

With that plea I close my remarks on the Budget and look forward to seeing the Government implement what it has incorporated in this Budget for the coming financial year.

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth) [4.44 pm]: Only one aspect of the Budget do I wish to touch upon this afternoon. However, that aspect has a bearing on the Budget as a whole inasmuch as if money is wasted in one department, then the entire Budget is suspect. Money can be wasted in various ways. It can be wasted by extravagant expenditure, such as that evidenced by the member for Moore early this afternoon. It can also be wasted by departments spending money ineffectively, and it is to that aspect that I wish to direct my remarks.

I refer to the Department of Conservation and Land Management. That department receives a very large amount in this Budget. The amounts it is spending on the national parks and wildlife branch is of the order of \$2 473 000 which is a considerable sum of money. On the one hand the department is spending that amount of money, and on the other it is completely negating most of the good which would be achieved as a result of the expenditure of that amount. The amount set aside by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management in this Budget is a fairly substantial one of \$58 186 000. The different sections are interwoven, but the amount set aside for national parks and wildlife, as I have mentioned, is \$2.473 million. That expenditure is fully warranted, and I would like to have seen even more allocated.

The aspect which is not warranted is that while the Government is spending that amount of money on the one hand, on the other it persists in exempting 40 000-odd people within Western Australia from the provisions of the Act which governs that department. I refer to the Wildlife Conservation Act. In Western Australia we have in excess of 40 000 Aborigines. By definition these people are Aborigines, whether or not they have blue eyes and fair hair or other such characteristics. Under the definition they are therefore exempt from virtually all of the provisions of the Wildlife Conservation Act. We have heard of money being poured down drains. This would have to be the ultimate example; a Government on the one hand spending \$2.5 million of taxpayers' money protecting wildlife, and at the same time negating that by saying that 40 000 people in this State are exempt from the provisions of the Act. That puts officers of that department in an extraordinary position, as will see later. If this sort of thing is happening with a very important department in the Government, what is happening elsewhere? It makes the entire Budget suspect, because if it is happening here, without doubt similar situations of wasted expenditure could be occurring in other departments.

Last year I introduced a Bill in this House to overcome this. I introduced another one earlier this year and the Government defeated it in the last session. At the time, the Minister said that while the Government would not accept the Bill, which would abolish this exemption for 40 000 people in this State, he would introduce regulations which would take care of the fauna on the list of rare and endangered species in Western Australia. So far as I am aware, nothing like that has been done. However, if anything were done it would be merely the tip of the iceberg, nothing else. The major problem would remain -- 40 000 people in Western Australia would be able to take, and would take, the fauna of Western Australia even though all that fauna is protected.

I would like to examine some of the statements made by the Minister at the time my Bill was defeated. When the Minister promised to protect the fauna by regulation, there is absolutely no doubt that he had the power to do so. The relevant portion of the section of the Wildlife Conservation Act which gives exemption reads thus --

... and the Governor may, if he is satisfied that the provisions of this section are being abused or that any species of fauna or flora which is being taken under the authority of this section is likely to become unduly depleted, by regulation suspend or restrict the operation of this section in such manner and for such period and in such part or parts of the State as he thinks proper.

But the Minister went further; he was not merely saying he would protect those species on the rare and endangered list or those rare and endangered species which were not on the list. In his speech rejecting my measure, he made conflicting statements. For instance, in one passage he said --

The Government does intend to enact regulations that will remove the exemption that Aboriginal people have enjoyed to take any animal, whether it be on the rare and endangered species list or not, except in the case of certain communities, mainly in the north west of the State, in respect of dugong.

There the Minister is clearly saying he will remove the exemptions that Aborigines have enjoyed. He went altogether too far in saying that because, had he done anything like it, it would have been ultra vires the Act. There is a section in the Wildlife Conservation Act which grants exemption and which empowers the Government to make certain regulations. The Minister is saying that he will introduce regulations under that section which will nullify the section. Of course he could not do it; it would be ultra vires. The Minister was wrong on that count.

In the course of his speech the Minister made another conflicting statement. In the passage I have just quoted he made it clear he would take away the exemptions the Aborigines enjoyed, but in the same speech he limits it to those species which are on the rare and endangered list. For instance, he said on page 2199 of *Hansard* --

... there is sufficient power already within section 23 of the Wildlife Conservation Act to take care of any action that is required to protect animals that are on the list of rare and endangered species.

Further on in the speech the Minister said --

The Government has made a good deal of progress in bringing home to them ...

That is, representatives of various Aboriginal communities. The Minister continued --

... the need to take action to protect the animals that are on the rare and endangered species list. I advise the House that in the very near future the Government will be enacting regulations, pursuant to section 23 of the Wildlife Conservation Act, that will offer security to all the animals on that list.

The Minister refers there to the list of rare and endangered species. On one hand he referred to the fauna on that list, yet on the other hand, in another part of the same speech, he said he would remove the exemption other than in respect of dugong. I have already pointed out that to act on his first undertaking would have been ultra vires and so he could not do that, and that may be the reason he has not yet introduced the regulations. The power to do so has been in the Act since 1950 but no regulations on that section have been introduced since then, notwithstanding what the Minister said.

There is another aspect I would like to touch on briefly. In the course of his speech rejecting the Bill I introduced, the Minister said --

The Government acknowledges that there is a need for a measure of reform and change in this area; indeed, it had been working on this very point for some time before the member for South Perth gave notice of his intention to introduce this Bill.

I believe that statement is an excuse for the inactivity of the Government on this measure. I introduced a Bill to remove the exemption last year, and at that time I met, at its request, top executives in the responsible department. In the course of explaining the Bill I had in mind -- and I presented them with it -- they wondered if it would be possible to do it by regulation. At the same time as I introduced the Bill last year, I actually made a statement in support of regulations, and I will refresh the Minister's memory. On 12 November 1986, on page 4122 of *Hansard*, I said --

These sections of the Wildlife Conservation Act 1950, and the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972, mean that no matter how rare our flora and fauna or how endangered the species 40 000 persons in this State can, in the absence of specific regulations to the contrary, and there are none, take such flora and fauna, at will, for food purposes.

I went on to say in that speech --

An alternative to this situation would be for the Governor to issue regulations, as he is

empowered to do, excluding rare and endangered species from the exemptions provided in the Act. This, however, would still allow all fauna not specifically covered by such regulations to be taken indiscriminately for food purposes by persons of Aboriginal descent and that could not in this day and age be regarded as acceptable.

As I have said, the power to make regulations has existed in the Act since 1950, yet to date no regulations of any kind have been made notwithstanding the Minister's saying he would introduce them. The introduction of regulations by a Minister is an extraordinarily simple thing. He does not have to think about it for months. He makes a decision, it is approved by Executive Council, it is gazetted, and the regulations are put in place. When the Parliament meets the regulations are laid on the Table of the House and if Parliament wishes it can disallow those regulations.

As well, there is no difficulty for a Minister in establishing a list of rare and endangered species. I asked the Minister for a list some time ago and he provided it. I have it here -- it contains the names of 106 Western Australian species including reptiles, birds, mammals, and one amphibian. All the Minister has to do is pick up that list and enact the regulation, which will protect at least the species which are on the list. The Minister has not done so. I made it perfectly clear to officers of the Minister's department when I spoke to them before I introduced the first Bill last year that this was merely the tip of the iceberg, and did not go nearly far enough. All flora and fauna, with the exception of those that are vermin, are protected under that legislation. The Bill would still allow people who claim to be Aboriginal -- people like Michael Mansell -- no matter how remote their aboriginality, provided that they were recognised as Aboriginal by the communities in which they live, to take native flora and fauna. They could go down to the Swan River and catch swans by whatever means they chose; they could catch wild ducks; they could shoot mallee fowl and wild turkey; they could climb trees to take parrots from their nests; they could catch and eat echidnas; they could do anything like that. There are 40 000 people in this State in that category, although not all are necessarily Aborigines. I refer to Michael Mansell, the so-called Aboriginal activist from Tasmania; he is blue-eyed and fair-haired. He could come over here and be exempt from all the conservation laws of this State. If Charles Perkins or any other Aborigine from the Eastern States wants to come over, they could do the same; provided they can claim Aboriginal blood, no matter how remote, they can take at will our flora and fauna, whether or not it is endangered or rare. It is a terrible situation that while the Government is spending \$2.5 million to protect flora and fauna, it is at the same time allowing Aboriginal people to be completely exempt from our laws. What utter rubbish; how farcical. If the Government is going to spend money on the conservation of flora and fauna in this State in this wasteful way, what is happening in the rest of the Budget?

This Act was introduced a long time ago; in fact when the first game laws were introduced in Western Australia, they were primarily aimed at protecting game for shooting purposes, not conservation purposes. The exemption provision in the Act was dropped for many years and was resurrected in 1950. There was justification for it then, but there is no justification for it now. The Minister has admitted that there are no Aborigines, to his knowledge, who rely for subsistence on the native flora and fauna. Every person of Aboriginal descent in Western Australia is either in employment or is entitled to and receiving social security benefits. Therefore, there is no justification whatsoever for this provision to remain. I am not talking about tribal Aborigines in the Kimberley or anywhere else, notwithstanding that they are all either in employment or receiving social security benefits; I am talking about the so-called Aborigines in all the towns of Western Australia. I will give the House a rough idea of the figures involved: Merredin has 115 Aborigines; Northam has 5 302 people who are exempt from the conservation laws of Western Australia; Geraldton has 1 167 Aborigines; Narrogin has 235 Aborigines; Pingelly has 199 Aborigines, and so on. What chance has our native fauna if, for example, it strays into the vicinity of Northam? What might happen to an echidna if it strays into that area with more than 5 300 people entitled to club or shoot it on sight? I will not go through the list but I will give an example of the sort of thing which is happening throughout Western Australia. The member for Avon is here tonight; let us assume that in one of his electorate's towns there is an officer of the Department of Conservation and Land Management's national parks and wildlife division. There are in fact 17 officers from that department stationed in various country towns in Western Australia. Let us assume that one officer is driving along a country road and hears the sound of rifle shots from nearby bushland. In pursuit of his duties he drives in to investigate and finds five

people with high-powered rifles. One man has two or three dead magpies lying at his feet. The officer accosts the man and says, "Right, you shot these magpies; what is the explanation?" The man -- who may be fair-haired and blue-eyed -- says to him, "I am part-Aboriginal and these people will testify that they regard me as an Aborigine."

The officer in those circumstances is completely stymied. He cannot risk litigation; he will not take that person to court to establish whether he is in fact part-Aboriginal. How costly would it be to determine whether a person who did not look like an Aborigine -- but claimed he was -- was in fact not Aboriginal? Therefore, the officer has to walk away and those five people will continue to shoot native wildlife in that area. The fauna they shoot might not necessarily be on the rare and endangered species list but even if it were, it would not be covered by the regulations. That is one example of what may well happen.

The area of Merredin has one officer from this department charged with the task of protecting the flora and fauna in that district. Assume that he is driving along a country road and sees somebody up a tree with a tomahawk, cutting a hole into the hollow of the tree, and with a pocketful of young parrots. The officer would call the chap down and say, "I am the local officer from the Department of National Parks and Wildlife. What are you doing with these parrots?" The chap could say, even though he does not look like an Aborigine, "I am an Aborigine, and therefore entitled to take these." What is the officer to do? What sort of task has that officer in the town of Merredin got? I will tell you how many Aborigines there are in this area --

Mr Brian Burke: Try Northam again.

Mr GRAYDEN: I have already given the figure for Northam. There are 115 people in the Merredin district who are exempt from the conservation laws of Western Australia, and yet this State is funding a wildlife officer in that town.

Mr Brian Burke: You have 115, each wearing one pair of pants with four pockets, each with their pockets full of parrots.

Mr GRAYDEN: There are 40 000 people throughout Western Australia who are exempt from these conservation laws. The Treasurer must realise what a loophole this presents. Anybody, whether part-Aboriginal or not, particularly those of some other nationalities, can say, "I am part-Aborigine." Nobody can establish otherwise. That is a ludicrous situation.

Mr Brian Burke: We think you are perfectly right, and will amend that law in the next session.

Mr GRAYDEN: I am delighted to hear that and applaud the Government. I have great confidence in many things that the State Government is doing for the environment, particularly national parks. I am delighted that the Treasurer has taken that attitude. I offer one or two instances to emphasise the gravity of this situation. Near Eneabba there is an area where the local farmers and pastoralists have attracted wild turkeys -- the true name is bustard.

Mr Crane: That is my area.

Mr GRAYDEN: Yes, it is in the area of the member for Moore. The member may not know this but there is a wildlife officer in Moora. There are 185 people in Moora who are exempt from the law, so one can understand how difficult that officer's task is. If that officer was driving along a country road and saw somebody walking across a paddock with two bustards under one arm and a shotgun under the other, he would naturally accost him. The penalty for an average person for shooting a bustard is very severe indeed, but were that person to tell the officer, "Look, I am part-Aborigine", he would be completely exempt and there is absolutely nothing the officer can do. How can that officer administer the conservation of wildlife laws in his particular area when he knows that virtually every person he encounters every day is exempt from the law? It is an extraordinary situation. It is the equivalent of saying that we have a very efficient Police Force in Western Australia but there are 40 000 people who are exempt from all the criminal laws in this State.

I will give another illustration to emphasise the seriousness of the situation and the need to change the legislation. A police officer told me recently that he had been stationed in the Meekatharra area and had been horrified to see parties killing as many as 14 bustards at a time. He said most of the birds were wasted and were not even plucked. He could do absolutely nothing because one of the party would claim to be part-Aborigine.

The member for Darling Range was here a few minutes ago. Officers from the department in

the Darling Range area have told me they have stopped cars in the hills area which have been nearly full of kangaroos. The occupants of the cars have been out at night shooting them. When stopped, they claim that one of their party is part-Aborigine. Again, the officer can do absolutely nothing. The serious aspect of this is that people who cannot claim to be part-Aborigine are fined very heavily for offences against the Act -- and so they should be. Just a couple of days ago fines of \$10 459 were inflicted upon a couple of people who offended against the Fisheries Act. There is also an exemption clause in the Fisheries Act for people of part-Aboriginal descent.

The member for Greenough was here earlier. I have driven through the sand plain areas of Greenough many times and seen mallee fowl on the road. No doubt the member for Greenough has seen them as well. A mallee fowl builds a mound nest and returns to it year after year. It is a relatively slow-moving bird and to shoot it would be like shooting fowls in a chook pen. When they stray on to the road they can be easily shot. Any one of the 40 000 people to whom I have referred can shoot them at will.

One of the 17 officers distributed throughout the State is stationed in the Narrogin area. When driving along the road he could see an echidna. He could stop and admire it, and possibly, if he has his children in the car, let them admire it too. Another car could pull up, an occupant from that other car could shoot the echidna, or hit it with a spanner or anything else handy, and take it away for food. They are eaten extensively. How stupid that would be. There are now very few echidnas in the Narrogin area. No doubt they appear very occasionally. There is one officer from the department stationed in Narrogin, but there are 235 people in his particular area who are exempt from the wildlife conservation laws of Western Australia. That is an absolutely extraordinary situation.

I would like to return to the definition to which I have taken so much offence. If we had Aborigines in Western Australia who are depending on flora and fauna for sustenance, no-one would begrudge them the opportunity of making use of it. It was put into the Act in 1950 for that specific purpose. Times have changed.

The SPEAKER: Order! A little less background noise please.

Mr GRAYDEN: No longer are Aborigines in Western Australia dependent on the native flora and fauna for subsistence.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will presume members did not hear me, but I asked for a little less background noise and I would appreciate some effort to accommodate that request.

Mr GRAYDEN: I want to touch briefly on the definition of a person of Aboriginal descent which appears in the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act. It states --

"person of Aboriginal descent" means any person living in Western Australia wholly or partly descended from the original inhabitants of Australia who claims to be an Aboriginal and who is accepted as such in the community in which he lives.

Let us analyse that. It refers to any person living in Western Australia who is wholly or partly of Aboriginal descent. One could have had a great grandfather who was part Aboriginal and one can claim to be of part Aboriginal descent. We have all sorts of ethnic groups in Western Australia -- over 60 different races -- and yet we exclude one group from the wildlife and conservation laws. It is a most unscientific and illogical approach, and it is demeaning as far as Aborigines are concerned.

The great majority of Aborigines in Western Australia are highly responsible people. They want to preserve our flora and fauna just as much as the rest of the population. To single them out and say they are not fit or up to the standard of people who come from Chile or Peru who have to abide by the conservation laws and that we will make an exception of them because we do not regard them as being sufficiently responsible is utterly ridiculous. It is an insult to Aborigines. For that reason I am absolutely delighted that the Treasurer has recognised this problem and given an undertaking that he will do something about introducing legislation to overcome it. I was going to give notice of a Bill, but I did not want to do so because that would have precluded me from speaking on the Budget.

Mr Brian Burke: It can be done by regulation.

Mr GRAYDEN: It cannot be done that way because the Act goes out of its way in one section to grant exemption to Aborigines. It would be ultra vires to counteract the intent of the section by introducing negating regulations. The section makes provision to regulate for endangered species.

Mr Brian Burke: Crown Law advises us to put them outside the reach.

Mr GRAYDEN: The Treasurer can make regulations, but all fauna and flora in Western Australia is protected except that which is classified as vermin. There are 106 species on the endangered list, and the average person would not have heard of most of them.

Mr Crane: The bustard is not on the list.

Mr GRAYDEN: No, and nor are echidnas and mallee fowl, so we would not be protecting them. The Government may say it will introduce regulations to protect some species which few people have heard about but it will not stop people who are remotely connected with Aborigines from going with high powered weapons and shooting swans, for example. They can trap swans on the Swan River -- they cannot shoot them in the metropolitan area because people cannot discharge firearms within a specified distance of the GPO -- but outside that they can do anything as far as flora and fauna are concerned. If the Government makes regulations relating to species on the rare and endangered list only it will not stop anyone from killing echidnas, and they are a favourite food of some people. Most Western Australians have never seen one. It would mean that 40 000-odd people would be within their rights in killing every one they saw. For that reason it is not sufficient to simply promulgate regulations in respect of the species on the rare and endangered list.

It would be possible to put into the Act a provision to ensure that people of Aboriginal or part-Aboriginal descent could continue to do these things if they used traditional implements, weapons and methods of hunting. It would still not make provision for all those people who are only remotely connected with Aborigines because under the definition anyone who can say he is part Aboriginal is exempt. There are other ways of doing it. We could take the definition as it stands and delete the words "wholly or partly" so that it then said that a person of Aboriginal descent was one living in Western Australia and descended from the original inhabitants of Western Australia. I do not know whether that would go far enough, but it would be an advantage were we to do that.

The Bill I had in mind would simply add a few words and ensure that if Aborigines wanted to take flora and fauna they would have to use traditional hunting methods, implements and weapons. Then I was going to refer to rare and endangered species so they could not touch them. I was going to add a section which would preclude their using fire so that they could not go on to a pastoral property and light a fire.

We have a situation in Western Australia where a department spends in excess of \$50 million and of that \$2.5 million is spent specifically to protect the flora and fauna. At the same time we say that 40 000-odd people in this State are exempt from the provisions of the wildlife and conservation legislation. It is an intolerable situation, but the Treasurer has given an undertaking to overcome the problem and I greatly appreciate it.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Trenorden.

BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Gaming Commission Bill.
2. Motor Vehicle Drivers Instructors Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

[Questions taken.]

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

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

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 13 October, at 2.15 pm.

House adjourned at 5.58 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

MOTOR VEHICLES: GOVERNMENT

Private Use: Policy

1764. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Is there a general policy for private usage of Government cars by public servants and employees of Government instrumentalities and agencies, or does each department and agency have its own policy?
- (2) To what extent and under what conditions are employees permitted to take home Government vehicles?
- (3) Are employees generally permitted to use such vehicles for private purposes?
- (4) Should an accident happen and a Government car be damaged when used for private purposes, who is responsible for the repair of the damage?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) In accordance with the determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal, officers in the special division of the Public Service and persons holding prescribed offices are entitled to unrestricted use within Western Australia of the motor vehicle supplied to that office. As a general policy, vehicles may be provided to other permanent heads and, in some cases, to other senior officers who perform a similar function, for use in discharging their official duties. In these cases, however, Government vehicles should not generally be available for private usage.
- (2) Generally, where senior officers are on call or are required to work abnormal hours, or in other circumstances as approved by the permanent head.
- (3) No.
- (4) Where usage is authorised, such accidents would be covered under the agency's general motor vehicle insurance policy.

TECHNOLOGY: COMPUTERS

Bureau Services

1822. Dr LAWRENCE, to the Minister for Industry and Technology:

- (1) Which Government agencies in Western Australia use computer bureau services?
- (2) Which private sector computer bureau services are accessed by Western Australian Government agencies?
- (3) Which Western Australian public sector agencies provide bureau services?

Mr BRYCE replied:

I will respond to the member's question in writing.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

National Safety Council: Disposal

1823. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Does the Government intend to dispose of the land and buildings currently occupied by the National Safety Council in Mt Lawley?
- (2) If yes, will he provide details of the proposed disposal?
- (3) If no to (1), what is the land to be used for in the future, having regard to his recent announcement concerning the change in direction of the National Safety Council?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

- (1) to (3) Cabinet is presently awaiting recommendations.

EDUCATION: MURDOCH UNIVERSITY

Guild of Students

1827. Mr TRENORDEN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it a fact that the Guild of Students at Murdoch University has sold information about its members to privately owned commercial organisations?
- (2) Is this occurring at the other tertiary institutions?
- (3) Is this approved practice?
- (4) If yes to either (1) or (2), was permission sought from students about whom the information was being sold?
- (5) If not, why not?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) to (3) No.
- (4) and (5) Not applicable.

WATER RESOURCES

Country: Reticulated Services

1837. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Adverting to his reply to question 1763 of 1987, could he please further separate those amounts which are going to be expended on connecting isolated places or townships -- no part of which has so far been supplied with mains water -- with reticulated water as opposed to new connections in places which by way of further development are an extension of already supplied properties, or so far vacant blocks where a building was erected?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

- (i) Lake Varley, \$635 000;
- (ii) Lake King, \$112 000;
- (iii) Bindi Bindi, \$105 000.

SEX SHOPS

Siting

1848. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Can local government authorities control the siting or limit the operation of sex shops?
- (2) Is it a fact that some councils seek to have this control?
- (3) Is it a fact that many individuals and groups support councils having this control?
- (4) What action, if any, will he take to meet these requests?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes, these matters could be dealt with through the provisions of a local authority town planning scheme.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) I have asked the State Planning Commission to look further at the question of placing greater control on the location of such shops.

HOSPITAL

Margaret River: Allocation

1849. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How much money has been set aside in the 1987 Budget for the proposed new Margaret River Hospital?

(2) When will the new Margaret River hospital be built?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1) Sufficient funds for the work proposed in the Budget.

(2) The hospital will be built as soon as possible after all planning options have been investigated and the most suitable option selected.

TRANSPORT: STATESHIPS

South East Asian Operations

1858. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) Does he concede that there is a conflict between the Parliament's call for greater involvement of the private sector in areas of Government which are costly and inefficient and his proposal to extend the operations of Stateships into Asia, when existing operations are inefficient and cost Western Australian taxpayers an estimated \$16 million a year?

(2) If the service to Asia is a profitable proposition, why has the Government not given encouragement to the private sector to operate the service?

(3) If the Government has attempted to give such encouragement, and failed to attract a private operator, why has the opportunity to operate a profitable service been rejected by the private sector?

Mr TROY replied:

(1) The private sector is entirely free to investigate and pursue profitable ventures in all areas, and this Government demands a similar commercial approach from State agencies, particularly those providing transport services. The intended extension of Stateships services to South East Asia is totally consistent with this position, and the service will not be proceeded with unless Stateships arrives at the conditions necessary to provide reasonable assurance of a profitable outcome.

As to the member's apparently uninformed comments regarding cost and efficiency, I commend him to a reading of the transport strategy committee report of 1986 on the benefits from subsidising the Stateships north west service.

(2) and (3) Answered by (1) above.

HEALTH: NURSES

Kimberley: Contracts

1859. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Is it correct that nursing staff in the Kimberleys are contracted on a six-month basis?

(2) If so, why?

(3) Has consideration been given to negotiating 12-monthly contracts with a midterm six-monthly air fare break?

(4) If so, why was that proposal not accepted?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1) Yes. Some staff may contract for six months.

(2) Necessity to cover turnover vacancies and environmental factors.

(3) Yes.

(4) Replicate six months' contracts can be negotiated.

ROAD

Southern Cross-Wyalkatchem: Sealing

1860. Mr SCHELL, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) Are there any plans to seal the Southern Cross-Wyalkatchem Road, between Bullfinch and Warralakin?

(2) If so, what is the time schedule for its completion?

Mr TROY replied:

(1) and (2) There are no plans to seal the road between Bullfinch and Warralakin. The relatively low traffic counts compared with those on other unsealed roads make it difficult to give a high priority to this road. The Main Roads Department will keep the position of this road under review, and funds will continue to be allocated to maintain the road in a satisfactory condition.

CRIME: JUVENILES

Charges

1862. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) How many children aged 17 years were charged with offences during the past five years?
- (2) How many offences were involved for each of the past five years?
- (3) How many convictions were recorded for each of the past five years?
- (4) How many children aged 17 years were charged with the unauthorised use of or stealing a motor vehicle during the past five years, and how many of those charged were convicted?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

The Commissioner of Police has advised me --

(1) Two days would be required to obtain this information from the manual recording system.

(2) and (3) Figures not available.

(4) Two to three days would be required to obtain this information from the manual recording system, and statistics on how many children were convicted are not available.

In these circumstances, and in view of the member's claim reported in the *South Western Times* on 17 September 1987 to have statistics on the matter of the involvement of 17-year-old juveniles in the commission of offences, I consider that the cost of diverting police resources to research the answers to (1) and (4) is not justified.

WATER AUTHORITY

Plumbing Inspections

1863. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has, and if so to what extent, the Water Authority of Western Australia reduced its inspectorial role?
- (2) Can he guarantee that the incidence of illegal and substandard plumbing will not increase with a reduction in the inspectorial role of the Water Authority?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

(1) The Water Authority's legal role in relation to the inspection of plumbing fittings and plumbing work has not been altered.

(2) It is not possible to issue guarantees in relation to the incidence of illegal and substandard plumbing work. It is a plumber's responsibility to ensure the quality of any plumbing work performed.

WATER AUTHORITY

Plumbing: Penalties

1864. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Does he consider that significant increase in penalties would assist in the reduction of illegal and substandard plumbing, and if so, on what statistical evidence experienced by other water supply utilities is such consideration based?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

Yes. It is for this reason that the Legislative Council has assented to increased

penalties for illegal plumbing works. Proclamation is dependant on the making of associated by-laws, which will be documented following industry consultation schedules for October 1987.

No statistical evidence is at hand in relation to the experience of other water supply utilities.

WATER AUTHORITY

Plumbing: Substandard

1865. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Is he aware of the risks, dangers, and fatalities that have and can occur from illegal and substandard plumbing?
- (2) Would he consider a proposal to fund an effective inspection system to reduce the incidence of illegal and substandard plumbing?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

- (1) I am aware that certain aspects of faulty plumbing works can and have caused risk, danger, and fatalities.
- (2) The Water Authority is not empowered to perform a general quality control function in relation to the wide spectrum of plumbing. It is for this reason that the authority's inspection system concentrates only on those aspects of plumbing having the impact recognised under part (1) of this question.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Fraudulent Claims

1870. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the estimated cost of fraudulent claims on the Education Department for subsidies, grants, or exemptions from charges for low income earners?
- (2) Approximately what percentage of that cost is attributable to ---
 - (a) claims made under a false identity;
 - (b) understatement of income;
 - (c) other means?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The Education Department provides no financial assistance for low income families in years 1-7. For children in years 8-12, some financial assistance is available. With the enforcement of strict eligibility criteria and the necessity to provide proof of status or means, it is estimated that fraudulent claims are virtually non-existent. Exemptions from school charges are monitored at the school level.
- (2) Not applicable.

EDUCATION POLICY

Union Secretary

1874. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the secretary of the State School Teachers Union have any input into the Government's education policy?
- (2) If yes, in what capacities?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) and (2) The State School Teachers Union has an input into the Government's education policy through its membership of departmental policy advisory committees, working parties, and task forces. The Teachers Union nominates its representatives. In some cases the secretary of the union is nominated.

EDUCATION POLICY

Australian Labor Party

1875. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Government's education policy identical to that of the Australian Labor Party's education policy committee?
- (2) If not, what are the major differences?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) and (2) The Leader of the National Party would be well aware that political parties use their policy statements as general guides to the specific policies they will pursue. This Government's detailed education policy has been used in this way.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Kulin District: Dam Catchment Area

1876. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Narrogin Regional Office received a request from the Kulin District High School Parents' and Citizens' Association for assistance on a dollar for dollar basis to enlarge the capacity of the school oval dam and to improve the catchment area?
- (2) What sources of finance are available for such a project?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Funding would need to be provided from the Narrogin District Education Office's minor works allocation.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Administrative Arrangements: Involvement

1877. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Further to his answer to question 1654 of 1987, which of the matters raised in questions 1654, 1658, 1659, 1717, 1718, 1719, 1721, 1722, 1773, and 1778 of 1987 are what he refers to as "administrative arrangements in which Ministers have no direct involvement"?
- (2) Which of the matters raised in questions 1654, 1658, 1659, 1717, 1718, 1719, 1721, and 1722 of 1987 are not within his range of ministerial responsibilities?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

I shall advise the member in writing of the detail he seeks.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Redirection

1878. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Small Business:

Why was question 1778 of 1987 redirected to the Minister for Public Sector Management?

Mr TROY replied:

I refer the member to the answer to question 1654.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Redirection

1879. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Industry and Technology:

Why was question 1773 of 1987 redirected to the Minister for Public Sector Management?

Mr BRYCE replied:

See reply to parliamentary question 1654.

GAMBLING: INSTANT LOTTERIES

Distributions

1880. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

- (1) Further to question 1816 of 1987, does the department keep separate financial records of the expenditure of instant lottery funds?
- (2) If yes, why is it proving so difficult to collate the information requested in question 1816?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) My department will be providing information today to the member's query of two days ago. He will receive my written response shortly.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Government Employees: Dismissal

1881. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

Has the Government given any undertaking to the Commonwealth that it will dismiss all public sector employees who exercise their right not to have an Australia Card?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See reply to question 1654.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Government Employees: Dismissal

1882. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

- (1) Does the Government have a policy on the continuation of employment of current public sector employees who exercise their right not to have an Australia Card?
- (2) If yes, what is it?
- (3) If no, is it the Government's intention to have a policy on this issue?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See reply to question 1654.

STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Fraudulent Claims

1883. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

- (1) What is the estimated cost of fraudulent claims on the State Energy Commission for rebates on its electricity and gas accounts?
- (2) Approximately what percentage of that cost is attributable to --
 - (a) claims made under a false identity;
 - (b) understatement of income;
 - (c) other means?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) and (2) The commission only allows rebates to holders of health cards that are issued by the Department of Social Security and Department of Veterans' Affairs. There is no evidence to suggest that any fraudulent claims have been made.

HOMESWEST

Fraudulent Claims

1884. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What is the estimated cost of fraudulent claims on Homeswest for rental assistance and interest subsidy?
- (2) Approximately what percentage of that cost is attributable to --
 - (a) claims made under a false identity;
 - (b) understatement of income;
 - (c) other means?

Mr WILSON replied:

(1) and (2) Homeswest's procedures and evidentiary requirements to determine eligibility are formulated so as to obviate the occurrence of fraudulent claims. For example, written evidence of income is required from either the Department of Social Security or the employer.

Statistics are not maintained on fraudulent claims. However, relatively few are evidenced. As to the cost, since in the event that a fraudulent claim is detected the claimant is retrospectively assessed and required to make full restitution, there is no cost involved.

HOUSING SUBSIDIES

Applicants: Means Testing

1885. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Housing:

Are all applications for interest subsidy means-tested --

- (a) at the time of application;
- (b) in subsequent years?

Mr WILSON replied:

(a) and (b) Yes. Applicants for Homeswest home purchase assistance are required to be eligible both at the time of application and allocation. As repayments are income-g geared, means testing is inherent in the administrative procedure.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Fraudulent Claims

1886. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) What is the estimated cost of fraudulent claims on the local government sector for pensioners' rates concession?
- (2) Approximately what percentage of that cost is attributable to --
 - (a) claims made under a false identity;
 - (b) understatement of income;
 - (c) other means?

Mr CARR replied:

This question has been incorrectly addressed to the Minister for Local Government. It has been referred to the Minister for Budget Management, and he will answer the question in writing.

MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT

Budget Allocation: Urban Transport Projects

1888. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Transport:

What, specifically, are the projects that are to be financed by the \$10.2 million allocation for "Urban Public Transport Projects" in the Main Roads Department budget?

Mr TROY replied:

The projects referred to in the member's questions are Australian bicentennial road development -- ABRD -- funded projects as below --

	\$M
Warwick transfer station on-off ramp and platform	0.104
Park-n-ride facilities	0.106
Depot facilities	0.069
Buses	2.362
Bus junction	7.550

\$ 10.191

SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Overseas Travel

1889. Mr COWAN, to the Speaker:

- (1) How many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;
(b) if so, where to?
- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87;
 - (c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;
(b) if so, who, and where to?

The SPEAKER replied:

- (1) (a) None;
(b) one.
- (2) Cook Islands.
- (3) (a) No;
(b) not applicable.
- (4) (a) No;
(b) no;
(c) not applicable.
- (5) (a) No;
(b) not applicable.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Travel

1890. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;
(b) if so, where to?
- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87;
 - (c) if so, who, and where to?

- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;
(b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) to (5) The Government has adopted the same practice as its predecessor with respect to questions concerning ministerial travel.

This practice, outlined by the former Premier in answer to question 1043 of 1982, is, in part, as follows --

As considerable research will be required to extract and collate the information requested, I am not prepared to place any further demands on staff who are otherwise fully committed. However, should the member have any reason to believe that travel or other expenditure of an unauthorised or unnecessary nature has been undertaken, he should let me have specific grounds for his beliefs and I shall have them investigated.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Travel

1891. Mr COWAN, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --
(a) in the current financial year;
(b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;
(b) if so, where to?
- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
(a) in the current financial year;
(b) in 1986-87;
(c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;
(b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr BRYCE replied:

See reply to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Travel

1894. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --
(a) in the current financial year;
(b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;
(b) if so, where to?
- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --

- (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87;
 - (c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;
- (b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr CARR replied:

Please see answer to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Travel

1895. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;

 - (b) if so, where to?

- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87;
 - (c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;

 - (b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr PEARCE replied:

See reply to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Travel

1896. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;

 - (b) if so, where to?

- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87;
 - (c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at

public expense by other members of Parliament;

(b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr HODGE replied:

See reply to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Travel

1897. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

(1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --

(a) in the current financial year;

(b) in 1986-87?

(2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?

(3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;

(b) if so, where to?

(4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --

(a) in the current financial year;

(b) in 1986-87;

(c) if so, who, and where to?

(5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;

(b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr PARKER replied:

See reply to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Travel

1899. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

(1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --

(a) in the current financial year;

(b) in 1986-87?

(2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?

(3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;

(b) if so, where to?

(4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --

(a) in the current financial year;

(b) in 1986-87;

(c) if so, who, and where to?

(5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;

(b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

See reply to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN
Overseas Travel

1901. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;
(b) if so, where to?
- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87;
 - (c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;
(b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr TROY replied:

I refer the member to the answer to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN
Overseas Travel

1903. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;
(b) if so, where to?
- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
 - (a) in the current financial year;
 - (b) in 1986-87;
 - (c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;
(b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

See reply to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN
Overseas Travel

1904. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --

- (a) in the current financial year;
- (b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;
- (b) if so, where to?
- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
- (a) in the current financial year;
- (b) in 1986-87;
- (c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;
- (b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr WILSON replied:

See reply to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Travel

1905. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Works and Services:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has he travelled overseas at public expense --
- (a) in the current financial year;
- (b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has he made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;
- (b) if so, where to?
- (4) Has he authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
- (a) in the current financial year;
- (b) in 1986-87;
- (c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has he authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;
- (b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

See reply to question 1890.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Travel

1906. Mr COWAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

- (1) Under each of his ministerial portfolio responsibilities, how many times has the Minister travelled overseas at public expense --
- (a) in the current financial year;
- (b) in 1986-87?
- (2) Which countries were visited on each of the trips?
- (3) (a) Has the Minister made arrangements for any future overseas trips at public expense;

- (b) if so, where to?
- (4) Has the Minister authorised overseas travel at public expense for any other member of Parliament --
- (a) in the current financial year;
- (b) in 1986-87;
- (c) if so, who, and where to?
- (5) (a) Has the Minister authorised or undertaken to authorise any future overseas trips at public expense by other members of Parliament;
- (b) if so, who, and where to?

Mr WILSON replied:

See reply to question 1890.

WILDLIFE

Protection Officers: Stationing

1907. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) In what towns or townships in Western Australia are officers of the wildlife protection branch stationed?
- (2) Approximately how many are stationed in each of the towns or townships nominated?

Mr HODGE replied:

(1) and (2) Kununurra 1; Karratha 1; Carnarvon 1; Geraldton 3; Wongan Hills 1; Moora 1; Narrogin 1; Bunbury 1; Busselton 1; Manjimup 1; Albany 3; Esperance 1; Kalgoorlie 1.

WARMAN INTERNATIONAL

Hyperchrome Technology

1908. Mr WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Works and Services:

- (1) Is it a fact that on 13 February this year the Government was involved in some form of memorandum of agreement with a company called Warman International in relation to the sale of a State Engineering Works technology called hyperchrome?
- (2) Who negotiated this deal?
- (3) Is it also a fact that in July this year he announced that the same technology was likely to be sold to another company, Bradford Kendall?
- (4) Who negotiated this deal?
- (5) What were the terms and conditions of both?
- (6) Is it a fact that Warman notified him that it regarded its prior arrangement as legally binding and that it would take legal action to protect its position?
- (7) Is it also a fact that royalties from the sale of this technology could be worth up to \$5 million a year?
- (8) Has the Government resolved these legal difficulties?
- (9) If so, on what basis?
- (10) Can he give an absolute guarantee that taxpayers' money will not be involved?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) No.
- (4) and (5) Not applicable.
- (6) It is a fact that Warman International has communicated with my office on

several occasions.

(7) Amount of royalties will be determined by total output of product.

(8) to (10) Not applicable.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

SWAN BUILDING SOCIETY

Police Investigations

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

(1) When did the police commence their investigations into the Swan Building Society?

(2) When did the police commence their investigations into the Teachers Credit Society?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) Consumer Affairs Department officers, assisted by seconded detectives, commenced their investigations into the Swan Building Society on 26 August 1987. Inquiries are incomplete to date.

(2) No investigations are currently being pursued by police into the financial affairs of the Teachers Credit Society. However, it is public knowledge that stealing charges have been preferred against a staff member.

CRIME: JUVENILE

17-year-olds

322. Mr D.L. SMITH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Is the Minister aware of a claim reported in the *South Western Times* on 17 September 1987 by the member for Mt Lawley that statistics show age 17 years is a "problem area for juvenile crime"?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

Yes, I am aware of the claim. The member for Mt Lawley may be correct in his assertion. However, it needs to be brought to public attention that the member's claim reported on 17 September is said to be based on statistical evidence. Only yesterday, 23 September, I received question on notice 1862 from the member for Mt Lawley in which he asks the following questions --

- (1) How many children aged 17 years were charged with offences during the past five years?
- (2) How many offences were involved for each of the past five years?
- (3) How many convictions were recorded for each of the past five years?
- (4) How many children aged 17 years were charged with the unauthorised use of or stealing a motor vehicle during the past five years, and how many of those charged were convicted?

Clearly, the member for Mt Lawley would not have asked the question if he knew the answers as he stated in the media. The statement includes a grab-bag of gimmicks apparently hastily put together in an effort by the Opposition to present itself to the electors of the South West Province as having some semblance of credibility and competence.

The Opposition chose the wrong man for the job. The Leader of the Opposition should by now know that the member for Mt Lawley cannot be relied upon because of the frequency with which he raises these types of issues in Parliament and in public and is caught out for not knowing what he is talking about. On many occasions we have heard how the member for Mt Lawley has drummed up figures which he has quoted in the newspapers and which are figments of his imagination. I have demonstrated on many occasions how the member for Mt Lawley does not know the facts and how he shoots his mouth off on law and order issues in an attempt

to scare the community. The member for Mt Lawley has misled the *South Western Times* newspaper and has now been exposed.

He claimed also on 17 September on ABC radio Bunbury that the annual report of the Commissioner of Police had revealed a crime explosion in the south west. Not only has the 1986-87 report not been tabled for reasons stated in the Parliament recently, but every member present knows that the annual report of the Commissioner of Police does not report offences on a regional basis. Yet again the member for Mt Lawley has been caught out.

Two untruths by the member for Mt Lawley were reported in the south west recently for political reasons. I welcome the member for Mt Lawley's involving himself in law and order issues in the South West Province on behalf of the Opposition.

TEACHERS CREDIT SOCIETY

Treasurer's Advice

323. Mr MacKINNON, to the Treasurer:

(1) Does the Treasurer recall in his answer to question 1567 saying --

I was verbally advised by Government officers of liquidity problems, and I was told no action was required because the R & I had made a normal commercial decision to address the problem, and had done so?

(2) Which Government officers advised the Treasurer of the Teachers Credit Society's liquidity problems?

(3) When did he receive that advice?

(4) Did it include advice about the major borrowers from the Teachers Credit Society?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) to (4) I certainly cannot remember the date, and I do not remember the exact nature of the advice or all the details.

Mr MacKinnon: Or who gave it to you?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I was going to say that I think I recall the advice was given to me by Mr Edwards, the chief executive of the department. I am not sure of the date on which he gave the advice or the ambit of the advice. I do not recall any advice as to the name or nature of any of the borrowers or borrowings.

If the Leader of the Opposition seriously wants an answer, then apart from what I have told him tonight, I will attempt to provide additional information if he puts his question on the Notice Paper.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tambrey: Construction

324. Mrs BUCHANAN, to the Minister for Education:

(1) Has the Leader of the Opposition made representations to the Minister requesting that the Tambrey Primary School in Karratha be constructed?

(2) Will the Minister accede to the Leader of the Opposition's request?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) and (2) This question raises an interesting point. The member for Pilbara has been assiduous in her approaches to me to have another primary school constructed in the Tambrey district. I met with a group of parents at a nearby school some months ago to discuss that situation. It is true that very late in the piece the Leader of the Opposition wrote to me urging me to give a commitment to the construction of that school. The letter from the Leader of the Opposition which I read yesterday urging me to take that action was dated 18 September. I understand that the Leader of the Opposition came across the desire of the Tambrey parents for a school during a fact-finding tour of the Pilbara.

The difficulty I have in acceding to his request is that I have acceded already to the request by the member for Pilbara for that school to be constructed. The decision was

announced by the Treasurer in the Budget on 10 September. That was eight days before the Leader of the Opposition wrote to me asking me to organise the construction of the new Tambrey school. That school was especially mentioned in the Treasurer's speech on the Budget. The Leader of the Opposition did not pay much attention to the Budget speech, therefore.

I wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition's fact-finding tour of the Pilbara was as successful as his fact-finding tour of the Kimberley which was given a write-up in the *North West Telegraph* of 2 September. Members may be interested to know what that article says about that visit. It states --

You might not like everything Liberal leader, Barry MacKinnon has to say, but at least he expresses it in a way the multitude can understand.

The Opposition leader was in Kununurra recently as part of a gruelling four-day fact finding tour of the Kimberley.

Party faithfuls, including some with renewed conviction, welcomed him at a dinner function at Gullivers Tavern.

With gyrating hips, animated hands and flowing oratory Mr MacKinnon called on every characteristic to emphasise his message and was convincing as he told the 60-strong gathering that the Party has at last got its act together.

All I can say is that if the good people of Kununurra can be convinced by gyrating hips, animated hands, and flowing oratory that the Leader of the Opposition has his act together, they should have drawn to their attention that he has asked the Government whether it would accede to his request to construct the school when 10 days before it made a public announcement that it would be doing so.

TEACHERS CREDIT SOCIETY

Investigation: Corporate Affairs Department

325. Mr COURT, to the Treasurer:

(1) Given that the Police Department is now reported to be examining some dealings within the Teachers Credit Society and the Swan Building Society and the fact that a receiver has been called into investigate one of the Teachers Credit Society's largest borrowers, the Potter group, and that the Corporate Affairs Department is inquiring into the Swan Building Society, will he now request the Corporate Affairs Department to conduct an inquiry into the Teachers Credit Society?

(2) If not, why not?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) and (2) I am not sure whether the Deputy Leader of the Opposition ever listens to the answers to questions that people other than he ask of Ministers. His question, just asked, included a presumption rebutted by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services not more than 10 minutes ago.

Mr Court: He said they were looking into some deals in the Teachers Credit Society.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not listen. I will read out the answer to him and he can tell me.

Mr Court: He said a person was charged with theft.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: As I said, I will read it out and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition can tell me if he listens.

Mr MacKinnon: We heard exactly what he said.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: He said that no investigations are currently being pursued by the police into the financial dealings.

Mr Court: I said examining some dealings within the Teachers Credit Society.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Why does not the Deputy Leader of the Opposition let me finish the answer. He said that no investigations are currently being pursued by police in the financial affairs of the Teachers Credit Society. However, it is public knowledge that stealing charges have been preferred against a staff member. That is hardly the claim that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made in respect of the Teachers Credit Society's affairs.

If the Registrar of Building Societies and Credit Unions recommends that the Corporate Affairs Department should look at aspects of the Teachers Credit Society, I have no doubt that I will accept his recommendation.

Mr Court: That is what I am asking.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That is not what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked. He said, "Will you now do this?" I will not do it of my own volition. I will take the advice of the registrar and act upon it, as I did in respect of the Swan Building Society. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition thinks that it is appropriate for Ministers, acting on their own volition contrary to, or without advice of those people responsible for tendering the appropriate advice in cases like this, then I do not.

Mr Court: In lieu of the problem that has arisen with the Potter group, I thought you might have a rethink of the situation.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: What does the Deputy Leader of the Opposition mean by "in lieu of"?

Mr Court: The major problem you have. The taxpayers are being asked to fund the Teachers Credit Society, and then you have the receiver who has been called in to investigate one of the four major borrowers of the society. I think that the seriousness of the situation might be such --

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That I should act to send the Corporate Affairs Department in to look at it. If the registrar advises me that that is what I should do and that that is the appropriate action, that is what will be done.

A moment or two ago the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that politicians should not be directing -- specifically in respect of the Corporate Affairs Department -- the Corporate Affairs Department to do certain things.

Mr Court: Hang on, the simple fact is --

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should hang on. The fact is that he did not want the Corporate Affairs Department, according to his own statements, to be politically directed. What I am saying is that the Corporate Affairs Department, if I am requested to by the registrar, will have its attention directed to the Teachers Credit Society and it will be directed by me to so do. I will not, on the basis of what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition thinks that a politician -- that is the Treasurer or another Minister -- should direct the Corporate Affairs Department to do and instruct it to start investigating either the Teachers Credit Society --

Mr Court: I did not say direct, I said "request".

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I will not request it.

Mr Court: It investigated the Swan Building Society.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: At the direction -- it went into the Swan Building Society because the registrar said to me that it should be told to. If the registrar says that it should be told to look at Teachers Credit Society, or Perpetual Trustees, or anyone else, it will be told to.

TEACHERS CREDIT SOCIETY

Investigation: Select Committee

326. Mr DONOVAN, to the Leader of the House:

Following the motion moved in the other place today by Hon Max Evans to establish a Select Committee to inquire into the Teachers Credit Society, will the Government move to establish a Select Committee on this matter in the Legislative Assembly?

Mr PEARCE replied:

It is not the intention of the Government to move to establish a Select Committee to inquire into the Teachers Credit Society in this House. Clearly, that is a tactic which the Government could follow if the other House moves to have the Select Committee so that it would be handled in the same political and biased way as the Select Committee established by the other place to inquire into the question of the abattoirs.

I must admit that I had a chuckle about the person who moved the motion. I guess he

has been set up by the Liberal Party to be the chairman of that committee. Liberal members have often spoken in terms of the little cliché which they often mention as though they had thought of it themselves; that is, that it is like putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank. If ever there was a clear case of putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank it would be appointing Hon Max Evans as chairman of the committee to inquire into the Teachers Credit Society.

Hon Max Evans was one of the persons who was clearly and definitely involved in the Liberal Party's efforts to destabilise the Teachers Credit Society in April this year.

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKinnon: What management committee is he on?

Mr PEARCE: I will ask the Opposition about management committees, because I have more information about its management committees.

Hon Max Evans' accountancy business advised a number of people to withdraw their funds from the Teachers Credit Society during the period of the by-elections in April 1987. A number of people withdrew their funds because of that. No matter how members look at it, anybody who was involved in advising people to take their funds out of the Teachers Credit Society during the period of that run is not a proper person to be chairman of the committee inquiring into that business. That person is a participant and he may well be a witness before the inquiry rather than the chairman. I notice that members opposite are not denying that his accountancy business was giving that advice.

Mr Court: How would any of us know?

Mr PEARCE: I would have thought that members opposite would not have hesitated to deny it, because only a moment ago I said in this House that the Treasurer had mentioned in his Budget speech that there would be a new primary school at Karratha, and the member for Mt Lawley picked up a paper, flipped through it and said, "It is not there."

Mr Cash: Kununurra.

Mr PEARCE: It was Karratha. On page 9 of the Budget speech the Treasurer said that new primary schools will be built at Alinjarra, Beechboro, Ocean Reef, Karratha, and Mundaring.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I would be quite happy to go home if that is what members want. I think the Minister should draw his answer to a conclusion.

Mr PEARCE: I am just about to, but I want to mention the question of the management committee meeting.

Mr Brian Burke: What he did was to deliberately mislead the Parliament.

Mr PEARCE: That is right, but he did it out of stupidity, rather than out of malice.

With regard to the management committee meetings which the Leader of the Opposition mentioned by way of interjection, what I said in a previous debate was that there had been four management committee meetings during the course of that month. The Leader of the Opposition tabled minutes for three of those meetings -- the 6th, 13th, a blank for the 20th, and the 27th. The fact of the matter was that there was a meeting of the management committee on 20 April, and the Leader of the Opposition was not prepared to table the four sets of minutes because it would have shown that --

Mr MacKinnon: There was no meeting on the 20th, you fool.

Mr PEARCE: That is not my information.

The SPEAKER: Order! If I have to stand once more, it will be the end of question time.

Mr PEARCE: The Opposition can fudge around these issues all it likes but to put somebody like Hon Max Evans in charge of an investigation --

Point of Order

Mr HASSELL: It is contrary to the Standing Orders of this House for members, including Ministers, to undertake the kind of attack on members of the other House which this Minister persists in doing in relation to Hon Max Evans. I ask you, Mr Speaker, to direct him both to desist and withdraw his remarks adverse to Hon Max Evans.

The SPEAKER: The member is quite correct. I can see other members going for their Standing Orders and I advise them that it is there. The Standing Orders also state that members should take those points of order at the time the comments are made. I thought that the Minister had moved away from his comments on Hon Max Evans. However, if he has not, I suggest he do so immediately.

*Questions without Notice Resumed***GRAIN FREIGHT***Contracts: Anomalies*

327. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) Does the new grain freight schedule announced by the Minister recently correct anomalies which existed in last year's contractual rate?

(2) Will the Minister provide me with a copy of the schedule?

Mr TROY replied:

(1) and (2) No grain freight schedule has been announced by me. The Leader of the National Party must be under some misapprehension. At the moment, commercial negotiations are being undertaken on the grain freight schedules between the parties representing the grain industry and Westrail. I have seen no schedule as yet.

This follows a process which has been in place for three or four years. The member will recall that last year they were not able to reach agreement, and I intervened on behalf of the Government. I hope that that circumstance does not arise this year and I have every confidence that it will not.

INFLATION*Farm: Estimates*

328. Dr GALLOP, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Can the Minister advise the House of current estimates of farm inflation?

Mr GRILL replied:

Members of this House will be well aware of the inexorable cost price squeeze through which farmers have been going for some years -- decades in fact -- and the inevitable costs that have increased year in, year out. About three statistical quarters ago a new trend seemed to emerge with figures coming from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics indicating that for the first time in many years farm inflation was starting to fall. I am very pleased to be able to say that the latest prognosis put forward by the BAE indicates that farm inflation for the coming 12 months will probably be in the order of two per cent.

Mr Cowan: You recognise that it does not have a very good record in forecasting farm inflation rates?

Mr GRILL: It has been as good as or better than most other prognoses I have heard. The member for Merredin should not denigrate these fairly optimistic views because, perhaps for the first time in his lifetime, farm costs are on the way down. I would have thought it was something to rejoice about.

Mr Cowan: It is, but the bureau is not always accurate.

Mr GRILL: It is more accurate than not. A two per cent farm inflation rate represents a real decrease of something like five per cent. It is great that for the first time in many years farm inflation is on the way down. That has been brought about very largely by the fact that interest rates are coming down and also because fertiliser costs are on the way down.

Mr Tubby: What about fuel?

Mr GRILL: Fuel prices are about stationary -- perhaps they could come down.

Hon John Williams: They are excessive but stationary.

Mr GRILL: Members opposite must give credit where it is due. The present Federal Government, of all the Federal Governments, removed fuel excise on diesel fuel used on farms by farmers.

Mr Cowan: And increased the differential from 6c to 10c.

Mr GRILL: That took something like 15c off the price of diesel used on farms.

Mr Cowan: It got as high as 19c at one stage.

Mr GRILL: Fair enough, it took 15c to 19c off the price of fuel used on farms. I have not heard many people give credit to the present Government for that reduction. It was a very significant reduction indeed, and many people in farming areas who are not aware of it should be.

Interest rates are on the way down and labour costs are perhaps increasing by about four per cent. In terms of the impact on an average, typical wheat-belt farm that indicates that the farm surplus will probably rise this coming year by something like 21.8 per cent. For the first time in a long time farm receipts, which are estimated across Australia to be something like 3.5 per cent higher, will exceed farm costs which will be about two per cent. That is very good news indeed.

LIBERAL PARTY

Management Meeting

329. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

(1) Is the Minister aware that the date on which he claims a management meeting was held by the Liberal Party was, in fact, Easter Monday.

(2) Is he also aware that his allegations are totally unfounded?

(3) If he is not aware of those facts, will he now apologise to the House for misleading it or otherwise put up supportive evidence or desist from misleading the House in such a wilful manner?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) to (3) The answer is no on all counts. Furthermore the Leader of the Opposition has a lot to say to the House about his meeting with Mr Simpson on 23 April when these issues were discussed.
