

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 27 October 1981

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

HOSPITAL: SUNSET

Petition

MR TONKIN (Morley) [4.31 p.m.]: I have a petition which reads, in part, as follows—

We further affirm that the care of the elderly is best conducted in a manner which does not permit the making of profits from their distress.

We are of the firm belief that land handed down by our pioneers in trust to the care of Governments for the benefit of later generations should not be disposed of for temporary financial gain.

The petition contains 19 signatures.

I have not signed that the petition is in accordance with the Standing Orders of this House; but I will be very pleased to do so within the next few minutes.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House after it has been signed by the member.

(See petition No. 105.)

LOAN BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Sir Charles Court (Treasurer), and read a first time.

MACHINERY SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Minister for Labour and Industry), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Labour and Industry) [4.35 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Machinery Safety Act 1974 came into operation in 1978. Since that time some deficiencies and administrative difficulties have become evident which necessitate amendment to the Act.

All machinery subject to the Act is registerable and two categories of machinery are described; that is, classified and general.

Classified machinery requires initial registration, annual inspection, and a certificate of inspection. The registration of this type of machinery does not require renewal. General machinery does not require a certificate of inspection, but it does require renewal of registration—usually on an annual basis.

At the time of registration, the chief inspector is required to determine in which category the machinery will be placed. This is impractical, restrictive, and confusing, since it does not permit prescribing in regulations which machinery belongs to each category; that is, classified or general machinery. All matters relating to procedure for registration of, for example, a boiler or a personnel carrying hoist, should be clearly established by regulations and, therefore, be readily understood by owners.

Under existing provisions it is necessary to wait till the time of registration to determine the type and relevant procedures. On the basis that the Act and regulations should be clear on matters relating to machinery registration, the present provisions are restrictive and confusing. It is therefore proposed to prescribe in regulations which types of machinery come within each category.

Procedures for registration of general machinery depend on whether or not premises are registerable under the Factories and Shops Act 1963. This policy has resulted in two registration systems for similar types of machinery and has proved cumbersome.

Additionally some differences in the Machinery Safety Act and Factories and Shops Act pertaining to registration requirements give rise to conflict and confusion for owners of machinery.

For example, premises that are not registerable under the Factories and Shops Act are—

- any mine, claypit, sandpit or quarry;
- any factory or shop situated north of the 20th parallel; that is, north of Port Hedland;
- any construction site;
- any prison, technical school, or industrial training school; and
- any hospital except where a maintenance workshop facility is attached.

The aforementioned have significant machinery installations that have always been registered, but under the provisions of the present Machinery Safety Act must be registered by a system separate to that which applies to machinery in a

factory or shop premises which requires registration.

Amendments to correct the aforementioned also require amendment to some definitions, to the registration renewal period, and to provisions relating to change of ownership.

The Bill includes a definition of "amusement device" which is in addition to its inclusion in the general interpretation of machinery. It is intended specifically to include reference to this type of machinery—that is, machinery that possesses significant hazard potential—in the sections of the Act relating to offences, in order to provide positive public protection.

Other proposed amendments included in the Bill are—

to provide for the types of hoist that require control by a certificated operator to be prescribed; most hoists do not require certificated control, but the exclusion of these from that requirement is not clear;

to rectify an omission in the summary procedure for dealing with offences by holders of certificates of competency where, as required by the Act, consent in writing to be dealt with by summary procedure is not given to the chief inspector by the person committing the alleged offence;

to provide that a certificate of inspection may continue in force for a period of two years instead of 18 months for certain pressure vessels not subject to high-risk factors. This will allow extra time to be devoted to areas which require more frequent inspection and cause less disruption to industry.

As outlined in my earlier comments, the major part of the proposed amendments relates to registration procedures.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Parker.

ACTS AMENDMENT (PRISONS) BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Hassell (Chief Secretary), and read a first time.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND ASSISTANCE (CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS) BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Minister for Labour and Industry), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Labour and Industry) [4.43 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

One of the purposes for which the Workers' Compensation Supplementation Fund Amendment Act 1981, referred to for convenience as the 1981 Act, was enacted earlier this year was to bring the Workers' Compensation Supplementation Fund Act 1980 into line with the Workers' Compensation Bill. That Bill was, of course, introduced into the Legislative Assembly during the first part of this parliamentary session, but was later withdrawn. The Workers' Compensation and Assistance Bill now before Parliament differs from its predecessor in a number of respects and the purpose of the present Bill is to adjust the 1981 Act—most of which is still not yet operative—to the changes that have been made.

Most of the present Bill is concerned with correcting cross-references to the withdrawn Workers' Compensation Bill and requires no comment. The proposed new section 4 of the Workers' Compensation Supplementation Fund Act 1980 differs substantially from the present section 4 of that Act, however, and calls for some explanation.

The present section 4 provides that the Act does not apply to mining employers insured by the State Government Insurance Office for their liability to pay workers' compensation to their employees, but the proposed new section 4 is narrower and provides that the Act does not apply to the insurance of employers by the State Government Insurance Office against their liability to pay workers' compensation to their employees in respect of certain industrial diseases associated with mining. This is because the Workers' Compensation and Assistance Bill does not contain a clause equivalent to clause 169 of the withdrawn Workers' Compensation Bill. Clause 169 provided that the State Government Insurance Office was the only insurer authorised to insure employers for the liability of employers to pay workers' compensation to all workers employed by them in any mining operation unless the Minister otherwise approved.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Parker.

METROPOLITAN MARKET AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

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

GRAIN MARKETING AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

MR OLD (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [4.47 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill amends the Grain Marketing Act 1975-1981 to ensure—

that the Grain Pool of WA has the power to trade on a private basis oats and other grains that are not compulsorily acquired or being recieved into a voluntary pool; and

that the Grain Pool's transactions in relation to oats since 31 October 1980 are legally valid.

The Bill aims to provide the Grain Pool with the power to trade grains not approved or prescribed under the Grain Marketing Act, and to ensure that it has no advantage or disadvantage compared with a normal private trader for these grains.

The Grain Pool will be able to enter into contracts, or trade warrants issued by CBH, for grains "authorised" by the responsible Minister by notice published in the *Government Gazette*. The Bill requires the Grain Pool to keep separate accounts for each "authorised grain" and to keep accounts for "authorised grains" separate from those for pooled grains. In addition, the Grain Pool is specifically excluded from having access to Treasury guarantees for "authorised grains".

The Bill permits the Grain Pool to use any surplus from its trading activities to maintain a proper reserve, to meet prior deficits, or after consultation with the Minister for any purpose which will directly benefit the grain industry. The Grain Pool will also have the option of redistributing the surplus back to those who have sold that grain to it in that year.

The Bill also aims to ensure that growers who sell only an "authorised" grain, and do not deliver any other grain to the Grain Pool are eligible to vote for, or be elected as, a Grain Pool director. The Grain Marketing Act currently specifies that only growers who have delivered to a pool set up under the Act are eligible to vote for, or be elected as, a Grain Pool director. This effectively

disenfranchises oat growers who are now not able to deliver to a voluntary pool.

These amendments have become necessary because of the reintroduction of warehousing for oats. The reintroduction of warehousing on 31 October 1980 enabled Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. to handle and store oats for anyone rather than just the Grain Pool. The Grain Pool, therefore, decided not to operate a voluntary oat pool for the 1980-81 season as it believed that it could not compete effectively with private traders under a warehousing system because of the first advance system of payment and the requirement to accept oats wherever they are delivered.

Instead, the Grain Pool decided to buy oat warrants issued by CBH for cash in direct competition with other private traders, believing it had the power to do so under the Grain Marketing Act. However, Crown Law Department has indicated that it doubts that the Grain Pool has the power under the Grain Marketing Act to trade oats or any other grain on a private basis.

It was, therefore, decided to amend the Grain Marketing Act to ensure that there is no legal doubt that the Grain Pool has the power to trade grains on a private basis and that the Grain Pool's transactions for the 1980-81 oat harvest are put beyond doubt.

The warehousing arrangement for oats will benefit growers most if the Grain Pool is able to compete effectively with private traders and users in purchasing oats. Moreover, it could well benefit growers in the future if the Grain Pool were able to compete for any other grains that might be traded in a free market.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Evans.

PRISONS BILL

Second Reading

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Chief Secretary) [4.52 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is a Bill to repeal and replace the Prisons Act which has been in force since 1903. It has been amended on 11 occasions since then, but these amendments, in the main, have been piecemeal.

A review of all provisions which were outdated or superseded by other legislation such as the Criminal Code was commenced three years ago. The changes identified as necessary proved so extensive that it was decided to prepare a completely new Bill.

The Bill has been drafted to—

reflect the basic obligation of the Prisons Department, which is the establishment, management, control, and security of prisons, and the custody and welfare of prisoners;

ensure an appropriate level of accountability and responsibility for departmental operations to the Government and the community through Parliament;

clearly define the rights, duties, responsibilities, and obligations of prison officers which will allow them to operate a prison system in a humane manner while at the same time ensuring that the necessary level of security is maintained to protect the community;

clearly define the rights and privileges afforded to prisoners within the context of the good order and security of prisons and ensure these rights and privileges are protected;

allow by statutory authority the department to provide meaningful activities for the occupation of prisoners;

encourage the department to establish programmes that will be of benefit in meeting the needs of prisoners, both while in custody and when they eventually return to the community, provided prisoners wish to avail themselves of such programmes;

increase legislative responsibility for the department's activities by incorporating into the law many of the current policies which because of the outdated nature of the Prisons Act are the subject of departmental standing orders, administrative instructions, manuals, and common usage;

ensure that the necessary powers exist to accomplish these aims while at the same time building in adequate controls to ensure these powers are not abused.

The Bill therefore seeks to establish the department's aims, objectives, and accountability to the community through the Government and Parliament; to define the rights, duties, and responsibilities of departmental officers; to ensure the operation of a humane environment for prisoners; and to protect both the prisoners and the public from abuse of those powers which are necessarily required by officers if they are to operate a secure prison system consistent with the realities of the 1980s.

The preliminary part of the Bill deals with technical matters of definition. These update the

terms used to make them consistent with modern aspects of the criminal justice system.

Part II of the Bill makes provisions for the proclamation of prisons. It authorises the placement of prisoners in police lockups as well as prisons. For the first time, the director of the department will be required at least every three months to review the placement of all prisoners serving their sentences in police lockups.

Consistent with the basic obligation of the department, it will be renamed the Western Australia Prisons Department, and provision has been made in schedule 1 to retitle the various prisons.

Part III will establish the duties, powers, and obligations of the director and clarify his powers of delegation. The responsibilities, duties, and obligations of prison officers are also for the first time detailed including a requirement that prison officers take an oath of engagement before appointment. This is consistent with the desired objective of maintaining a disciplined service in which high standards are a byword, and obligation for the maintenance of the essential service is recognised by all.

It is desired to ensure that sufficient legislative power exists to enable the director or the Minister through the director, to conduct a thorough inquiry into any matter, incident, or occurrence affecting the security or good order of a prison or concerning a prisoner or group of prisoners. This deficiency will be overcome by the provision of machinery to allow for the appointment and the conducting of an inquiry.

This will greatly assist the director to ensure that his department meets its obligations to the community through the Government and Parliament and to conduct its affairs at the highest possible level of accountability.

The lawful custody of a prisoner under the present Act is vested in the gaoler or superintendent of a prison. It is intended in part IV to change this by placing all prisoners in the custody of the director and requiring him to determine the appropriate placement during incarceration.

This will overcome many of the administrative, organisational, and legal problems relating to the lawful custody of prisoners in police lockups, and to those awaiting transfer to prison, while under escort, during court appearances, while away from the prison for medical attention, and other reasons specified in the Bill.

This part also provides for the implementation of one of the major recommendations of the recent inquiry into the rate of imprisonment in

this State; that is, an increase in the rate of remission for good behaviour. It is proposed to increase remission on a finite term from one-quarter to one-third. This will have the effect of generally bringing Western Australia into line with the majority of other States.

While there will be a proposed increase in general remissions, specific proposals will be made for those prisoners convicted of escaping lawful custody. Once the prisoner is returned to prison, the period absent from lawful custody will be served in full without earning remission. Any additional term of imprisonment imposed for escaping also will be served without remission.

The present legislation does not make adequate provision for the authorities effectively to deal with a prisoner where he commits an offence on the last day of his sentence or during his discharge. This is to be rectified.

Part V of the Bill deals with many of the very difficult and complex matters which over recent years have been of concern to the Conference of Australian and New Zealand Ministers in charge of prisons, probation, and parole. These areas cover such sensitive issues as the searching of prisoners, use of restraints, use of firearms and force to maintain order and discipline, trafficking, loitering near or unauthorised entry into a prison, the searching and questioning of the public who are entering security institutions, and overcoming the problem of the illegal entry into prisons of weapons and drugs.

There can be no simple answer to these problems, but it is obvious that if the community is to be appropriately protected powers must exist, with adequate safeguards against abuse of those powers, for prison officers working in security institutions to operate effectively.

This part therefore makes provision for—

The searching of prisoners and proper disposal of any contraband which may be discovered.

The use of restraints for prisoners who may be liable to injury from their own actions, to injure others, to present a security risk when being moved from one place to another, or on medical advice. The supervision of the medical officer will be essential in all cases requiring any form of restraint involving medication. Restraint in this sense is never to be used as a form of punishment. In all cases where restraints are used for a period of more than 24 hours the director will be advised.

The prison authorities to order the medical examination of prisoners where there are

reasonable grounds for believing that such an examination will or may afford the necessary evidence to prove an offence has been committed. The most obvious area of course is the taking or concealing of illegal drugs. These examples indicate a need for legislative authority to be provided enabling proceedings to be initiated on the basis of proper medical evidence.

The use of firearms under strictly defined conditions against prisoners who are attempting to escape, or escaping lawful custody, or against persons who are illegally breaking into a prison in order to effect a prisoner's release, or for some other reason.

The use of general force in emergency situations where the good order, and security of the prison is threatened. These events are rare, but the need to be prepared, to have the necessary authority to act decisively and positively in order to protect the community, the staff, and prisoners is paramount if the primary aim of custody and security is to be maintained.

The power to search and question persons who are entering a prison with provision for regulations to be made governing this power and ensuring privacy, decorum, and expedition.

The imposition of penalties for persons who are convicted of offences for trafficking of illegal goods, loitering about or near a prison, unauthorised entry to a prison, or unauthorised communication with a prisoner.

In all these areas it is necessary to strike the correct balance between the rights prison officers should be given by law to enable them to carry out the difficult task we require of them, the rights of the public who must interact with the prison system, and the rights of prisoners. I believe this has been accomplished.

This part also allows for a prisoner to obtain a medical examination and receive medical treatment. Provision is made for the State health authorities to inspect prisons and ensure normal community standards are maintained.

A prisoner's right to practise his religion is also protected.

Because of the many difficult and often conflicting forces interacting on a modern prison system, it is essential to establish a scheme for regular and independent assessment and review. This will be accomplished in part VI of the Bill with the appointment by the Governor of prison visitors.

Prison visitors so appointed will be required to—

visit and inspect prisons at least every three months;

report in writing to the Minister on those visits and inspections;

keep a record and report to the director or Minister every complaint made to them by an officer or prisoner; and,

communicate with the director immediately if it is considered necessary.

Prisoners' rights to communicate either verbally or in writing with the outside world are protected with necessary restrictions. The Bill makes provision for a prisoner to write to and receive letters from the Minister, the director, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations, and the Commonwealth Ombudsman under confidential cover.

Prisoners are assured of confidential access to their legal advisers, parole officers, and other officials and regular contact with their friends and relations. These rights may be exercised provided at all times they are consistent with the security and good order of the prison, and are in each case bona fide for the purposes which are accepted as legitimate, as set out in the Bill. Provision therefore will be made to allow it to be required that visitors to certain security prisons make a declaration identifying themselves and stating their relationship with the prisoner and the purpose of the visit.

The procedures to be followed for the inspection and censoring of incoming and outgoing correspondence are also detailed for the first time.

Part VII deals with prison offences. The system which currently exists of categorising offences into minor and aggravated will be maintained, with some deletions and additions in both categories to update these provisions in the light of experience.

Minor prison offences may be heard and determined by the superintendent, if the prisoner so elects, or by a visiting justice appointed by the Governor for this purpose. Aggravated offences, however, must be heard either by a magistrate or by two justices of the peace in a summary way. Provision has been made to allow prison officers who have been appointed prosecuting officers to appear before the magistrate or visiting justices. Prisoners charged with aggravated offences are entitled to legal representation. The range of penalties for both minor and aggravated offences has been adjusted.

These provisions will ensure that the prison authorities are able to maintain discipline while affording the prisoner the full protection of his legal rights and privileges as determined by the High Court of Australia in the case of *Stratton v Parn and others* (1978) 52 ALRJ 330.

While general provision exists in the current legislation for the authorisation of leave of absence programmes the policies and practices are very loosely defined in regulations, manuals, administrative instructions, and by common usage. In line with the earlier stated aims and objectives, the policies and practices covering the various forms of leave of absence from prison are defined in the Bill. While they do not differ markedly from current practices their incorporation in legislation will ensure that they are operated in accordance with the directions of Parliament and will be unable to be altered without the approval of the Parliament.

Four distinct forms of leave of absence will be authorised in part VII of the Bill as follows—

- (1) The director may, with the approval of the Minister, grant either escorted or unescorted leave for up to 72 hours for compassionate reasons such as visiting a near relative who is dangerously ill or the funeral of a near relative.
- (2) The director may in the last three months of a sentence where a prisoner has served more than 12 months and has a minimum security rating, grant leave of absence for the purpose of the prisoner engaging in either paid or voluntary employment.
- (3) The director may grant leave for a prisoner to visit his friends or relations. For a prisoner to be eligible for this leave he must have served 12 months and be a minimum security class and be within 12 months of his expected date of release. If his sentence allowed him to be involved in the programme for a full 12 months for example, he may be granted 12 hours' leave per month for the first six months, then 12 hours per fortnight for the next three months, and for the last three months more frequently in accordance with a policy approved by the Minister.

- (4) The Minister may approve institutional programmes involving absences from prison where prisoners are individually or in groups engaged in community work, charitable or voluntary work, work associated with the prison, sport, religious observance, and other activities, provided the prisoners involved are rated minimum security and are placed in the charge of or under the supervision of a prison officer.

These provisions do not create any new form of leave of absence, but do propose to give legal recognition to certain long-standing practices of the department.

They also propose to eliminate ministerial involvement in every grant of leave of absence—as presently applies—while maintaining a management discretion which is both necessary and desirable. It is expected that this discretion will receive most regular use in the case of women prisoners because of the lack of institutional options available for the placement of women prisoners.

The provisions require strict adherence to procedures for selection, approval, and supervision of prisoners on these programmes with a requirement that the Minister report to both Houses of Parliament if he exercises his discretion and approves prisoners for leave to visit friends and relations outside normal requirements.

Detailed procedures are proposed for dealing with any breach by the prisoner of the conditions of the leave permit. The basic objective is to make it clear that leave of absence is a privilege which, if abused, leaves no second chance to the prisoner concerned.

The Bill in part IX promotes the development, by the department, of meaningful activities for the occupation of prisoners. It also proposes that the department encourage programmes that will be of benefit in meeting the needs of prisoners both while in custody and when they eventually return to the community. This part also proposes an option—except where the prisoner may be required by the superintendent to work—for the prisoner to participate, if so inclined, to better equip himself for leading a normal, law-abiding life when returned to society.

This places the onus on the prisoner to effect his own rehabilitation and removes the expectation that the Prisons Department is required to rehabilitate prisoners before they are released. That requirement has long been recognised as impossible without the freely given will and intention of the prisoner.

Part X seeks to establish for the first time in our legislation a specific provision for the discipline of prison officers. Currently, matters relating to discipline are the subject of regulations which have been found on many occasions to be inadequate in dealing with disciplinary hearings. The proposals will specify details of those actions of a prison officer which constitute disciplinary offences and ensure that sound procedures are followed to guarantee the protection of his rights and a fair hearing.

At the same time we have sought to ensure that disciplinary issues are dealt with in a manner appropriate to discipline, and do not become formal legal proceedings. A prison officer may have his charge heard by his superintendent or some other officer or superintendent appointed by the director. Provision is made for regulations to cover the conduct of these hearings.

A prison officer charged will have the right of appeal to the director on the determination of a hearing or the awarding of a penalty by the superintendent. Provision also is made to allow the matter to be referred to the director by the superintendent for determination and for the awarding of a penalty. In these cases the prison officer will have a further right of appeal to an appeal tribunal. Penalties for offences under this section will be widened to allow a greater exercise of discretion.

The sections governing the discipline of officers will be designed to protect fully the rights of the employee to a fair hearing while at the same time incorporating into legislation a system which is consistent with a disciplined essential service.

Discussions have been held with representatives of the Prison Officers' Union in relation to those parts of the Bill which will directly affect officers. A number of changes to earlier drafts were made as a result of those discussions. I appreciate the basis on which those discussions were held and approached by the union representatives.

Since the industrial unrest over a disciplinary matter within the Department of Corrections last December, industrial relations have greatly improved, with all parties endeavouring to formulate a mutually acceptable policy to prevent industrial action which may jeopardise prison security. The Government welcomes those initiatives and commends the Prison Officers' Union for its part in them.

Part XI deals with a number of general provisions. One of the provisions is a clause the aim of which is to deal with partial strikes or work limitations to the extent of ensuring that in

those situations the employer is entitled to deduct salary for the period of the industrial action.

At present, there is no question but that an employer is entitled to deduct wages or salary for the period of a strike. But a number of factors combine to make this difficult or impossible where the industrial action taken is in the form of a passive or partial strike or work limitation.

The proposed provision will not of itself require that salary or wages be deducted, but will permit an application to be made by the employer—the Minister—to the Industrial Commission which will determine as a matter of fact whether a refusal of work is occurring, and the duration of it, and will on the facts being established make declarations as to the commencement and termination of the industrial action.

For the period between such declarations, the employer—the Minister—may refuse payment to those officers engaged in the industrial action.

A number of options were considered in relation to this provision, but it was determined that the proper course to follow was to seek to separate this kind of situation from a disciplinary procedure—although disciplinary questions might arise—and to involve an independent body—the Industrial Commission—in a determination of the facts on evidence presented.

The Bill will delete reference to a number of current provisions which are outdated in both concept and usage, such as reformatory prisons and prisoners, and the reception of convicted inebriates. It can therefore be seen that the main aims as stated earlier have been incorporated in the Bill.

The objectives of the department and a high level of accountability and responsibility for fulfilment of those objectives are proposed to be clearly established. Provisions are proposed to delineate the rights of prison officers to exercise their powers, duties, and responsibilities, and to fulfil their obligations while carrying out their task of protecting the community.

The rights of prisoners and the public, to the extent that those rights are consistent with the requirement of security, control, good order, and management of the prison are ensured.

The department's resolution to provide sound programmes to assist prisoners is proposed for the first time on a statutory basis, thus placing the onus on the prisoner to use these programmes if he is motivated to lead a law-abiding life on release to the community.

Since this Government came into office in 1974 it has actively undertaken a programme to

modernise this State's prison system. In 1979 the department, following a review by the Public Service Board, was restructured and placed on a sound administrative footing. In 1980 the Government announced a \$34 million rebuilding programme to increase the number of secure beds available and upgrade institutional facilities. The enactment of a new Prisons Act will greatly assist in ensuring that the prison service is able to meet the demands for high standards placed on it by the Government and the community.

Consequential to this Bill it will be necessary to amend the Offenders Probation and Parole Act 1963-1980 and the Criminal Code mainly to amend those sections either naming the Department of Corrections or referring to remission, or reformatory prisons and prisoners.

Might I add that should this legislation be adopted and last for as long as the present Act has lasted—approximately 75 years—it will have achieved all that I have set out to ensure that it does achieve. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Parker.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from 22 October.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [5.20 p.m.]: I want briefly to reiterate what the Leader of the Opposition said last week with respect to the Budget, particularly his comments about the State's royalties. As he stated, the 1973-74 royalties comprised 4.15 per cent of the value of the State's mineral production, yet the royalties provided for in this Budget represent a drop in real terms of 2.8 per cent. This represents, in 1981-82, a loss of something like \$228 million, which is revenue the State can ill-afford to lose.

Every time we suggest that something should be done in the education, health, or other fields members opposite ask, "Tell us what taxes you are going to increase?" There are two parts to that problem. One involves revenue—and I have already mentioned the \$228 million loss in royalties—and the other—

Sir Charles Court: Are you serious about that? It is a phony figure you are quoting and a phony statement you are making.

Mr TONKIN: If that is so, I will be interested to hear to what degree it is wrong.

Sir Charles Court: Which royalties do you want to increase further? Your own colleagues have said not to touch iron ore, nickel, coal, and gold.

Mr Brian Burke: Do not misrepresent our position. The only exception made by the Opposition is the goldmining industry.

Sir Charles Court: You had better talk to some of your friends.

Mr Brian Burke: I am telling you what the position is. Do you want me to say what the member for Murray says? Is that your policy? He includes gold.

Sir Charles Court: I do not have to take notice of what others say.

Mr Brian Burke: Do I have to take notice of what some of my members have to say?

Mr TONKIN: I am prepared to accept as right the figure of \$228 million until it is shown to be wrong. If this can be done I will be happy to admit my error, something which the Deputy Premier has not been prepared to do. If the Treasurer wants to talk about errors he may remember that two years ago the Deputy Premier continually said—in spite of simple sentences in English to the contrary—that it was quite legal for a businessman to say he did not have to give cash refunds when goods were defective. Time and time again I pointed out that the Deputy Premier was wrong. He refused to admit he was wrong. Now his own Bureau of Consumer Affairs has said he is wrong. When I asked him last week to admit he was wrong he refused to do so. It is a poor state of affairs if Ministers make mistakes—and we all do—and are not prepared to admit their errors. If it can be shown that I have made an error with that figure of \$228 million in lost royalties I will be prepared to admit I was wrong.

The Treasurer has spoken about our not wanting to increase royalties on iron ore and other minerals, but this is news to me. I heard him say this in the House last week and I was completely mystified. The figure of \$228 million was stated in the newspapers something like two weeks ago and I have not heard it contradicted.

One way in which we could spend the extra money that would go to the State's coffers would be to increase the number of policemen in the State. Ever since I have been a member of Parliament—and my pamphlets will prove this—I have said continually that the Police Force is undermanned.

One way to measure the undermanning of our Police Force is to study the ratio of police to the population. This is not the best measure, because there is a big difference between small and large States or States with special difficulties. Nevertheless, this ratio in South Australia reveals there is one policeman to every 411 persons; in

Tasmania it is one to 429; and in Western Australia it is one to 485, showing that we are well below the South Australian figure.

Mr Watt: What about New South Wales?

Mr TONKIN: That State's figure shows it is worse off than is Western Australia.

Mr Watt: You said this was not the best measure.

Mr TONKIN: It is only one; all measurements involve some difficulty. Quite obviously one useful measure is to compare the number of policemen with the population; but there is a difficulty if we compare a State the size of Tasmania if it had one million people with a State the size of Western Australia with one million people. If both States had the same number of policemen it is obvious that one would still be worse off than the other. I do not want to dwell on those circumstances. Certainly we are worse off than Tasmania, because we cannot compare Tasmania's excellent geographical situation with ours—Tasmania is a pocket handkerchief.

To bring the Western Australian Police Force into line with South Australia's force we need an extra 180 policemen for each of the next three years, in addition to wastage. Of course, I admit that South Australia is better off than any other State in this respect.

Let us consider another way to measure our needs. We find Western Australia fares very badly indeed when we consider the ratio of policemen to area. Victoria has the most favourable figure with one policeman for every 29 square kilometres; Tasmania has one to every 70 square kilometres; New South Wales has one to every 87 square kilometres; South Australia has one to every 311 square kilometres; Queensland has one to every 437 square kilometres; and Western Australia has one to every 967 square kilometres. The last three States mentioned are the most comparable.

These figures show that Western Australia is doubly worse off than is Queensland, which is the State with the second worst figure. Quite clearly Western Australia, which runs third when we consider the police-to-population ratio, is by far the worst off when we consider the police-to-area ratio.

Western Australia has the worst penalty rates for policemen working on weekends and public holidays; in fact, in many cases no penalty rate exists. This is another way in which we can show that our Police Force is being poorly treated.

The State Treasury puts a great deal of reliance on the police-to-population ratio when its officers

speak publicly in Western Australia. I have said that Western Australia runs third behind South Australia and Tasmania using this ratio. However, when the Treasury officers make submissions to the Grants Commission they use the figure I have just given for the police-to-square kilometres or area ratio. I consider this to be a more honest way to consider the situation. It is a pity this Government speaks with two different voices. Publicly it says we are third in Australia when comparing the number of police with members of the population; it does not mention the State is far worse off in regard to the ratio of police to area. However, when dealing with the Grants Commission, the report of which is supposed to be a confidential document, and this is the introduction—

Mr Watt: Is this the confidential document?

Mr TONKIN: It is meant to be, but it is a document I have obtained which the member can have. It is contained in a report prepared by the Police Union. I do not know how confidential it is, but it is not available for general circulation to the public of Western Australia.

Mr Watt: It is now.

Mr TONKIN: And so it should be; the people of this State have a right to know what is in it. The people pay for these reports and they should have the right to know about them.

Mr Carr: The submission is freely available in the National Library in Canberra.

Mr Watt: Then it is not a confidential document.

Mr Carr: This Government tried to make it so by not releasing it in Western Australia.

Mr TONKIN: Perhaps I incorrectly used the word "confidential". However, the Government did not intend to have the publication widely distributed in Western Australia; it tried to prevent the distribution of the publication because it states the facts. It refers to the immense geographical size and wide population dispersion of this State. It states that in some remote areas manpower and vehicle allocation to travel great distances to provide police services to isolated communities is a necessity. That is the statement this Government made to the Grants Commission, but when it speaks to Western Australians it says, "We have plenty of police. Don't worry about it. We have the best ratio to population in Australia". The Government knows in its heart that it does not have enough police officers.

In its submission to the Grants Commission the Government referred to the high crime ratio. Members would know how high that is in

Western Australia. The average crime ratio of the three-year period 1975-76 to 1977-78 for Australia indicate that Western Australia heads the list with the highest number of crimes per 1 000 people. Western Australia's rate is 21.84; Victoria's 18.66; south Australia's, 18.58; New South Wales', 17.49; Queensland's, 14.67; and Tasmania's, 12.26. This third set of statistics to which I have referred demonstrates that Western Australia has the worst crime ratio.

We would have sympathy with this Government if it were sincere and said to the people of Western Australia what it said to the Grants Commission. However, this Government prefers to spend its money on the employment of public relations officers for Ministers instead of spending it on the employment of more police officers.

Mr MacKinnon: If you were in Government would you get rid of all the public relations officers?

Mr TONKIN: I could not say that we would do that. I am not in a position to make a commitment as to what we would do in Government.

Mr MacKinnon: You would do what Wran did and treble the number.

Mr TONKIN: The record of the John Tonkin Government shows that its number of public relations officers was much smaller than that of the present Government. One person does not form a Government; however, I can inform the member that if I were a member of a Government in this State I would fight very hard against the employment of the present number of public relations officers and I would fight very hard for the employment of more police officers.

Mr O'Connor: Do you know there has been a reduction in the number of public relations officers recently?

Mr TONKIN: Why is that?

Mr O'Connor: I will tell you afterwards, if you wish. It was done in connection with the review committee's operations. Of recent times a reduction has been made in that area.

Mr TONKIN: I was not aware of that, but I applaud the move.

Mr O'Connor: An increase, not a reduction, has been made in the number of police.

Mr TONKIN: There should have been. As my figures indicate the Police Force is undermanned. This State is in the worst condition compared with any other State in regard to the number of police officers it employs. The morale of police officers is not high, and the lack of a sufficient

number of officers is one of the reasons for that situation. In remote areas the Police Force must represent law and order. This State has particular problems in relation to law and order and should receive special consideration.

The point I make is that there are ways by which this Government could afford to employ more police officers. One way would be to increase mining royalties. The Premier may quibble about the figure of \$228 million, but whatever the figure is, the amount of royalties paid should be higher than at present.

Mr O'Connor: Would you put a royalty on gold?

Mr TONKIN: The Opposition has answered that question.

Mr O'Connor: On what would you put the additional royalties?

Mr TONKIN: I am not the spokesman for the Opposition in regard to those matters. The Minister should direct that question to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition or others responsible for that matter. The Minister's Government believes that royalties are too low, otherwise it would not have tried to cover up the situation in the present Budget.

Mr O'Connor: We have tried to increase them.

Mr TONKIN: This Government has tried to say that royalties will be increased to a proper level, but its action is cosmetic. The Government's move to do something about the situation indicates that it is concerned about the level of royalties.

Mr O'Connor: We indicated months and months ago that we would do something about it, and have done something positive.

Mr TONKIN: I will give the Minister an example relating to his own portfolio. The brochure entitled, "The Facts on WA's new Workers' Compensation Laws" was produced at the expense of taxpayers, and that money could have been used to employ more police officers. The brochure was party-political propaganda, and its cost should have come out of the Liberal Party's funds, not the pockets of taxpayers.

Mr O'Connor: It was up to the Government to make sure some of the information given by your friends was set straight so that the public knew the facts.

Mr TONKIN: Is that right? Every time the Government disagrees with remarks made by someone should it spend taxpayers' money to publish party-political propaganda?

Mr O'Connor: Not necessarily. It stopped strikes from occurring and millions of dollars

being wasted. I thought you would appreciate that.

Mr TONKIN: The Government produced that brochure for the purpose of party-political propaganda.

Mr O'Connor: We produced it to make sure the public knew the facts.

Mr TONKIN: I am not quibbling about the facts. The brochure was party-political propaganda. In response to anything we say the Government dips its hands into the taxpayers' pockets to produce what it says are the facts.

Mr O'Connor: Do you think we should have let go ahead the strikes that would have affected thousands of people and cost millions of dollars? You don't care about the people, that's your problem.

Mr Barnett: Make your own speech later.

Mr TONKIN: The Minister is living in fairyland if he believes the brochure stopped a strike. We should be dinkum about this.

Mr O'Connor: Within three days of the brochure going out the strike stopped.

Mr TONKIN: If I sneezed, does the Minister think there would be an earthquake in China? His argument is pitiful. His argument is *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*. Just because one thing happens it does not mean that something else will.

Mr O'Connor: The brochure had something to do with it, make no mistake about that.

Mr TONKIN: I refer now to the amount of foreign money pouring into Australia—for in particular, into Western Australia—for the purchase of land. There has been a flood of money from Asia, and that money has been derived from prostitution and the sale of illegal drugs. The money must be got rid of somehow. The people with this money are not concerned about how much they spend on properties—easy-come-easy-go.

Mrs Craig: What proof do you have that the money comes from drugs and prostitution?

Mr TONKIN: It is obvious that much of the money is coming from those sources.

Mrs Craig: What is the proof?

Mr TONKIN: What proof does the Minister have that it has not come from those sources?

Government members interjected.

Mrs Craig: You make statements to get headlines, but you can't substantiate them.

Mr TONKIN: The fact of the matter is that an enormous amount of the money coming from South-East Asia is derived from the sale of illegal

drugs and prostitution. If the Minister does not believe that—

Mrs Craig: I don't disbelieve that, but I am asking for the proof.

Mr TONKIN: If a goodly amount of the foreign money is not derived from vice and illegal rackets why is it that the money invested does not remain in the investments for very long? Of course the money comes from those illegal sources. What I have said does not prove that the money comes from those sources, but it does not disprove that the money comes from those sources. There is such a huge volume of money coming into this country and being used unwisely that it is obvious the money comes from those illegal sources. If it did not come from those sources it would be invested more carefully. The fact is that the money is being squandered on real estate in this State.

Mrs Craig: Don't you think real estate in Western Australia, or even in Australia, is a good investment? How can you say that the money is being squandered?

Mr TONKIN: My point is that the prices being paid indicate that the money is being squandered—the prices are inflated.

Mrs Craig: How much above the normal market price do these people pay?

Mr TONKIN: They pay the normal market price which is the price the market will bear. Simple economics show that the huge demand has pushed up the prices. The situation is as simple as that. The price of real estate in this State is being pushed up by the flood of hot money from South-East Asia and other places which is making it hard for Western Australians to purchase homes.

The Government has done nothing to stop the increase in interest rates or to halt the inflow of hot money from South-East Asia which is pushing up the price of real estate. Young married couples are finding it increasingly difficult to purchase land or homes.

Mr O'Connor: Did you see the auction results in Sunday's paper?

Mr TONKIN: I did. Whether those results indicate a permanent about-face or a temporary hiatus, I do not know.

Mrs Craig: How much money do you think is coming from these illegal sources?

Mr TONKIN: The Minister has done nothing about the situation. I cannot give her figures to show the exact dollar and cent amounts that have come in, but that inability does not get her off the hook. The fact is that she is doing nothing about this matter. The Government has not established

a register of foreign investment and has not inquired as to the original source of money invested. All the Minister can say is, "How do you know this? How do you know that?"

The point is that any Government must act responsibly in regard to foreign investment. The Government has the power to do so, but it has not exercised that power. It has done nothing to stop the inflow of foreign money which is pushing up the price of land in Western Australia. All the Minister can say is, "Prove where it comes from". She has the whole apparatus of the Government behind her, but she does not know what is going on. How can an Opposition member tell the Minister what is going on when he does not have research assistance or sources of that nature from which to obtain the information? I suggest she busy herself to determine the situation. The Government should know what is going on. The birthright of Western Australia is being sold to overseas interests, and it is about time action was taken to stop that process.

Mrs Craig: If you make a statement you must be able to base it on something. You must be able to say how much land is being sold to overseas interests. You can't say straight out that the birthright of Western Australians is being sold overseas.

Mr TONKIN: I can—I have just said so. The ownership of much of our land is going to South-East Asian interests. Does the Minister deny that fact? I cannot quantify the amount of land going to overseas interests, but can she? The Minister has the whole apparatus of the Government behind her, but she cannot quantify the amount of land going into the hands of overseas interests.

Mrs Craig: You are making the speech and making the statements.

Mr TONKIN: My point is that much of the money coming from overseas has been derived from various vices. This inflow of money is preventing Western Australians from being able to pay only a reasonable price for land. This situation coupled with high interest rates is making it more and more difficult each day for Western Australian families to purchase homes.

I am glad the Deputy Premier has returned to his seat.

Mr O'Connor: I haven't been out.

Mr TONKIN: I think he left his seat for a few minutes.

Mr O'Connor: I have been talking to you all the time.

Mr TONKIN: I am referring to when I commenced my speech. I would not like to say

something behind the Deputy Premier's back instead of to his face. Last week he was not prepared to admit that he made a mistake. Some time ago he asserted that it was not illegal for a business proprietor to put up a sign stating, "No cash refunds". Clearly it is illegal to do so, and I told the Minister that. I indicated the Act of Parliament which makes such a sign illegal. The Bureau of Consumer Affairs said that it is illegal. The Minister was in error and I had hoped that he would be man enough to say that he was in error.

Mr O'Connor: I say unequivocally that at the time you asked the question I got legal advice from the Bureau of Consumer Affairs—

Mr TONKIN: I did not have the benefit of legal advice, but I indicated to the Minister that the Trade Practices Act makes illegal the putting up of the sign to which I have referred. The Act is quite clear.

Mr O'Connor: From the legal advice, and the information from the Bureau of Consumer Affairs, it was obvious that you were incorrect.

Mr TONKIN: The practice is illegal.

Mr O'Connor: We obtained advice from the people who should know, and the advice was as I gave it to you.

Mr TONKIN: Part of the duty of being a Minister is that he must be responsible for answers. A Minister can obtain advice as he so desires, but it is his responsibility to answer questions correctly.

Mr O'Connor: I was satisfied with the answer.

Mr TONKIN: If the Minister's advisers give him the wrong advice he is at fault if he accepts it. I had no legal advice at all. However, I read the Act and I went to the Trade Practices Commission.

Mr O'Connor: It is time you got legal advice.

Mr TONKIN: Is the Minister saying that about the Bureau of Consumer Affairs? The bureau agrees with me, after a delay of two years. It has said that it is concerned about the illegal signs which state that there will be no cash refund.

The Act clearly says that if goods are defective, one can obtain a cash refund.

Mr O'Connor: Is putting up a sign illegal?

Mr TONKIN: Yes.

Mr O'Connor: Are you sure?

Mr TONKIN: Yes I am sure. The bureau is sure and the Trade Practices Commission is sure.

Mr O'Connor: I will have the matter reviewed again.

Mr TONKIN: The Minister has probably made an honest error; however, it is quite clear that the Minister's own bureau does not agree with his answer and Press statement.

If we make an error, we should be prepared to say so. The Trade Practices Act clearly states that if a person buys something which is defective or if it cannot be used for the purpose for which it was purchased, the buyer should receive his money back. The bureau has agreed with me after two years. There is no doubt that it was embarrassed to agree with me and contradict its Minister, but now it has agreed with me.

Leave to Continue Speech

Mr TONKIN: I seek leave to continue my speech at a later stage of this sitting.

Leave granted.

Debate thus adjourned.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.17 to 7.30 p.m.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [7.30 p.m.]: I will deal with a problem in connection with an item that I inspected recently. I mention this because it indicates the kinds of problems faced by many people. This concerned a patio that was supposed to have been erected before last Christmas, but it is still unfinished. When I inspected it, the firm concerned—Paul's Outdoor Leisure Centre—said that it was finished. I inspected the patio in company with Mr Bill Gorrie, who is the senior building inspector of the Bureau of Consumer Affairs.

Originally the specifications for the patio were passed by the Shire of Swan. Then it was discovered that the patio was not strong enough for what was required, so the owners went to the bureau, and then back to the Shire of Swan. Discussions went backwards and forwards between those bodies.

A beam on the patio had to be replaced. First of all, the company intended to leave the wrong beam in position and place the other one underneath it. Members can imagine what an eyesore that would have been. The company was

persuaded to remove the faulty beam and put the proper beam in the correct position.

This case had been continuing for more than 10 months. This is the job that was supposed to have been finished before Christmas of last year.

I made the following notes in relation to that job when I made my inspection: There was rust on the H-beam; there was rust on the underside of the roof; sand or dirt of some kind had been painted in on the uprights; where the bracket went through the original fascia board, the hole was far too large and ill-fitting; the brackets were not square; the brackets were spaced unevenly; the brackets were placed in different ways; the brackets were of two different sizes; and one of the crossbeams was too short, and had had a bit tacked on the end.

Mr O'Connor: Was it hanging on a skyhook?

Mr TONKIN: Yes. The extra bolts were unpainted. That job was supposed to have been finished.

When I was formerly the Opposition spokesman on consumer affairs, I suggested to the House that companies involved in such work should be licensed and that, as happens in New South Wales, the licences should be revoked if the companies were not in a position to meet their commitments.

Mr O'Connor: What was the approximate value of the extension?

Mr TONKIN: I have the figure in my file.

Mr O'Connor: Under the recent amendment to the Small Claims Tribunals Act, the tribunal has the power to deal with the matter if over \$1 000 is involved, even if only \$1 000 might be paid. That may help to overcome these sorts of difficulties, because previously they could not deal with anything of a value over \$1 000.

Mr TONKIN: The contract price was \$1 450.

Mr O'Connor: That would put it within the Small Claims Tribunals under the new Bill.

Mr TONKIN: The problem is that the people doing this sort of work are not qualified. I am not a handyman, and I would not attempt to do a job like that. I do not think it would last long if I did it. However, the work I saw was the kind of job I would probably do. It is a disgraceful job.

It does not seem that these people are employing tradesmen. Perhaps they are employing kids, and paying them practically nothing, but whoever it was, they did a dreadful job; and this kind of thing happens almost every day in the State of Western Australia.

Most businessmen do not operate in this way, fortunately. The people about whom we are talking do not have any expertise or conscience. For the businessman, it is just a job; for the person who lives there, it is his home.

In the case to which I have referred, tension and arguments have been in existence for almost a year. Surely one's peace of mind and one's enjoyment of one's home are worth money.

Previously in this House I suggested a seven-point clean-up plan for swimming pools. I pointed out that a swimming pool company may move in and excavate for a pool, and then not be seen for months. The householder would have a hole in the ground with dirty water in it, and he would have to try to keep the children out of it. That sort of thing can go on for months. The person's home has been invaded, and the enjoyment of his home has been diminished severely. That should be worth money, too.

The point that concerns me is not whether, eventually, this patio will be built satisfactorily. What worries me is that the people have had to argue and fight on the telephone; they have had to bring in the Bureau of Consumer Affairs; they have had to bring me in; and they have had to bring in the Shire of Swan. They have had many arguments with Paul's Outdoor Leisure Centre, and this has been going on for many months, yet the patio was supposed to have been ready for a party last Christmas.

No-one should have to put up with that kind of thing in his own home. How can one enjoy one's home when these sorts of arguments are going on?

Mr O'Connor: They paid for it in advance, I take it?

Mr TONKIN: They paid part in advance; and they have paid the rest to the Bureau of Consumer Affairs. That is another matter about which I am not happy. The bureau will say, "You give us the rest of the money and we will keep it, and when we are satisfied we will pay it over".

I was looking at one of my old files today, and I read a letter from the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs (Mr Fletcher). He said that in that case he would have the money paid over, even if there were some small defect. From the point of view of a person having a job done, why should the money have to be paid over, to sit in a consumer affairs account when it could be in his own account, earning interest? When the job has not been done and the delay is long, that is an important matter.

If I enter into a contract and the contract is not completed, why should I have to pay the money

over? Even if I am paying it to the bureau, why should I have to pay it to anyone at all? I am losing my right to say, "Look, I am not going to pay because the job is poor". Even if one accepts—

Mr Williams: You have got to make some sort of substantial arrangement, to substantiate your claim.

Mr TONKIN: If one enters into a contract and the contract has not been completed, of course one goes to the bureau. That is why we set up the bureau. If one goes to the bureau, why should one have to pay the money over? I pay money over only at the completion of a contract.

Mr O'Connor: The bureau has a responsibility both ways. If it is going to insist on the job being done and then not pay them after, the bureau is in a fairly difficult position.

Mr TONKIN: Then there would be the normal process of the law.

Mr O'Connor: I do not think it is as bad as you make out, when the bureau holds the money on behalf of both parties.

Mr TONKIN: Sometimes the bureau can hold the money for many months, and the owner loses the use of that money.

Mr O'Connor: I am not trying to justify the long period of delay.

Mr TONKIN: It is now the end of October, and the contract to which I referred earlier was entered into in November of last year. I am finding such problems all the time.

Mr Williams: Are you really finding them all the time? Is not that an isolated case?

Mr TONKIN: It is certainly not isolated. I am seeing these problems all the time.

Mr Williams: The boot is normally on the other foot. The small businessman can be charged with deficiencies, and it is up to him to prove that that is not so. He has to prove that he is innocent, in other words. That is just not right.

Mr TONKIN: I do not think the member for Clontarf can use those terms. If he were to have a look at this job, he would agree it is substandard.

The average small businessman does his job well; and I have no quarrel with that. If I were in business myself in this type of area, I would be pleased to have a stricter policing of the industry so that it was run by genuine people.

If one were employed to do an inferior job, and one employed a young lad instead of a tradesman one would have a bad name. A person in this kind of business would be pleased to see the

unscrupulous people put out of the industry. That is all I ask.

Many of these jobs are occurring all the time, and the people affected are coming to me frequently. I do not mean they come every day because, after all, my area is only a fairly small one. However, I know that many of my colleagues have been receiving lots of these complaints.

The Bureau of Consumer Affairs does not seem to have the power to enforce action. The Government should consider the Consumer Affairs Act and related Acts to see if more teeth can be given to the bureau. I spoke to a senior officer of the bureau on the telephone—and, to be fair, I will not name him—and he said, "Look, if they don't co-operate, there's not much we can do". I know that is a pretty vague statement; we could have been talking about lots of things. However, I was really shocked by that statement because it seemed to me that the bureau should have some power to make people comply.

Mr O'Connor: They can through the small claims, normally.

Mr TONKIN: Yes, but we are talking about the bureau as distinct from the Small Claims Tribunals.

Mr O'Connor: There are teeth between the two; but you are out of financial requirements, generally.

Mr Pearce: Mostly false teeth.

Mr O'Connor: I do not agree with that.

Mr Pearce: If you dealt with as many consumer affairs matters as members on this side do, you would realise that is not true.

Mr O'Connor: I think we had better let the member for Morley participate in the debate.

Mr TONKIN: These people should be licensed. They should be made to employ properly qualified tradesmen and they should not be permitted to employ young lads to whom they pay a pittance.

There is no way members can persuade me that the job to which I have referred at Beechboro was performed by a properly qualified tradesman. It was a shocking job. A person might be prepared to accept that sort of workmanship if he performed the work in his own home; but if one employs a company and pays the contract price, it is disgraceful if one then finds one has a botched-up job in one's backyard a year later.

These people should be licensed when they are involved in constructing patios and swimming pools. Three years ago I asked the Government to take steps in this regard, but no action has been taken. I do not believe the situation is any better today than it was when I drew the attention of the House to it several years ago.

Mr Williams: How would you go about licensing them and policing the situation?

Mr TONKIN: There would be the capacity to remove the licence if work was not performed to a satisfactory standard. If Government members would like to come and have a look at the job to which I have referred, I should be happy to show them around it. I would say if any building inspector looked at it, he would remove the licence of the company which performed the job.

Were we to license these people, we would have properly qualified tradesmen in the industry and it would benefit the genuine people who perform this sort of work already. Of course, the majority of people who are involved in the industry are tradesmen and it would be to their advantage—it would certainly be to the advantage of the consumers—if licences were issued.

In conclusion, I ask the Government to look again at providing a stricter form of licensing of people involved in this industry, in order that we might remove the unqualified people.

Mr Williams: In many instances the small businessman is apprehended and told he is guilty when in fact he is innocent.

Mr TONKIN: Who says the small businessman is guilty?

Mr Williams: The consumer protection people say a small businessman is guilty and he has to prove his innocence.

Mr TONKIN: The member should be careful about what he is saying.

Mr Williams: I am not a great advocate of the consumer protection people.

Mr TONKIN: That does not surprise me.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

MR WATT (Albany) [7.47 p.m.]: I want to use the opportunity provided by this debate to make one or two observations about the Budget itself, but predominantly I shall direct my comments towards some of the matters which affect my own electorate.

It has been well and truly acknowledged that this particular Budget was framed in probably the most difficult financial climate in which a Budget has ever had to be framed. It is a credit to the Treasurer that he was able to achieve as much as he did, given the circumstances under which he had to draw up the Budget. Despite the difficulties and the fact that, in many areas, reductions and cutbacks in expenditure have been necessary, obviously the Budget is not all bad.

Initially I should like to comment on the minor changes which have been made in the

presentation of the accounts. I refer to the Treasurer's speech in which he mentioned the fact that a number of the accounts were being presented in different forms. The grants for operating expenses for statutory authorities are not shown in separate divisions as they were in the past, but are now shown under the respective ministerial portfolios. That sort of presentation provides members with a much better opportunity to ascertain, at a glance, the extent of each ministerial responsibility.

The public utilities section of the Estimates has been discontinued and the provision for funds in that area has been included in the relevant ministerial portfolios. That is also an improvement. Obviously it is difficult to make any dramatic changes to the form of presentation of the Budget, but anything that can be done to provide members with a better and more detailed understanding of where money is being spent, has to be to the good.

I should like to comment briefly on the Budget allocation for education. Earlier in the year great public debate and controversy raged over education funding. However, the allocation for education in the Budget represents 12.4 per cent of total spending, which is about 1 per cent more than the increase in revenue. It is very commendable that the Government has seen fit to make such an allocation to education and it is indicative of the Government's commitment to this area.

Indeed, it tempts one to say, "I told you so", to all the people who were convinced the Government would not produce a figure anything like that which was allocated eventually.

Mr Pearce: We told you so—that is why it was forthcoming.

Mr Stephens: They tested the water and found it was very cold, so they changed their minds.

Mr WATT: Members may think what they like; but I am prepared to give credit where it is due. Indeed, if what was suggested by the members who have just interjected were true, I would have thought they would be big enough to congratulate the Government on the job it has done.

Mr Stephens: Congratulations to the teachers for the job they have done.

Mr WATT: The member will never give credit where it is due unless it is his idea.

The other area I should like to mention is payroll tax which has a vital effect on small businesses. Unlike what is happening in New South Wales which, of course, has a Labor

Government, the rate of pay-roll tax was not increased in this Budget, but rather the minimum level at which it must be paid was increased by 42 per cent, from \$72 000 to \$102 000.

As a result, businesses with annual pay-rolls of \$102 000 or less, will not be liable for any pay-roll tax. This means another 750 small businesses currently paying pay-roll tax will be exempt, while all employers with annual turnovers in excess of \$102 000 will also have their yearly pay-roll tax reduced by amounts ranging up to \$2 500. That is most commendable.

None of us likes pay-roll tax. I regard it as an "anti-employment" tax; but given the amount of money it produces for the CRF, nobody has been able to produce a suitable alternative, bearing in mind it is in fact the only growth tax which this State Government has available to it.

These days we hear a great deal about apartheid. As I understand it, "apartheid" means "separate development". I do not wish to become involved in a debate about the politics in South Africa, but I want to draw the attention of the House to what I regard as being something of a "them and us" situation, which exists, in some respects, between the metropolitan area and country areas. It is almost a form of separate development—a form of apartheid, if members like.

Mr Pearce: Are you looking for your own Namibia?

Mr WATT: No; I am stating only the facts as I see them.

I should like to give examples of the sorts of things which concern me and which prompt me to make that claim. The first two items to which I wish to refer relate to education.

In *The West Australian* of Saturday, 8 August, was an advertisement issued by the Education Department offering programmes for intellectually talented students. The advertisement indicated special programmes would be available at the following senior high schools: Applecross, Belmont Duncraig, Governor Stirling, Hollywood, Kelmscott, Mt. Lawley, and South Fremantle. No special programmes were available to senior high schools in the country.

In smaller print further down in the advertisement it was mentioned that parents of students who were currently enrolled in year seven at Government primary schools outside the metropolitan area should contact the appropriate regional superintendent who would arrange for an assessment to take place. It said further that, if the people concerned who were applying were found to have a suitable aptitude and measured

up to what is regarded as being intellectually talented, they would be able to live in Perth and undertake one of these special programmes.

The Principal of the Albany Senior High School asked the Education Department why a programme of this nature was not available to any senior high schools in the country. He was told the department regarded the programmes as being better conducted in large numbers, rather than small numbers. That may or may not be right; I could not argue with it. The department said also, "These programmes are better carried out in the metropolitan area". It appears to me the department is adopting the "Big is Beautiful" concept and it is not necessarily correct.

It would have been just as easy for the department to select senior high schools in one or two country centres. Indeed, it may well have been an enriching educational experience for some of the students from the metropolitan area to go to the country and spend a year or two taking the course. I am sure students would benefit greatly by doing that. It is generally acknowledged that the quality of life in the country and the sort of environment provided is a far better one for children to grow up in than the city environment.

I take exception to Government departments adopting dogmatic attitudes which result in country people being disadvantaged.

It has been suggested that, to classify people as intellectually talented, is to practise a form of elitism. I should like to quote from a paper which was delivered by Dr Warren Loudon on the subject of intellectually talented children. He said—

No society, whether it be a primitive, socialist or democratic society, can exist without its elites. It is the elites of the society that direct the way in which its policies are set for the future. The nature of the elite is determined by the needs of the society at any given point in time. When we understand that, we can begin to understand the word "elite" better. It refers to the people who are going to be able to move our society in whatever direction the society needs, wishes or is capable of going. It is the definition of the "the elite" that varies from one society to another, not the existence of an elite. If we take the point of view that a democratic society must make maximum use of its varied human resources, develop a variety of elites, and provide opportunities for everyone to have a chance to develop to the maximum whatever abilities, talents, capacities and

interests they have and then we must look quite differently at providing for gifted-talented children.

I suppose one can say that is being done, providing one lives in the city.

Another matter which was brought to my attention in the education field related to the TAE examinations which are to be conducted soon. A group of students at the Albany Senior High School are studying French. In the past, students being examined in languages, in particular in French, have been examined at the schools which they attend. An examiner has made a trip down through the south-west and the great southern and has gone from town to town orally examining all the students. This year students in the metropolitan area will be examined orally by an examiner, but students who are taking TAE French in the country have two choices. They can either come to Perth at their own expense and be examined by an examiner or, alternatively, use a tape recorder to do their examinations.

I understand part of the oral examination for French is a 10-minute conversation with the examiner. I am not quite sure how a student could have a 10-minute conversation with a tape recorder. It is a traumatic experience to speak into a tape recorder when one is not used to it. I imagine it could upset young people who are not accustomed to using a tape recorder.

It is discriminatory that some young people are able to do their oral examinations directly with an examiner, while others must do them in a different way.

Mr Pearce: You should be criticising the Government for not making the money available.

Mr WATT: It may well be there are some advantages in doing a French examination by means of a tape recorder. In fact, such a suggestion has been made to me. The point is that people in the city are being treated differently from those in the country and I find this difficult to accept.

Mr Pearce: Who's responsible for it?

Mr WATT: I do not know where the blame lies, but the Tertiary Examination Board has its allocation of funds like everybody else.

Mr Pearce: They have been cut like everybody else's.

Mr WATT: It is up to the board to provide the required services. That is one way the board has erred, in not providing an equal service to all concerned.

I move on to speak about the provision of cultural facilities in regional areas. Some time ago

the Government recognised that there was a difficulty for regional centres in providing adequate cultural facilities as opposed to recreational facilities, because that need is being met in part by other departments. In recognition of that problem, where communities are generally required to provide facilities for a population much larger than that actually residing in those centres—I am referring to centres like Geraldton, Bunbury, Albany, Kalgoorlie, Esperance, and Northam—the Government has established a policy which will provide a subsidy of \$1 for each \$2 spent by the local authority up to a maximum of \$750 000. That policy was formed recognising the problems which Albany, particularly, was having at the time.

Mr Carr: It was mainly formed under pressure by the Opposition, actually, which agitated very strongly for that.

Mr WATT: I do not accept that for one second.

Mr Carr: I didn't expect you to.

Mr WATT: Because I know differently, so the member for Geraldton can think what he likes.

Mr Carr: I will show you a file some time.

Mr WATT: It will satisfy his own ego and that is about all.

The policy to produce the types of cultural facilities needed by each community will vary according to the state of that local authority's economy. Obviously, local authorities which have been involved in heavy borrowings have committed themselves to fairly extensive loan repayments. A large proportion of their annual budget is committed to loan repayments and it does not leave a great deal for a major borrowing; for example, to take the maximum advantage of the policy to receive \$750 000, a local authority would need to be building something costing in excess of \$2 million, which is a lot of money. Some people will say that Geraldton and Esperance have already built very fine facilities, but they are also very expensive facilities. There may come a day when even those areas will have difficulty in paying for the facilities because inevitably these sorts of buildings, especially if air-conditioned, have tremendous running costs attached to them including cleaning, caretaking, and other associated costs which are very expensive indeed, and the situation is worrying. The Albany Town Council has had problems in trying to get a submission together which is acceptable to the cultural facilities fund committee. What it proposes to do is to have a staged development, the first stage of which would involve the redevelopment or refurbishing of the town hall as an intimate theatre. The

seating proposed would be in excess of 300. A proposal was put to the regional cultural facilities funds which declined to accept the application put forward. The proposal is designed to provide a suitable theatre for the majority of concerts, stage productions, ballets, school functions, and drama which are likely to be staged in Albany.

The regional administrator was one of a number of people whose advice was sought in an effort to get a satisfactory proposal together. He was asked to prepare a report on the community's cultural needs and his report recommended a staged development, the first stage of which should be the refurbishing of the town hall. Advice was also sought from the Arts Council which supported that view. Consultants, Oldham Boas Ednie-Brown & Partners, were approached and they produced a draft proposal for two stages. Hassell & Partners were also consulted and came up with the same advice; that is, that one large hall could not possibly satisfactorily cater for all the needs of the performing arts, no matter how good that facility was. It is suitable, for example, for the opera, symphony concerts, and major ballet productions, but is not suitable for drama, chamber music, and most of the Arts Council productions.

The regional population is relatively small and is unable to financially support major theatre activities more than once or twice a year; however, the smaller productions would be supported with greater frequency.

The old town hall has been classified by the National Trust and so the community is obliged to keep that building in good repair. It makes sense for the first stage of a two-stage development to be the recycling of an old but nevertheless important and historically significant building. It would be done at a cost within the capacity of the community and the fund. We have a precedent for this with His Majesty's Theatre which was refurbished. I am a strong supporter of that project. It was an excellent thing for the Government to do. Even though it cost a lot of money, I fully support it. I do not know whether the people involved in that project have anything to do with this one, but they now seem unprepared to approve a similar type of project in Albany, which is causing the town council a great deal of worry. The council has invited committee members to visit Albany and inspect the building and decide what the rest of the proposal should be.

The council has committed itself to a staged development within the same precincts, so it would form part of a greater cultural facility, and yet the fund committee seems unwilling to agree

to fund this project. When the Premier was in Albany recently the town council made its views known to him very strongly and he made one or two suggestions to the council which it took up, but, notwithstanding that, it seems that the proposal is still not being accepted. If the proposal the Albany Town Council is putting forward is not acceptable, purely and simply because it is not a new building, I hope the Government will reconsider the criteria for the proposal because it seems a senseless waste of a fine old building which could be made into a very beautiful intimate theatre concept followed in a few years' time by a further building suitable for ballets, cabarets, and similar activities.

Another area I touch on now relates to the Education Department also. I wrote to the Minister for Education a while ago, though I am not sure whether this problem can be blamed on him as much as on the Treasury—

Mr Pearce: Lack of Government money! Weren't you saying the Government put a lot of money into education?

Mr WATT: Why does not the member listen to the details before he starts making judgments?

Mr Pearce: I will make a judgment later; how about that?

Mr WATT: That will be a welcome change. The Albany Technical College uses commercial aircraft services to transport people to and from Perth for a variety of purposes. It has been demonstrated to be more economical to use the airline than to send people by car, but, unfortunately, people are obliged to make their bookings in a most cumbersome manner.

The system which must be followed is this: Firstly, the Albany Technical College must ring the travel clerk in Perth, which is a trunk call, and the Technical Education Division approves details of the travel to be undertaken; the travel clerk then rings the WA Government Travel Centre which records the booking and in turn rings TAA which handles Skywest reservations; TAA then makes a reservation and has to wait for the approval to be sent down and an exchange order from the Government Travel Centre, which is forwarded to Skywest Airlines. Skywest Airlines then issues the ticket and forwards it to Lynchs Travel, Skywest agents in Albany, from whence it must be collected by somebody from the technical college.

It is a very cumbersome procedure and it is ridiculous that so much red tape must be followed simply for the issue of an airline ticket. It is fair enough if approval has to be sought first, but somebody from the college has to drive down and

pick up the ticket anyway. It would seem a simple matter for the person to drive down there and pick up the ticket and complete the whole procedure.

The Minister for Education replied to my letter saying that although travel by car for departmental appointments between Perth and Albany is more economical than by air, it is Education Department policy that all air bookings are authorised at director level. Because it is policy does not make it right, but I will not argue about the wisdom of air bookings being approved at director level. The Minister said, "However, though it is Government policy for the Government Travel Centre to handle the air bookings of Government employees, the airline does pay commission to the department, which commission is credited to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. It also encourages the college, where possible, to make its bookings one month prior to departure so that it can take advantage of the discounts which are available." I applaud that as well. The Minister finished up by saying, "Any streamlining of procedure that can be effected will be arranged". That came after he virtually told me there would not be any changes anyway. I question whether the amounts paid for these air fares from Albany would be as much as the extra cost incurred with the racing around, the trunk calls, the wastage of time, and all this sort of thing that is necessary for bookings to be made. I ask the Minister to look at this again and have some costings done in relation to it. I suspect it is costing us money, not saving it.

The next matter I want to touch on relates to the calling of tenders for vehicles. We have in Albany a motor body building firm by the name of Evertrans which is an excellent firm and does a first-class job. It is recognised by the motor vehicle industry that Evertrans does its work at competitive prices; indeed, on many occasions where Evertrans is in competition it can produce an article more cheaply than can its competitors provided, of course, it does not involve delivery to some place well away from Albany.

We have been battling for some time for this firm to be able to tender for truck bodies and that sort of thing required for Government vehicles. The company can make just about anything of this type. It makes bodies for large road trains and semi-trailers, down to utility tops for small light trucks. So there is no question about its capability and its competence in this work.

The regional officer of the Department of Industrial Development and Commerce and I have been trying—I am afraid without success—for a breakthrough in this area.

Recently a partner in the firm showed me a copy of a tender document which had been forwarded to him by the regional officer. However, the tender was for a total unit—a one-tonne dual-cab pick-up truck with a body on the back. This company is not in a position to tender on a total unit. Unless local dealers approach it to obtain a quote for the fitting of the body and then put in the tender themselves, Evertrans is not in a position to compete. We should be looking at ways to accommodate decentralised industry such as this. Government departments should call for separate tenders for cabs and chassis and bodies. This firm hardly, if ever, fits any bodies to Government vehicles; all such work is done in Perth. Vehicles are supplied in Perth and then transported to Albany, but I would like to think that policy could be changed so that this regional industry could have a bite of the cherry.

I would like to talk about the abattoir in Albany. In recent years this abattoir has closed down about March or April and not reopened until September or even October of each year. Obviously this causes great economic disruption to the community as the abattoir employs 200 or 300 people who are suddenly put out of work.

To overcome this problem to some extent the company has shut down its export beef floor and now limits its activities to sheep. It is now encountering a problem because of the high cost of transporting the sheep. Recently the abattoir applied to the Main Roads Department and to the Transport Commission for permission to transport sheep from Midland to Albany by road train. I do not think a decision has been made yet, but the early warning signal is that the proposal is likely to be knocked back.

The abattoir treats approximately 600 000 sheep annually, and mainly in the period from September to March as I have indicated. With the increase in fuel costs over the last two years, the viability of hauling sheep over long distances is very much in question. In its application to the MRD and the Transport Commission the abattoir submitted a number of facts which I would like to relate to the House.

It needs 600 000 sheep as an annual throughput for viability. To maintain this level the abattoir must be active in all markets where sheep are sold. Some 65 per cent of its purchases are made through saleyards, and the remaining 35 per cent are made by direct purchase from farms. The three main saleyards are Midland, Katanning, and Boyup Brook.

The abattoir provided me with many figures to demonstrate that it is essential to maintain a

strong presence in Midland for the abattoirs to be viable. In 1978-79 the road costs from Midland to Albany averaged \$1.05 a head. The next year, 1979-80, this rose to \$1.20 a head on average; that is, an increase of 15c a head. In the 1980-81 year which concluded in May of this year, the cost was \$1.40 a head, and the indications are that for the coming season the cost will be \$1.50 a head.

A transport company has quoted \$1.10 a head to transport the sheep by road from Bedfordale Hill to the Albany wharf area. The quote is based on the assumption that permission can be obtained to use the normal-sized road train.

The proposal is to assemble the sheep at a property near Bedfordale and then transport them to Albany. In this way the road trains would not travel through the built-up areas, and there would be no real danger to the residents in the areas through which they would pass.

Mr Old: How much would it cost to get them to Bedfordale?

Mr WATT: I am not sure of the figure; I was hoping that no-one would ask that.

Mr McIver: Where is Bedfordale Hill?

Mr WATT: At Armadale.

Mr McIver: You want to transport them by road from there to Albany?

Mr WATT: Yes.

Mr McIver: Sheep?

Mr WATT: What is wrong with that?

Mr McIver: I think you had better do some homework!

Mr Old: Why?

Mr WATT: The point I am making is that the sheep are being transported now by semi-trailer. I do not know whether the member for Avon has been here all the time I have been speaking. Freight costs are creeping up all the time and it is making it very hard for the abattoir to compete.

Mr Stephens: What is the rail freight cost?

Mr WATT: I will come to that in a moment.

The abattoir in Albany employed a maximum of 620 people when killing cattle and sheep. Now it is killing sheep only, but it still employs 320 people. So members will realise the effect on the town when these people are out of work because the abattoir has closed down.

The member for Stirling referred to rail transport. The abattoir has looked into rail transport and Westrail quoted \$1.35 a head for special trains for 4 000 to 6 500 sheep. Obviously additional costs are involved because the sheep

would be purchased over two days of sale and this would mean that people would be involved in assembling the sheep at Midland, and again at Albany to unload them into the yards.

A matter of equal concern is the welfare of the animals. In some cases the sheep would be without water for a total of 68 hours.

Mr McIver: Oh, come on—don't put that rubbish up! Thousands of sheep are being transported by rail and they have never lost a sheep.

Mr WATT: I do not know where the honourable member has been, but obviously he has not been listening. I am saying that the train would take the purchases from two days of sale, so that the sheep sold on the first day would have to be held until the second day's selling had been concluded.

Mr McIver: What do you think happened before all the road trains came on-stream? What is the difference?

Mr WATT: The member for Avon professes to be an expert, and I know he has a great sentimental attachment to the railways.

Mr McIver: I am not saying I am an expert, but I am giving you the benefit of my experience.

Mr WATT: The fact remains that the figures were given to me by the company, and that is the situation as it has been explained to me. A relatively small road transport operation is involved, and it would improve the viability of the works in Albany. Certainly the abattoir industry is a most important one in our region, both for the farmers and for the abattoir workers. We should be supporting a proposal to keep the abattoir viable.

I would like to comment on tourism in Albany. Albany is very much a tourist town and tourism generally throughout the State has experienced a few lean years. We now have as our promotions officer and as the Manager of the Albany Tourist Bureau, Mr Bill Gill, a gentleman whom many people will know from his association with the television media and from his own public relations activities. I am pleased to say that he is doing a first-class job for us.

Recently Mr Gill, on behalf of the Tourist Bureau, launched an appeal for \$20 000, an amount which was regarded as the absolute minimum for a tourism advertising campaign based on the metropolitan media. This amount was subscribed by the community, and it was a commendable effort. That advertising campaign is now operating, and perhaps because of it—although other factors may be involved as

well—Albany is experiencing tourist activity levels in line with the record experienced in the Albany sesquicentennial year of 1977.

I would like to compliment also the Honorary Minister for Tourism for the co-operation which he has extended to the Albany Tourist Bureau. I know that he appreciates the value of Albany as a tourist centre. He has kept me informed of correspondence between himself and the Federal Minister for Tourism. The Honorary Minister for Tourism has tried to persuade his Federal counterpart to make Federal funds available for some projects in Albany, and in particular for the Cheynes Beach Whaling Co. Ltd. which was closed down three or four years ago. This was a great loss to the town. There is a plan to completely refurbish the whaling station and present it as a museum. Already a whalechaser has been beached there and will become part of the display. The whaling station will be recreated as though it were still operating.

Mr Blaikie: What is the extent of Government finance you are looking for?

Mr WATT: We are seeking about \$1 million. The Federal criteria for making such finance available is that the project must be of national significance. We feel that the projects about which we have put forward submissions are of national significance. Firstly, Albany was the first settlement in Western Australia and that makes the town itself of national significance. Secondly, the whaling industry has been of national significance. One of the first whaling operations was carried out off the south coast of Albany and there is still a pile of old bricks where the Norwegians had a whaling station very soon after the settlement of Albany.

Mr Stephens: They left about 1914, I think.

Mr WATT: The Norwegian whaling station commenced a long while before that.

Mr McIver: Do you think that would have preference over Belladong Farm in York, which was the first farm in Western Australia?

Mr WATT: Yes, I do. Do not forget that I lived in York for a while, and I have some sentimental attachment to York also.

Mr McIver: You are saying a site of old bricks is of more significance than Belladong Farm?

Mr Stephens: If you remember, Mr Fraser offered to help Albany when the Federal Government took whaling away. We are still waiting for that help, of course.

Mr WATT: I am pleased to see that the Honorary Minister is doing everything he can, and I must commend him for that.

Now I wish to comment on the help which Small Business Services Pty. Ltd. has provided for Albany. We have had visits from the counsellors of the service, together with the regional officer (Terry Booth) who is resident in Albany. They provide a worthwhile service for small business people in Albany. They do not go about their work with a lot of noise, seeking gratification for what they do. However, the small businessmen have appreciated the work done by the regional officer and Small Business Services Pty. Ltd. I hope that they will continue to make regular visits to Albany.

With those remarks, I indicate my support for the Budget.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [8.31 p.m.]: The member for Albany has enshrined the great myth of this Budget in saying that it is a Budget that has been framed in the most difficult economic circumstances. That is not an original line. In fact, the Treasurer started off that story.

Mr MacKinnon: He quoted that from the Leader of the Opposition's speech.

Mr Watt: The Leader of the Opposition acknowledged that in his opening comment. Do you want to disagree with your leader?

Mr PEARCE: I disagree with that comment.

Government members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: It is a distortion to suggest that the Leader of the Opposition said what the member for Albany said he said. The Leader of the Opposition said that he acknowledged—

Mr Blaikie: Your leader will be reading your remarks with interest.

Mr PEARCE: —the claim made by the Treasurer that this was a Budget framed in the most difficult economic circumstances.

Mr Watt: Is not that the same thing?

Mr PEARCE: Then he went on to point out that the difficult economic circumstances were a combination of the Treasurer's making and the Prime Minister's making. That is exactly the point with which I wish to deal, because if there is a fundamental myth about the strategy of this Budget, it is that a strategy even exists.

Mr Blaikie: I think you had better start talking about Gosnells.

Mr PEARCE: The first thing one notices on looking at the income side of the Budget is an increase in the actual amount of income, carried through to the expenditure column, of 11½ per cent over the previous year. Theoretically, if the Federal Treasurer is to be believed, that amount runs ahead of the current inflation rate.

Therefore, it could be said of this State Budget that it has an increase in income greater than the inflation rate for the prevailing period. That would not seem to be a Budget framed in the most difficult economic circumstances.

I do say that in the framing of this Budget the Government has not taken advantage of all the taxing options which were available to it. For example, as my leader has said, mining royalties have not been treated as they may have been. Despite the fact that the economic circumstances are difficult, the State Government has made a deliberate choice about its budgetary strategy. That is exactly the point my leader made.

Sir Charles Court: Why don't you come clean and state which royalties you would increase, and to what extent?

Mr PEARCE: "Come clean" summarises my major point exactly. One of the things which has been done—and this has been indicated by the Minister for Education—is that the expenditure side of the budgetary ledger has been overstated deliberately. There is no intention on the part of the Government to spend all the money that has been allocated in certain areas, one of which is education.

Clear, political reasons can be seen for this. I will explain the political reasons, and then I will point out where the non-expenditure will happen.

As the member for Albany has pointed out, we had a political crisis some months ago dealing with the level of education expenditure in the proposed Budget.

Mr Sibson: That was when you were the errand boy.

Mr PEARCE: That is when I had a great deal to do with the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations. I certainly played some role there. At that time, the Government was in massive political difficulties, trailing the Opposition by some 9 per cent at the polls. After two months of political turmoil, the Minister for Education met with the President of WACSSO (Mr Bingley) and the President of the State School Teachers' Union (Mr Negus); and an agreement was made that the Budget would contain an allocated expenditure of not less than \$479 million for the current financial year.

Mr Sibson: That was a very strange approach to the whole thing.

Mr PEARCE: It was two months too late; and it would not have happened if the teachers and the parents had not taken the action they did. As the member for Stirling said earlier, that amount of money would not have been allocated.

Mr Grayden: Absolute rubbish! You know that is untrue!

Sir Charles Court: Absolute nonsense!

Mr PEARCE: The Minister for Education was quoted widely as saying that the amount of money to be allocated would be \$427 million.

Mr Grayden: Absolute nonsense!

Mr PEARCE: That was said on 28 June. The Minister for Education said that the amount of money to be spent on education for the current year would be no more than it had been in the previous year, in real terms.

Mr Grayden: Absolute rubbish!

Mr Sibson: That is not right.

Mr PEARCE: I do not intend to go over the whole thing. Members on the other side can distort the reality as much as they like in here. Outside, where it counts, the people know the facts. That is why, when I go to meetings, I obtain a laugh from the 500 or 600 people attending when I use the word "Grayden". The people fall over the floor, laughing themselves silly. In fact, they are in considerable danger of doing themselves an injury. The reason for that is the comic show we had from the end of June until August, when the Budget amounts were being decided.

However, I do not dispute that the Government went one better in the Budget. It allocated an amount of \$480 million, plus a few spare dollars, instead of the sum of \$479 million that it promised it would budget for education. However, many things will happen between the writing-out of the amount for education and the expenditure of it.

I predict that when we assemble here at this time next year, we will discover that the education budget has been underexpended by an amount of at least \$10 million. That is to say, although \$480 million has been allocated, when we come back here next year we will discover that less than \$470 million has been spent.

Mr Grayden: Will you abjectly apologise if that is not the case?

Mr PEARCE: I will apologise abjectly if that is not the case.

I will make another prediction. When we are discussing this question, I will be leading the Opposition on education questions, but the Minister will not be responding. Somebody else will be sitting in the Minister's chair. There will be a little bit of movement on the ministerial benches. Everyone knows that is on the way, and the Minister for Education is going elsewhere—not necessarily outside the Chamber.

I will not step outside with him! That has been suggested before. However, he will not be the Minister for Education, because his performance has been so bad.

Mr Coyne: That is the kiss of death.

Mr PEARCE: Of course, as I have made these predictions, the Premier may be forced to retain him.

Mr Carr: Perhaps the new Premier might sack him.

Mr PEARCE: That is a possibility as well.

How do we know of a deliberate Government intention not to spend the money that has been allocated for education? In fact, the Minister for Education revealed that.

I directed two questions to the Treasurer and one to the Minister for Education on funding for pre-schools. I asked those two gentlemen whether, between them, they knew exactly what was going on. There has been a budgetary allocation to provide the salaries for 204 pre-school teachers in the current financial year—

Mr Grayden: Don't you realise we have an ongoing commitment for pre-schools?

Mr PEARCE: —compared with a Budget allocation for 211 pre-school teachers in the previous financial year—a diminution of seven teachers. In fact, those seven teachers are involved in the transfers of pre-schools to pre-primary status. There has been a slight change in the number of pre-schools as opposed to pre-primary schools, because a couple of pre-schools have transferred in the course of the last year. On that basis, the number of teachers allocated in the Budget, in real terms, is the same as in the previous year.

The Budget contains an allocation to maintain staffing for four-year-old pre-school education in the next year at the level for the last year. That is the first fact. Fact No. 2 is that three days after the Budget was introduced in this Parliament, the Minister for Education sent a letter to the committees of pre-schools saying that, because of budgetary constraints, it was no longer possible to provide the funds for teachers in pre-schools for four-year-olds.

Mr Grayden: Don't you realise we have already given a commitment in respect of pre-schools?

Mr PEARCE: What the Minister does not appear to realise is that the Budget provides the money to employ all the teachers for all the four-year-olds who are currently in the system; yet the Minister wrote letters to people telling them that the Government cannot afford teachers because there is no money in the Budget.

Mr Grayden: You simply don't understand.

Mr PEARCE: I understand very well. I can read the Budget.

Sir Charles Court: One of the whizz kids!

Mr Sibson: All you can read are the number plates on cars.

Mr PEARCE: So there could be no misunderstanding of the matter, and so the Government had a chance to reply to that simple point, I asked the Treasurer last Thursday whether he could explain away that situation. He told me that Budgets were complicated matters, and that when they put down 204 teachers, presumably—

Sir Charles Court: I am not going to drop everything just to answer your questions. You will get the answer tomorrow. I promised you that. What are you griping about?

Mr PEARCE: I am griping about the fact that the Government has no intention of spending the money in its Budget. I am not Robinson Crusoe in this, because, out there, thousands of people are hoping to have their four-year-old children go to pre-school education next year. They are concerned about the matter.

I asked the Treasurer to explain away that deficiency. It is a simple question. The Budget provides for 204 teachers; and I suppose in budgetary terms, "204 teachers" means what it means in English. One does not have to have financial expertise or a degree in economics to be able to count to 204; and one does not need to be particularly wise to know what a pre-school teacher is. It seems that one would not have to go down to the Treasury to obtain an explanation for this.

I found it difficult to believe that the Treasurer could not give me an answer immediately; so I asked the Treasurer again today whether he could explain away this deficiency. I asked the Minister for Education to explain away this discrepancy, and he did not know. "Put it on notice", he said, so he could be totally accurate. I had to put the question on notice so he could find out what was meant by the term "204 teachers"!

Mr Grayden: I did not have the Budget figures before me. I could not take your word that they were the figures.

Mr PEARCE: I raised the matter last Thursday. I raised it again today. If I put it on notice, would I get more out of an answer than, "It is in the Budget"?

Mr Grayden: I said we have an ongoing commitment to those pre-school teachers.

Sir Charles Court: You will get your answer.

Mr PEARCE: I know the answer—that there will be no explanation. There can be no rational explanation for that contradiction. I was giving the Treasurer and the Minister for Education an opportunity to explain it away.

Sir Charles Court: You smart aleck!

Mr PEARCE: Before I made this clear statement to the Parliament, I gave the Treasurer and the Minister three opportunities to explain away that discrepancy. I say, quite unequivocally, that the money exists in this State Budget to employ all the teachers necessary to maintain four-year-old pre-school education in 1982 at the level that existed in 1981.

Mr Grayden: Absolute rubbish!

Mr PEARCE: For the Minister to write to the pre-school committees to say that lack of money in the Budget is forcing the curtailment of four-year-old pre-school education is, to say the least, a deliberate and misleading untruth.

Mr Grayden: That is a completely false statement.

Mr PEARCE: It is completely accurate.

Mr Grayden: You will find out tomorrow when we give you the detailed information. Then I will expect you to humbly apologise.

Mr PEARCE: If I get detailed information from the Minister it will be the first time.

Mr Tonkin: How is the Minister going to prove that 204 is not 204?

Mr PEARCE: If someone had come into the House at question time today without knowing what had gone on in regard to this pre-school matter, the very fact that the Minister was forced to arrange four "Dorothy Dix" questions from his back-bench colleagues on this issue would have made that person realise how difficult the Government's stance is on this issue. That the Minister did not have the decency to disguise the fact that they were "Dorothy Dixes" by changing the wording so the questions about four-year-olds would sound marginally different from questions about five-year-olds showed him up for what he is. He lacks the skill necessary; it is an art form.

I want to face up to the question of four-year-old pre-school education because clearly it will be a big issue at the next election; it is clearly a point on which people must know where the respective parties stand. The stance between the two parties is quite clear. The Government attitude is that at the moment some people are getting pre-school education for their four-year-old children and others are not, and this is unfair. The Opposition agrees with that. The idea of having four-year-old

education in some places and not in others is unfair.

Mr Sodeman: What is your solution?

Mr PEARCE: We understand that the reasons for the situation are purely historical and can be related to the Government's grab of pre-school education in 1977.

Mr Sibson: There was no grab.

Mr PEARCE: What about the Pre-School Board? The member should not tell me that the abolition of that board was voluntary. The Minister was talking about the inducements which were to be offered to pre-schools to transfer to pre-primaries. One inducement was that four-year-olds would be looked after, but two years later the axe has come down. The bribe has lasted for two years and the Government feels there is no longer any need for it. This is why in some areas where pre-schools which had existed before 1977 were operating, the community committees have resisted the pressures to transfer to the Education Department, which would make it cheaper for them, but would mean they would have less control.

Mr Grayden: They are transferring at the rate of two a week.

Mr PEARCE: That is an interesting interjection, and I shall stop for a moment to deal with it. The Minister says that pre-schools are transferring at the rate of two a week. That means in the last year at least 100 have transferred from pre-school to pre-primary status. Let us imagine that every pre-school has only one teacher, although members would know that many have two. If there were just one teacher involved this would mean that 100 teachers have transferred from pre-school status to pre-primary status in the last year. That means that when the Government budgeted for 211 pre-school teachers in the last year, 100 of them would have transferred to pre-primary status. This means that in the budgeting to maintain the level of four-year-old education the Minister would have had to budget for only 111 pre-school teachers. Instead, he has budgeted for 204. If the Minister is accurate in budgeting for that number—

Mr Sodeman: He said "presently transferring".

Mr PEARCE: —let him tell me over what period these transfers have taken place?

Mr Grayden: I am not suggesting a period; I am suggesting the rate of about two a week.

Mr Sodeman: Why not make it two years and do away with the whole lot?

Mr PEARCE: It would have to be only two months to demonstrate the inconsistency between

the information given off the cuff and given in the Budget. Whatever the situation, the position for the Minister gets worse. With 204 teachers budgeted for in pre-school centres we can see that for other teachers to transfer to pre-primaries the situation ought to be better for the four-year-olds left in the system with that degree of budgetary allocation, yet the Budget shows that that is not so.

The Minister has shown a very culpable ignorance of his own portfolio and his own sections of the Budget with those sorts of statements. Members will see why I was prepared to deviate and deal with his interjection. It was certainly damaging to the Minister's case.

The point is that the divergence between the Government's policy and our own on education for four-year-olds is that the Government says that having access to four-year-old pre-school education in some areas only is unfair, and we agree with that. The Government's solution is to cut out pre-school education for all four-year-olds except those who buy it completely for themselves. The Government says there will be no, or very little, Government participation in four-year-old education.

Our stance is the reverse of this. We say there is a need in this modern community for pre-school education for all four-year-olds. Therefore, our policy is to extend pre-school education to all four-year-olds. This cannot be done in one year and it will not be done in the first year of this next Labor Government. But it is no massive expenditure we are looking at.

Even if we take the Minister's figure of \$16 million a year, that is a miserable 3 per cent of this year's education budget. With an expansion of 3 per cent it will be possible to provide the recurrent expenditure for pre-school education for all four-year-olds. If we did that on the basis of two sessions a week rather than four sessions a week, as some pre-schools operate, that figure would be lower; the percentage expansion would be 1.5 per cent. There is no great difficulty in extending the education to all four-year-olds. In the first full parliamentary term of a Labor Government, pre-school education would be extended to most four-year-olds in the State.

Mr Sodeman: What would be the capital cost involved? You are talking about recurrent costs.

Mr PEARCE: We are discussing the recurrent section of the Budget.

Mr Sodeman: I am talking about your policy.

Mr PEARCE: The Minister has estimated at \$21 million the capital cost of buildings for all these children. That is a hefty amount. There

would be no problem in finding \$16 million in one year. The difficulty would be in the provision of capital funds, but that would depend on how a Government approached the provision of buildings for four-year-olds. There is a whole range of options which make the Minister's figures suspect. If the member for Pilbara wants to debate our policy in greater depth in terms of capital funding and the priority given to four-year-olds under a Labor Government, I would be happy to accommodate him in greater depth during debate on the budgetary estimates for capital expenditure—the General Loan Fund Estimates.

Mr Sodeman: It would have to be a hypothetical debate.

Mr PEARCE: Of course; we are looking ahead 1½ years. That is the difference between the Opposition and the Government on the issue of pre-school education. The Government is making a big mistake if it does not believe there is a large demand for pre-school education for four-year-olds in the community. When the Minister made those foolish statements last week about children wetting their pants—

Mr Grayden: Do you realise that a lot of them have two-plus-year-old children?

Mr PEARCE: How many—with "scrupulous accuracy"?

Mr Grayden: I am not in a position to say exactly how many.

Mr PEARCE: If there are pre-school children who are two-plus-years-old, how foolish it is for the Minister to speak about four-year-olds wetting their pants. I have discussed his allegations with pre-school teachers and the general belief is that the Minister is wrong. The Minister will appreciate that when this matter was discussed with the Community Kindergarten Teachers Association no-one thought he was right.

Mr Grayden: You were talking about four-year-olds; I was talking about three years plus.

Mr PEARCE: Everyone knows what is meant by five-year-olds and four-year-olds. We do not need "Dorothy Dix" questions to muddy the waters in that area. The Minister is trying to call four-year-olds three-year-olds.

The pre-school issue has been important because it has indicated the extent to which the Government is prepared to track away from the budgetary commitments it has already given. It had to provide a certain amount of money in the education budget to meet the commitment it had given to parents and teachers. The money was put

there, but the figures are only as good as the paper on which they are written—not even as good. Already the Minister is looking to underspend the amount by up to \$1 million if he can manage it.

Mr Grayden: We have invited a response from all pre-schools in order to determine a course of action.

Mr PEARCE: Why is it necessary if the Minister already has budgeted the money for all the teachers they already have?

Mr Grayden: We have a commitment to these teachers irrespective of whether they stay in the pre-school system or join the Education Department.

Mr PEARCE: Of course the Minister has a commitment to the teachers, although he has gone rather soft on that commitment. Last year it was a question of "anyone who is displaced will be offered a job". Now it is a matter of teachers being replaced "if possible". The teachers have noted that. If the Minister is to pay the teachers he may as well let children attend the classes.

I have made my prediction: When we come here next year we will find that less than \$470 million has been spent in the education area. I will take great joy in pointing out the areas in which the Government is shaving money. I will do that at the beginning of the next session. We will also be able to discuss how less than 10 per cent of the graduates will be offered first-up jobs when all these horrifying figures are available and the level of Government duplicity is clear. We will be able to discuss these matters in February or March 1982.

I would like to comment on the Government's education policy as it relates to the Claremont Technical College. On the Tuesday of the week before last the Premier announced that the college was to be closed. He said it had outlived its usefulness. He said it cost \$800 000, which was too much.

Mr Grayden: Do you not have a motion on the notice paper dealing with this subject?

Mr PEARCE: Before the points of order come I indicate that in respect of part of the Government's overall budgetary strategy to save money by closing the Claremont Technical College, I placed a motion on the notice paper calling on the Government not to close the college. However, there is no guarantee that the motion will be dealt with, because the Government has closed off private members' day. I understand from the Leader of the Opposition that a statement made about guaranteeing private members' business was in the melting pot.

Sir Charles Court: Why?

Mr PEARCE: I do not wish to quote the Leader of the Opposition specifically on this.

Sir Charles Court: There has been no change.

The SPEAKER: Order! The fact is that there is on the notice paper a notice of motion dealing with this subject and I cannot anticipate the will of the House with respect to the business with which it wants to deal. Therefore, I must rule that the member should not deal with the subject.

Mr PEARCE: With regard to my own attitude of the handling of that motion, without canvassing the merits of it, it is not my intention to proceed with the motion until such time as the present negotiations between the Minister and the people from the college are completed. It does seem that the Government is backtracking on the closure of the Claremont Technical College, and if it is the case that the negotiations are to continue for some time before a decision is made, I will not seek to move my motion until the outcome is clear. I understand Cabinet will be meeting and discussing this issue on Monday. If the college is to remain open I will withdraw my motion.

One of the provisions being canvassed with regard to the support of education in this State—in regard to the institutions that are threatened with closure on financial grounds—is that \$600 000 should be found from outside sources to keep the college open. This idea is totally abhorrent to the Opposition.

The proposition that Government education institutions threatened with closure are asked to find their own funds is totally abhorrent to us, and a general principle of which we can never approve. I am not referring in particular to the Claremont Technical College, but to the general principle.

The Government may go to any education institution and say, "We will close you down, but if you can raise half your costs for next year from private sources or big business, we will keep you open". That seems to be a very poor precedent. How long will it take for us to find the Minister for Education contacting a kindergarten or primary school to say, "We want you to find 10 per cent of the running costs for your school next year because we are worried about our budgetary situation"? The Government must realise that under the Constitution it has a responsibility for education institutions and that it must live up to that responsibility by providing for education necessary in this State. If there is such a thing as unnecessary education and it is at present provided, funding for it could be cut out.

However, if the education is necessary the Government should pay for it.

I will not canvass at great length other areas in which cuts have been made. I will deal with them in particular in Committee when, if reference is made to such things as the textbooks subsidy scheme, swimming classes, and driver education classes. It seems to be a strange attitude adopted by the Minister that when he looks for areas in which spending cuts can be made he goes directly to peripheral courses attached to schools, courses which have the most practical value to the community. Of course, I refer to driver education and swimming classes. Not one member of this House is not concerned about the present high road toll and the number of young people who drown each year.

Mr Cowan: It is a contradiction for the RTA to promote a driver education programme when the Education Department is eliminating it.

Mr PEARCE: That is right. The RTA has moved some of its officers into schools to conduct driver education programmes because it knows the best way to decrease the road toll is to have properly educated drivers.

Mr Sibson: That is the role of the RTA.

Mr PEARCE: That is correct, and it is a role adopted by schools. The driver education programme in this State has been conducted for 10 or 11 years.

Mr Sibson: Because of the demands of the teachers—the costs—the situation could not be tolerated.

Mr PEARCE: The member for Bunbury has decided to make a statement on behalf of the Minister for Education. Perhaps the member hopes to be moved to the magic chair when the Minister vacates it. The member said the cost could not be tolerated, and that is the cost of paying teachers to teach 16 and 17-year-old students to drive properly. What sort of cost-benefit analysis does the member do in regard to how many people will die on the roads because the driver education programme will not be continued? How much is a life worth in Bunbury?

Mr Sibson: If the rate required by the teachers was more reasonable the course could have been done.

Mr PEARCE: The rates are established by the Minister and the tribunal. I will not get into a silly argument about whether it is correct that teachers want 50c more an hour when people will go on to the roads less prepared to drive than they would have been.

Mr Grayden: Do you realise alternative courses are being formulated?

Mr PEARCE: That is the normal response of the Minister. The justification for cutting out the course is that money will be saved, but he has said that a new course will be commenced. Therefore no money would be saved. His statement is not fact because other courses are not being formulated.

The Minister's statements in regard to this matter and others are not reliable, and in that regard I refer to his statement about the closure of the Claremont Technical College.

Mr Hassell: You don't understand the position. Driver training education will be dealt with on a completely different basis which will result in significant improvements not necessarily related to the Education Department. It does not mean there will not be a proper system. We have already indicated there will be a proper system.

Mr PEARCE: The member for Bunbury seems to know more about the Minister's portfolio in regard to driver education courses than the Minister. Would the Minister for Police and Traffic like to indicate to the House where the driver education courses mostly will be conducted?

Mr Carr: Perhaps he will make a statement to the House tomorrow.

Mr PEARCE: It would not be a bad starting point for the Minister to say that the courses will be conducted inside schools.

Mr Hassell: It is hardly worth talking to you at all; you never listen.

Mr PEARCE: I am trying to make my speech, but the Minister continues to interject.

Mr Hassell: At least you should be accurate.

Mr PEARCE: I would like the Minister to give a run-down on the cost differential between RTA people conducting the course and teachers conducting it.

Mr Hassell: It is not RTA people.

Mr PEARCE: Who are they?

Mr Hassell: The details have to be worked out.

Mr PEARCE: The Minister for Police and Traffic is more sophisticated in his presentation than the Minister for Education, but the import of their remarks is to the effect that new courses are being formulated and that the Government will come back with the details for us to consider. We have had off-the-cuff statements from both Ministers that new courses are being formulated.

The Minister for Education created a furore when he made his statement about the closure of

the Claremont Technical College. During a weekend he indicated that money would be saved, and during the following week he said the saving would be spent on special education. I am sure that statement caused shudders down the Premier's spine because it means that a saving is to be effected in one area, but the money saved is earmarked for another.

Mr Grayden: That statement wasn't from me. The statement was made by the *Daily News*, and it was an error.

Mr PEARCE: I ask the Minister: Is it correct that he never said that the Claremont Technical College would be closed and that the money saved would be spent on special education at that college?

Mr Grayden: The money is to be spent on special education, and we have an area set aside for it. A great deal of accommodation at the college will be vacated.

Mr PEARCE: There was never any intention to use the Claremont Technical College site for special education. The Minister made his statement on a Sunday that the college would be closed, and by the Tuesday he said that the college would be kept open for special education. The buildings are totally unacceptable for any type of special education.

Mr Grayden: Perhaps you could make inquiries at the Education Department.

Mr PEARCE: I probably get more information from the Education Department than does the Minister.

Mr Grayden: I am aware of that, and it is pretty unreliable.

Mr PEARCE: We will see about that.

Mr Grayden: I think your informant tries to curry favour with you and gives misleading information.

Mr PEARCE: The Minister should use the plural of the word "informant" to indicate the many informants I have.

Mr Grayden: Before we sent a letter out the other day *The Sunday Times* rang me to question me about it. I hadn't even sent it out.

Mr PEARCE: I have a fast delivery service.

Mr Sibson: It is wrong that you get that information in that way.

Mr PEARCE: It is my job to know what goes on within the area of education.

Mr Carr: Someone has to look after it.

Mr PEARCE: That is right.

Mr Grayden: You have received stolen information.

Mr PEARCE: If the Minister can prove that I am in receipt of stolen information I would be pleased to admit it.

Mr Sibson: You have just admitted it.

Mr Grayden: You have just admitted that you have got stolen information.

Mr PEARCE: I would be pleased for the Minister for Police and Traffic to take up the matter. As a lawyer he understands there is no contradiction in my statements. I will not continue with these boring matters.

Mr Old: Very good.

Mr PEARCE: The Opposition's attitude to the Budget is that more money than was expected a month ago has been provided for education, and that is to the credit of the parents and teachers of this State who campaigned at great cost and, I might say, at great risk to themselves, to have education funding increased. They received an assurance from the Government that a reasonable level of education expenditure would be achieved. However, the increases were piecemeal and the cuts were to important areas. Courses such as the driver education programme and swimming classes will be curtailed. The cut to pre-school education funding is totally unjustified in terms of community needs. Most importantly this situation reveals the crucial fact about the Government's Budget. The Government has no intention of spending the money allocated. The allocation has been made, but the action to spend will not take place.

Mr Sibson: The cuts were made after an atmosphere of sound discussion. Progress was made. They had nothing to do with what went on at schools such as Newton-Moore. If it hadn't been for the local PCA that settled down the dispute no progress would have been made. Even the teachers wanted the dispute to settle down. It was only because of the movement of the TLC that the dispute went on. Discussions had taken place in a very sound atmosphere.

Mr PEARCE: He has six minutes left. I hope the member allows me one or two seconds to speak.

Mr Sibson: The Minister was involved in these sound discussions, and you know that as well as I do.

Mr PEARCE: These interjections are unacceptable. The member for Bunbury has advanced his crackpot theory in this place before. The teachers and parents of this State campaigned for and achieved a good level of

commitment by the Government to education funding in the Budget.

Mr Sibson interjected.

Mr PEARCE: Turn it up!

Mr Sibson interjected.

Mr PEARCE: The allocation has been made, but the money will not be spent. The intention of the Government is to cut education spending in areas it can. I warn the teachers and parents of this State that they will need to be vigilant in the months ahead, particularly at the beginning of the 1982 school year. I assure those people that the Opposition will monitor the level of school staffing at the beginning of the year and the employment of graduates from teaching colleges and other places. We will endeavour to ensure the Government spends the money it has allocated. To do that we require the vigilance of all concerned with the education system in this State. If we are to have the education allocation completely spent we will require the vigilant eyes of every parent, teacher, and student in this State.

MR SIBSON (Bunbury) [9.12 p.m.]: I support the Budget. Before referring to the various matters it contains, I commend the Premier and the Government generally for the way in which this Budget was put together. Despite all the problems involved, including funding restrictions and cutbacks inflicted by the Federal Government, the Budget is one of the most responsible of all time. I have a distinct feeling that my statement is a reflection of the public's view. We were told that there would have to be some funding cuts.

Mr Pearce: You speak better sitting down.

Mr SIBSON: We knew the cuts would be drastic, but the end result is that in the important areas of health and education the Budget is wise and the allocation is substantial.

The member for Gosnells has been bleating tonight about the various problems that will flow from the education allocation. He did not refer to the good things that will happen. One of the great benefits of the debates of recent months is that there has been an awakening and an awareness on the part of the public of what Budgets are all about.

In recent years people have tended to pressure the Government for more money irrespective of the result. It is my firm belief that we do not necessarily get better education or health care simply by spending more money. We will have better education by ensuring that every dollar spent is spent wisely. Money does not grow on trees and there must be some sensible and logical

thinking put into the spending of money, as well as its long-term effects.

The innovations and changes which have been made in this Bill have been good. The people in the community who are looking forward to having their income tax decreased rather than increased must realise that the spending of money in this field makes this more difficult.

For some time, the people of Bunbury have been looking forward to the building of a new courthouse. The late Sir David Brand indicated that there was a need for this action, but there was a change of Government and the courthouse project did not proceed. During the time I have been a member of this House—it has been some nine years—a great deal of pressure has been applied on the Government for a new courthouse. Some five years ago the Government had the opportunity to buy the land adjacent which belonged to the Uniting Church. That purchase held back the establishment of the new courthouse, but it gave us a valuable piece of land which will enable a better courthouse to be built.

Some 18 months to two years ago the adjacent *South Western Times* building which is opposite the Bunbury City Council Chambers became available due to the establishment of its new building in the light industrial area. It was realised that it would be opportune for the Government to buy that property so that it would have enough land to develop not only a courthouse, but also a Government centre which would, in the long term, be of great benefit to the city.

A large amount of money has been spent on the new court building in Perth. I accept the fact that the budget for that building had to be increased because of all sorts of industrial and other problems. However, the time has come when we must look at the possibility of a courthouse in Bunbury. Let us hope that we will see the development of a magnificent building in Bunbury which will complement the new Bunbury City Council Chambers which were established some three years ago. I will be pursuing this matter over the next 12 months. The plans for the courthouse have been drawn and most of the preliminary work has been done.

Another matter of concern to me involves a small industry, but nonetheless a very important one in Bunbury and the south-west; that is, the fishing industry. For many years now, fishing boats have been operating out of Bunbury. The fishermen have used the old fishermen's jetty which does not seem to have positive ownership, although the Bunbury Port Authority is

responsible for it. The jetty is in bad shape and at the moment, needs approximately \$3 000 spent on it for immediate maintenance, from a safety point of view. In order to keep up operations there it would need approximately \$30 000 spent on it, on top of the \$3 000. It is a very unsatisfactory facility because the jetty is not compatible with the type of fishing boats used in the south-west. It is very difficult to get the fish from the boat to the jetty and off the jetty to the market. The fishermen who work out of Bunbury work under very difficult conditions.

The Public Works Department has stated that there is a need for a better facility. I was involved in the selection of a site for a jetty facility in the small boat harbour area next to Craven Marine. The Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife has recognised that this need is a top priority. I should like to say to the Minister for Works that there is a real need for this facility and it should be considered in the next 12 months.

If a survey of the fishing facilities throughout Western Australia were carried out, I am sure it would be found that the Bunbury jetty is the most poorly at this stage. We must ensure that facilities are available for the fishing industry because it is a growing one, despite its many problems. It is a vital industry to this State. In the last year a processing licence was issued to a firm in Bunbury. This has added a new dimension to the fishing industry in the State. The processing licence allows fish to be processed in the south-west. Lobster is becoming a main part of the industry because there is a growing demand for seafoods in the hotel and food businesses. It is important we work towards a land-backed wharf, with secured gates and locks and the provision of fuel on site.

The way in which the fishing boats are fuelled in Bunbury is quite alarming. The deputy mayor is the local fueller and he has to take his tanker to the jetty to provide the fishermen with fuel. All the boats must be there at the one time, and this causes a problem if a fisherman is running short of fuel; he cannot always obtain it when he wishes. With proper security, fuel could be made available with servicing on site. With the introduction of freezer storage as well, a greater potential for the industry would be ensured.

Another area of concern not only to the people in my electorate, but also to the people throughout the south-west, is the proposed establishment of an additional power station in Bunbury. Members will recall that a new power station was built in Bunbury in 1957 and that over the years that station has produced an enormous amount of energy to feed into the grid.

The station has also provided employment for 300 people in Bunbury and that has been a great support to the city.

The proposed new power station will add a further dimension to the energy system in Western Australia. We are all aware that as a result of the cutback in loan funds by the Federal Government, this power station has not gone ahead. It would behove any member of Parliament to keep reminding our Federal colleagues of the need for development of energy in Western Australia.

We have seen in other States that energy sources have fallen below requirements and there has not been proper maintenance of power stations. However, the Government of Western Australia has forged ahead. Money has been spent in Collie on the development of an energy source and the development of the coalfields to ensure we have sufficient coal to provide our power needs.

We are disappointed that Federal funds are not available through normal channels to establish a power station which would be of great benefit to the people of Bunbury and the south-west. Such a power station would support a power generation expansion to Kalgoorlie and the Pilbara. The Minister for Resources Development and the Premier are attempting to find ways to provide finance to establish this very much needed source of energy.

Members would have heard of the proposal to establish two smelters in the south-west for the alumina industry. This will be a great asset to the State and to Bunbury. I have been told that for every dollar spent and every person involved in the mining of alumina, five men and \$5 are involved in the refining of alumina, but in the smelting of alumina, the ratio is 25 for both. Members can imagine what a great impact a smelter would be on the south-west of the State. It would generate far greater use of the Bunbury inner harbour, which is a magnificent facility, built at great cost to the Government. We are looking forward to the time when we can increase the throughput of that port.

The work being carried out by the Bunbury Port Authority perhaps makes it one of the more efficient and better port operations in this State. Naturally, any other industry which can be encouraged in this area will be of great value, not only to the mining, refining, and smelting industry, but also to the downstream industry which is associated with the smelting of alumina.

Another proposal which is being debated at the moment is the establishment of a pulp mill.

Members will recall that some years ago, the wood chipping industry was established in this State amid critical and sometimes unreasonable debate, with people forecasting all sorts of dreadful things which would happen to the timber industry. I have visited the wood chipping areas in Manjimup and Pemberton on a number of occasions, in company with some of my colleagues. One of the great advantages of wood chipping is that it has allowed the red gum to be put to some use and to become a revenue earner, thus helping to consolidate the industry. In addition, there is a great deal less waste from karri and jarrah.

It is interesting to note that jarrah chips are nowhere near as marketable as red gum and karri chips. Many people would have us believe that whole areas of jarrah are being taken for wood chips, but that is not the case. The only jarrah which is used for wood chipping is that which is not suitable for logging and milling purposes. Anyone who knows anything about the milling industry would know that no miller would put a jarrah log or any other log through the chipper if it were suitable for the sawmill, because the return from the sawmill is much greater. The wood chipping industry has proved to be compatible with the whole timber industry.

The concept of clear felling and reforestation with karri has brought a new dimension to the timber industry. I must admit an area which has been clear felled looks quite barren and bare. However, a one-year-old forest gives one a good idea of the advantages of clear felling, followed by regeneration of the species. It is possible to see five-year, 10-year, 15-year, 25-year, 45-year, and even 100-year-old forests in these areas, enabling one to gain an insight into the whole regeneration process of karri.

As the member for Warren would know better than any of us, it is quite a sight to see. Of course, this regeneration has not been as a total result of wood chipping, but, certainly, wood chipping has complemented and made more viable the entire timber industry.

The next stage of this industry is the establishment of a pulp mill. The very vexed question is where to establish this operation, and whether it will have adverse effects on the area in which it is established. I understand the company is considering a site in the Boyanup area. Incidentally, it is considering land from which I used to cut firewood, so I know the area rather well; I know it to be sandy, poor soil, and not the first-class rural land which some people would have us believe.

The idea of the company is to secure enough land to establish a substantial buffer area around the mill, even greater than the area around the particle board factory at Dardanup. The Minister for Local Government, who is the member for that area, no doubt appreciates the way that factory was established, with its buffer area. In fact, many people ask where the factory is established; they can drive along the highway and not even see it.

Naturally, local landholders and people living nearby are concerned—and for very good reason—that this industry may be established in their area. They would like to know whether the industry will have some effect on their every-day lives; whether it will affect their industry; and whether there is the possibility of water pollution.

I believe we must be progressive in our thinking in regard to new industries because an area generally gets only one chance; if it knocks back the opportunity to establish a new industry, it very often does not come again. I mention as only one example the proposal by Borden Chemical Co. (Australia) Pty. Ltd. to establish a formaldehyde plant at Bunbury; the proposal was rejected, and since that time nobody has shown any interest in trying to proceed with the project.

I believe we should welcome every new industry with open arms, but we should not allow industries to be established in a willy-nilly fashion anywhere in an area without first considering possible adverse effects and taking into account all the environmental safeguards. We must accept the challenge of negotiating with companies prepared to establish industries. I see the establishment of a pulp mill as the natural and real progression of the wood chipping industry which will add a further dimension to the timber industry, as did the particle board factory, and many others. We should approach this matter in an objective way, welcoming the industry, but seeking also to protect the people who may be affected by its establishment, so that they may go about their farming, fruitgrowing, or dairying activities, and in a way which will allow the new industry to complement the whole region.

Members would be aware that the City of Bunbury, geographically, is a fairly small area in terms of the Bunbury City Council. My electorate is also geographically small. This is of concern to me because the lack of available land means the attraction of industry to the area is limited. The residential area is growing at a fast rate, and commercial and light industry is developing rapidly and solidly. The time has come for us to look for industries we can incorporate into the City of Bunbury which will have a real impact on

employment and revenue turnover and, generally, on firing up the economy of the region.

One of the industries with which I believe we can make great progress is the education industry; the City of Bunbury should consider the promotion of this industry. We are fortunate in that the Bunbury Technical College is situated on the ring road and an additional area of 200 acres has been set aside for educational purposes.

I was disappointed recently to learn that the Bunbury City Council believed it would be better to build houses on that land. It is my firm conviction—and I know the Minister for Local Government shares this view—that we should retain this land for education.

I see it as the opportunity to establish in Bunbury a real and worth-while industry which could provide education not only for the people of Bunbury, but also for people throughout the south-west and, indeed, the entire State. There would be no reason that we could not attract people from all over the State to be participants in a well integrated and fully established education industry.

Sufficient land has been set aside, and whether we use it today, in 10 years, or in 50 years' time, it is essential we retain that land for that purpose. As the years go by, the demand for such a facility will surely grow and, if we concentrate on broadening the aspects of education, we could speed up such a programme. I am not saying we could build a university or a teachers' training college tomorrow; that would be pies in the sky. However, I believe we could broaden the concept of education through the technical college and through the TAFE scheme, and other schemes and provide facilities which would attract local people and people from throughout the south-west and, indeed, the entire State.

I turn now to the fairly complex problem of sewerage, which has been a lasting and very costly problem for the City of Bunbury. A great deal of the original part of the city was built on what was, virtually, reclaimed swamp land; the area has been land filled. Naturally, it is advisable that new housing established in the area should be deep seweraged. The cost of providing deep sewerage to that area is very great due not only to the high cost of dewatering, but also to the slow and cumbersome process of installing sewerage lines through established residential areas, involving as it does the removal and replacement of fences and, sometimes, of buildings, the removal of trees, and the disruption of gardens. I understand the loss to Bunbury sewerage scheme this financial year is about \$400 000. This matter

is of concern to me because, naturally, if a loss is sustained it must be made up in the form of higher rates. It is the responsibility of the Country Sewerage Department to try to recover as much of that loss as possible which, in turn, means higher rates.

It is important we accept the fact that today there is an increasingly greater number of people living in the metropolitan area and moving to the city. The percentage of people living in the city as opposed to the country is increasing every day. Therefore, we must make it attractive for people to live in country towns and country areas generally. We must come to grips with this problem and endeavour to ensure sewerage is provided at a reasonable cost.

I do not agree we should pursue a policy of establishing total sewerage. I have mentioned that a great deal of Bunbury has been established on a low-lying area. However, other houses have been established on high, sandy areas. I can never understand why we should demand that deep sewerage be installed in such areas.

The funds are simply not always available. Sometimes we tend to hold back developers waiting for deep sewerage, which adds greatly to the cost of development and frequently normal, modern-day, sophisticated septic systems would suffice. We shall have to look closely at this matter in the future to ensure we develop at the desired rate and at a cost which can be borne by ratepayers.

I do not accept the conviction which has been held for a long time that deep sewerage can be installed only by the PWD. I do not intend to denigrate the people in that department, but the methods used by the PWD are quite archaic and we should look to the establishment of private contracts to do the work.

I am quite certain that, even in the areas where dewatering is required, contract people with the expertise, knowledge, and equipment could perform the work more cheaply than the PWD and with greater efficiency. This is particularly true in high land where the installation of deep sewerage is easier and the contract system could be used very efficiently. In the long term, more people would be able to be connected to deep sewerage and the expenditure would be much less.

Mr Jamieson: The MWB has had some very unfortunate experiences with contracts.

Mr SIBSON: The situation mentioned by the member for Welshpool could apply to anything. If we were to rebuild Parliament House, there would be no guarantee we would not have an unfortunate experience with a contract. The

comment made by the member for Welshpool indicates a rather backward way of looking at the matter, because a great deal of work is carried out in this State under the contract system. We have to look only at developments such as the Muja power station to see that projects carried out under contract are usually most successful. Only a few failures are recorded.

A number of companies could perform work of this nature; for example, Cross and Sons of Bunbury do a great deal of pipeline laying and they have the expertise and knowledge to install deep sewerage. Devaugh and Company has established a very good name in the south-west for the work it has done in the installation of deep sewerage, road maintenance work, and heavy construction.

I do not accept the point made by the member for Welshpool, because I am certain a number of contractors could do this work. As a Minister, the member for Welshpool may have had a few unfortunate experiences with contracts; but, generally speaking, if we look at the work done in this State, we can see that most of it is carried out by private contractors and it is done very successfully. I am certain that, over a period of a few years, we could develop some very effective and worth-while contracting arrangements with people in the private sector who are capable of installing deep sewerage.

We should look at the matter closely rather than accept that the private contract system is not a possibility. We should look at new, innovative ideas in regard to these matters.

I shall touch on another hardy annual as far as my electorate is concerned and that is the removal of the Stirling Street-Picton rail link, and the associated redevelopment of the total railway facility in Bunbury. For many years requests have been made by the city council and people generally for the removal of the Stirling Street rail link. There are some very good reasons for doing this. It would allow Blair Street to be established fully; it would allow for excess land along the railway line to be used for other purposes; it would allow for the redevelopment of East Bunbury; and it would allow for further extension and development of the city centre. However, this can be done only in conjunction with the total redevelopment of the rail facility in Bunbury.

It is my belief the passenger and goods service should go through the Northshore. As members would be aware, there is a rail link through the Northshore, servicing the whole of the rail facility into the top end of the city. Therefore, the centre

of Bunbury could be serviced through the Northshore. This would allow for the removal of the marshalling yards which would presumably then be established at North Picton which seems to be the site favoured for that purpose.

Of course, we must appreciate there is a very real cost factor involved in such developments. It is clear also that the matter of planning must be considered. I am very pleased the regional plan has been put forward and it offers a couple of alternatives for the servicing tunnel to co-ordinate with the industrial, commercial, and residential developments.

I tend to favour the plan which allows for a service tunnel from the harbour area out into the light and heavy industrial areas further inland which would enable the development of residential areas along the coast. This would keep industry out of the Glen Iris area and would allow for a service tunnel.

In the long term, that plan would be complemented by the redevelopment of the railway which would open up quite a large area of land. That land would front onto the estuary area and would open up quite a vista with Queens Gardens in the background. An area of this nature would allow the city to grow and develop.

However, before plans of this nature can be put into effect, it is the responsibility of the Bunbury City Council and local people to decide what they want to do with the area. A development of this nature would cost an enormous amount of money. It is the business of Westrail to move freight by rail and the present rail service in and out of the city is quite adequate for that purpose. However, Westrail accepts that, in the long term, for the benefit of the development of Bunbury, it would be advantageous to remove the railway line which runs through the City of Bunbury.

Therefore, I stress that it is essential the Bunbury City Council and local people decide what they want to do with the area. In other words, a proper land use plan must be drawn up. Such a plan would indicate the land which would be used for parking and that which would be used for the extension of the Blair Street road system. In addition, it would need to indicate the establishment of facilities such as a concert hall which would enhance the growth of the city.

Another matter I would like to mention has received a great deal of publicity recently and I refer to the export of live sheep and cattle, but particularly sheep. Members would recall that there has been a great deal of criticism recently about the smell of live sheep which are exported from Fremantle. I can understand local people

being concerned about the smell and the movement of trucks in and out of the Fremantle area.

As a result of the road system and port development in Bunbury, it has the potential for live sheep export. We in Bunbury would be happy to relieve the people in Fremantle of the smell of the sheep, and in fact, in terms of the movement of sheep, the smell is not particularly offensive.

Mr Old: They smell like dollars.

Mr SIBSON: It was said at the port authority conference in Bunbury yesterday that live sheep smelt like dollars!

We would be pleased to establish a live sheep export industry and to relieve the people of Fremantle of the smell about which they complain. We would be happy to establish a comprehensive exporting industry through the Port of Bunbury. In turn, this would assist the waterside workers who are always looking for extra work and it would increase the revenue of the port.

Over the years the waterside workers in Bunbury have had a wonderful record of work and they have given very little, if any, trouble. We would be pleased to relieve the port and the people of Fremantle of the problems they have been experiencing in regard to the export of live sheep.

As a result of the way in which the harbour has been established in Bunbury, I do not think the smell of the sheep would be a significant problem, because the port is located out on the point and problems would arise only when the wind blew from a particular direction.

The sheep are loaded onto the trucks in areas beyond the city boundary and they are brought to

the port very quickly. The trucks are washed down and the level of cleanliness tends to minimise the odour. I am quite certain we could assist Fremantle by taking the live sheep export industry away from the port there and, at the same time, we could establish a very worth-while industry in Bunbury which would assist the port and the waterside workers who very genuinely need more work.

Not only would the establishment of such an industry in Bunbury assist the city, but also it would improve the movement of the sheep. A number of the sheep in the south-west, great southern, and other areas could be transported into Bunbury as easily as they are carted to Fremantle. Indeed, the access to Bunbury would be a great deal easier than to Fremantle. I look forward to the investigation of this matter and hopefully to the establishment of a live sheep export industry in Bunbury.

I wish to reiterate my support for the Budget which is very responsible and acceptable. I have had the distinct feeling that most people have accepted it as a Budget with which they can live, particularly bearing in mind the very stringent conditions under which it was framed.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Carr.

BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Agriculture and Related Resources Protection Amendment Bill.
2. Small Claims Tribunals Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 9.58 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

2344. *This question was postponed.*

MINING: COAL

Collie: Companies

2347. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Mines:

What does the Government consider will be the benefits that will be derived from the introduction of another mining company on the Collie coalfields?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Introduction of a third operator on the Collie coalfields will enable an accelerated exploration programme in a promising section of the coal basin, and may result in the development of a further mine which would help meet the projected rapidly increasing demand for coal in the State.

HEALTH

Photocopying Machines

2353. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has his department carried out any tests or investigations on the likely harmful effects on humans of photocopying machines?
- (2) If so, will he—
 - (a) advise the outcome;
 - (b) table relevant papers?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) I am advised that the use of photocopying machines is not considered to pose any health hazard to operators. There is a theoretical possibility of ozone, but tests have revealed minute traces only, well below acceptable levels. There were also reports that nitropyrene and 4-aminobiphenyl (potential cancer causing agent) had been found in the carbon black toner, but five samples of different toners were examined and no nitropyrene or 4-aminobiphenyl was found in any of the samples.

- (b) Yes. There are no other relevant papers. The tests for ozone were informal.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 553).

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Hire-Purchase Act: Relief

2354. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

Of the 288 cases referred to on page 20 of the 1980-81 report of the Bureau of Consumer Affairs in which finance companies objected to relief being granted pursuant to the Hire Purchase Act, in how many cases did the commissioner grant relief?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

99.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Hire-Purchase Act: Deferrals

2355. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

How many deferrals have been granted for—

- (a) sickness; and
- (b) unemployment,

pursuant to the Hire Purchase Act in each of the seven years prior to the year referred to in the 1980-81 report?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (a) and (b) The following table discloses the occasions on which the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs granted relief to hirers against the consequences of a breach of a hire-purchase agreement—

1973-1974—nil
1974-1975—nil
1975-1976—nil
1976-1977—nil
1977-1978—79
1978-1979—380
1979-1980—420

The statistics shown represent an amalgamation of both sickness and unemployment approvals, a breakdown of which is not readily accessible.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Trading Stamp Act

2356. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

When is it intended to amend the State's trading stamp legislation?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Because the member seems to have missed the whole process of amendment of the Trading Stamp Act I will give details in chronological order.

The Trading Stamp Amendment Bill was introduced into this House on 5 August 1981, completed its passage on 11 August 1981, and was introduced in the Legislative Council on the same date.

On 8 September 1981 the Bill completed passage through the Council and it received Royal Assent on 16 September 1981. It was proclaimed on 23 October 1981 to take effect from 1 November 1981. It is Act No. 46 of 1981.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Power Stations: East Perth and Fremantle

2357. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

(1) Has he received representations that the East Perth and Fremantle power stations might be used for rubbish disposal and the burning of such rubbish result in the generation of power?

(2) Is such a use feasible?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

(1) The proposal to use garbage as a fuel for power generation has been suggested from time to time to the State Energy Commission, and studies have been carried out.

(2) Studies of incineration of garbage to produce electricity undertaken by the State Energy Commission and many other authorities within Australia and overseas, indicate that the principal problem, particularly in a city such as Perth with low population density, is the cost of transport of garbage to the central incineration point. There are also many technical problems associated with the mixed composition of garbage and I am advised that, taken overall, incineration to produce power is not economic relative to landfill disposal of garbage as now used.

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLES

Production Date: Identification

2358. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

(1) Has there been a new practice develop in which the motor industry indicates that vehicles should carry plates indicating the year and month in which the body shell and bare train sub-assembly are issued and day the vehicle is driven from the production line?

(2) If so, what are the details?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) For many years the term "year model" has been used in relation to motor vehicles and the year concerned has been that stamped on the compliance plate which is attached when the vehicle complies in all respects with the Australian Design Rules. Ministers of Consumer Affairs became aware that the system could generate problems in that the date shown on the compliance plate, especially with imported vehicles, could vary substantially from the actual "date of manufacture". Following discussion with the vehicle manufacturing, assembly and importing industry, it was agreed that a standard "built date" should be introduced. Industry has voluntarily agreed to comply from January 1982 and Ministers have indicated that failure to comply will result in consideration of requirement from mandatory compliance.

MISUSE OF DRUGS BILL

Submission: Public

2359. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Has he received a submission from the public committee on the Misuse of Drugs Bill relating to relations between the police, young people and youth social workers?
- (2) What other initiatives are being taken by the Government to effect the improvement of relationships between the police, young people and youth social workers which he stated in the media on 22 September was the Government's aim?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) A number of social workers do lecture police recruits on different facets of welfare work.
Contact between social workers employed in the drug abuse area and appropriate police officers will be encouraged. A close watch on the effects of the interaction between police and those with whom they deal under the new law will be maintained.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Light Globes: Voltage

2360. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has the State Energy Commission made a submission to the Industries Assistance Commission indicating that the State Energy Commission encourages users to use a 255/260 volt lamp?
- (2) If so, by what means are users encouraged to follow this course of action?
- (3) What has happened to the stated intention to print such advice on customer's accounts?
- (4) Does the State Energy Commission admit that Western Australian consumers are being penalised because they purchase 245 volt lamps for use in a system in which the voltage is much higher?
- (5) Is it a fact that voltage can be as high as 275 in off-peak periods?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The commission has prepared an advisory leaflet which is distributed through commission offices and organisations in the trade and housing industry.
- (3) The message has been scheduled for the first available two-month billing cycle, and is expected to be presented about January-February, 1982.
- (4) Both 255/260 and 240/250 volt lamps are available in the Western Australian market. The Industries Assistance Commission's draft report states *inter alia* . . . "the choice of paying more for a lamp which will, on an hourly basis, be more economical in the long run will be made by individual consumers".
- (5) No.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: ACT

Rates: Moieties

2361. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Does the Government intend to amend the Local Government Act so as to provide that councils may enable ratepayers to pay their rates in four moieties?
- (2) If so, when will such action take place?
- (3) How many submissions have been received from councils requesting such an amendment?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) and (2) Councils are already able to permit rates to be paid in several moieties, if they wish to do so. No consideration is therefore being given to an amendment to the Local Government Act.
- (3) I am not aware of any such submission.

HEALTH: BABY FOODS

Cans: Lead Solder

2362. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is there risk to babies from the lead solder in cans of food?
- (2) If so, what is the Government doing to rectify this situation?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Legislation proposed under the Western Australian food and drug regulations will prescribe a specific standard for lead in infant foods in tin plate containers—

A mean level of 0.3 mg/kg calculated as the metal in 10 samples. No sample shall exceed 0.8 mg/kg.

This is a very low level indeed and will discourage the use of lead solder for this purpose.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: VIDEO RECORDERS

Industry: Criticism

2363. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

What does the Government intend to do to rectify the position with respect to video recorders, which industry has been criticised in the 1980-81 report of the Bureau of Consumer Affairs?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

The Bureau of Consumer Affairs continually monitors advertisements placed by video firms to ensure compliance with the Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act.

Twelve summonses relating to breaches of both the Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act and the Door to Door (Sales) Act were recently issued against video firms.

POLICE: COLLEGE

Establishment: WAIT

2364. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

What is the present status of suggestions that a new national police college be established at the Western Australian Institute of Technology?

Mr HASSELL replied:

Negotiations are taking place through the Australian Police Ministers' Council in an endeavour to relocate the Australian Police College at the WA Institute of Technology.

The matter will be further discussed at the meeting of the Australian Police Ministers' Council in Hobart on 20 November 1981.

EDUCATION: NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Registration: Criteria

2365. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is he reviewing the criteria for the registration of non-Government schools?
- (2) If so, is this review being undertaken independently of other State Governments or is it being made in conjunction with them?
- (3) When will he be able to outline the updated criteria?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) to (3) All Australian Governments are concerned with the registration of non-Government schools question at the present time and the Western Australian Education Department is liaising with other Education Departments and the Schools Commission on the matter.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: HOUSE COATING

Continental Homes Pty. Ltd.

2366. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Has the Consumer Affairs Bureau received complaints relating to continental coating work done by Continental Homes of 20 Lacey Street, East Perth?
- (2) If so, how many?
- (3) Is it a fact that salesmen have been operating in the Albany region, refusing to leave homes until the elderly inhabitants have agreed to pay money and sign documents?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) One.

- (3) By way of general comment this cannot be confirmed. In the complaint lodged at the bureau it was alleged that two salesmen were present at an Albany house from 2.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. on a Saturday before the contract was signed. The contract price was \$1 320. The elderly pensioner concerned maintained she did not fully understand the contract. After the Deputy Commissioner for Consumer Affairs intervened, the company agreed to write off the outstanding amount of \$440.00 as a gesture of goodwill.

ANIMALS: DOGS

Act: Amendment

2367. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Has she received a further report from the Dog Act review committee?
- (2) If not, when does she expect to receive such a report?
- (3) Is there widespread concern amongst local government authorities at the incidence of roaming dogs attacking livestock?
- (4) Has she received complaints from the Mundaring Shire Council relating to attacks by dogs on people and livestock?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) and (2) As the Dog Act review committee was appointed only recently, I would not expect to receive its report for some time.
- (3) Although representations have been made to me on this subject, I am not aware of widespread concern.
- (4) No.

TRAFFIC: DRIVERS

Offences

2368. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

For the years ended 30 June 1979, 1980, and 1981 respectively, how much was paid in fines for traffic offences—

- (a) on infringement notices;
- (b) through court actions?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (a) For the years ended 30 June—

1979—\$3 142 627

1980—\$3 493 246

1981—\$3 629 436;

- (b) separate records are not kept of money received for traffic offences following court actions.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS: WA ARTS COUNCIL

Funds

2369. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

- (1) Is it a fact that many Perth arts groups are angry at the big percentage of Government arts funding appropriated for its own use by the WA Arts Council staff?
- (2) Is it a fact that most of these groups are fearful of making any public or private protest on the appropriation of their funding, because of the treatment meted out by the WA Arts Council to *Artlook* magazine, these organisations having seen the annual grant to *Artlook* being suddenly cut off in December 1980 following criticism of the council and its staff?
- (3) Will he move to abolish the bureaucratic structure of the WA Arts Council leaving the council itself to act with minimal staff purely as an enabling body in the arts, passing on the funds provided by the Government to independent arts groups throughout the State?
- (4) Is it a fact that the network of country arts councils in Western Australia receive virtually no funding from the WA Arts Council and that all matters of country touring and workshops are decided by a centralised arts bureaucracy in Perth?
- (5) Will he move to ensure that all matters of country touring and workshops be decided by country people themselves by providing for a set and significant proportion of available funds for use, at their own discretion, by the country arts councils, the central WA Arts Council deciding only on the break-up of funds between the country groups?
- (6) How many people have written to him stating their appreciation and need of the magazine *Artlook*?

- (7) Is the magazine *Artlook* filed in—
 - (a) overseas and local universities' libraries;
 - (b) high school libraries throughout the State?
- (8) Have those concerned in (7) and (8) requested that funds be made available to allow the magazine to continue in production?
- (9) Has there ever been a comparable degree of such widely dispersed public interest in the funding of any other arts organisation in this State?
- (10) Why has no consideration been given to the wishes of these people?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Not as far as is known. The WA Arts Council spends 18 per cent of its budget on administration and overheads. In taking a responsible attitude towards the allocation of public funds the council checks and analyses hundreds of applications from organisations and individuals. It also monitors the work and output of organisations and individuals in the performing, visual, and plastic arts across the State. Apart from this, staff spend a considerable amount of their time helping organisations and individuals with information and advice. The council also organises tours by individuals and groups to hundreds of schools and communities across the State. These are among the activities of the staff of the Arts Council which contribute a great deal towards the development, appreciation and participation in the arts in Western Australia. What the Western Australian Arts Council does with a staff of 15 is done in South Australia by two separate organisations having a total staff of about 26. The proportion of the annual grant from the Government to the Western Australian Arts Council that is shown for administration and overheads in fact contributes to the general benefit of the arts community in Western Australia.
- (2) Considering the fact that there are greater calls on Arts Council funds than the council can possibly distribute, given the size of its annual grant from the Government, the council enjoys a good working relationship with almost every group. It exercises no censorship over what the groups say and it does not control their method of operation or their choice of artistic expression.
- (3) The structure of the Western Australian Arts Council has proven itself to be efficient and effective in carrying out the wide-ranging responsibilities outlined in the WA Arts Council Act, some of which are referred to in the answer to question (1).
- (4) The Western Australian Arts Council has encouraged the formation of the network of country arts councils in the State. As voluntary organisations they receive some funds from the Western Australian Arts Council to set up their operations and from time to time receive grants for special projects. This year five country arts councils applied for general purpose grants for 1982, totalling \$18 203. They all received grants to a total of \$14 796. The council's extensive touring programme normally operates in close co-operation with local arts councils or local organisations. The arts access programme which provides tutors in many areas of the arts operates only on the basis of requests from people in country areas. Both touring and arts access can only operate at the level they do because of considerable subsidy by the Western Australian Arts Council.
- (5) The council has an advisory committee on which regional representatives of country arts councils sit. In every State in Australia the organisation of country tours has been placed in the hands of a central organisation. The negotiating and organising of tours to many country areas is a complex matter that would not work without a co-ordinating body.
- (6) In 1981 about 65 people have written concerning the magazine *Artlook*. Most of these letters stated their appreciation of the magazine.
- (7) (a) and (b) The Western Australian Government does not keep central records on the names of all periodicals filed in libraries in the State or overseas.

- (8) A number of letters have been received requesting that public funds be made available to the magazine *Artlook*.
- (9) Many arts organisations in Western Australia have enjoyed a wide degree of public interest over many years. That interest has taken many forms, from going out on cold winter nights to attend performances, to membership on boards and committees, organisation of fund raising activities, membership of auxiliaries and purchase of subscriber series tickets. Considering the fact that *Artlook* magazine has on a number of occasions encouraged its readers to write letters in support of the magazine, it is hard to compare this reaction with the more active and positive kind of support enjoyed over many years by many other organisations in this State.

- (10) While the Western Australian Arts Council from time to time has given grants to publications for the purpose of reporting on the arts, the council sees as its main function to support the active participation in the arts rather than simply the reporting of the arts. The wishes of those people who have written to support *Artlook's* grant application have been given careful consideration. However in a time of financial restraint the Council has felt that the \$75 000 requested by *Artlook* in 1982 could be used more effectively supporting other arts activities. It is the duty of the Western Australian Arts Council to taken an overall view of the cultural scene in the State and allocate its scarce financial resources among competing qualified applicants in order to achieve what it considers in its judgement to be best for the arts.

FISHERIES: TRAWLING

Research

2370. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) When was the last Government financed fisheries trawl research project conducted in Western Australia?
- (2) What are the details in terms of areas researched and cost of project?

- (3) Is it intended to conduct another trawl research project in the near future and if so when and where?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The last Government financed fisheries (excluding prawns) trawl research project was conducted in Western Australia was in 1904 by the chartered vessel *Rip*.
- (2) (a) Details are hereby tabled;
(b) cost not available.
- (3) There are no current plans to assist in trawl research projects.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 554).

FISHERIES: TRAWLING

Metropolitan Beaches

2371. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) Is it a fact that there is now a limit imposed on trawl fishing off metropolitan beaches?
- (2) What is this limit in terms of distance from the beach?
- (3) Why has this limit been imposed and when was it imposed?
- (4) How many trawlers were operating—
(a) prior to the limit being imposed;
(b) after the limit was imposed;
(c) now?
- (5) What fish are the trawlers endeavouring to catch?
- (6) Are they being successful in catching these fish by using the newly imposed limits?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The waters of Warnbro Sound, Cockburn Sound, south of the North Mole, and north of the North Mole to Trigg Island with a width seawards of two nautical miles from high water mark.
- (3) The limit was imposed on 7 March 1980, to accommodate expressions of concern by the angling public that local stocks of angling species were being depleted by trawling.
- (4) (a) Not known precisely, but about two or three;
(b) same as (a);
(c) same as (a).

- (5) Small bottom living species, including sand whiting.
- (6) Information available indicates that the operators are not being successful to any significant degree.

First-year apprentices—\$20.00 per week
 Second-year apprentices—\$17.50 per week
 Third-year apprentices—\$15.00 per week.

- (2) There is no current proposal to increase this allowance.

MINING: DIAMONDS

Companies Involved: Owners and Directors

2372. Mr McPHARLIN, to the Premier:

- (1) Can he advise whether the Ashton Joint Venture company is wholly owned by Australian interests?
- (2) Who are the directors of this company?
- (3) Is Afro West Mining and Exploration Pty. Ltd. an Australian-owned company?
- (4) Who are the directors of this company?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The Ashton Joint Venture is made up of three companies, CRA, Ashton Mining Limited and Northern Mining Corporation. The exact details sought are not readily available to me but I am sure that details of Australian ownership can be obtained from the Corporate Affairs Office, Perth, or by reference to the companies.
- (2) to (4) Details can be obtained from the Corporate Affairs Office, Perth, or by reference to the companies.

APPRENTICES: COUNTRY

Technical Courses

2373. Mr McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) What is the rate payable for apprentices in the country who have to do a technical course as part of their training and no technical college is available locally?
- (2) Has there been any proposal to increase the allowance?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Country apprentices who attend block release or intensive training courses as part of their training are paid a living-away-from-home allowance at the following rate—

SALES TAX: FEDERAL BUDGET

Motor Vehicles: Windscreens

2374. Mr McPHARLIN, to the Treasurer:

Prior to the Federal Budget being introduced, no sales tax applied for motor car windscreens. Can he advise where they have now been included and what rate has been applied?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

This matter is not within my Ministerial responsibility and I suggest the member directs his inquiry to the Commonwealth Taxation Office, Perth. In any case I am not clear as to the current state of the legislation in Federal Parliament and its possible impact on this particular matter.

WATER RESOURCES

West Pilbara and Agaton

2375. Mr McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Is the West Pilbara water supply, Harding Dam proposal being financed on a dollar for dollar basis between the State and Commonwealth?
- (2) If not, are the mining companies contributing to the project?
- (3) Why is it that this proposal has been given a higher priority than the north eastern agricultural water supply Agaton project?
- (4) Does the Government propose to recommend to the Federal Government that the Agaton scheme has the highest priority for future allocation of funding?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) The Commonwealth Government is making contributions to the West Pilbara scheme. The amount of the contribution is determined each year and may vary but the Commonwealth contribution in any one year will not exceed the amount contributed in that year by the State Government.
- (2) Mining companies including the Woodside joint venturers have contributed to the project. Further contributions in the future are anticipated.
- (3) It is not a matter of higher priorities rather financial and commitment considerations. The Government under its agreements with the industries involved, has commitments to the development of the West Pilbara water supply scheme. The Government is fully reimbursed by companies for the capital expenditure on industrial water needs and the domestic requirements of itinerant workers. The only contribution the Government makes is the comparatively very small proportion for the needs of permanent residents.
- (4) A seminar will shortly be held to discuss a report on the Agaton project. Decisions as to the future of this project and the State Government's submissions to the Commonwealth concerning it, may be influenced by this seminar.

WATER RESOURCES

Agaton

2376. Mr McPHARLIN, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government made a firm decision on arranging a seminar to discuss the Agaton project with all interested people?
- (2) If so, what has motivated this move?
- (3) If the seminar is to be held, will consideration be given to an early date because of harvesting commitments?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The purpose of the seminar is to ensure a proper understanding of the scheme and its "on-farm" alternative and of a recent cost benefit study conducted by the Agaton cost-benefit study group.

- (3) The seminar will be held as early as practicable. It is hoped that this will be mid-November. Action is currently in hand to set the date and venue, and an announcement will be made when such arrangements are finalised.

STOCK: SHEEPSKINS

Treatment: Tests

2377. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) When were the sheep from which the samples of "Clout" affected wool, which the WA Department of Agriculture forwarded to the CSIRO for testing—
 - (a) shorn;
 - (b) treated with "Clout"?
- (2) When were the tests conducted by the CSIRO?
- (3) In these tests conducted by the CSIRO—
 - (a) what detergents were used;
 - (b) at what temperatures were these tests conducted;
 - (c) what period of time did each test take?
- (4) In what days did the tests conducted by CSIRO vary from the normal procedures for scouring which are used by scouring companies in Western Australia?
- (5) (a) Does he have sufficient detail of the tests conducted by the CSIRO to be duplicated in Western Australia;
 - (b) if "Yes", will he table this detail;
 - (c) if "No", will he obtain this information?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) (a) Initial samples were taken for laboratory scouring tests on 9 June 1981. Experimental sheep were shorn for wool processing trials on 4 August 1981;
 - (b) the sheep were treated with "Clout" on 7 November 1980.
- (2) The exact date of the CSIRO tests is not known. The CSIRO report on the laboratory scouring tests was dated 16 July 1981 and that for the wool processing trials, 7 October 1981.
- (3) (a) to (c) This information is not available at this time.

- (4) This information is not available at this time.
- (5) (a) No;
(b) not relevant;
(c) details of test procedures could be obtained if required.

TRANSPORT: BUSES

MTT: Cockburn

2378. Mr A. D. TAYLOR, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is a new bus timetable about to be introduced by the Metropolitan Transport Trust with respect to services within the Town of Cockburn?
- (2) Are any services presently operating to be cut, and if "Yes", which services?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) The MTT is currently examining the feasibility of providing a limited service to the Newton Street south area.
- (2) No other changes to services in the Cockburn area are under consideration at this time.

WATER RESOURCES

Lake Yangebup

2379. Mr A. D. TAYLOR, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Are the waters of Lake Yangebup monitored?
- (2) If "Yes", what is the frequency and when were they last monitored?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Lake level monthly, water quality twice yearly; both taken October 1981.

WATER RESOURCES

Lake Yangebup

2380. Mr A. D. TAYLOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) Are the waters of Lake Yangebup monitored?
- (2) If "Yes", what is the frequency and when were they last monitored?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) I understand that monitoring in respect of both level and quality is or

has been undertaken by the Metropolitan Water Board and the Public Health Department.

RAILWAYS: ROAD SERVICES

Private Enterprise: Negotiations

2381. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Have there been discussions with any private company on the proposed joint venture between Westrail and private enterprise to operate the Westrail road service?
- (2) If so, with which company or companies?
- (3) What new consignment limits has Westrail applied to its trucking permits?
- (4) Does he have a timetable for the introduction of the joint operation?
- (5) If so, will he give the details?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) Westrail has been examining a number of possible alternatives for the future handling of "smalls" and parcels freight, which includes its road service operations.
One of these alternatives is a joint venture with a private transport company and in the course of its studies Westrail has had assistance from several freight forwarders.
- (3) In certain areas of the State Westrail operates road vehicles requiring a licence under the Transport Act.
- (4) and (5) For a joint venture to succeed Westrail would need to obtain a satisfactory proposal. Before this can be contemplated it would be necessary to call public tenders to give private companies the opportunity to submit offers for a joint venture. These matters are not yet determined.

RAILWAYS: ROAD SERVICES

Freezer: Trucks

2382. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Transport:

Upon cessation of operations of the Westrail road freezer service, what did Westrail do with the freezer trucks previously used by it?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

Westrail's road freezer service comprised six trailers incorporating three tonne freezer capacity and one semi-trailer incorporating a seven tonne demountable freezer compartment.

The refrigerator units were removed from the six trailers and the trailers then fully used in general goods haulage.

The freezer compartment was removed from the semi-trailer and sold.

WATER RESOURCES: TREATMENT PLANT

Beenyup: Tenders

2383. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Did the Metropolitan Water Board appoint Kemp Scott and Furphy as consultants for the letting of contracts with respect to the Beenyup treatment plant?
- (2) With respect to those parts of the contracts relating to instrumentation and control panels—

- (a) were the firms Contran (WA) and Fisher and Porter tenderers in this regard;

- (b) did the main contractor—Hawker Siddeley—and the contractor recommend Contran as the successful tenderer as meeting all specifications and being the lowest tender;

- (c) was the difference in price between Contran and Fisher and Porter in excess of \$50 000, the lower price being from Contran?

- (3) Notwithstanding this advice, obtained at great expense from its consultants appointed for that purpose, did the Metropolitan Water Board nevertheless award the contract to the higher tenderer—Fisher and Porter—in contradiction to that advice?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) No. The consultants were engaged to prepare documentation and make recommendations to the board in connection with the contract which will be let by the State Tender Board.
- (2) and (3) The evaluation of the tenders is still in process. It is not customary to publish any information prior to the final decision of awarding the contract.

ABATTOIR: ROBB JETTY

Freight Terminal

2384. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Transport:

Referring to my question 2335 of 1981 relevant to the Robb Jetty Abattoir freight terminal, what are the alternatives under consideration of which railway staff at Robb Jetty have been informed?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (i) Continue operations as at present;
- (ii) total divestment of "smalls" and parcels traffic;
- (iii) rationalisation by only operating a limited number of regional freight centres; and
- (iv) participation in a joint venture.

I am advised that all staff employed at Robb Jetty were invited to attend a meeting called recently to discuss the matter.

ABATTOIR: ROBB JETTY

Future

2385. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Referring to his answer to my question 2332 of 1981 relating to the Robb Jetty Abattoir, has the Government made, or does it intend to make, or is it giving consideration to making any decision which will have an effect on any or all of—

- (a) the nature and functions of the Robb Jetty Abattoir;
- (b) the number of staff and wages employees permanently employed at Robb Jetty;

(c) the number of weeks in each year that the Robb Jetty Abattoir operates?

- (2) If "Yes" to any of the above, what is the decision if made; or if not yet made, what area or areas does it, or will it, affect?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) and (2) It is the responsibility of the Western Australian Meat Commission to manage the Robb Jetty Abattoir. The Western Australian Meat Commission has not made recommendations concerning the items listed in the question.

EDUCATION: TECHNICAL

College: Carine Glades

2386. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the Government intend to withdraw the English literature course at Carine Glades Technical College?
(2) If so, why?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Yes.
(2) To enable facilities at the technical college to be used for vocationally-related courses.

WATER RESOURCES: WANNEROO

Quality

2387. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has the Metropolitan Water Board received complaints over the past 12 months concerning the taste and odour of water in the Wanneroo area?
(2) How many complaints have been received and when were they received?
(3) If "Yes" to (1), what action is being taken?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Yes, but none since 27 September 1981.
(2) Approximately 54.

- (3) The taste and odours are intermittent and conventional monitoring techniques have not been able to identify the cause. The Department of Chemistry at WAIT has been commissioned to investigate taste and odour problems.

WATER RESOURCES: RATES

Notices: Final

2388. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Will he give a breakdown of the costs involved per letter to send final notices on water accounts including the cost of postage?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

The physical cost of stationery (including envelopes), the computer cost to produce the restriction notices and final accounts and the cost of postage is estimated at approximately 35c per assessment.

The clerical cost of matching the envelopes, notices and final accounts, plus the administrative costs associated with responding to the inevitable telephonic, written and personal inquiries arising from such action, is conservatively estimated to add a further 35c per assessment.

The total estimated cost is therefore at least 70c per assessment—it could be significantly higher.

As of 31 July 1981 there were approximately 144 000 assessments for which no current year payments had been made (excluding pensioners). Past experience with the final notice procedure indicates that this number would increase to above 180 000. With 180 000 final notices on the first moiety and, say, 100 000 notices on the second moiety, this indicates some 280 000 notices on the recovery of rates alone.

In addition, the board issues more than 230 000 excess water accounts each year. Allowing that only 80 000 of these would involve final notices, the total number of notices is in the order of 360 000, costing an aggregate of \$252 000.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Housing: Rental

2389. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Is his department aware of the practice adopted by Australian Homelocators of requiring clients responding to advertisements for rental accommodation to pay a fee of \$40 before divulging the address of the accommodation?
- (2) Is it also aware of instances in which clients, having paid this fee, are then advised that the particular property advertised is no longer available?
- (3) Can he confirm advice given to me by an officer of Australian Homelocators that complaints by clients to the Consumer Affairs Bureau are referred by the bureau back to the firm?
- (4) What action, if any, is the bureau taking in respect of such operations by this firm?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) With all consumer transaction complaints, complainants initially are referred back to a firm's/company's management suggesting they try to negotiate settlement. Should such action fail to result in satisfactory resolution, the Bureau of Consumer Affairs will then undertake formal investigation.
- (4) Should sufficient evidence exist to support a breach of the Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act, the firm will be prosecuted.

COMMUNITY WELFARE: EMERGENCY RELIEF

Emergency Assistance

2390. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Referring to his answer to part (2) of question 2196 of 1981 in which he denied that studies carried out by his

department showed that emergency relief in Western Australia is administered in an *ad hoc* fashion and is in need of a framework for rational structuring, can he guarantee that a study titled "Emergency Assistance" in which it is stated that "A feature of emergency relief in W.A. is that the types of assistance offered are in numerous narrow categories and follow no rational structuring and that creating an emergency relief framework for future rationalisation of emergency relief services is an issue which will probably require consideration in the near future," has not been conducted by his department?

- (2) If not, will he make further checks with regard to the existence of any such study to ensure that, in fact, he has not misled the Parliament in his previous answer?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) and (2) In my reply to parts (1) and (2) of question 2196 I referred to a recent joint publication issued by the Department for Community Welfare and the State Energy Commission which states in part that expenditure on emergency relief is up 110 per cent on a comparable period in the previous year. I understood that this was the study that the member for Dianella was referring to in that question.

I have since been advised that a departmental working paper was prepared by a departmental officer earlier this year for a conference of welfare administrators and this also makes the same observation regarding growth in expenditures quoted. This paper makes comment on the total system of emergency relief in Western Australia including services provided by the Commonwealth and the private sector. Such comments are matters of opinion and speculation by the officer concerned. They are not endorsed as the final views of my department.

I stand by the terms of my original answer, emergency relief provided by my department is not administered on an *ad hoc* basis.

Eligibility is determined under the Welfare and Assistance Act and those in need who are eligible receive assistance.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Cullacabardee Village

2391. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Was Cullacabardee village established on the basis of a self-management concept, which involved a stipulation that there be prior consultation with established families and particularly with senior members of the family groups about the suitability of possible new occupants?
- (2) Is this stipulation still being adhered to?
- (3) In particular, did the State Housing Commission consult with his department and with senior members of established family groups about the Coomer family being accommodated at the village, and who was finally responsible for approving such accommodation for this family?
- (4) What provision is made for village occupants to have easy access to centres such as Princess Margaret Hospital for regular medical treatment and for children who need to attend special schools to have guaranteed transport to such schools?
- (5) Is his department aware of the problems that may arise should vacant houses at the village be used for families with housing problems who have no established links with established groups of families in a small isolated community?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Yes. As explained by me last Thursday, self-management and consultation has been an objective in relation to the village.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Yes. The accommodation was approved following consultation between the State Housing Commission and family leaders.

- (4) Transport for appointments and admissions at medical centres is provided by the Aboriginal Medical Service. Patients are encouraged by medical staff to make their own arrangements with AMS. If that is not possible Community Health Services assists with arrangements. Normal ambulance services are available if needed in an emergency.

All people are free to visit any other medical centre via an MTT bus provided by DCW which travels twice each week day to Midland from Cullacabardee. The bus service is provided by the State Government at a current annual estimated cost of \$30 000.

Primary school children attend the East Beechboro Primary School and the Lockridge Senior High School admits secondary students. All students travel via the MTT charter bus provided for the community. Children are delivered to the school grounds at 8.45 a.m. and collected at 3.30 p.m. via the same bus. Any children requiring special educational treatment are the concern of the Education Department. That department is responsible for providing the necessary back-up if it is required.

- (5) Yes.

HOUSING: ABORIGINES

Aboriginal Housing Board: Rental

2392. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

Referring to his answer to question 2324 of 1981 in which he advised that there is an emergency housing scheme to cater for extreme cases of hardship, would he provide details of this emergency housing scheme and of the agencies through which it is made available?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

The emergency housing scheme referred to in question 2324 of 1981 refers to the scheme whereby the State Housing Commission takes into consideration conditions of hardship being experienced by the applicant and whereby the application is advanced ahead of the normal housing list and housed as quickly as possible.

2393. *This question was postponed.*

EDUCATION

School Book Assistance Scheme

2394. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

What will be the total funds available in the 1981-82 Budget for school book assistance to needy families?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

An amount of \$497 000 is available and this will enable the level of assistance to be extended.

HOUSING: RENTAL

Emergent and Wait-turn

2395. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

(1) How many applicants are currently listed by the State Housing Commission for—

- (a) wait turn initial assistance for four-bedroomed accommodation;
- (b) wait turn transfer to four-bedroomed accommodation;
- (c) emergency initial assistance for four-bedroomed accommodation;
- (d) emergency transfer to four-bedroomed accommodation?

(2) What is the average waiting time involved for those listed for emergency transfer to four-bedroomed accommodation?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

(1) The number of applicants listed by the State Housing Commission for Commonwealth/State rental housing in Metropolitan Perth area are—

- (a) answered in question 2137, 1981.
- (b) 25 as at 30 Sept 81.
- (c) Answered in question 2137, 1981.
- (d) 22 as at 30 Sept 81.

(2) It is not possible to be precise in establishing the average waiting time for an applicant listed for an emergent transfer into four-bedroomed housing. The factors of availability of vacant houses, the degree of hardship for the applicant and degree of selectivity being exercised by the applicant will all have some influence to a varying extent. The commission has a responsibility to house applicants in need of urgent housing in the first instance and those applicants already in some form of housing but in need of urgent re-housing as quickly as possible.

ABORIGINES: FUNDING

Disparity

2396. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

Further to his answer to question 21 of 1981, what has resulted to date from the joint investigations into the apparent disparity in funding between Aboriginal groups in Western Australia and those in the Northern Territory, referred to in that answer?

Mr HASSELL replied:

The matter is still under investigation. The expected meeting between the Federal Minister (Senator Baume) and the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, (Mr Paul Everingham) and myself has been deferred due to the postponement of the Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council meeting, in Perth from September 1981 to February 1982.

HOUSING: RENTAL

Emergent: Hansen, Mrs L. and Mrs R.

2397. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

(1) Further to his answer to question 2143 of 1981 relating to the Hansen family, can he confirm that a meeting involving the Chairman of the State Housing Commission and the Aboriginal Housing Board was held last week regarding accommodation for the Hansen families?

- (2) Can he also confirm that the outcome of the meeting was to refer the matter to a further meeting between the Chairman of the Aboriginal Housing Board and Mrs Hansen senior?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), what was the outcome of the second meeting?
- (4) When is it expected that this family's housing problem will be solved in view of the fact that the present one-room accommodation available to this family of three adults and three young children at Emmaus women's refuge is contrary to all health regulations?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) and (4) The outcome of this meeting will be the subject of a report for consideration of the next meeting of the Aboriginal Housing Board and the rehousing of the family will depend upon the advice of the board.

PRISONS

Fremantle

2398. Mr PARKER, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Will he confirm that the following is the practice adopted with regard to letters from prisoners in Fremantle Gaol to members of the Legislative Assembly:
 - (a) letters go to the internal prison censorship office;
 - (b) they are then forwarded to the office of the Director of the Department of Corrections;
 - (c) the letters (or a copy of them) are then sent to his office; and
 - (d) they are then forwarded on to the member of Parliament concerned?
- (2) If the above is not the practice, will he detail the practice followed?
- (3) Who makes, or has made, the decisions on these matters?
- (4) When was the practice changed from that which said that letters from prisoners to—
 - (a) barristers and solicitors;
 - (b) the Ombudsman; and
 - (c) members of Parliament,
 were forwarded unopened and uncensored, and why?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) (a) to (d) No. The practice outlined is not that followed by the Department of Corrections.

In particular, the Chief Secretary is not involved in the censorship of prisoners' mail, although if a security issue of significance arose as a result of the censorship process, it would be expected that the Chief Secretary would be informed.

Prisoners' letters and letters to prisoners or copies of them are not sent to the Chief Secretary's office.

Neither are letters from or to prisoners automatically sent to the director. The director is involved only where issues involve security and/or the good management and discipline of a prison.

It is also incorrect to separate the treatment of letters to and from members of Parliament from the treatment applied to other correspondence not involving members of Parliament. The primary responsibility of the Department of Corrections is a responsibility which it owes to the whole community. It is for prisons to be kept secure. Members of Parliament do not have special rights and privileges in relation to access to prisons or prisoners or in relation to correspondence with prisoners.

I have no doubt that the public of this State would expect the prison authorities to have proper regard for the content of mail sent to and by certain prisoners. Mail has been known to contain contraband, including drugs, and has on occasions been of a defamatory, derogatory, obscene or threatening nature or prejudicial to the security or good order of prisons.

These considerations particularly apply in relation to Fremantle Gaol which is the State's major maximum security institution, and which houses nearly all of the most serious convicted criminal offenders in the State.

- (2) If mail is considered by the internal prison censorship officer to be of a nature which is objectionable in terms of its content and the considerations referred to above, it is referred to the office of the director. Within the office of the director, a decision is made whether the letter should be forwarded to the addressee or returned to the prisoner or sender, together with reasons as to why it will not be forwarded, or if necessary referred to appropriate law enforcement authorities.
- (3) The current policy on censorship of mail was approved by the Chief Secretary in March 1979.
- (4) (a) to (c) Prior to March 1979, there was no definite list of mail exempted from censorship with each case being at the discretion of the prison censorship officer. The current policy on this matter was accordingly elaborated with advice being sought from the then Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

WATER RESOURCES: MWB

Chairman: Travel Expenses

672. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) Notwithstanding the Premier's publicly stated view that the cost of the overseas trip made by Mr Batty, the Chairman of the Metropolitan Water Board was "small indeed", is he aware—
 - (a) that the amount of money paid to Mr Batty was contrary to the direction of the Deputy Premier;
 - (b) of the need to ensure that expenses of this nature should conform to established policy to ensure efficiency and to eliminate waste?
- (2) Can the Premier give an assurance that there will be no repetition of this contradiction of directions issued in this area of the Deputy Premier?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) I would not be prepared to give the sort of answer the Leader of the Opposition is seeking in categorical

terms because I do not think it would be fair either to Mr Batty or to the Parliament. When questions are posed which suggest that an action was contrary to direction—

Mr Brian Burke: The Deputy Premier said it was.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Let us put that aside for the moment. Such smart aleck or slick sort of tricks do not get anyone anywhere. I wish to give the House, and the public, the proper answers, and they will receive the proper answers.

I do not think it is fair to suggest that Mr Batty received money contrary to direction, in the context which is being used. When the Deputy Premier saw what was proposed, it was made clear that he was not prepared to agree to the \$8 000 as an advance at that stage, but he did not rule out the possibility of a reimbursement for accountable expenditure. The Government has asked for details and we will probably be considering that aspect of Mr Batty's visit at Cabinet next Monday.

In the meantime, we have had a preliminary review of Mr Batty's report of the work of a technical nature he did while abroad. We will receive further information next week and I anticipate Cabinet will give consideration to the background as well as to the actual facts of the situation in respect of the advances made to Mr Batty.

It is not good for the Leader of the Opposition to ride a hobby horse or bandwagon with matters such as this in an effort to try to embarrass a person who has given a great deal of public service at the fraction of the rate of pay the Leader of the Opposition and I receive.

Mr Brian Burke: Though, greater allowances.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I would not be so sure about that, especially when we consider electoral allowances which are tax free. Members of Parliament might look at themselves before they start throwing stones. As far as I am concerned, the matter will be formally investigated and reported on in the proper way.

EDUCATION: FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

Policy

673. Mr NANOVIK, to the Minister for Education:

Would the Minister please define what he means by "four-year-olds" and what commitment there is to pre-school education for them?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

The term "four-year-olds" in the context of pre-primary and pre-school education is used to define all those children who turn four years of age in a calendar year. In other words, children from the age of three years and one day at the beginning of the calendar year.

In recent years, increasing numbers of these younger children have attended pre-schools and pre-primary centres in areas where there are reducing numbers of the older children.

The Government now has to decide how best to cater for these children on a State-wide basis and has proposed a series of options in a letter to all pre-school committees and parents.

These options are—

- (1) Formation of playgroups where the Government would provide a local pre-school or pre-primary as the venue, employ additional supervisors, and assist in organisation.
- (2) Continuation of sessional-pre-school with fees charged to cover the costs and part funding from the Government.
- (3) Placement of a small number of younger children in sessional groups not filled by five-year-olds.

Responses to these options are now being received and will form the basis for our future planning.

WATER RESOURCES: MWB

Chairman: Travel Expenses

674. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Was the Deputy Premier correctly quoted in saying that Mr Batty's allowance was paid to him contrary to his advice?

- (2) If the Deputy Premier was correctly quoted, can he give the House an assurance that in future his advice in matters such as this will be followed?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) I think I ought to clarify the position. When the details came to me for the approval of \$8 000 expenses for Mr Batty for his overseas trip I went through them, bearing in mind the length of time involved, and I felt I ought to approve half of that with the balance subject to documentary proof of expenditure. I signed the document which approved \$4 000, with the balance to be subject to documentary proof.

At the time, I was unaware that the board had given approval and that Mr Batty had already taken \$8 000.

Mr Brian Burke: That is not a desirable situation, surely.

Mr O'CONNOR: However, that is the fact of the situation which I felt I should point out.

INSURANCE

Brokers

675. Mr HERZFELD, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Has he noted a report in last Saturday's *The West Australian* under the banner headline "More Brokers Look Certain to Crash"?
- (2) Has he any information to confirm this report?
- (3) What advice can he give to the public to assist them in ensuring they are not caught up in any further collapses of insurance brokers?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Advice received yesterday indicates that the situation at present is that a total of 72 licence applications have been received of which 37 have been approved. The balance of applications are still under consideration by the board and awaiting the provision of requirements.

I am informed by the Insurance Brokers Licensing Board that there are two insurance broking concerns experiencing difficulties at present and are likely to go out of business. It is worthy of note that these companies have not applied for licensing.

Since the legislation became public knowledge insurance companies have been rationalising and reassessing their relationship with brokers and agents. At the same time many of the smaller brokers have been reassessing their own positions with respect to the legislation and making a decision whether to apply for licensing as a broker or to apply for exemption under section 4.4 of the Act and remain in the market place as an agent.

The board is aware of some small to medium-sized brokers who have not yet applied; however, it is possible that some of these brokers are negotiating with larger brokers for the take-over of their registers with a view to winding up their businesses.

In general terms the board does not anticipate any major calamities being brought about by the institution of the legislation and the arrival of the appointed day.

- (3) After 31 October 1981 persons wishing to deal through insurance brokers should ensure that the broker is licensed under the General Insurance Brokers and Agents Act. The Secretary of the Insurance Brokers Licensing Board should be contacted if further information is required.

EDUCATION: PRE-SCHOOL

Teachers

676. Mr PEARCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Further to my question without notice of last Thursday, has the Premier had the opportunity to ascertain why, in his Budget, he budgeted for the 1982 school year the same number of pre-school teachers as were provided in the Budget for the 1981 school year?

- (2) Can the Premier explain the contradiction between his Budget and the statement made three days later by the Minister for Education that it was necessary to make large reductions in the number of pre-school teachers because of budgetary constraints?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) I said I would follow up the member's question if he so desired, or he could put it on the notice paper. I did pass on his question, but I have not been back in time today to obtain that information, but I will pursue it for the member.

EDUCATION: FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

Policy

677. Mr SIBSON, to the Minister for Education:

Would the Minister please define what he means by "five-year-olds" and what commitment there is to pre-primary education for them?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

The term "five-year-olds" in the context of pre-primary or pre-school education is used to define all those children who turn five years of age in a calendar year. In other words, children from the age of four years and one day at the beginning of the calendar year.

All these five-year-olds are eligible for and currently receive pre-primary education and the Government meets all costs associated with their education.

CO-OPERATIVE BULK HANDLING LTD.

Take-over: Mr Tuckey

678. Mr PARKER, to the Deputy Premier:

I remind the Deputy Premier of my question without notice of last week concerning Mr Tuckey's plans with regard to the take-over of Co-operative Bulk Handling and ask—

- (1) Has he now had time to find out about the plans?

- (2) Has the Government had time to formulate an attitude as to whether it supports or endorses Mr Tuckey's plan in this matter?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) No.

EDUCATION: FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

Policy

679. Mr GREWAR, to the Minister for Education:

The Liberal Party Policy for 1980-83 states—

- (a) The programme to extend pre-primary education to five-year-olds—now reaching 85 per cent of eligible children—will be moved to completion; and
- (b) We will also encourage suitable provision for four-year-old children where there is strong local community support.

Would the Minister please advise—

- (1) What progress has been made in achieving policy aim (a)?
- (2) What encouragement can we now expect for those children referred to in paragraph (b)?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) We now have a situation in which all five-year-olds—that is, those turning five in a calendar year—are guaranteed pre-primary education at the Government's expense.
- (2) The offer of help in establishing playgroups for this younger age group and the other options outlined to parents in my letter of 16 October are precisely to "encourage suitable provision" for these younger children.

TRAFFIC: RTA

Personnel: Manpower Levels

680. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

I refer the Minister to an article in last Saturday's *The Western Mail* relating to the road traffic patrol, and I preface my question by quoting two paragraphs

from that article. The first paragraph reads as follows—

A PRESSING need to bolster the metropolitan police force is behind the State Government's decision to abolish the Road Traffic Authority.

The fourth paragraph of the article reads in part as follows—

There can be no doubt that RTA officers—particularly those in country posts—will be used to provide more policemen in the metropolitan area . . .

I ask—

- (1) Can the Minister assure the House that there will be no diminution of effort in country patrols?
- (2) Can he assure the House there will be no reduction of the manpower available for country traffic patrols?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) and (2) I think it has been made clear the very purpose of the proposals for an amalgamation of the police and the Road Traffic Authority is to achieve a more effective use of the available police manpower. If the merger takes place, that will involve adjustments to the deployment of men and adjustments as between the work carried out by road traffic patrol officers and that undertaken by officers as part of their general duties. The particular strategies for those matters become the responsibility of the Commissioner of Police. I assure the member for Geraldton that very detailed consideration of those matters has been given by the commissioner, in view of the clear statements by the Premier and me that in the event of a merger there will be no diminution in the effective operations of the road traffic patrol because of our policy and commitment to maintaining effective road traffic measures. Beyond that, I cannot tell the member, or say specifically that certain officers will not be moved from certain places, or will not have a redefining of certain of their duties.

Mr Carr: There could be a transfer of personnel from the country to the city, then?

Mr HASSELL: I am not saying there could be a transfer of personnel from the country to the city, or otherwise. What I am pointing out is that there will be a reallocation of responsibilities, because that is the essence of the whole issue.

SEWERAGE: SEPTIC TANKS

Fees

681. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister for Health:

The Minister will recall my plea by way of a grievance debate 12 months ago to review that section of the Health Act which regulates septic tank fees charged by local authorities. I ask: What progress has been made with the review promised at that time, and when does he expect to reach some conclusion?

Mr YOUNG replied:

I thank the member for some notice of his question. I hope that in the very near future, the regulations will be amended in respect of the fee chargeable and a higher distribution will be able to be made to local government authorities. I cannot give him an exact date as to when the amendment will be made; however, it will be in the near future.

CO-OPERATIVE BULK HANDLING LTD.

Take-over: Mr Tuckey

682. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the plan by Mr Tuckey to take over the operations of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. and to load wheat and other commodities onto ships, and to bypass the operations of the Wheat Marketing Board?
- (2) Is he concerned at these plans, announced by Mr Tuckey?
- (3) Has the Minister received approaches from primary industry groups with respect to those plans?
- (4) Are the Minister and the Government concerned at the chaos Mr Tuckey's plan, if implemented, would cause in the farming community?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) to (4) The only information I have about Mr Tuckey's so-called plan is what I heard on the news this morning and what I have read in the newspaper. I do not think it is within Mr Tuckey's province to evolve such a plan. He may say what he likes, but the installation happens to belong to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. and any problems at the wharf will be handled through the normal channels; namely, the Minister for Labour and Industry, and all parties concerned. I am not taking the matter terribly seriously.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Laverton

683. Mr COYNE, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) What steps are being taken to satisfy the needs of the Laverton community in respect of a TAB betting facility?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that the absence of an agency in Laverton provides a fertile base for illegal starting price betting operations?
- (3) Bearing in mind that the expanding nickel mining operations at Windarra, and the recommissioning of the renowned Lancefield goldmine, have added an extraordinary impetus to the Laverton economic scenario, would the Minister concede there are valid and compelling reasons for the TAB to re-evaluate its priority in terms of the town's betting needs?
- (4) Would the Minister confer with the TAB Chairman with a view to achieving the early establishment of a betting agency to service properly the needs of this burgeoning mining community, with its high proportion of single men whose leisure-time activities are of vital importance?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) The TAB has undertaken a feasibility study and the results are being evaluated.
- (2) No.
- (3) and (4) Answered by (2).

EDUCATION: PRE-SCHOOLS

Younger Children

684. Mr TUBBY, to the Minister for Education:

When the Pre-School (Education and Child Care) Act was repealed late in 1977, was the problem of admission of younger children into pre-schools recognised and catered for in the consequential Education Act amendment?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Yes. In the Education Act Amendment Act 1977 new interpretations were introduced separating the provision of children one year below school age and those two or more years below school age. A pre-school centre was defined as an assembly of children over the age of four years, the majority of whom are one year or less below the minimum age for admission to year one of a Government primary school. A care centre was defined as an assembly of children over the age of three years, the majority of whom are more than one year below the minimum age for admission to year one at a Government primary school. In order to induce community-operated centres to come into the Government system, the Education Department agreed to honour its enrolment commitments "for 2 years". It was never intended that the younger children would be catered for indefinitely.

EDUCATION: PRE-SCHOOL

Teachers

685. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

It is fascinating that we have had an unprecedented four "Dorothy Dix" questions from the Government side on the pre-school issue which shows how much damage has been done to this Government.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member will ask his question.

Mr PEARCE: I am doing that. My question is as follows—

- (1) Can the Minister for Education explain why the Budget contains an allocation for 204 pre-school teachers, enough to employ every teacher in a pre-school at present?
- (2) If he is aware of that provision in his own section of the Budget, will he explain to the House and the people why he has written a letter to the committees of pre-schools telling them they may have to do without their teachers of four-year-olds next year due to budgetary restraints?
- (3) Will he accept that statement is misleading, either innocently or wilfully, and withdraw his comment?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) to (3) I reject entirely the latter remarks of the member for Gosnells. I would take the opportunity of replying to his question, but in view of the need for scrupulous accuracy—

Several members interjected.

Mr GRAYDEN: —I will ask him to put the question on the notice paper.

WATER RESOURCES: MWB

Reorganisation

686. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Premier:

I wish to ask a further question of the Premier. I am intrigued by the apparent conflict between the Premier and his deputy over Mr Batty's expenses. However, I ask the Premier the following question—

- (1) Is he aware of the claim by the Minister for Water Resources that delays in the Crown Law Department are holding up the drawing up of new legislation to reorganise the MWB?
- (2) If the Premier is aware of these delays, will he investigate the situation with a view to expediting the legislation referred to?
- (3) Will he outline to the House the extent of the problem with the Crown Law Department?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I know the Leader of the Opposition would love there to be a difference of

opinion or a divergence of information between the Deputy Premier and me. However, there does not happen to be any at all. The Leader of the Opposition flogs these issues that are of no great moment in the main course of events.

Mr Wilson: According to you.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If he gets any joy out of doing so, let him play with his toy. The reply to the question is as follows—

- (1) to (3) The answer will be given in the right way and at the right time. In regard to the drafting of the legislation for the Metropolitan Water Board, there is no secret that there have been delays in the drafting of what is a very complex piece of legislation. The Minister, very wisely, is more concerned about having legislation in its proper form before he brings it here rather than just bulldozing legislation through and taking a chance about what may be in it. I think that is fair enough.

Mr Brian Burke: That is a new attitude, anyway.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to emphasise there is no problem of the kind to which the Leader of the Opposition is referring. It is a question of the time and space factor in drafting a very complex piece of legislation. I have already asked that the legislation be expedited, if possible, but I also agree it is better to delay the legislation rather than introduce it hastily. Probably the Minister for Water Resources has more knowledge of these matters, particularly in relation to the law, than does any other member of this Parliament—

Mr Brian Burke: You are not saying that he has more knowledge than the Attorney General, are you?

Sir CHARLES COURT: —more knowledge than any member in this Assembly, if the Opposition wants to be pedantic about it.

Mr Brian Burke: Not pedantic—just accurate.

Mr Bryce: Scrupulous accuracy.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Even the Attorney General, whom I believe is the best Attorney General in the whole of

Australia, would be quick to acknowledge the legal capacity of the Minister for Water Resources.

Mr Bryce: Squaring off.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the Bill can be introduced this session, for obvious reasons it will be introduced. On the other hand, if it is a matter of delaying it to ensure its completeness and correctness, naturally I would advocate its being delayed.

RACING: HORSE

Sprint

687. Mr NANOVIICH, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Did he meet with members of the WA Turf Club on Tuesday, 20 October, to discuss the matter of speed horse racing?
- (2) Is he in a position to advise the outcome of that meeting?
- (3) If not, would he indicate when he will be able to release information about the outcome of that meeting?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) I met with representatives of sprint racing or quarterhorse racing interests on Monday of last week and I met with representatives of the WA Turf Club on Tuesday of last week.
- (2) An analysis of the outcome of those discussions is proceeding.
- (3) An announcement will be made as soon as possible.

MINING: DIAMONDS

Agreement: Ratification

688. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

Will he indicate to the House whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill in the remaining days or weeks of this session to ratify an agreement between the State of Western Australia and the Ashton Joint Venture?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

On the assumption that an agreement is completed to the satisfaction of the Government, the answer would be "Yes".

Mr Brian Burke: What a rorl!

Sir CHARLES COURT: What right has the Leader of the Opposition to say that without knowing the facts?

Mr Brian Burke: With three or four weeks left you are pressing us for co-operation with regard to the notice paper, and you are going to bring in an agreement of this magnitude?

Mr Bryce: You have had it for eight months.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I prefaced my remarks by saying that if an agreement is arrived at to the satisfaction of the Government the legislation will be introduced. I am quite staggered at the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition because we do not have to close the session at any particular time.

Mr Barnett: You will be here on Christmas Day, pal.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to say this to the Leader of the Opposition, and I imagine that if the member for Kimberley were here, he would be supporting me—

Mr Brian Burke: The Deputy Premier does not.

Mr Pearce: I do not know whether *Hansard* can record laughter.

Sir CHARLES COURT: There is a considerable amount of concern amongst the people of East Kimberley that there may be some delay about the completion and ratification of the agreement, and about how quickly the project can proceed. The people of the area have expressed concern about the continuity of the operation.

Mr Brian Burke: So are we concerned, but not at this pace.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I believe that this concern is justified. However, there is no need for legislation to be rammed through the Parliament as has been suggested by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. There will be ample time for the legislation to be considered.

Mr Bryce: May I ask you a question by way of interjection before you sit down? Is it reasonable for you to have this agreement for eight months or two years and to then give us two weeks to consider it?

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is reasonable for the very practical reason that the Government is in the business of looking after the best interests of Western Australia and of Australia. If it takes us another 12 months to reach satisfactory agreement, then we will take that time before introducing the legislation. I remind the member for Ascot that he is not the Government. The Government has the responsibility to negotiate these things.

Mr Bryce: You treat it with the same contempt that you treat the Opposition.

Mr Brian Burke: We will be wanting to speak to you about private members' time again.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We will bring the legislation to Parliament to have it ratified.

Mr Bryce: Rubber stamped!

Sir CHARLES COURT: There will be ample opportunity for it to be considered.

Mr Brian Burke: Rubbish!

