

# Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 7th August, 1979

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

## BILLS (11): ASSENT

Messages from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Supply Bill.
2. Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act Amendment Bill.
3. Collie Coal (Western Collieries) Agreement Bill.
4. Evaporites (Lake MacLeod) Agreement Act Amendment Bill.
5. Justices Act Amendment Bill.
6. Dairy Industry Act Amendment Bill.
7. Aboriginal Communities Bill.
8. Acts Amendment and Repeal (Road Maintenance) Bill.
9. Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill.
10. Wundowie Charcoal Iron Industry Sale Agreement Act Amendment Bill.
11. Iron Ore (Mount Newman) Agreement Act Amendment Bill.

## THE LATE HON. ERNEST KNIGHT HOAR

*Condolence: Statement by Speaker*

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I advise members I have received the following letter addressed to myself—

Thank you for your letter of sympathy on the passing of my dear husband.

Also I thank all the members of the Legislative Assembly who supported the motion of condolence.

While Minister, M.L.A., and Agent General, he worked and gave of his best to his State.

I thank you on behalf of myself and family.

Yours sincerely  
Dorothy Hoar

## EDUCATION

*Objectionable Literature: Petition*

MR BATEMAN (Canning) [4.35 p.m.]: I have a petition regarding school literature. I will not read the whole of the content of the petition because it has been mentioned many times previously. Many groups of individuals have

publicly complained about objectionable literature used in schools, but apparently to no avail.

The petition bears 22 signatures, and I certify that it conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

*See petition No. 77.*

## POLICE ACT

*Repeal of Section 54B: Petition*

DR TROY (Fremantle) [4.36 p.m.]: I have a petition addressed to the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. The petition reads—

We, the under-signed citizens of Western Australia call for the repeal of Section 54B of the Police Act. This provision eliminates freedom of speech and assembly in this country. It has been used to attack the working class and its organisations. Charges under or against this section must be taken from the records.

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

The petition contains 120 signatures, and I certify that it conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly. I have so signed.

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

*See petition No. 78.*

## QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

## STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL

*Second Reading*

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [5.41 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill now before members will complete the major review of the stamp duty legislation referred to in my Budget speech of the 5th October, 1976.

At that time I stated that a general overhaul of the Stamp Act was to be made, and as a first step it was proposed to remove a number of minor and irritating charges.

The move towards achieving the first step in this proposal was made shortly afterwards when

the second reading speech of the Stamp Act Amendment Bill was delivered to the House on the 19th October, 1976.

The object of that Bill was mainly to remove certain small, irritating imposts which had little revenue yield but were time consuming and, therefore, a source of annoyance to the taxpayer.

The Bill I am now presenting to members is the result of considerable study over the past two years.

The present Stamp Act was re-enacted in 1921. However, many of the provisions and charges have actually been in force and remained unchanged since 1882.

As a result of the review, the proposals contained in the Bill will—

- Generally update and streamline the Act to remove some outmoded provisions, modify the law to conform with current practices, and pass the general administration of the Act to the Commissioner of State Taxation; redraft certain sections and definitions;

- standardise the general administrative provisions;

- convert all rates of duty to a standard "per \$100" base and simplify the application of duty and stamping of instruments;

- introduce provisions to prevent the undesirable loss of revenue from the use of known duty avoidance schemes;

- eliminate some anomalous situations;

- delete the remaining minor stamp duty charges and abandon a small progressive scale of duty; and

- adjust some fixed or nominal charges that have remained unchanged since 1882.

I will now deal with each of these matters in the order in which I have mentioned them.

A large number of the amendments proposed by the Bill are designed generally to update the law, remove outmoded provisions or definitions and, at the same time, transfer or consolidate provisions in order to give a better understanding of the intention of the law.

The Bill also contains provisions for the general administration of the Act to become the responsibility of the Commissioner of State Taxation who currently administers all other taxing laws.

Certain sections of the Act and some of the definitions have simply been rewritten in accordance with more modern drafting techniques which should produce greater clarity of understanding and although now reproduced in a

somewhat different form, the meaning or intention of the law has not been changed.

It is proposed to complete the removal of statutory declarations and prescribed forms from the law. In the cases involved, statutory declarations are considered to be an unnecessary imposition on taxpayers, and in time of changes in procedures and commercial practices prescribed forms can be a hindrance to efficient management.

The general administration provisions have been standardised as much as possible to follow other taxing legislation, particularly the provisions relating to objection and appeals. This is a desirable situation from the point of view of both taxpayers and the legal profession when dealing with the department in such matters.

Similarly, the provisions for the commissioner or his officers to inspect books, records or instruments, or to obtain information under certain circumstances have been closely allied with other taxing legislation.

The opportunity has been taken to propose a conversion of all charges to a "per \$100" basis for the purposes of consistency and ease of calculation. This will affect the charges of duty on security documents, such as mortgages and the licences for motor vehicles.

It is also proposed that a minor progressive scale applying to documents of security up to \$200 be removed as mortgages for such a small amount are never seen these days. This proposal could result in a few cents increase in the amount of duty payable in certain cases. However, the number of occasions when such a small amount is secured by a document of one type or another would be minimal.

A somewhat similar change is proposed with the duty payable on the transfer of shares in co-operative and provident societies where a rate per \$25 will be converted to the equivalent of a rate per \$100.

One of the major reconstruction changes proposed in the Bill is that concerning the mortgage situation.

The current law provides for stamp duty on a mortgage document. In addition, there is another amount of duty payable on any one or more documents involved in further financial arrangements by way of additional, collateral, auxiliary, or substituted security, transfer or assignment, etc., of that document.

In all there are 10 types of security documents attracting duty at three different rates.

It is proposed to charge duty on only two types of these security documents and the remaining rates, being minor items of duty, are to be deleted from the law. This move will be of particular importance to the various lending institutions, which are faced with hundreds of mortgage documents each day.

Action also is to be taken to counteract some existing duty avoidance schemes. One such arrangement is the "splitting" of loans in order to avoid or reduce the amount of duty that is properly payable. This action by some taxpayers produces an inequitable situation and creates dissatisfaction for other taxpayers operating in this area of finance. It also affects the amount of revenue received from this source.

By another arrangement a purchaser agrees to buy a block of land on the understanding that the vendor will erect a house on the land for the purchaser. Ultimately, the house is completed and the property is then transferred to the purchaser.

However, in many instances the transfer is presented to the State Taxation Department on the basis of only the land being transferred. This creates an inequitable situation between taxpayers and seriously disadvantages many other selling agencies.

A further avoidance scheme involves the transfer of land by two separate transactions. The first step is to complete a transfer, purporting to be by way of mortgage, conveying the legal interest in the property. Secondly, a subsequent agreement, between the same parties and entered into outside the jurisdiction of this State, completes the arrangement and effectively transfers the beneficial interest of the property. The current provisions of the law are to be modified to prevent the use of this scheme.

Still yet another arrangement involves the use of a provision in the existing Act whereby payments made in perpetuity, or for life, are utilised to effect the transfer of property. The law is to be amended to ensure that normal *ad valorem* duty is payable.

It is proposed also to eliminate some of the anomalies in the present law. One of these anomalies concerns the exemption from duty on cheques used by charitable organisations.

It is intended to extend the existing provisions to overcome a current administrative problem in determining the eligibility of some organisations to this concession.

In another different situation an exemption currently benefiting building societies is to be removed.

The reason for this move is that in 1965, when the exemption was first given to building societies, the societies were very small organisations operating for a particular purpose involving the receipt of money over a stated term of years with almost a total restriction on the withdrawal of those deposits.

The character of those societies has changed dramatically in recent years and their day-to-day operations can now be likened to those of a savings bank or a credit union, which does not enjoy the same concession.

It is proposed to place all these organisations, which operate in the same manner, on a similar basis.

The present law contains an exemption provision for instalment purchase agreements when the goods have been purchased for resale.

It is now proposed also to extend the exemption to include those situations when goods are leased by the dealer.

A further anomalous situation exists in respect of receipts issued by banks and building societies for term or fixed deposits on which duty is currently not being paid, and those receipts issued by corporations conducting similar banking operations upon which duty is being paid. It is proposed to exempt this type of document from duty.

As a further measure of relief, it is proposed to delete the stamp duty charge on agreements, memorandums of association, articles of association, discharge of mortgages, and collateral, additional, or substituted securities.

It is also proposed that any transfer pursuant to a contract of sale stamped with *ad valorem* duty will not be charged with any further duty.

All of these items contribute very little revenue but are a time-consuming expense both to the taxpayer and the State Taxation Department.

It is also intended to update the duty situation relating to betting tickets. The proposal is to have only two different areas to which two separate rates will apply.

It is not the intention of the Bill to increase revenue collections by amending the existing rates of duty. However, the review has highlighted several situations which should now be adjusted.

One such matter relates to some nominal charges which have been in the legislation since 1882 and have never been amended during all these years. In the main, these charges apply to certain documents which are not provided for under a specific head of duty. The types of duty are—

- a lease of any other kind;
- a conveyance of any kind; and
- a simple deed not otherwise chargeable with duty.

These types of documents are assessed only with a nominal amount of \$1 under the current law.

This flat charge of \$1 for these types of conveyances, leases, and deeds is recorded as 10s. in the original legislation of 1882 and, as already stated, has remained unchanged for nearly 100 years, right up to the present day. Inflation has not caught up with the duty on these types of documents and, therefore, it is proposed to increase this type of charge to a more realistic figure in order to cover the cost of services provided.

The proposal in these cases is to move from \$1 to \$5, which I think members will agree is very reasonable when they consider the change that has occurred in money values from 1882 to 1979. The increase will to some extent rectify the inequitable situation that has arisen over the years when, because of changes in value, the amount of duty payable on an *ad valorem* type of instrument has risen but these charges have remained static.

There is also one other type of document in this category and that is a duplicate of any instrument. Currently, a duplicate instrument attracts duty of only 50c except when the duty on the original document is less than that figure. In those cases both the original and the duplicate are stamped with the same amount of duty.

Here again, the amount of 50c was the equivalent of 5s. back in 1882. It is proposed in the Bill to raise this long-standing flat charge of 50c to \$2 which, for the reason already given, is more realistic these days.

The existing provision—to cover the fact that when the duty on the original instrument is less than \$2 then a duplicate will attract duty equal only to that lesser amount—is to be retained.

It is estimated that all the proposals in the Bill will result in an increase in stamp duty collections of approximately \$200 000 in the current year. The additional revenue likely to be obtained is minimal in relation to current receipts from stamp duty and arises mainly from the proposed updating of charges which have been unchanged since 1882.

As the Bill arises from an overall review and updating of the existing legislation and is not intended as a revenue raising measure, it is being introduced before the Budget to enable it to be considered separately from the Budget proposals.

It is proposed that the Bill will operate from the date of proclamation, which will probably be some time later this year. It is necessary to have a time lag between the date of assent and the date of proclamation in order to allow the Commissioner of State Taxation time in which to circularise various members of the commercial world and the legal and accounting professions of the changes that will affect them.

However—and I emphasise this—two operative clauses are to commence from the date of assent. These particular clauses relate to possible sources of duty avoidance and, therefore, the need to remedy the situation as soon as possible.

As I have said, a Bill of this kind would normally be part of the Budget papers but, in view of the fact that it resulted from a comprehensive review, I thought it preferable to introduce the Bill separately from the Budget to enable members to study it. The only measures which have any urgency are those where tax avoidance is currently being practised and these, as is well known and acknowledged in business and financial circles, should be tidied up as quickly as possible. Hence the date for the operation of certain clauses differs from the proclamation date otherwise referred to.

In view of the length of the Bill and its complexity when trying to read it into the parent Act, I have had prepared a printed document of explanatory notes dealing with the clauses. The explanatory notes have been written in layman's language and I think they will greatly assist members to translate the Bill, complicated and long as it is, into the parent Act and give a clear understanding of what is intended. I have arranged with the Clerks for copies of the document to be made available to all members after I have tabled it, and I understand the Commissioner of State Taxation will send copies to all people who have regular dealings with his department.

I commend the Bill to the House and seek permission to table the document of explanatory notes on the Bill.

*The document was tabled (see paper No. 252).*

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

#### *Message: Appropriations*

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the Bill.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: TWELFTH DAY***Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 10th May, on the following motion by Mr Shalders—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

**MR BATEMAN** (Canning) [5.58 p.m.]: It has been a long time since we last met in this Chamber and we are all a little rusty. It has been rather cold over the last 24 hours but I suppose it will warm up as the night goes on. It is very good to see all the Ministers back from their holiday and looking so fresh. The Minister for Labour and Industry enjoyed himself at the sport of kings, the Premier was planting trees in Israel, and the Minister for Housing got his finger jammed in a dyke in Holland or somewhere—they are walls which hold back water. Be that as it may, it is good to see them all looking so fit for the pre-election debate.

I would like to speak first of all about a problem which has concerned me greatly for a long time. This Parliament gave me the privilege of having a two-months' overseas study tour in relation to the disposal and recycling of rubbish. During those two months I went to Germany, Switzerland, and England, and I saw some of the largest refuse incinerators in the world. When I returned I made a report.

Because I thought the report was relevant to our problems here, I supplied a copy of it to the Parliamentary Library and also to all local authorities. I received acknowledgment from two organisations only; the Rotary Club of Gosnells wrote to thank me for the report and the Western Australian Jaycees asked me to speak about my study tour at its official opening. I complied with this request, but no-one else showed the slightest interest in all the work involved in the report.

Shortly before the first part of the session finished, I was rather aggravated to hear the Minister for Health refer to the member for Maylands as an instant expert when he was speaking on this problem. If ever there was an instant expert, it is the Minister for Health. Suddenly he knows all about all sorts of diseases;

recently he has become an expert on fleas and mits.

I believe strongly that there is only one way to dispose of our rubbish. Perth has a population of 800 000 only and we cannot sort out our rubbish problem. The Greater London Council has a population of some seven or eight million, and yet it has been able to resolve the problem. The Greater London Council incinerates all its rubbish and then the clinker is taken from the bottom of the incinerator and used as a road base; a good example of recycling.

The Greater London Council makes good use also of its waterways. Sometimes 15 to 20 barges are loaded with rubbish that has been compacted into bales and these barges are towed many miles up the Thames to the incinerator.

We will have to look to a greater use of our waterways. We could institute a baling system in places such as Fremantle, Melville, and all the way along the Swan. The incinerator could be located further up the Swan where it would create no dust, smog, or fog nuisance. The equipment used by the Greater London Council collects all the dust. Although Birmingham is still endeavouring to overcome a smog problem, London has no smog at all.

I would like to refer briefly to part of this report. While I was in England and Germany I looked at many methods of refuse disposal including the direct tipping of waste on land, separation before incineration, and direct incineration. The method most widely used was direct incineration, and I believe in time to come this method will be used generally throughout the world as a great deal of our refuse is in the form of paper and cardboard boxes.

Pulverisation and composting are two other methods of waste disposal. The pulverised waste is spread over the surface of the ground and when composting is used, the waste is eventually utilised as a fertiliser.

The Swiss people face an erosion problem when the snow thaws on the Alps and takes away the topsoil. To combat this problem, the waste is composted and then used to combat the erosion.

A system of transfer stations is employed when it is necessary to transport the refuse over long distances. The waste is baled and transferred from a loading zone to an area where it is incinerated.

I would like to quote from my report as follows—

I feel at this point a brief history of the Greater London Council is necessary. It is a

local authority with regional responsibility for Greater London. It works in close co-operation with the 32 London Borough Councils and the City of London, which have their local responsibilities. The area is 610 square miles with a population of about 7½ million.

Of course this report was written seven years ago so obviously the population has grown considerably since then.

I would like to point out that the Greater London Council is responsible for 32 borough councils—a great many more local authorities than in the Perth metropolitan area. The report continues—

The General Manager of Greater London Council was anxious that I should see all the methods used for refuse disposal by his Council and we motored to Cringle Docks at Wandsworth where I was shown the pulverisation and barge loading plant.

The waste is then loaded onto the barge and taken to this central incinerator.

From there I visited the Edmonton refuse incineration plant, which is one of the largest in the world. I will give some dimensions in order that members may have some idea of its size. The incineration block is 320 feet long by 100 feet high, and the chimney stack is 328 feet high and 32 feet in diameter. Each day of the working week refuse collection vehicles deliver 1 800 tonnes of crude refuse to the plant in 600 to 700 separate loads. It is interesting to note that the deliveries are made between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. to avoid peak-hour traffic rushes. As is the case in our community nowadays, the rubbish is generally contained in plastic bags, and it is easy to handle and to dispose of.

I reiterate that the time will come when we will have to use our waterway; the time will come when we will have to use barges for transport. Irrespective of the opposition of many city, shire, and town councils, the time will come when pits and sanitary land-fill sites will no longer be available. As the years pass we become more and more aware that the sanitary land-fill method of waste disposal is not a good method; we have experienced certain problems in respect of pollution of waterways and underground streams by gaseous pollutants. People remove all sorts of poisonous medicines, pills, and potions from their cupboards, and throw them into the bin. These poisons all end up in the sanitary land-fill sites. Therefore, not only for that reason but also for the many other obvious reasons, the day will come when we will have to use another form of waste

disposal. One of the more obvious reasons is that birds can scavenge rubbish from sanitary land-fill sites. That cannot be done when rubbish is incinerated; in that case there are no rats or mice. The heat is so extreme that no pests can survive.

After travelling overseas and visiting all the places I have mentioned, I still maintain that direct incineration is the best method of rubbish disposal. There is no better method. I say that for the many reasons I have already explained. I read in the paper only recently that the member for Moore said we should recycle our rubbish; but that will not work. It has not worked in England or Germany. The reason is that there is so much paper in the world today that it is uneconomical to recycle it. The only components of rubbish which may be recycled are the metallic elements such as iron, tin, and lead. These are melted down in the burning process. Bottles also may be recycled.

The metal waste drops to the bottom of the incinerator, where it cools and forms into ingots. These are extracted by a massive magnetic device, which then loads them on to vehicles to be taken away and re-used.

In my opinion it is a great shame we do not have a central body with experience in respect of rubbish disposal. Surely to goodness we must have some experienced people in this State—people who have travelled the world and who have visited the places I visited. Surely those people have learnt enough. They may be engineers or other people working in local government who have been considering this matter for many years, and if they were brought together they could probably come up with a sensible solution.

Surely to goodness if their expertise were available to a central authority a common-sense solution could be reached. However, whilst the councils and shires all want to do their own thing and have different methods of disposal, we will have nothing but arguments, and we will have problems between the health departments of the local authorities and the Public Health Department and the Commonwealth Health Department. Therefore, the sooner the people with experience are drawn together as a central body and common sense is allowed to prevail, the better it will be for all of us.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr BATEMAN: Mr Speaker, I was a little disappointed you were not in the Chamber before the suspension of the sitting for tea to hear my dissertation on the disposal of rubbish, because

the local council in the area you represent is very sensitive about any interference with its workings.

Mr Davies: Do not forget the Speaker gave the Premier a lemon.

Mr BATEMAN: I wish to refer now to another important matter concerning my electorate. This problem dates back almost to the time I commenced representing the area in this place. In 1973 I wrote to the then commissioner of the Public Health Department (Dr Davidson) regarding the noise emanating from the premises of Besser Vibrapac Masonry (WA) Ltd.

In his reply dated the 24th January, 1973, Dr Davidson stated as follows—

Thank you for your letter about complaints of noise from the above Company.

This has been investigated and, as you suggested, is due to steam released from the autoclaves. It is believed that the main problem is a faulty valve on one of the autoclaves and a replacement has been ordered.

It is proposed to re-site all the autoclaves and to arrange for steam to be released into a large dry underground tank. This may take some time but should be completed within six months.

However, the machinery on the company's premises kept banging away at all hours of the night, keeping people awake. So, on the 9th April, 1973, I again wrote to the Public Health Department, and Dr Davidson replied in the following terms—

Thank you for your letter of the 2nd April.

The Company did promise to install a new 8in. valve on the autoclave which was causing most of the noise problem. There was some difficulty but it is now on the premises and will be installed this weekend (14/15th April). It is hoped that this will abate most of the noise and ultimately the steam will be released into underground tanks which will reduce the noise still further.

The premises will be kept under observation but please let me know if there are any further complaints.

The noise nuisance has continued to this day.

Besser Vibrapac is not the only company which is causing a problem for local residents; a firm called Hot Mix Ltd. is also a source of complaints. It has increased its factory's output which, in turn, has added to the existing pollution problem in the area. The factory belches smoke across the Kenwick-Beckenham area. At times, it

is so bad that it dirties the washing hung on the lines early on Monday mornings. Many complaints have come from residents of this area.

Many petitions signed by local residents have been presented to the Gosnells City Council relating to this problem. On the 8th March, 1979, I received a letter from a Mrs Sidell, which stated as follows—

In the light of a petition, complaints etc, re Besser-Calsil and Hot Mix factories in Bickley Road, you may be interested to see the enclosed copies of correspondence . . .

The file dated back to April, 1973. Her letter continued—

We hear some action is being taken, but we have no doubt, in another six years, more complaints will be made . . .

I do not think it is fair that year after year these people should be subjected to the problems of soot, dirt, dust, machinery banging at all hours of the night, and other industrial noise.

However, what angered the residents more than anything—even more than the inconvenience to which they have been subjected for all these years—was the report contained in the *Daily News* of Wednesday, the 9th May, 1979, under the heading, "Works noise angers residents". Members can imagine their reaction when they read the article, which states as follows—

Mr Graham Blackburn, general manager of Hot Mix said his company was resurfacing the main Perth Airport runway.

"We can't disrupt the airport routine to keep a few residents happy," he said.

He said his company had to fit in with the international and interstate flight timetables, and this meant starting at 1am some days.

He expected the job to be finished by the end of next week.

After all the troubles and problems to which my constituents had been subjected over the years, they were very unhappy indeed to read that article.

Mr Blackburn, knowing I was interested in this matter, wrote to me enclosing a photograph of the Hot Mix plant which he maintained was installed many years ago. However, houses were built in the area many years ago, too. In fact, I lived in the area for many years; my children were born there, and the eldest is now 30 years old. So, to my certain knowledge these homes were constructed in the area long before Hot Mix Ltd. established its factory in the locality. I can remember when the Readymix Group established

a plant in the area. All these problems date back to that time.

Unfortunately, the Minister for Health is not in the Chamber tonight. I know Ministers do not have time to read *Hansard*. However, I ask either the Minister or the member representing him in this place tonight to please think about the problems faced by some of my constituents and try to alleviate this noise nuisance.

One of the worst types of problems in our modern society is noise; it prevents people from getting a good night's sleep; if one has visitors it can be very annoying to hear the rattling and banging of the trucks and machinery outside. I have experienced plenty of that, with the development of the Canning Vale area taking place opposite me, so I know exactly how these people feel.

Last year I spoke about the referendum held to allow Australians to choose their national song. The Premier was absent on that occasion, and I am sorry to see he is absent again tonight. However, he is a very busy man, so we cannot knock that.

Mr Jamieson: He is away somewhere singing "God Save the Queen".

Mr BATEMAN: On the 7th October, 1977, the Premier's Department issued a Press statement which read as follows—

"God Save the Queen" is to continue as the National Anthem in Western Australia.

The Premier, Sir Charles Court, said today Cabinet had decided that "God Save the Queen" should be used on all occasions except in cases where it was necessary to distinguish Australian participants from those of other countries . . .

One starts to lose a little respect for any Premier—I would say this even if it were a Labor Premier—who refuses to accept the will and the wish of the people, in this case the people of Western Australia.

Mr Watt: What was the wording of the question asked in the referendum?

Mr Jamieson: It does not matter whether it was a national song or not.

Mr BATEMAN: I will return to that point later in my remarks. An article then appeared in *The West Australian* on Tuesday, the 11th April, 1978, under the heading, "National song to be unsung". That was a strange piece of journalism! The article states—

Australia's national song is not to be sung—by order of the Government.

The Administrative Services Minister, Senator Withers, issued the curious edict yesterday.

Mr Pearce: He got "unsung" himself, didn't he?

Mr BATEMAN: The article continues—

He said that though "Advance Australia Fair" was called the national song it was really only a national tune.

There is a terrible, inbred hatred which some people have for other people; I cannot understand why they have this hatred. The Premier had it for Gough Whitlam, the former Prime Minister. The present Prime Minister still has such a hatred for Gough Whitlam. However, unfortunately for the Premier of this State and for Mr Fraser, they can no longer blame Gough. What do they do? They turn to the unions. I think the member for Morley made some comment tonight about that, and the Premier became upset about it.

Mr H. D. Evans: President Carter is coping it, too.

Mr BATEMAN: The trouble is that there has been too much Liberal Government rule in Australia, and particularly in Western Australia. In Australia, there have been 26 years of Liberal Government rule out of 29 years.

Mr Grewar: Whose fault is that?

Mr BATEMAN: The Government kicks the unions. However, union members obviously must vote for the Government. In the past 21 years in this State, the Liberal Party has ruled for 19 years. This is the problem in this State and in Australia generally. There has been too much Liberal government. It is high time there was a change.

In the Federal sphere, the Liberals have governed for 29 years, excepting the three years during which Labor was forced to the polls on two occasions. I am sure, as I am sure that the sun rises and sets, that the Australian people will not put up with this any longer.

The people have seen the dogmatic attitudes of the Premier. He is not prepared to listen. He is prepared to divide the State by his dogmatic attitude towards unionism. I know that all unions are not right. I know that we on this side are not always right; but by God, neither is the Government always right.

I have never seen a more dogmatic, dictatorial Premier in Western Australia. I do not like referring to anyone when he is not in the Chamber to answer for himself—

Mr B. T. Burke: But he is not well.

Mr BATEMAN: This Premier of Western Australia will be known as the man who said the most and did the least in relation to benefitting the people of Western Australia. Never in the history of this State has there been so much division between brother and sister; never has there been so much division in families; never has there been so much unemployment; and never has there been such a dark alleyway through which we cannot see the opening at the other end.

A State election is forthcoming. It is high time the people of Western Australia took a good look at everything that has gone on. They should reject the garbage and nonsense one reads in *The Sunday Times* under the headlines "8 000 New N-W Jobs" and "Good news in the Budget". What nonsense!

Mr Clarko: Did you see *The Sunday Times* said that the Liberals would win the next election?

Mr Davies: It shows how foolish they are.

Mr BATEMAN: The headlines continue, "Boom '78—More jobs and big spending". Boom and bust! I remember hearing the Deputy Premier saying one day that that was what happened to us—boom and bust. That was one of his interjections. In 1977 a headline read, "8 000 New N-W Jobs—Bonanza ahead in gas project". So it goes on. That is *The Sunday Times*. It really looks after the Liberal Party.

In *The Sunday Times* of the 5th August, 1979, there was a headline, "Confusion still reigns on anthem—no leads given". There will not be any leads given while our Premier continues with his present attitude. The article reads as follows—

Bouncing up and down on the home trampoline, the five-year-old was singing God Bless Australia at the top of his tiny lungs.

Sung to the tune of Waltzing Matilda, song posed the question: What is Australia's national anthem and how often is it played?

Well, it is not played very often. It is a damn shame that it is not. It is over two years since the nation chose "Advance Australia Fair" as its national song. The decision reached in the referendum was based on a 43.2 per cent national vote in favour of "Advance Australia Fair." However, the Premier and the Prime Minister will not accept that the people of Australia decided that that was our song.

Mr Jamieson: We are the only country in the British Commonwealth which has not its own national song.

Mr BATEMAN: The situation is so bad that a new organisation has been formed. There was a headline which read, "Project challenges national pride". Another one read, "Chaney: Be proud of Australia". That comment was made at a meeting attended by the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. Mr Chaney, the Lord Mayor of the City of Perth, said, "Be proud of Australia." The article under the latest headline I have quoted read as follows—

Australians had only themselves to blame for the lack of enthusiasm and respect for their national day, the Lord Mayor of Perth, Mr Chaney, said yesterday.

Speaking at a Perth City Council reception to mark Australia Day, he asked: "Can you imagine the French celebrating Bastille Day on the nearest Monday to the national day to gain a long holiday weekend?"

Mr Chaney said it was doubtful whether Governor Arthur Phillip, members of the first fleet, the military and convicts felt any enthusiasm when they landed at Sydney Cove in 1788, but Australians had plenty to be enthusiastic about now.

"The foundations to a great economy have been laid," he said.

"The nation's greatest asset is its 13 million people."

Mr Speaker, if I had my way—and I will probably never have it except in my own home—every school child in private, public, and State schools would stand every morning when the flag was raised to the highest part of the flagpole and he would sing, "Advance Australia Fair". That is something to be proud of, because Australia is a country to be proud of. Australia should have a national song which the people can sing. After every trot meeting and at the pictures, "Advance Australia Fair" should be played.

I referred to the headline, "Project challenges national pride". We have lost our national pride. While we have Premiers and Prime Ministers who are bigoted and biased, there will never be any national pride. When a campaign of this type, which is to cost \$3.5 million of taxpayers' money, is commenced it is crass stupidity and a damn disgrace. The leaders of our State and Federal Governments have allowed this sort of thing to happen.

In America, when they sing "The Star Spangled Banner", every person stands in respect for his country. He believes it is his country and it has given him sustenance and a livelihood. It is a damn shame in our country that the sum of \$3.5 million is to be spent in boosting national pride

when it is the responsibility of every parent and every school teacher to ensure that the children are taught the national song in order for them to understand and respect the country in which they live.

I would like to deal briefly with the overpass on the Albany Highway at the Carousel shopping centre. Much has been said about the need for this overpass. I wrote a letter to the Town of Canning on the 15th September, 1978, asking the council to endeavour to do something about the shocking traffic problem which was causing concern at the Carousel Shopping Centre. The problem arose on the Albany Highway because of persons alighting from buses and crossing the road.

From 7.00 o'clock to 9.00 o'clock each morning it is impossible to get across the highway; and of an evening it is just as bad with people coming from all over the place, such as Gosnells, Kelmscott, Lynwood, and Queens Park to shop at Carousel. This portion of the road has been referred to by many people as "suicide leap"; one has to leap across and hold up one's hand in an effort to stop the traffic so that a crossing may be made. However, I notice that the Perth City Council is putting a pedestrian crossing over Mint Street.

Mr Davies: And that was a battle.

Mr BATEMAN: This will provide a safe way for all concerned who wish to cross that street; but no similar action is being taken at Carousel. An overpass should be built at this point.

I wrote to the Minister for Works—who was the Deputy Premier at the time—and he replied that there was a certain sum of money set aside for this type of work and if the council were prepared to go ahead with such a scheme the Government would be prepared to assist the council. But no, the council was not prepared to allocate any finance at all.

There have been 192 motor vehicle accidents and five pedestrian accidents in this area since 1976. Some deaths resulted from these accidents. I hope something will be done by the Canning City Council, in co-operation with the Government, to have an overpass constructed before any further tragedies occur. I have been asked to present a petition to the Parliament and already 3 000 signatures have been obtained. So all these people want a crossing. An article to this effect appeared in the *Darling Advertiser* of the 12th July, 1979. Something has to be done to avoid a major traffic accident outside the Carousel shopping centre.

I move on now to a subject we have heard a lot about over the last couple of months. We have heard a lot of strange rhetoric about the Fremantle-Perth railway line being pulled up. The Premier has said it is not going to be used any longer, and the Minister says the line will not continue. The Minister has said recently that he knows nothing about a document which is floating around and talks tonight to the Leader of the Opposition about the law of libel. All members have seen last night's *Daily News* headline. If the Minister says there is nothing in that headline, perhaps a libel action should be taken against the paper.

Mr Nanovich: That was just the media romancing.

Mr BATEMAN: The newspaper would be the best one to sue. It would seem that the headline in the *Daily News* of Monday, the 6th August, is libellous. The heading in tonight's issue of the *Daily News* is "Exclusive—The document".

It staggers me that nothing has been done as yet to the Albany line or the Perth to Kelmscott or Armadale line. The Government has ripped up all the others. The Perth-Fremantle line is a "goner", and there is mention that the Midland-Perth line will finish. All the country trains mentioned so often by the member for Northam are "goners" and this is now the position with the Perth-Fremantle line.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

Mr BATEMAN: After all the recent publicity the Minister has changed his attitude regarding the electrification of railways. He now says there will be a steady flow of information provided to the Premier at every party meeting. I know you would be unhappy, Mr Speaker, if I did not move an amendment of some sort. It has been decided, and rightfully so, because of the Government's changes of heart and misleading statements and documents and the threat of libel and so forth, that I should move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply as follows—

... but we regret to inform Your Excellency that information published in the *Daily News* on August 6 and 7, 1979 makes it plain that the Minister for Transport has:

- (i) misled the public and the Parliament over the proposed closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway,
- (ii) disseminated grossly misleading and inaccurate information about proposals for the electrification of suburban railways,

- (iii) sought to discredit a reputable community organisation—the Friends of the Railway—by falsely claiming their proposals would cost about \$120 million, despite the existence of expert advice from the Government's own advisers in Westrail that the cost would be less than half that amount and that, therefore, the Minister for Transport lacks the confidence of the House.

**MR DAVIES** (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [7.57 p.m.]: I second the amendment. I am pleased to congratulate the member for Canning on the action he has taken and to support his amendment wholeheartedly.

**Mr Rushton**: Did you write it?

**Mr DAVIES**: What does the Minister think? Of course I wrote the amendment, and I meant every word of it. I do not humbug around and try to dodge the issue. Did the Minister write the question asked by one of his colleagues this afternoon about the electrification of railways? Of course he did! The Government had six publicity officers standing outside the Premier's office all the afternoon.

**Mr Rushton**: Snooping again.

**Mr DAVIES**: I walked past and saw them there, and did not they look embarrassed as they thought, "How are we going to get this mug out of this mess? He has put his foot right in it." All afternoon they sat and pondered, and the best they could come up with was a Dorothy Dix question about electrifying railways from here to kingdom come and back. It would have been better had they not even mentioned the subject. It would have been better if Government members had remained at their party meeting or smiled longer at the camera this morning.

I was "snooping again" when I looked out my window and saw everyone gathered outside. When one keeps one's eyes and ears open one knows what is going on. If the Minister had done that and paid some attention to what was happening in the department he is supposed to control he would have known what was going on; and we would not have had to move that he does not have the confidence of the House.

The honesty, integrity, and credibility of the Government is in tatters. If that is the case tonight, then the reputation of the Minister is in shreds. Anybody who has watched the events of the past few days would know what I am saying is true. The Minister has displayed a pitiful performance through the media. He has been grasping at straws, assassinating the characters of people, dealing with points which have not even

been raised, and dodging the issue. This can only lead me to believe that the Minister is misleading the public deliberately. If he is not misleading the public, then he is certainly misleading the Parliament.

Although it is becoming rather common in this day and age to attempt to mislead the Parliament, such an action is not accepted by the Opposition. On a matter as important as this, the Minister has been guilty of either gross negligence or crass incompetence. There are no other words for it.

For many months the Perth-Fremantle railway has been a symbol of much of what is wrong with the Government. It is a symbol of the reason the Government will be defeated at the next election. I only wish that the next election was to be held next Saturday. Nothing would please me more than having the opportunity to take on the Government at the present time, or at any time it cares to nominate in the future.

Since this issue first arose the Government has demonstrated its arrogance and insensitivity to public opinion. The Government's actions are documented in the files I have here and I am sure the Minister's files are as big as mine. The Government has been ruthless when dealing with public opinion. Above all, the Government has displayed a total lack of vision in planning for the future. All the Government has done is to cut, pare, and draw in without a plan for doing the job the railways are doing now or could do in the future.

Throughout this matter the Government has been reluctant to face up to the issues confronting the public. It is a matter of great regret—and I am sure you, Sir, will agree—that the Government has not been more honest in its dealings with the public. In my opinion this means the Government cannot cope. It has indicated clearly it is getting tired and it is run down. The Government is lacking in ideas. It will not listen to the views of the people. It will not listen to what its advisers say. It will not listen to the advice of its departmental heads.

**Mr Stephens**: I thought you had been saying the Government consisted of one man. If that is the case, what you are saying now is that one man is run down.

**Mr DAVIES**: I agree with the remark made by the honourable member. The Premier is run down, he is not well, and he is tired.

**Mr O'Connor**: He would run rings around you.

**Mr DAVIES**: I am willing to take on the Premier at any time. He does not frighten me with his limited number of phrases and the two or

three avenues in which he believes he excels. It will take him on at any time.

Mr O'Connor: Of course, as you are equipped with the ego you have, you will take him on at any time.

Mr DAVIES: I do not have an ego. I should like to know why the Premier did not appear on Channel 9 and debate the nuclear issue with me. Why did he send one of his departmental heads? Why was not one member of the Government prepared to appear on Channel 9 and debate the issue of nuclear power with me? I am not an expert in this field. The Government could not get a member to debate the issue with me. It had to send the Commissioner of the State Energy Commission.

Mr O'Connor: The only reason you want the election now is that you do not know whether you will be the leader of your party in a few months' time.

Mr DAVIES: The Minister has made an extremely funny remark! He is dodging the issue again. Why would not the Minister appear on Channel 9 with me and debate the issue of nuclear power? Why would not any of the other Government members debate the issue? I am not an expert on nuclear power.

Mr Shalders: We all know that.

Mr DAVIES: However, no Government member was game enough to appear on Channel 9 with me to discuss the question of nuclear power. Let us have a look to see how brave the Government is.

Mr Tonkin interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr DAVIES: Let us look at how brave the Government is. When the member for Morley was discussing the Industrial Commission and compulsory unionism, the Government sent a party hack from Kalamunda or Mundaring to debate the matter, because nobody else would appear on television with him. This matter means a great deal and is very dear to the heart of every member of the work force.

Mr Blaikie: Who was invited?

Mr DAVIES: The member who has just interjected should ask the member for Morley. However, I am getting away from the amendment. Nevertheless, I want to make the point that all the criticisms I have made of the Government have been epitomised by the amazing performance of one of its senior Ministers during the past 30 hours. It is obvious the Minister has had greatness thrust upon him. He has become a man of destiny and a man whose stewardship in

his portfolio sums up everything which is wrong with the Government. It epitomises the dishonesty and secrecy in which the Government indulges frequently. That is one of the reasons the Government should realise the public is heartily fed up with it and is waiting to choose a new Government at the next election.

It is unfortunate for the Minister for Transport that he cannot wait until election day to leave the front bench. We would like to see him do the decent thing and resign tonight. We should like to see him tell the House that he no longer wants to be part of the Government, because he is no longer fit to be part of it.

The Minister should leave the Government because he has misled the public and the Parliament over an issue which is of great importance to everyone. I do not know whether this has occurred as a result of the Minister's wilfulness or incompetence; but I believe, and those who sit behind me believe, the Minister is not fit to hold the portfolio of Transport.

I should like to tell members what the Minister said on the 17th May this year when this matter was discussed in Parliament by way of a motion. We were at that time seeking the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire further into the matter. Members will recall the rows which occurred in the corridor that afternoon. The member for Moore skedaddled off as fast as he could when he knew he had to put his vote where his mouth is. Members will recall the rows which took place outside the House. The member for Moore was granted a pair suddenly—

Mr Stephens: He got away without a row tonight.

Mr DAVIES: We all tried not to leak the fact that we intended moving this amendment tonight; but somebody has warned the member for Moore. Members will recall what happened on the 17th May last. I should like to quote the Minister's comments which appear on page 1568 of *Hansard* and read as follows—

The Government has a responsibility on any issue to make a decision after full consideration of all the factors, both social and economic, which are involved. This is what the Government has done. The Government has reports which provide a background over the last nine years. The decision has been made after full consideration and assessment.

I intend to prove later that that statement was not true; but if it was true then, it most certainly is not true now. The Government has not considered all the facts. It has not considered all the reports

which have been available to it and its decision has not been made after a full consideration and assessment of everything available to it.

As has already been pointed out by the member for Canning, last night the Press published material which revealed that statements made by the Minister involving the Perth-Fremantle line have been absolutely incorrect. The issue of electrifying the suburban rail system has become a key issue, if we need a key issue. In the general overall debate there is no doubt that matter, particularly in the context of what has taken place recently, has become the key issue.

Now the Friends of the Railways repeatedly argued that fact and they have been proved to be most informed and were responsible for putting a submission to the Government on these matters. Members will recall the submission made to them on the 14th May last. There were a number of copies going around.

It went to Cabinet on the 14th May and was reported in *The West Australian* on the 15th May. The submission was compiled by people with a great deal of expertise. Mr Darryl McCaskill was one person involved and he was the chief mechanical engineer. His name has been mentioned on a few occasions and even just recently. He is a very respected man. Before members start to denigrate others, as the Government so readily does—it is often aimed at myself but in this instance it is aimed at the former CME—they should remember that this man only recently retired, and still has a great wealth of information. On his retirement many expressions of regret were passed by heads of other branches, including no doubt the Minister himself. Mr McCaskill was considered by many to be one of the best chief mechanical engineers the railways ever had. He was instrumental in the compilation of the report of the FOR.

Ever since the formation of the FOR, the Government has attempted to denigrate and discredit it. Despite this, there is little doubt that its credibility is significantly higher than the Government's credibility at the moment.

The FOR claims the cost of electrification would be about \$50 million. The Government rejected this statement out of hand, saying it was not true and the correct cost was about \$120 million. I look forward to the Minister telling us how the great difference came about. Of course, he is talking about an electrification job from here to Narrogin, or something else quite as ridiculous. He seems to have some scheme which just does not relate to what we are discussing.

Now it is revealed by the chief mechanical engineer that FOR was correct and the Minister for Transport was wrong. I refer to the present chief mechanical engineer because the document which was a phantom document yesterday and which has become so apparent now is initialled apparently by one "L.P.". I imagine that would be Luke Pitsikas, the present CME. The document is also initialled by someone else whose initials I cannot read, but it could be Williams, whom I think is one of the Assistant Commissioners of Railways. He saw the document on the 1st June, 1979.

The chief mechanical engineer in his report said—

The "Friends of the Railways" analysis of rail and bus policies for the Perth-Fremantle corridor has been studied in detail and no basic errors of fact or figure can be found. The costs are stated to be based on published contract prices for the Brisbane electrification project.

2. As the organisation appears to have professional and academic expertise the analysis of the Urban Public Transport for Perth Rail and Bus Policy show a depth of knowledge not previously experienced . . .

And it is no wonder of course that it has expertise and academic knowledge.

The FOR spent a great deal of time gathering the details and they used the very best evidence that was available. Members should note particularly that the present chief mechanical engineer, in his submission dated the 31st May, says the report has been studied in detail. Today, in a frantic attempt to get himself off the hook, the Minister has said that it is not a report. I do not care what it is called. It is a four-page document, The Minister says the report was only a memo and was a rush job. He said it was a preliminary document. I suppose that means it was going to be sent back with a comment that it was not the kind of memo or report the Government wanted, and with a request that another be written.

Let us consider how the Government has dealt with this matter. On the 17th May the Government said that every consideration had been given to all reports and that there was no need for a Select Committee. That was said in Parliament on the 17th May. This letter from the Secretary for Railways apparently was sent to the chief mechanical engineer on the 21st May and the chief mechanical engineer replied on the 31st May. Proof of this can be found in the photo that appears on the front page of tonight's *Daily*

*News*. It refers to the Secretary for Railways' letter of the 21st May. So, on the 17th May, when we were told everything had been taken into consideration—the Minister said that on page 1568 of *Hansard*—and that we had nothing to worry about, the matter had not even been sent to the Secretary for Railways.

The letter had been sent to the chief mechanical engineer on the 21st May—four days later—and was replied to on the 31st May—10 days later. It was received in the office of the Secretary for Railways on the 1st June; and yet we were told on the 17th May that consideration had been given to every aspect of the matter and we had nothing further to worry about.

That is why the Minister should resign. Obviously at that time he knew reports had not been completed, and he should not have mislead the House. If he had said, "Give us another six weeks and let me see what I can do with it; and I will report back to Parliament at a later stage", we may have accepted it, although perhaps not very well. However, he told us it was a *fait accompli*; that it had been done; that every report had been considered; and that there was nothing to worry about.

The matter was still in his too-hard basket, by all accounts, because it was still filtering through the system to the chief mechanical engineer and back again, some 14 days later.

Now, of course, we must consider the astounding acrobatics of the Minister when the existence of the document was made known yesterday. I strongly resent the implication he made in answer to a question this afternoon, that I knew of this document and that I had something to do with it. I most certainly did not. I was at Channel 9 debating the question of nuclear power with the Chief Commissioner of the SFC. I was debating it with him because no Government member would debate it with me.

A reporter came to me with a copy of the newspaper and said, "Would you like to say something about this? It is surprising." It certainly was surprising and I was happy to make some comment about it when I saw the headline, "Figures mislead". They certainly did mislead. What did the Minister say? He denied any knowledge of it and took the paper to task. He blasted the newspaper for having the temerity to print such an article. He said the document did not exist. The Commissioner of Railways had told him so. On the television news staring straight at the camera, he said, categorically, that there was no such report. The Minister may not have considered it to be a report, but it certainly was a

four-page document. It is no good the Minister playing with words. We all know what it was. We knew from the *Daily News* that it existed yet the Minister said it did not.

Mr Rushton: How do you know it was a four-page document?

Mr Pearce: We know more about it than you do.

Mr DAVIES: I am talking specifically about that four-page document. Subsequently we ascertained it comprised four pages. This is because the Minister said the report was a memo.

On the eight o'clock news this morning after I suggested to one of the radio stations that there was no such report and that the *Daily News* should be taken to task, the Minister said he would find out from the *Daily News* what this was all about.

Why should such a story have been published if it were not true? It was not true, because the commissioner said so—and he knew—and he intended to get in touch with the *Daily News*. He should have been in touch with the *Daily News* long before that; I know I would have been if those remarks had been attributed to me when the report did not exist.

However we know what happened; he said that it did not exist. The commissioner said it did not exist, and no doubt everyone believed that. I am quite certain they did believe it, because of incompetence. Those people did not know what was going on in their very office. The matter had been pushed into a pigeon-hole because it did not suit the purpose of those involved. It did not suit the end result which they wanted. So, a document which last night did not exist, today became a memo.

If the Minister, in fact, knew about the report and said he knew nothing about it, he should get out because he is being completely dishonest. If the Minister genuinely did not know of the document, I can only say he is ill-equipped and should not continue in office.

I imagine that if a final report were to be written concerning a vital decision, and which required vital advice, one of the people who would be asked to comment would most certainly be the chief mechanical engineer. Others would be Mr R. E. Hunter, the chief traffic manager, and Mr George Shea of the MTT, all people with considerable expertise. Personally, I would want to see all of those people and obtain their opinions.

If we are to talk about opinions, let us look at what has happened. On the front page of

yesterday's issue of the *Daily News* there was a boxed article headed, "Silence of loyalty". This is something of which I have been suspicious for a very long time—the silence of loyalty.

I am an ex-member—in fact, I am an ex-assistant secretary—of the Railway Officers' Union. I still receive copies of minutes of the council meetings, some 18 years after I left the organisation. I noticed in the report of the last meeting, held on the 27th June, there was mention of a deputation of the joint executive of the Railway Officers' Union to the Commissioner of Railways. The morale of the railways' employees was deteriorating because of confusion with regard to the stance of the commissioner on the closure of the Perth-Fremantle line. The executive wanted to know whether the commissioner supported it or the Government. The executive stated that its members thought the time had arrived for the commissioner clearly to state his position on such an important industrial, social, and political matter.

In reply, of course, the Commissioner of Railways expressed disappointment at the remarks of the executive in endeavouring to obtain a statement from him. He said that advice tendered to the Minister was sacrosanct and that union members should know not to inquire about his position, and should not pursue the matter any further.

I would have thought that if the Commissioner of Railways was in favour of the closure of the line he would say so there and then, and that he supported wholeheartedly the policy of the Government. I can understand quite easily the stand he had to take because obviously he did not support the Government, but he did not intend to say so. Out of loyalty, he kept silent.

I have spoken to other people and strange to say only last week I was present at a function where safety awards were being presented at the Main Roads Department. Some railway officers were present to collect their awards, and amongst others in that group was the chief traffic manager and the chief mechanical engineer. I stopped to pass the time of day with them, and I said, "What about the report on the Perth-Fremantle railway?"

You, Mr Speaker, should have seen the way they backed away. The implication was, "Do not ask us to say a word." I did not pursue the matter any further because it was quite obvious their feelings were for the retention of the line. But, out of loyalty to the Government, they would not say anything. I say again that they are not supporting

the Government wholeheartedly, otherwise they would have been anxious to say so.

That attitude has been apparent for quite a while and I am certain railway officers are not allowed to speak out for obvious reasons. That is part of their employment conditions, but I would like to see an inquiry at which they could give unbiased evidence as to whether or not they are in favour of closure of the line.

That is not really the point under discussion tonight; we are discussing the Minister and his Government, and the fact that the Minister has misled the public. It is obvious that everything which has been printed in the Press is right. The figures are right, and it is equally obvious that the chief mechanical engineer has said that the FOR figures are right. This information has come out by way of some leak. I do not hold with that kind of thing but it is done from time to time. It was done to us when we were in government. I can remember several occasions, quite distinctly, when it occurred, but I did not pursue the matter to the bitter end as this Government was prepared to do in the case of a young man employed by the State Housing Commission. I was quite convinced that leaks were occurring within my own town planning office to some sections of the then Opposition. That happened, but I let it go.

However, when something is printed in the paper for everyone to see, one would be a fool not to take some notice of it. No doubt the Minister hoped we would take no action and, like him, ignore what was going on in front of him. However, I have to disappoint the Minister on this occasion because the evidence is there for everyone to see; it is there in black and white.

Quite obviously, the Minister has made a mess of explaining this "phantom" document; this report which did not exist yesterday but which has emerged as a four-page memo today. The "phantom" document has some substance at last!

There is not the slightest doubt that the Minister should have known something about it, and he should have done something about it. The Minister should not have misled Parliament. In the light of this major revelation how can we any longer believe a single word the Minister says with regard to the Perth-Fremantle rail closure?

Many questions need to be answered. What inputs and reports were received by the committee which produced the Government's grossly inaccurate document purporting to refute the FOR claim? On what basis did they produce their document which refuted the FOR claim? How much of that document—how much of the Government's own document—can be believed?

How much of the truth is subject to whitewash? How many other costly proposals in the FOR document have been deliberately inflated? By how much has the Government's own figure been under-estimated? Why was the Minister completely unaware of the views of Westrail's chief mechanical engineer with regard to electrification? Why was the commissioner unaware of the information supplied by one of Westrail's most senior officers?

The chief mechanical engineer would rank as one of the most senior men in the whole department, but apparently his four-page memo—which was not a report—did not even receive consideration. In fact, until today it did not exist. Apparently it did not exist until lunch time, because I bought an early edition of the *Daily News* at lunch time, and that paper did not carry any mention of the matter.

We want to know how the estimate of \$55 million by the chief mechanical engineer was raised by \$65 million to \$120 million. Why would one of the chief officers of a Government department make the statement—

... no basic errors of fact or figure can be found ...

The question which cries out to be asked above all is this: If the reply to the FOR submission on electrification was made either dishonestly or without taking into account all the expert advice, how do we know the decision to end the Perth-Fremantle passenger rail service was not also made dishonestly or without taking into account all the expert advice? The answer is, of course, that we cannot be sure about that. We do not know where we are. This major error on the part of the Government has thrown into doubt the whole of its strategy, the whole of its honesty, the whole of its credibility, and certainly the whole of the future of the Perth-Fremantle railway.

Many of us were never sure at any time that the Government was being honest. The Opposition has never been sure and some other members of Parliament have never been sure. That has been printed in the newspapers. I do not say one can believe everything one reads in the newspapers but I have never seen refutation of that statement. Local authorities along the line have not been sure; the Friends of the Railways have never been sure; international experts have never been sure; and above all some 120 000 members of the public who signed a petition were not sure. All those people had doubts. All those people are in effect saying to the Government, "Have another look; ensure you are doing the right thing." All those people are being ignored.

Who is the man who must take responsibility for all this? It is a fact of life which is acknowledged under the Westminster system that the Minister must take the blame for the way the department is run. The Minister for Transport must take the blame in this case. Let me remind members of his record and what has happened.

Let us go back to the time when he was Minister for Town Planning. He was the Minister who did not know his department had been leaking confidential town planning information to property developers. Yet people were being advantaged because of his incompetence on that occasion.

When we were debating the Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill, he was the Minister who made the \$3.5 million mistake. He came into the House and gave us sets of figures. After a great deal of checking and rechecking it was pointed out to the Minister by the member for Mt. Marshall and others that he had made an error of \$3.5 million. It was not much: the public would pay anyway! He was the man who brought in legislation which needed to be adjusted. I can show in the debate on that Bill that even the revised figures the Minister quoted were not correct. We did not pursue the matter; it was a relatively small amount. We hoped it would all come out in the wash. Even then, the allegedly correct figures he gave us were not correct.

The Minister now makes a \$65 million mistake on electrification. In the meantime, he also signed a certificate to say the signatures on the petition he presented to Parliament were in order and correct, and the next day he denied that. He said some signatures were not correct, but when he presented the petition to Parliament he signed a certificate saying the opposite. He was prepared to stand up and say that. Obviously he had not checked the signatures but he was prepared to sign a certificate in order to get the petition on the Table of the House and out of his hair. He then sent staff officers to Parliament House to go through the petition and he tried to denigrate and ridicule the petition as a whole because it contained false signatures.

Anyone who had spent two minutes looking at the petition could have picked up false signatures, but 95 per cent if not more of the signatures were authentic. The Minister was prepared to try to denigrate the petition, those who had signed it, and those who had come here to present it by saying the petition had been incorrectly signed, after he had signed a certificate that the petition was in accordance with Standing Orders.

We now have the \$65 million mistake on electrification. How can the Minister honourably, responsibly, and properly stay in this House a minute longer? I do not know. Anyone who has made such a monumental mess of a portfolio in a matter such as this, who has denied and retracted statements on more than one occasion and wants us to forget about the whole thing, cannot stay in the House. He must go.

Important transport decisions are to be made. In the light of the revelations of the last few hours, the only decent and responsible course for this Government is to suspend all moves for the termination of the passenger service between Perth and Fremantle on the 2nd September. The whole matter must go back into the melting pot. We must not stop the passenger service on the 2nd September.

We should have a full review of the decision by a public inquiry. I do not believe the Government can any longer reasonably deny the need for a public inquiry. We previously asked for the appointment of a Select Committee, and it might have been better had the Government agreed to that request; but—I repeat—the Government told us then that every possible consideration had been given to every bit of available information. Yet the matter was still lying around the Minister's office at that time.

I do not want a public inquiry to say "Yes" or "No" to the continuation of the service. I want it to bring out all the facts relative to the operation of that service, and perhaps relative to the operation of the whole suburban service. Until such an inquiry has been held we cannot allow the system to close on the 2nd September—only a month before the Royal Show, incidentally, as many people have pointed out. We must keep the service operating until the review has been completed.

The vital Southern Western Australia Transport Study remains to be attended to. With the energy crunch hurtling in on us, all transport matters assume the highest importance. With such a record of failure and incompetence or even worse behind him, Western Australia cannot any longer afford to have the member for Dale in the key transport post. Western Australia cannot in fact any longer afford to have him in the Ministry. The case against him is clear; the case against the Government is clear. The Minister for Transport and the Government are to be condemned for the stand they have taken in this matter, for the way they have treated the public, and for the way they have tried to hoodwink the Parliament and public.

In this place we have a duty to the whole State to uphold the highest standards of public administration and the highest ministerial standards. A great burden is placed on every member of Parliament to demand that the time-honoured and tested principles of the Westminster system of government on which our system operates be upheld, and they must be upheld regardless of friendship or political expedience. If they are not upheld the decency, honesty, and integrity of the whole system of government is undermined.

While the whole Government must share the blame for the appalling state of affairs revealed by the Press in the last few hours, the primary responsibility rests of course with the Minister for Transport. I believe he should resign his office. If he will not resign, I believe the Premier should strip him of his office.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr DAVIES: It is a melancholy duty, as the member for Canning said when he introduced the amendment, to have to stand here and say what we have said; but it must be said, and if the Government has a shred of decency and integrity and wants to restore its credibility, the only thing it can do is endorse this grave amendment, which I naturally support.

MR RUSHTON (Dale—Minister for Transport) [8.40 p.m.]: I listened with interest to the member for Canning move the amendment to the Address-in-Reply. He did it with great reluctance, and I can understand that.

Mr Pearce: Rubbish! He didn't do it with great reluctance; he did it with the greatest of pleasure.

Government members: He said so.

Mr RUSHTON: The Leader of the Opposition indicated that he wrote the amendment.

Mr Pearce: At least he can write—that is more than you can do.

Mr RUSHTON: I would have been very reluctant to move an amendment written by the Leader of the Opposition. Tonight I think we saw the Leader of the Opposition in his true role—that of a character assassin.

Mr B. T. Burke: Why don't you answer the substance of the amendment? If there were an income tax on brains you would get a massive refund.

Mr RUSHTON: I listened with great interest to the speeches so that I could hear the arguments put forward. However, it seems that the Opposition does not want to listen to what we have to say.

Mr B. T. Burke: The Leader of the Opposition did not speak nonsense as you are doing now, and he did not resort to personalities.

Mr Pearce: Come on, get on with it.

Mr RUSHTON: The amendment states that I misled the public and the Parliament over the proposed closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway. That is totally untrue. The amendment says also that I have disseminated grossly misleading and inaccurate information about proposals for the electrification of suburban railways. That is totally untrue. It is also totally untrue that I sought to discredit a reputable community organisation.

Mr Pearce: You made every effort to discredit it. Your efforts were totally unsuccessful.

Mr RUSHTON: I would like to address myself firstly to the positive aspects of this amendment. This issue is about the Government's action in upgrading the urban transport system in the metropolitan area.

Mr B. T. Burke: You don't know the difference between upgrading and uprooting.

Mr RUSHTON: The Opposition has not been successful in doing anything positive; all it seeks to do is to downgrade any action taken by the Government. The Opposition wants to destroy the credibility of one who is upgrading the urban transport system, not only for Perth but also for the whole of Western Australia.

Mr B. T. Burke: Who is doing that?

Mr RUSHTON: If one looks at the reports that have come forward over the years, one realises that for something like nine years certain actions have been recommended in regard to transport.

Mr T. H. Jones: You allowed the railways to run down and you know it.

Mr RUSHTON: The Tonkin Government responded to this recommendation by bringing before both Houses of Parliament legislation to close the railway line between Leighton and Perth. This action makes it very easy for me to answer the present amendment moved by the Opposition. I do not need to say any more because these facts show that the Opposition's attack is quite unjustified. We know the action taken by the Opposition when it was in office, but now that we propose to go a bit further and upgrade completely the public transport system for metropolitan Perth, the Opposition seeks to denigrate one who is moving in this way.

Mr B. T. Burke: Who is that?

Mr RUSHTON: The Government assessed these professional reports, and it decided to take

the opportunity to upgrade the public passenger transport system. We sought assistance from the Commonwealth Government, but unfortunately such assistance was insufficient for us to do what we wanted to do. So we set about accomplishing our aim by leasing certain equipment.

Mr B. T. Burke: What—sledge hammers?

Mr RUSHTON: We called tenders for 10 railcars; that is, five pairs. That is a positive step towards the upgrading of the transport service.

Mr B. T. Burke: You won't have any lines to run them on shortly.

Mr RUSHTON: We examined potential growth rates in the metropolitan area to determine which services warranted upgrading. After detailed examination it became apparent that there was a declining growth rate in the Perth-Fremantle corridor. There is no opportunity for growth in this area while the present attitudes remain in regard to rezoning and densifying these areas. So it was quite obvious that until the people in this corridor and the local authorities involved had a change of heart we could not expect greater railway patronage. Members must remember that the professional advice acted upon by the Tonkin Government was that this should be an integrated service.

The interesting part of this exercise is that it will present a challenge to the people in the area to respond to a more frequent public transport system. Over the years we have been told that the public will respond to a more frequent service and so the residents of this corridor will be given the opportunity to use an improved service.

The professionals tell us that unless there is a time gain for the commuters, they will not transfer from one mode of transport to another. It will be interesting also to see what happens in the Perth-Armadale corridor where transfer stations are to be established.

Mr Skidmore: Why don't you get back to the Fremantle line? That is what we are talking about.

Mr RUSHTON: We will be testing the public response to a well-held theory; that is, that they will transfer from one mode of transport to another where there is a time gain. This is a positive part of our plan to upgrade the system.

Let us now consider the economics of the proposed upgrading of the transport system. It is obvious that there will be a direct saving of approximately \$2 million per annum in maintenance costs alone and an indirect saving of \$1.6 million per annum. This will be achieved over a period of time. I am sure everyone

understands the economics of the subsidy per passenger on the railway line as this matter has been explained many times in the past.

Another point that has been made many times is that the implementation of our system will result in better energy efficiency. The experts tell us that the use of linked buses in this corridor will result in a 50 per cent saving in the use of energy.

Mr Skidmore: That is a lot of rubbish.

Mr RUSHTON: We all know the mess the present Leader of the Opposition made in his attempts to solve the problem of the local roads in the Servetus Street area when he was a member of the Tonkin Administration.

Mr Taylor: Have you solved it in six years?

Mr Davies: We set up an inquiry and you have not acted on it yet.

Mr RUSHTON: We do not want to see the local roads overused in this way. We sought a way out, and this is our positive solution. The local people believe it is the right thing to do. It is interesting to note that in its report the Friends of the Railways recommended that Servetus Street should be used. It will be interesting to hear the views of the Opposition on this point.

Mr T. H. Jones: What about the amendment?

Mr RUSHTON: A long time ago the member for Cockburn made a statement that the road should go inland on the reserve, and that would mean that it would go through the showgrounds and other such places.

Mr Carr: This has nothing to do with the amendment.

Mr Taylor: I am not quite sure what you are talking about.

Mr RUSHTON: Many members of the public now understand the benefits of our plan.

Mr Skidmore: Tell us about the bus service to Meekatharra? You might as well—you have covered every other part of the State.

Mr RUSHTON: I am very pleased that many of the public—including railway people—now have a better understanding of the factors involved and they are coming to me—

Mr B. T. Burke: When they leave you they certainly won't understand it.

Mr RUSHTON: It has been said that a main part of this issue is the electrification of the suburban railway line. Of course this matter has been taken out of context.

Mr Pearce: The cost of electrification is a big issue.

Mr RUSHTON: That is the one point the Opposition is making. Members opposite say the system should be electrified, without worrying about the cost.

Mr T. H. Jones: Of course we worry about the cost. You didn't worry about electricity costs a few years ago, did you?

Mr RUSHTON: The FOR have said we should move towards electrification immediately. I wish to give the House an indication of why there is a difference in the cost estimate prepared by the FOR and that prepared by the Government's advisers; and bear in mind the FOR are now talking about partial electrification and not full electrification. I will give members the figures contained in the report prepared for the Government, compared with those contained in the FOR report, which is available to anyone who wishes to read it.

Mr B. T. Burke: What is he talking about? I think he is talking about road tax.

Mr RUSHTON: This report was prepared in consultation with the Commissioner of Railways, the Chairman of the MTT, and the Commissioner of Main Roads. Therefore, it would appear that the Leader of the Opposition and his supporters wish to denigrate the work of those people; although a moment ago he was saying we should seek the advice of the Chairman of the MTT.

Mr B. T. Burke: You should seek anyone's advice.

Mr Davies: I wonder why the the chairman is retiring in January.

Mr RUSHTON: Because he will finish his term.

Mr B. T. Burke: No, because he is fed up; and we will have a few words to say about that shortly.

Mr RUSHTON: To give the House some idea of the difference between the figures submitted by the FOR and those submitted by the people who reported to the Government, let me point out that the FOR suggested 19, three-car train sets, with 20 diesel cars retained for use—so they were not suggesting complete electrification, nor were they comparing apples with apples, but rather apples with pears.

Mr Skidmore: That was clever!

Mr RUSHTON: The FOR said the 19 train sets would amount to 23.87 million, whereas the Government said they would amount to 47.25 million.

Mr Davies: That was not in the chief mechanical engineer's report.

Mr B. T. Burke: Forty-seven point two five million what? He is crazy.

Mr RUSHTON: Members opposite have denigrated the fact that the Government's consultants allowed for a growth factor of 40 per cent, bearing in mind that a period of eight or more years would be required to implement electrification. It is interesting to hear members opposite challenge us for allowing any growth factor at all, because one would have to be quite stupid to produce a system for which one did not allow any growth.

Mr B. T. Burke: You said there would not be any growth.

Mr RUSHTON: We have already said that in respect of the Armadale line there is an expected population growth of 100 000, and the expected population growth in respect of the Midland line is 40 000. The Government indicates with justification that there will be growth throughout the system. That answers the people who like to denigrate the report prepared by specialists.

In respect of the item for track work, clearance, adjustment, including the city station one metre sink, platform reconstruction, and new Barrack Street bridge, the FOR allowed a figure of 0.2 million, whereas the Government's consultants said it would amount to 8.4 million.

Mr Skidmore: Eight point four million what?

Mr B. T. Burke: Catherine wheels.

Mr RUSHTON: When we turn to the item for overhead catenary structures for 70 km track, including permanent way costs, the FOR allowed 14.1 million whereas the Government's consultants allowed 19.1 million.

Mr B. T. Burke: Nineteen point one million what?

Mr RUSHTON: The FOR and the Government agreed that substations would cost \$2.5 million; however, the Government allowed \$2 million for contingencies, whereas the FOR made no allowance. The FOR made no allowance for coincidental resignalling and communication costs.

Mr Pearce: That has nothing to do with electrification. You have to have signals no matter what system you use.

Mr RUSHTON: That shows how ignorant of these matters is the member for Gosnells. The Commissioner of Railways holds that an amount of \$15 million is necessary to provide for resignalling and communication. This illustrates one of the major differences in the figures. I have figures worked out on the basis of what has been implemented recently in Brisbane in respect of

railway electrification, and these figures have been double checked by the Westrail officers. It is estimated that for 70 route kilometres resignalling would cost \$10.5 million, replacement and undergrounding of communications would cost \$2.5 million, and the provision of additional communications and contingency allowance would amount to \$2.5 million, making a total of \$15 million.

In addition to the figures I have given, there are a few lesser amounts; and we find that the estimate of the FOR amounts to \$41 million, whereas the estimate by Westrail amounts to \$100 million. On top of that there is other related expenditure estimated by Westrail at \$9 million, taking its estimate to \$109 million. Other items amounting to about \$11 million could be deferred for a period of time. That gives a brief indication of the differences between the figures of Westrail and the FOR in respect of electrification.

I believe the Director General of Transport, in consultation with the Commissioner of Railways, the Chairman of the MTT, and the Commissioner of Main Roads produced the best response they could to the submission made by the FOR, without resorting to detailed planning and the expenditure of large sums of money. I believe they presented their report in a very fair way. The Director General of Transport signed the report and submitted it to the Government.

Mr Davies: Is he a railwayman?

Mr RUSHTON: The Leader of the Opposition is saying that this is a false document. In the Press it is being said that Westrail officials have given false opinions, and that is unacceptable to me. I believe it is also unacceptable to the people of Western Australia that such claims should be made anonymously. Claims like that can disparage people who have acted in good faith and with integrity. We now find that people are being denigrated as a result of material being made available to the Press.

Mr Pearce: On the grounds that the material is wrong.

Mr Davies: They have not taken all the matters into consideration.

Mr RUSHTON: Let me deal with the memorandum. The daily newspaper quoted a document, but did not mention that it was only a memorandum.

Mr Pearce: It was a memo according to you this afternoon. Now it is a memorandum.

Mr Spriggs: What is the difference?

Mr RUSHTON: He would not understand. Great play has been made of this memorandum.

As far as I can ascertain, the response was referring to a letter of the 21st May. Of course, it would take some time to get to the CME in Westrail and, of course, the answer came back on the 31st May. The commissioner asked his departments for comments, and I understand Mr McCaskill's report of previous times, but slightly upgraded, was sent forward.

Mr Davies: Are you saying Mr McCaskill gave his material to the CME?

Mr RUSHTON: No, I am saying that when he was an officer of that department he had a fixation about electrification of the railway system.

Mr B. T. Burke: Now you are denigrating Mr McCaskill.

Mr RUSHTON: No I am not.

Mr B. T. Burke: He was an honoured employee when he worked in the department, but now he works for FOR, he has a fixation.

Mr RUSHTON: Mr McCaskill believed electrification of the railways could be carried out quite cheaply. He held this belief well before I became Minister for Transport and, in fact, before some members opposite were even in this House.

That I understand was the source of this material. I am told by Westrail that when this comment went forward to the experts responsible for preparing an internal Westrail report, it was declared invalid.

Mr Davies: Table the file! Tell us what happened after the 1st June.

Mr RUSHTON: So, for my part, I certainly would not have seen a comment coming from the CME. That refutes all the derogatory remarks made by members opposite and by people outside this place.

In fact, what happened was that a division of a department put forward a comment which was found by those responsible in a professional way for assessing such information to be unacceptable.

Mr Davies: How would the Commissioner of Main Roads know what it costs to electrify the railway?

Mr RUSHTON: The Leader of the Opposition is off the beam; we are talking about Westrail.

Mr Davies: You are talking about a document which you claim must be right because it is signed by Knox, Shea, and Aitken. What expertise do those three men have regarding the electrification of the railways? From where did they obtain their information?

Mr RUSHTON: The report dealt with a great deal more than simply electrification.

Mr Davies: Who is the most knowledgeable? Obviously, it would be the CME.

Mr RUSHTON: If the Leader of the Opposition will only keep quiet for a moment, I will tell him. In fact, Westrail prepared the basic material regarding electrification.

Mr Davies: But who in Westrail? Was it the office boy or the secretary of the commissioner? Who was it?

Mr RUSHTON: If the Leader of the Opposition wishes to demonstrate he is unintelligent, let him continue.

Mr Davies: To get out of this one you must tell us—

Mr RUSHTON: I do not need to get out of anything. It is the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues who must restore their credibility, because they have acted quite wrongly.

Mr Davies: You have misled this Parliament.

Mr Sodeman: Tell him he should resign.

Mr RUSHTON: The Leader of the Opposition certainly should resign for his performance tonight. His own colleagues will have him out after the next election, anyway.

Mr Pearce: You may not be here after the next election. They are not too happy down in Armadale with what you are doing with trains.

Mr RUSHTON: I have explained that the response to a request by the executive of Westrail for a comment on the FOR report came back in something less than 10 days, and that people within Westrail responsible for assessing that information and reporting on the statements by FOR made a certain finding—namely, that the material was invalid and unacceptable.

Mr B. T. Burke: Who decided the CME was wrong in his assessment?

Mr RUSHTON: I have already stated a number of times that in the opinion of the Westrail officers responsible for compiling the internal report, the material was unacceptable.

Mr Carr: But who was it?

Mr RUSHTON: Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Sibson), obviously the material available to members opposite is severely limited that they should make an attack on the Government in this way, because only a few weeks ago similar claims were made in a local newspaper to the claims now being made with great emphasis by the *Daily News*. The statements made in the first case were very nearly libellous, but the matter was not taken up, despite the fact that the same material from

the same source was involved. However, now that we are on the eve of an election, members opposite believe they should dramatise the whole situation.

Mr Pearce: Who says we are on the eve of an election? The election is not due until February, or didn't you know?

Mr RUSHTON: This matter was splashed all over the newspapers yesterday; reference was made to misleading figures and to an internal Westrail report. I received confirmation from the commissioner that there was no such document, and that was proved to be the case. An "internal Westrail report" means something that is prepared by officers of Westrail as a report. What happened was that a comment came forward from the CME which Westrail was not prepared to accept in its internal report.

I am glad I took action this morning to issue a statement of the facts behind this matter; it flushed the leaked paper immediately. I am sure that without a statement from me, we would have had a week of innuendo and attack. This has been one of my better days, because something I did not believe would work so well has worked admirably. As far as I am concerned, I have achieved what I set out to do. Unfair criticism was levelled at the Government and I made a statement to explain the issue.

However, today's *Daily News* chose to use statements such as, "A statement was hurriedly issued today by the Minister". Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Sibson), nearly everything one does as a Minister is at speed, so that is an unfair criticism.

I rang a senior officer of the *Daily News* to see whether the document could be made available to me so that I could have it validated, and he replied "Oh, no. It is held under lock and key." He did not intend to let me see it until later. However, it was interesting to note that once I made my statement explaining the matter, the document very quickly appeared in the newspaper in headline form.

Mr Acting Speaker, the Government has nothing to answer for tonight. The Leader of the Opposition has challenged my integrity by claiming I must have known about the comment which came from the CME—a comment which was held to be invalid and unacceptable by officers of Westrail and therefore was not included in their internal report which went forward to the Director General of Transport for summary and co-ordination and eventual submission to the Government.

The Commissioner of Railways advised me that in fact an internal Westrail report on which the newspaper is building such a case does not exist. I believe Mr McCullough; he has spent a lifetime working with the railways and certainly is not the type of person who would set out deliberately to mislead me or the Government. Equally, I do not believe Mr Knox, Mr Shea, or Mr Aitken would set out to mislead the Government. However, members opposite, under the cloak of parliamentary privilege, are challenging the integrity of these men and are claiming they have distorted figures and given the Government a wrong steer. I have challenged Mr McCaskill through the newspaper to identify the people he thinks are "doing a fix" within Westrail.

Mr Pearce: It is the Minister, not Westrail.

Mr RUSHTON: We have heard a scurrilous attack by the Opposition tonight. The amendment was written by the Leader of the Opposition and moved by a member who said he had no heart for it. The Leader of the Opposition made a very poor presentation; he produced no facts to support his claims. I believe that in these few moments I have been able to destroy the very base of the attack levelled at the Government by members opposite. I would ask the House to give members opposite the treatment they deserve by defeating this amendment.

MR McIVER (Avon) [9.10 p.m.]: With the Leader of the Opposition, I support the amendment moved by the member for Canning.

We have heard the speaker who has just resumed his seat, the Minister for Transport, answering the accusations that have been made against the Government. He has not introduced any new material into the subject we have been debating in this House for a long time. I believe the Government did not expect from the people of Western Australia the reaction it has given to this issue.

I have been critical of the Press for the reports it has made in relation to the Labor Party generally. I have been critical on a fair basis. However, I feel that the Press has done the Labor Party a service in its editions of last night and tonight. The Press has clearly indicated that a report has been prepared by a senior officer of Westrail. The question of whether the commissioner has seen the report is irrelevant.

Members cannot tell me that in an enterprise as large as Westrail the commissioner sees every document and every memo prepared in the various branches. It would be utterly impossible for him to do so. When one puts the question into its perspective, there can be no doubt that a

document exists. I would go further. I would say that no doubt what has been quoted is only an excerpt from the document. It is not as though the document does not exist. To say that it is only make-believe is utter nonsense.

The closure of the Fremantle-Perth railway has been in the mind of the Government for many years. I will be quoting from documents. I will be producing tangible evidence that the Fremantle railway closure has been pending for a considerable time.

The Government has hedged in relation to this matter. It has made claims about economy. However, the people of Western Australia have not been told of the real issues. Because of its neglect of public transport in Western Australia, the Government is now faced with the closure of the Fremantle-Perth railway.

For many years, the local authorities from Perth to Armadale have been pressuring the MRPA, which in turn has been pressuring the railways, to run more rail services from Perth to Armadale. Naturally, there is not enough rolling stock to do so, and it has to be obtained from somewhere. There is no money to purchase rolling stock, because Uncle Malcolm has said "No" to every submission that has been made. What is the Government to do? It has to close the Fremantle-Perth railway so that the railcars may be utilised on the Armadale-Perth section of the railway. That would implement the integration of bus and rail services which has been planned for a considerable time. That is the crux of the matter. By this move, the Government will not save anything in fuel. The railcars will be used even in their present run-down condition.

In May I asked questions about the tenders for the 10 new railcars. I followed those questions with a supplementary question tonight. The Minister has said that the matter is being evaluated. That is not a positive answer. It does not indicate that the new railcars will be purchased. I doubt that they will be. It is quite obvious that there is no money coming from Canberra.

Let us consider the situation over the years. The Government has to accept criticism for the hypocrisy of its senior Ministers and the Premier in saying that the line would not close. Over three years, there have been memos to the Cabinet in relation to the real situation. In addition, figures have been ascertained by the Friends of the Railways. That organisation has been spearheaded by men of great integrity. Those men certainly can analyse the situation for the people they represent. The organisation has within it a

former senior railway administrator and a chief mechanical engineer, Mr McCaskill. Because Mr McCaskill supports the Friends of the Railways, all of a sudden his viewpoint is not considered.

I maintain that Mr McCaskill's viewpoint is as important now as it was when he held the position of chief mechanical engineer. However, the Government will not allow the Friends of the Railways to discuss the situation with the public—the people who voted us into this House. The Government will not hold an inquiry. It would not even permit a meeting outside the railway station, as the Press has revealed.

All that the Premier can say is that the Leader of the Opposition is denigrating senior Westrail officers. That is nonsense. The Leader of the Opposition was a spokesman for the railway officers for many years. He would be the last person to denigrate the people with whom he has worked for a long time.

In his political notes in the newspaper, the Premier has been forced to deal with the Fremantle-Perth railway problem because of the growing momentum of the issue. In last Thursday's issue he devoted a full column to the railway. He tried to whitewash the real issues.

This State has become a laughing stock, not only to the rest of the nation but also to the world because of the decision of the Government. It does not matter what we say in the House. The Government has made up its mind. In *The West Australian* of the 27th July, 1979, the Government advised the people that it was firm on the rail closure. In other words, it does not matter what anyone says; the Government has made up its mind.

For the reasons that I have previously explained—because of the rapid growth in the Armadale-Perth corridor—the Government has to obtain railcars from somewhere. That is the essence of the problem. However, with the oil crisis steadily worsening, I wonder how long the old railcars will be able to run.

When Ministers visit country areas, they demonstrate the hypocrisy of this Government. I will quote an extract from the *Esperance Express* of Friday, the 16th March, 1979. The headline is "Minister Will Consider Rail Link with Lakes District". It is suggested that the Government will build a new railway to Esperance from the Lakes District. However, the Government cannot maintain the 12 miles of railway that it has here. This is the rubbish fed to the people of Western Australia.

The Government is running X-class locomotives on 45 lb. rails. What is the future in that? It is

only a matter of years before such traffic will stop. Is it the Government's policy to replace those? Of course it is not. When the report is produced, it will be interesting to learn what is the future of those lines.

This is the rubbish being fed to the people. The Government cannot maintain 12 miles of railway from Perth to Fremantle.

I want to quote from a document issued in 1966 by the Perth Regional Transport Co-ordinating Committee. The report is issued by people who know a little about transport. Let us consider the situation in 1966.

Mr Coyne: That was 13 years ago.

Mr McIVER: It was in 1976; what is wrong with the member's arithmetic?

Mr Pearce: It is the same as the Minister's.

Mr McIVER: I shall quote from the report as follows—

The overall effect of approval will be to allow us to move on railway improvements. As you know nothing has been done for many years for the railway system and the Committee believes we cannot wait any longer before committing investment on it.

I repeat: This was in 1976, and it makes interesting reading. These are recommendations from the Minister to the Premier.

Mr H. D. Evans: They have gone a bit quiet over there.

Mr McIVER: To continue—

4. The current situation with the railway system is as follows:

- (i) Integration of the bus and rail system can go no further, there is insufficient railway rolling stock.
- (ii) Existing capacity on peak hour trains is fully utilised and there is no additional rolling stock available.
- (iii) Twenty-three per cent of the rolling stock is almost at the end of its useful life and a further thirty-five per cent will need replacement by 1985—a total of 53 railcars and carriages out of a fleet of 93.
- (iv) Adverse public comment has been made about the standards of the rail fleet and instances of overcrowding on suburban trains.

This was in 1976. It is not what the Opposition said, but what the Minister said. To continue—

5. The Commissioner of Railways has indicated that preliminary work to obtain six

new carriages at a cost of \$1.2 million using 1977/78 and 1978/79 loan funds and anticipating deliveries at the end of 1978 should commence now.

Since then nothing has been done. It was only in June of this year that a move was made to order new railcars—at least, I assume a move in this direction was made. The reply to a question on this matter this afternoon was very evasive. I do not think the Government has the money to purchase new railcars; and I do not think we are going to get any. The Minister's recommendations to the Premier were as follows—

- (i) The proposal for electrification be dropped.

So the idea about electrification and there not being enough money to carry it out was being discussed by the Government in 1976. To continue—

- (ii) That we adopt a programme for both bus and rail improvement which the State can fund from its own resources. This programme relying on continuing use of the diesel railway would commence in 77/78.

11. There are two Alternatives to (ii) above—(a) continuing to operate suburban passenger trains on the entire railway system or . . . (b) continuing to operate passenger services on Perth to Midland and Perth to Armadale lines and discontinue the Perth to Fremantle service.

How many times since 1976 have the Premier and the Minister said that this line will not be closed? At the opening of the Westrail centre the Premier said to the workers that they should have no fears, and he gave them an assurance that the line would remain open. Yet here are recommendations from the Minister, who knew full well that it was the Government's intention to close the line.

The Government, however, has had the hide to come into this House and show its hypocrisy and to talk rubbish about the economy and other things and to mislead the people of this State, just as it has been doing with many other issues since it came to power in 1974.

Mr T. H. Jones: They are very quiet now.

Mr McIVER: I shall continue quoting as follows—

12. Under Alternative (b), at a date chosen, we would cease to operate passenger trains on the Perth-Fremantle line, rail passengers would be diverted to buses operating on existing roads with priority

arrangements at significant congestion points. Rail freight traffic would continue over the Fremantle line. The Commissioner of Main Roads advises that the road system between Perth and Fremantle has adequate capacity and will have for the foreseeable future. This Perth-Fremantle corridor is not a growth corridor, that is to say total passenger journeys by car, bus and rail to and from the Central Business District are showing little increase.

The Government knew this in 1976. To continue—

On the other hand, the other two corridors have potential for growth and indeed are growing rapidly in terms of persons resident in them and travelling to and from the Central Business District. The Metropolitan Region Scheme as currently approved and the endorsed corridor plan for Perth, dictates this pattern of growth.

Adoption of Alternative (b) would save \$4.0 million capital expenditure up to June 1983. The reduction in annual operating expense on closure of the rail passenger services between Perth and Fremantle would be \$1.75 million—

I point out to the Minister that there is a discrepancy between the current figure showing the saving to be made and that presented to the Premier in 1976.

To continue—

—and the additional cost for replacement bus services roundly \$1.0 million annually, leaving a saving to the State of \$.75 million annually.

Cessation of passenger train services on the Fremantle line would provide additional rolling stock for the remaining lines. This would temporarily defer the need for new rolling stock to provide additional capacity, but would not eliminate the need for replacement of rolling stock.

It is quite evident why, in the last two financial years, no additional rolling stock has been purchased. There has been a build-up in the Perth-Armadale corridor. Perhaps that is the next line which will get the axe from the Government—if it remains in power. I see the Government has resolved itself to sit on this side of the House, because it has prepared new seats for this side of the House next year.

Like the Leader of the Opposition, I would like the Government to go to the polls as soon as possible on this very issue of the closure of the Perth-Fremantle line.

Mr Clarko: You will lose on the other 99 issues.

Mr McIVER: We have heard before the great words of wisdom from the growing member for Karrinyup. When his words are analysed we find there is no substance to them. He cannot even pick the correct football teams, so the member for Murchison-Eyre tells me.

Why does not the Government inform the people of the truth? That is what the Opposition wants from the Government. We want the truth and we want to be able to debate the issues and to have a full inquiry. This is what the Friends of the Railways want, this is what the railway unions want, and this is what the majority of the people in Western Australia want. However, the continuing arrogance of the Government is shown by its answer of "No" to these requests. The great white father has said, "Irrespective of what other people say, the line must go."

Mr Rushton: Are you now calling me the great white father?

Mr McIVER: I was speaking of the Premier. The Minister makes great play about the Opposition not quoting a figure for the cost of electrification for urban transport. The electrification of urban transport was accomplished in Queensland where the necessary money came from Consolidated Revenue. It is the year of the train in Queensland.

Mr Rushton: You should refer to them.

Mr McIVER: The Queensland Government spent \$19 million from its own resources.

Mr Rushton: How many millions do you think we have spent on the railways in this State?

Mr McIVER: I am talking about urban transport. The Government has not spent anything on rolling stock in years.

Mr Rushton: We have called for applications. You people did not do anything.

Mr McIVER: The Minister says he has called for applications. There is nothing wrong with calling for applications for a job; but that does not mean to say a particular applicant will get the job.

Mr Rushton: Tenders are in.

Mr McIVER: For how long is this going to continue? Members opposite took the same action before the last election when they were talking about electrification. The Minister must think we on this side of the House have very poor memories. This is what members opposite intended to go to the people with. They were going to do a great deal for the railways and in fact for the whole of the transport system of Western Australia. It was going to be the greater

development of transport we had ever seen. In fact, the railways are now closing down.

Mr Stephens: What did you do when you were in government?

Mr McIVER: Unfortunately we were not in government long enough to evaluate the situation and obtain the finance we would have liked; but had we done so, the transport system today would not be in such a chronic mess.

Mr Blaikie: You would have sold out to the Commonwealth, would you not? It would be like the South Australian situation.

Mr McIVER: This issue has been canvassed in the House for many hours; but surely anyone with any knowledge of the transport situation in Western Australia can see that the majority of people want this line to be retained.

Only today I was talking to a person involved in the training of retarded children. These children reside in an institution served by the Perth-Fremantle line. They have been taught how to get on and off trains. This has necessitated a great deal of instruction. Some members may think it is an easy task; but it is not when one is dealing with a retarded child. These children have been trained specifically to use the railway system. Now they must be taught how to cope with buses and, therefore, the training programme of these children has been set back considerably.

Mr Clarko: They use buses in Scarborough.

Mr McIVER: The honourable member may be correct; but in this case a training programme has been conducted involving a large number of retarded children.

We must consider also the situation in regard to elderly people. I do not know where the idea came from, but people say, "they will use the buses automatically".

Mr Rushton: Do you know who travels around the city in the Clipper service in greater numbers than anyone else? It is the elderly people.

Mr McIVER: The elderly people use the Clipper service because it is free.

Mr Rushton: That is the reason, is it?

Mr McIVER: The Clipper service is free and it was implemented by the Tonkin Labor Government.

Mr O'Connor: No, it was not.

Mr Jamieson: They had a great bus service everywhere.

Mr McIVER: If the Clipper service is so good, why is it not extended to West Perth where medical practitioners and the like have their offices?

Mr Rushton: That is where it is going.

Mr McIVER: When is it intended that the Clipper service should be extended to West Perth?

Mr Laurance: When we close the railway.

Mr Rushton: It was in the newspapers. You do not read the newspapers.

Mr McIVER: I have read a great deal of the Minister's rubbish in the newspapers.

I support the amendment moved by the member for Canning. I have endeavoured to put this matter in its correct perspective. I have tried to set out the real reason that the Government is closing the line. If the Government is honest and wants to inform the people of its point of view, I challenge it to debate the issue either by means of a Select Committee or through some other committee of inquiry so that people, other than members of Parliament, can have their say in an endeavour to retain this railway line. It will be a retrograde step for some people when this line is closed; it will certainly be a retrograde step for transport generally; and it will consequently be a retrograde step for the whole of Western Australia.

I support the amendment.

MR HERZFELD (Mundaring) [9.35 p.m.]: In speaking against this amendment I am very conscious of the age old tactic that when one has nothing to say that is of any consequence one attacks people. It is quite obvious the Opposition was left with nothing to say; therefore, it initiated this scurrilous attack on the Minister. The most disconcerting aspect of the amendment is that, by attacking the Minister, members opposite are attacking his advisers.

Of course, the amendment adds nothing to the state of information on this question and it is part of a predetermined programme by the Opposition to try to capitalise on an issue for political ends and political ends only. It is not in the interests of members opposite to be honest and decent with the people of Western Australia.

Members opposite have focused on a document which has no official relevance. It is the opinion of an individual and it was used by the newspaper concerned purely to sell copy. I shall refer in due course in some detail to the content of the so-called "report" and I will show just how little credence one can give such a document.

The Opposition has been fast off the mark to denigrate the advisers of the Government; but at the same time it has not questioned the credibility of the people who claim to be right on this issue. I should like to pose the question, "Just who are

these experts in the FOR organisation that they throw their lot in with?" With one exception, none of them have been named and I prefer to place my reliance for advice on the people who advise the Government, rather than on the information of an unknown, recently retired employee of the Railways Department.

Mr T. H. Jones: Do you know who is advising whom? It is not Westrail advising the Government; it is the Government telling Westrail what to do.

Mr HERZFELD: By moving this amendment the Opposition, and particularly the Leader of the Opposition because obviously he admitted to being the architect of it, has shown the degree of stupidity that exists on his side of the House.

Mr Pearce: Are you attacking people because you have no points to make?

Mr HERZFELD: I will come to the points I wish to make in a moment.

Mr Pearce: What a hypocrite you are! You were just condemning that approach a few moments ago.

Mr HERZFELD: Members opposite are asking the electors of Western Australia to display their confidence in their policies at the next election.

Mr Pearce: I am pointing out your hypocrisy in condemning one line of action and then following it yourself. That is sheer hypocrisy.

Mr HERZFELD: I am saying the electors of Western Australia are much wiser than that and the Opposition, far from doing itself any credit on this issue, will find it will be its doom. This matter will involve also the demise of the present incumbent as Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Pearce: Just as well your electorate is a long way away from the line.

Mr Jamieson: You said that about me, but it made no difference. We are still here.

Mr HERZFELD: The honourable member who has just interjected may still be here, but members opposite tipped the bucket over him, did they not? Perhaps he still has ambitions to come back.

Mr Pearce: He is a lot higher up in his party than you are in yours. You should be the last one to cast aspersions on anyone.

Mr HERZFELD: The whole basis of this amendment moved by the Opposition is the information held by one person—

Mr Laurance: If you keep on making all those interjections we shall have to have a mini *Hansard* next session.

Mr HERZFELD: The whole basis for this amendment is that in the view of one person, an estimate carried out by the FOR was correct. It is fairly obvious from what has been published that the whole basis of their estimate is nothing like the estimate which was prepared for the Government. I suppose I could prepare an estimate and that estimate might be only \$20 million. However, in no way could my estimate be compared with any other.

I read in last night's paper that one difference between the two estimates is that the FOR made no provision for air-conditioning of the railcars whereas the Government's estimate does. If we are going to discredit the Government's figures, let us make sure we are making a comparison on an equal basis.

Tonight the Minister has indicated quite clearly that no matter on what figures the FOR based their estimates they were not the same figures the Government's advisers used.

Mr Skidmore: That is an admission of guilt if ever I heard one.

Mr HERZFELD: I beg the honourable member's pardon.

Mr Skidmore: You heard the first time.

Mr HERZFELD: I did not. I would be interested to hear what he said.

Mr Skidmore: Read *Hansard* and find out.

Mr O'Connor: He does not want a reply.

Mr Skidmore: Not particularly.

Mr HERZFELD: Apparently the FOR estimate does not include items which they say are not necessary. Who are they to say whether or not they are necessary?

Mr Skidmore: Because they have nothing to do with the closure of the Fremantle-Perth line.

Mr HERZFELD: Who are their experts? I happen to be talking to the amendment. Obviously the member for Swan does not want to do so. I will come to the closure of the railway line in a minute.

Mr Pearce: That is what the amendment is about. It means you are not talking to the amendment this minute, doesn't it?

Mr HERZFELD: As I understand the so-called document, the \$50 million estimate is based on the Brisbane electrification project cost.

Mr Skidmore: That is right.

Mr HERZFELD: I wonder whether any consideration is being given to the fact that the original estimates for the Brisbane project have been well and truly exceeded.

Mr O'Connor: By double.

Mr Skidmore: That is in regard to the total scheme. You are way off.

Mr HERZFELD: Perhaps the FOR report did not take into account this essential practical experience.

Mr Skidmore: The cost in Queensland escalated for other reasons.

Mr HERZFELD: I have read the FOR document.

Mr Skidmore: You had better read it again.

Mr HERZFELD: I would have to say anyone who believes what the FOR had to say, based on the simple evidence that was contained in that document, would have to be very stupid.

Mr Skidmore: The CME agreed.

Mr HERZFELD: I said earlier that it appeared to me the Leader of the Opposition was reflecting the opinion of members on the other side of the House—he was indicating they were stupid. It may well be that the CME in this particular instance—

Mr Skidmore: Is stupid in your mind?

Mr HERZFELD: —thought that the letter drafted by Mr Entwhistle was correct.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HERZFELD: I remind members of the Opposition that the work involved in the electrification and standardisation of the railway line does not include only mechanical work.

Mr Skidmore: Go on! No kidding? Fair dinkum?

Mr HERZFELD: It also includes civil works. It may be that the CME in this case was not too *au fait* with that side of it.

Several members interjected.

Mr Jamieson: You are a disgrace to your profession.

Mr HERZFELD: A number of disciplines are involved. I would say that I would need a great deal more information to satisfy me that the case that was put up by the FOR had any credibility. I would rather place my judgment on those senior civil servants who are giving advice to the Government on matters of transport.

Mr T. H. Jones: Are they? Who is advising whom? Can you tell us?

Mr HERZFELD: By asking a question the member for Collie again is casting a slur on those very responsible and senior civil servants.

Mr T. H. Jones: I have seen this happen too many times.

Mr Skidmore: You have already said the CME is stupid.

Mr T. H. Jones: You tell us. I will be glad to learn who is advising whom.

Mr O'Connor: If you listen you will learn a fair bit.

Mr Skidmore: Not from him.

Mr T. H. Jones: Not from the member for Mundaring.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): Order!

Mr HERZFELD: I hope that when the Opposition has given some thought to the matter they will investigate and find out who were the FOR experts who were able to submit this estimate in only three weeks.

Mr Skidmore: The estimate was recognised by the CME as being spot on.

Mr HERZFELD: Once the names of the experts are obtained their qualifications should be compared with those of the people who advise the Government.

Mr Skidmore: Like Shea? He would know a lot about railways.

Mr HERZFELD: Perhaps then members of the Opposition would adopt a different view if they could see beyond the political capital they thought they might gain from this issue. There has not been enough emphasis placed on the very positive aspects of the Government's total urban transport package. The tendency of people is to forget. This issue is before us as a result of the political shenanigans perpetrated by the Opposition. People are inclined to forget that the Government has taken some very positive initiatives in urban transport which include the rail closure. People tend to forget that the rail closure is only part of this transport policy package. The Government has indicated that it will upgrade the railway services to Midland and Armadale. It has also stated it will take practical steps to replace the railway from Fremantle to Perth with a much more convenient, frequent, and better bus service. It will be a far more flexible service which will much better serve the people and, as a result, it will hopefully increase patronage. In addition, fuel will be saved.

Mr T. H. Jones: What happens when we run out of fuel?

Mr HERZFELD: It is only people such as the member for Collie who capitalise on gloom-and-doom attitudes, who think we will run out of fuel.

Mr T. H. Jones: The Deputy Prime Minister made a statement on Monday regarding this.

Mr HERZFELD: The only reason we will run out of fuel is if the member for Collie and the unions which support him put the clamp on fuel deliveries, as was done in New South Wales recently.

That is the reason we will run out of fuel. Members opposite seem to forget we are 70 per cent self-sufficient, and if the TLC will allow us to get on with our exploration programme it is possible we will become completely self-sufficient.

Mr T. H. Jones: You should do your homework.

Mr HERZFELD: I have done my homework.

Mr T. H. Jones: Not if you talk like that.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): Order!

Mr HERZFELD: Members opposite thrive on creating fear and concern in the minds of the people. I have spoken about the energy economy of the proposed change, and I have spoken about the cost economy. Members opposite seem to think money grows on trees. Where will we get the money to electrify the railways? I interjected while the member for Avon was speaking and said that the Labor Government had an opportunity to do something about electrification during 1971-1974. However, what did it do? Nothing! What did the then Government do to upgrade the railway system about which it is complaining all the time? Absolutely nothing!

Mr Rushton: The then Government moved to close a railway.

Mr Jamieson: We will tell you all about that shortly. The Minister is slow, but he will wake up.

Mr HERZFELD: Opposition members have been criticising the Government for neglecting the transport system.

Mr B. T. Burke: Hear, hear!

Mr HERZFELD: However, members opposite fail to comment on the fact that this whole issue is about upgrading and improving the transport system.

Mr O'Connor: Hear, hear!

Mr HERZFELD: This whole issue has been brought about by the Government's attempt to get people to return their patronage to public transport. That certainly will not happen with the existing rail system; that is obvious. The present trend indicates a constant decline in patronage.

Just recently I wrote to the Director General of Transport and asked what evidence if any was available anywhere in the world to show people would return to public transport when the price of

fuel increased. In this State we have the situation that during the last 12 months the price of fuel out of bowsters has doubled. Since 1974 we have seen a tenfold increase in the price of crude oil.

Mr B. T. Burke: Thanks to Malcolm!

Mr HERZFELD: Yet, the patronage of public transport continues to decline. I asked what evidence there was, internationally, to show that people would return to public transport if the price of fuel continued to rise. He replied that there was no evidence. I only wish I had his letter with me because I could actually quote his statement that it was felt people would rather give up eating than lose the freedom of using their motorcars. That statement conforms with my view.

Before people return to the use of public transport they will pool their cars and plan their trips a little better. In that way they will conserve fuel but, certainly, they will not abandon their motorcars.

One message which needs to be got across loudly and clearly to the electorate is the fundamental difference between the policies of those on this side of the House and those in opposition with regard to public transport. Our policy is that we supply the type of public transport that meets the needs and aspirations and life style of the people in this State. The policy of the Opposition is to provide a public transport system and then make the life style of the people conform with it.

This difference in policies is what the closure of the line between Perth and Fremantle is all about. The Opposition states the line should be kept open, electrified, and people provided to use it by putting up high rise buildings along the route. That would be the only way to patronise the service. However, everyone does not go along with that sort of philosophy. People should have a choice as to how they live and how they commute, and it is the Government's job to ensure that the choice is maintained. The Opposition would waste money on something that cannot be justified economically. Having made that mistake, it would then set about rezoning large areas of land so that people could be housed in flats. The Opposition believes in "big brother government" telling the people what to do.

There is another point I wish to make in relation to this overall plan enunciated by the Government which is very important and must not be forgotten. The rail closure will give the Perth City Council an opportunity to provide a heart for the city with the removal of the ribbon which dissects the city and confines its growth. I

envisage a wonderful heart for this city in the area now occupied by the railway line. There will be room for malls and gardens, and there will be a connection between the southern and the northern parts of the city.

I am aware the Government has said it is leaving its options open with regard to the railway reserve, and I am glad of that. If we find, in three years' time, that circumstances and new technology dictate a different type of public transport, the rails will still be there to be used to the best advantage of the people of Perth. I hope any future planning will enable us to keep the area as a heart for the City of Perth because that certainly will enhance the beauty of this city and improve living conditions in it.

In conclusion, I reiterate that this is a scurrilous attack on the Minister—a Minister who has proved himself again and again to be thoroughly competent.

Mr Pearce: As with the fuel tax levy!

Mr HERZFELD: The Minister is thoroughly sensitive to the wishes of the electorate. In fact, I know of no Minister who spends more time in consultation. If I had his unenviable job I do not think I would have been as patient as he was with the FOR people. He gave them the courtesy of a very good hearing but, just like the Opposition members, the FOR people are not prepared to accept facts. They are not prepared to accept the fact that other people have different points of view, and that those people can be right. They seem to think they have a God-given right not to be wrong. They consider that people who are professionally competent are wrong because they are employed to advise the Government.

Mr Jamieson: Such conceit.

Mr HERZFELD: I agree the FOR people have tremendous conceit, and I also think the Opposition members have tremendous conceit when, on such skimpy evidence, they set about attacking the Commissioner of Railways, the Commissioner of Main Roads, and the Director General of Transport because of the advice they have given the Government on this issue and the professionalism they have exhibited.

It is rather difficult for the public to discover the facts because it appears the Press, for whatever reason, does not want to publish the facts. But the facts will get across to the public, and members of the Opposition will then have red faces. I totally oppose the amendment.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [10.01 p.m.]: Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Blaikie)—

### *Point of Order*

Mr PEARCE: On a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker, you have called two consecutive members on the Government side.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): It is my prerogative to whom I give the call and I do not believe I have given it to two members of the Government side.

### *Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

Mr STEPHENS: The member for Gosnells should make sure of his facts before he gets up on a point of order.

I am sure the House will be interested to know the National Party's position in this matter. The National Party is, of course, that independent group the members of which are able to make their decisions on the facts. We are not dictated to and we do not follow blindly. As we have stated on many occasions, we are very interested in restoring public confidence in this House of Parliament and in upgrading the prestige of parliamentarians, generally.

Mr Pearce: It is a pretty big job.

Mr STEPHENS: The first thing we must do is ensure that debate takes place in this House and that we are made aware of all the facts so that we can make decisions in the interests of the State. We must not just follow blindly and accept as gospel everything the Government brings forward. To do so would be to render this House a mere rubber stamp. In my opinion, it is the public belief that this place is just a rubber stamp, and I consider that is one of the factors leading to the very low image Parliament projects in the public mind.

I do not agree with the member for Mundaring that the Government's advisers are sacrosanct and we cannot question their judgment. I believe we are particularly lucky in this State in that our senior public servants are men of reliability and credibility; but that does not make them infallible. Therefore, we should be free to question them. We can question them in any way without reflecting on their integrity.

As we all know, the Minister for Transport has the ultimate responsibility for that department. The final decision is the Minister's, and if he takes advice from his officers which proves to be wrong the responsibility is his. He is not forced to take their advice.

Having said that, I should also restate my party's position with regard to issues which come before the House. We have stated we are prepared to support the Government in principle but we reserve the right to make our judgments for or against issues as they come before the

Parliament. When I say that, I mean for or against issues of a positive nature which will achieve something worth while for this State. We have indicated we will not support censure motions because either they are designed purely to embarrass the Government or, if carried into effect, they would not achieve any worth-while benefit.

The amendment now before the House would not achieve anything worth while in relation to the facts and information on the Perth-Fremantle railway line if it were agreed to and carried into effect. The Leader of the Opposition acknowledged that fact when speaking earlier this evening. I wrote down his words when he said them, and he said that for anything beneficial to come out of the Perth-Fremantle railway discussion the whole matter had to go back into the melting pot.

To support an amendment to the Address-in-Reply designed to achieve the removal of the Minister from office would not ensure the whole question goes back into the melting pot. If it would not ensure that, it would not achieve anything worth while in relation to the Perth-Fremantle railway debate or the electrification of the line. So it is quite obvious that the National Party will not be supporting the amendment.

Mr H. D. Evans: Are you happy to see the line closed on the 2nd September?

Mr STEPHENS: No. We do not want the line to be closed, but can the member for Warren assure me that support of this amendment would lead to retention of the line? We in the National Party would be prepared to make a judgment on an issue before this House which would ensure the line is retained and is not closed on the 2nd September, but the member for Warren cannot assure me that support of this amendment would achieve that end. There is one very good reason that he cannot give that assurance; that is, it would not in fact ensure that the railway line is retained.

Mr H. D. Evans: At least it would give it a chance.

Mr STEPHENS: Over the last six years the member for Warren and other members on that side of the House have stood up in this place and said time and time again that there is only one Minister in this House; that is, the Premier. If they accept that as being a fact, how can they suggest that the removal of one Minister will achieve anything?

Several members interjected.

Mr T. H. Jones: You were a Minister once.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): Order!

Mr STEPHENS: I am inclined to be modest and for that reason I do not want to go into details about the time I was a Minister. I refer to it very rarely. I was not sacked; I resigned because I was not prepared to be pushed around.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I trust the honourable member will relate his remarks to the matter before the Chair.

Mr STEPHENS: Yes, Mr Acting Speaker. We have previously opposed in this House an amendment to the Address-in-Reply motion in relation to the railway line, and we have supported an amendment calling for the appointment of a Select Committee. The latter amendment was moved in this House on the 17th May. That action was consistent with the policy of my party which I outlined earlier in my speech.

Mr Pearce: Sitting on the fence.

Mr STEPHENS: We are not sitting on the fence. I will not repeat what I said. It is quite obvious the member for Gosnells cannot hear very well. I suggest he read my speech when it is available in *Hansard*, when he will see I outlined our policy in relation to the issues which come before this House. When he has assimilated that he will clearly understand why we previously opposed an amendment to the Address-in-Reply motion in relation to the railway line but supported the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into that matter and the report prepared by the Friends of the Railways. We took that action because we believed that if this Parliament is to make considered judgments, its members must be aware of all the facts.

Mr T. H. Jones: Who moved for the Select Committee?

Mr STEPHENS: The honourable member knows who moved for the Select Committee. We believe that the establishment of a Select Committee would have enabled this House to be fully apprised of all the relevant information. It would have allowed those members in the House who are prepared to make a free judgment to have access to the facts. Had a Select Committee been established, we would not be in this present situation. Certainly we would not be wasting the time of the House by debating an amendment to the Address-in-Reply, an amendment which is in effect a censure motion.

The Press reports of the last few days, and particularly the reports contained in the *Daily News*, must have enhanced the credibility of the Friends of the Railways. We must now ask ourselves whether the Government deliberately avoided the establishment of a Select Committee

because it was afraid that some facts contrary to its point of view would be put before this House. Certainly it appears that there is information coming forward that must cause some doubt about the matter to reasonable people, and certainly the Press reports enhance the argument that a Select Committee would have allowed us to get to the bottom of the issue.

The member for Mundaring referred to the confused thinking of Opposition members. I do not believe Opposition members are the only ones who have indulged in confused thinking. Either the Premier is guilty of confused thinking, or if his thinking is not confused, he is guilty of trying deliberately to mislead the people in the electorate of Merredin.

I would like to refer to an article which appeared in the *Merredin Mercury*. It is headed, "Confused thinking says Premier", and it refers to the Premier's comment on a speech made to our National Party conference by the Parliamentary Leader of the National Party, the member for Merredin. The Premier criticised the member for Merredin, and incidentally, of course, he criticised also the National Party, for supporting the motion for a Select Committee to inquire into the closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway line. The Premier conveniently ignored the fact that the National Party had opposed an amendment to the Address-in-Reply on this very subject. In part the Premier was quoted as follows—

I question whether the people of the Merredin electorate share his professed concern about the future of the Perth-Fremantle passenger rail service.

He was critical of the decision to terminate that service—a decision made because not enough people use it and because there are no realistic prospects of increasing the patronage.

Every member who comes into this House, in addition to his responsibilities to his electorate, must also have regard for the wider interests of the State as a whole. It is very remiss of the Premier to criticise any member for taking an interest in an area outside his particular electorate. Perhaps if the member for Bunbury wishes to interject he will speak up.

Mr Sibson: I said, "What a naive comment."

Mr STEPHENS: A naive comment from a naive person.

Mr Watt: That is what he was getting at.

Mr Pearce: It was not worth asking for amplification of his interjection.

Mr STEPHENS: No, I was wasting my time.

Surely everyone agrees that what happens in the metropolitan area must have a bearing on the State as a whole. When a State Government loses money anywhere, it is of interest to all the residents.

I will go further and say that the fact we are now debating such an amendment following articles that appeared in the Press strengthens the decision we made on that occasion to support the move for a Select Committee to elicit all the facts. That was what we were after.

I take this opportunity to challenge the Premier in regard to his comments quoted in the *Merredin Mercury*. As I said earlier, if his thinking was not confused, it was deliberately misleading.

The only other point I would like to make during this debate relates to something that has not been missed by members of this Chamber; that is, we notice once again that the member for Moore is absent.

Mr T. H. Jones: Do you know where he is?

Mr STEPHENS: The member for Moore was absent when the previous amendment to the Address-in-Reply was moved. Subsequently, when speaking in this House, he expressed regret at his absence on that occasion and he said he supported the retention of the Perth-Fremantle railway line. He assured the House that had he been present he would have voted for that amendment.

Mr Jamieson: Probably he is again at a Press conference.

Mr STEPHENS: We all know what happened when it came time to vote on the motion to appoint a Select Committee. The member for Moore was again absent from the House. Once more he is absent. It is stretching things a little far to ask us to believe that this is simply coincidence.

Mr Jamieson: Why don't you announce your candidate to stand against him and stop mucking about?

Mr STEPHENS: We are witnessing the continuing saga of strong talk and weak action that has been typical of the members of the National Country Party—

Mr T. H. Jones: I thought you were trying to win him over.

Mr STEPHENS: —who have for years turned their backs on those whom they profess to represent. The National Party is left to carry on the tradition of representing effectively the country people.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr H. D. Evans: What did you say about modest members?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): Order! I ask the member to contain his remarks to the amendment before the Chair.

Mr Skidmore: I thought he was doing that fairly closely.

Mr STEPHENS: I am rather surprised at that comment, Mr Acting Speaker. I thought I was containing my remarks to the matter before the Chair. I was referring to the comments made previously by the member for Moore about the closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway line. I thought I was in order.

Mr Jamieson: But he never indulges in these debates—you have already said that.

Mr STEPHENS: I will move on. As I said earlier, supporting this amendment would not supply us with the facts and information upon which we could make a sound judgment whether or not to retain the Perth-Fremantle railway line. I have indicated that the National Party is sympathetic towards the retention of the railway line, but we would like Parliament to have all the facts at its disposal.

I will conclude by saying that even were this amendment carried tonight, at best it would mean the resignation of the Minister for Transport, and I do not think that would achieve anything. Have Opposition members stopped to think what would happen if the Minister were to resign?

Mr Jamieson: Who would take his place?

Mr STEPHENS: Exactly!

Mr Jamieson: You worry me.

Mr STEPHENS: The next Minister for Transport might be the member for Moore, and then we would be a great deal worse off.

With those few remarks I indicate that the National Party will be opposing the amendment.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [10.19 p.m.]: It is obvious that certain serious questions need to be answered by the Government. We need to know what happened in Westrail. How did it happen that reports appear not to have been read by the responsible officers? How did it happen that a significant report on the costing of electrification of the metropolitan system was not seen either by the Commissioner of Railways or the Minister for Transport? We must question the competence of the people responsible for the transport operations in this State. In fact, that is what the amendment before us tonight is all about.

I believe the Minister for Transport has conceded in essence that part of the report in the

*Daily News* is correct. The Friends of the Railways submitted that the cost to electrify the Perth metropolitan railway system would be \$50 million.

That costing was then sent to various people in Westrail, who were asked how accurate it was; and at least one person in Westrail—the chief mechanical engineer—reported, presumably to his superiors, that the costing of the FOR was accurate—that is, the chief mechanical engineer said that the \$50 million analysis was quite right. Who saw this man's report? I say to the House that the chief mechanical engineer of Westrail is a very senior official. Probably he is the most competent official in Westrail to analyse a costing of this type. He is the man one would go to if one were trying to ascertain whether people from outside were right. I think my leader said earlier that the chief mechanical engineer is the third man down in the hierarchy of the railways; so he is a very senior official indeed.

That report was produced, but what happened to it? If the Minister is to be believed, nobody read it, because Westrail then produced a report which is at total variance with that of its own expert. When the existence of the report of the chief mechanical engineer of Westrail was alluded to by the FOR, the Minister assured the people of Western Australia that no such report existed, and he was backed up by the Commissioner of Railways. Surely somebody either in Westrail or in the Minister's office, must be demonstrating a great deal of incompetence, if the very existence of a report by a senior official was not even known. One could understand the situation if in fact Westrail had decided that its officer's costing was inaccurate. Westrail would at least know that the proposition had been put to it, and it would refute it on various grounds. Yet according to the Minister nobody knew about the report; nobody had even seen the document. The Minister even went so far as to allege that the document did not exist. What degree of incompetence does that demonstrate?

I come back to the point made by the member for Avon, and supported by the Minister's denial of the article in yesterday's issue of the *Daily News*, that in fact the whole operation was not designed to dig out the truth of the matter, or to ascertain what would be the actual cost of electrifying the system, but in fact was designed to prop up the Government's policy. The Government had already announced that the Fremantle railway had to be closed because it could not afford electrification, and it could not afford to continue the rail service. Westrail had to back up that policy by producing a figure, and it

produced a figure of \$120 million, which was obviously padded.

The difference between the FOR figure of \$50 million—and that figure was found to be accurate by the chief mechanical engineer of Westrail—and the Government's figure of \$120 million is \$70 million, made up essentially of padding in most cases. The difference is made up mainly of costs which would have to be incurred if the railway system were to continue at all, whether it be diesel or electric. If the railway system is to continue, most of those additional costs would have to be borne. I think an interesting question is raised here, because I represent an electorate which runs down a good section of the Perth-Armadale railway line, and I can tell the Minister—if he is not aware of it already—that many people in that area are most concerned about the future of that line. They understand that the system needs to be electrified if rapid transit rail transport is to continue into the future, bearing in mind the volume of traffic that will be required by the growing population.

Of course, the Minister has made a brief flirtation with electrification. Recently, he returned from an overseas holiday, announcing that he had been looking at electrification. He made a couple of announcements, possibly affected by jet lag, and then the matter died away. Perhaps it was filed away in the same Westrail vault in which the document to which we are referring was filed away.

The essence of our call for the resignation of the Minister for Transport lies in this fact: if the Minister was unaware that the chief mechanical engineer of Westrail had agreed that the costing of the Friends of the Railways was accurate, then he has demonstrated incompetence in the operation of his department. If the Commissioner of Railways was unaware that the third man down in the hierarchy had agreed with the FOR, then he was negligent in his duties; but the Minister must carry the responsibility because it was he who put the Commissioner of Railways in that position, and it is he who is responsible for supervising him.

If the Minister was aware that the chief mechanical engineer had produced a report on the basis of a costing of \$50 million, but chose to ignore it, hoping that nobody would find out about it, then he is not only negligent but also dishonest, and should be called upon to resign for misleading the people of this State.

Either the Minister is culpable on the grounds of dishonesty or on the grounds of

negligence—whichever one chooses, it should lead to his resignation.

What sort of defence has the Minister for Transport put up in respect of this matter? Virtually none. He now says that the document provided by the chief mechanical engineer is inaccurate and, therefore, it was ignored on those grounds. However, yesterday the Minister did not know that document existed. Is this the mark of a Minister who is in charge of his department? Is this the mark of a Minister who knows what is going on in the area of his own responsibility? Mr Deputy Speaker, I will tell you what it is the mark of: It is the mark of the considerable consistency that this Minister has displayed.

This Minister is the same chap who lobbied into this House in the dying days of the autumn session and had to admit that his department had been inaccurate in costing the fuel tax loading. He had to admit his department was inaccurate by some millions of dollars. That inaccuracy was first pointed out by the member for Mt. Marshall. I saw an advertisement only the other day for one of those remarkable little calculators which do all sorts of wonderful things and can be bought for \$10 from Woolies. Perhaps the Minister should get his department to buy him one, or perhaps the Minister should buy one for his department, because the Minister is consistently coming up with figures that are proven to be inaccurate.

Why is that? Is it simply because he cannot add? I think it is more likely because he cannot figure out what is going on in his department and balance it against the directives he receives from the Premier. I agree with the comments made by the member for Morley that this is very much a one-man band; the decisions come down from the top. I believe the Minister probably had little to do with the decision. He was told what to do, and that was all there was to it. He was told the reason for closing the line was that upgrading and electrification would be too expensive. He had to produce figures to prove that was true. Therefore he got his officers to grab every figure they could think of and pad it out as much as possible, in the hope that the final figure would scare everybody off. Maybe it did, but unfortunately that figure was abundantly wrong and was demonstrated to be so by the FOR, which was supported by the Minister's own resident expert on the matter—the chief mechanical engineer of Westrail.

My leader raised the question regarding on what advice Westrail decided that its chief mechanical engineer was wrong when he said there was nothing wrong with the basic assessments and the figures contained in the report of the Friends of the Railways. What other

expertise is available to Westrail to enable it to decide that its chief mechanical engineer is wrong?

Who else in Westrail has sufficient detailed engineering knowledge to be able to make such a judgment and to prove the chief mechanical engineer wrong? We have suggested that in fact there is nobody in Westrail with that expertise apart from the chief mechanical engineer.

Mr Rushton: You are denigrating some very good people who are very professional.

Mr PEARCE: Let us get to the facts of this. Who are these people? That is a question we are entitled to ask. The Minister has not told us who they are. He says they are very good people, but for all we know they could be bus drivers because the Minister will not tell us who they are or what are their qualifications. On one hand we have the chief mechanical engineer whose qualifications and qualities are undoubted, and on the other hand we have other experts in Westrail who have proven the chief mechanical engineer to be wrong, but whose qualifications are unknown.

Mr Rushton: What is the qualification of the Commissioner of Railways?

Mr PEARCE: His qualification does not appear to include basic literacy, if he has not even read the report of his own chief mechanical engineer. Yet he says the report does not exist. For heaven's sake, if it is the Commissioner of Railways who is the Minister's resident expert, surely he would have read the reports from his engineers, including the chief mechanical engineer, and made his own judgment. However, the Commissioner of Railways has not done that; we know he has not by his own statement which appeared in *The West Australian* and by the Minister's statement in this House tonight that the Commissioner of Railways had not seen the report that was produced on the front page of the *Daily News*.

Mr Rushton: What is the qualification of the chief engineer?

Mr PEARCE: We are dealing with the Commissioner of Railways, and the commissioner says he has not seen the report. In fact, that scrubs the Commissioner of Railways from the list of people who made this sort of analysis.

Mr Rushton: He said it was an internal report. You are talking about something different, now, and misleading the House.

Mr PEARCE: The Minister for Transport is the last one to talk about other people misleading the House. I have not been subjected to banner headlines on the front page of the *Daily News* to

the effect that the figures I have provided to Parliament are misleading.

Mr Rushton: It will be a long while before you get to that stage.

Mr PEARCE: If that is being on top, I think the Minister for Transport has a long and slippery downward slide facing him.

If it is not the Commissioner of Railways who is the Minister's resident expert, who in Westrail is the expert? I pause to allow the Minister to throw up another eminent Westrail officer we might consider for this honour.

Mr Rushton: You do not even have regard for the professional officer in charge of signals.

Mr PEARCE: Mr Deputy Speaker, there we have it; the Minister suggests that the man who is in charge of providing the costings relating to the electrification of our railways might be the officer in charge of signals! It could be anyone. Is it not pathetic where we have a Minister whose job it is to take advice from his own department and make decisions and present those decisions to this House, that when we ask that Minister who is giving him advice he replies that it could be the man in charge of signalling; or, it could be the chief mechanical engineer? Does not the Minister know who it is?

Mr Rushton: I am saying I receive my advice from the Commissioner of Railways.

Mr PEARCE: Who, according to his own statement, had not even seen the report in question.

Mr Rushton: There you go, misleading the House again.

Mr PEARCE: It is not misleading the House; it is a clear demonstration that somewhere in the Minister's department there is incompetence. I suspect the incompetence lies with the Minister himself. However, if the Minister is correct and the incompetence lies further down the line under the Commissioner of Railways, it is the Minister's job to root it out. The fact that the Minister has not done so means that he is incompetent and should resign. That is putting the kindest interpretation on the matter; namely, that the Minister is taking this stand because he simply does not know, because he is not doing his job properly.

I believe the more sinister interpretation of the situation is correct; namely, that the Minister did have a good idea of what was going on and attempted to falsify the figures in order to get his Government out of a scrape. The figures have been falsified.

*Point of Order*

Mr RUSHTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I object to the remark that I falsified figures, and I would like the member for Gosnells to withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I did not hear the member for Gosnells in quite that sense. However, I request that the member for Gosnells be cautious in his language when making allegations of that nature.

*Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

Mr PEARCE: I will certainly take your advice, Mr Deputy Speaker. The point I am making is fundamental to my argument. Either the Minister for Transport knows what is going on in his department, or he does not. My basic assumption is that the Minister's statement is wrong; that has been proved by the newspaper article. Why is the Minister wrong? Is he wrong because he does not know what is going on and is simply parroting out what he has been told, or does he know, and does not want to admit it? I think the second possibility is the more serious of the two and is more likely to be accurate.

However, whichever suggestion is true, the Minister should resign. If the Minister does know what is going on, he has misled the public by the figures he has produced, and that is an offence which calls for his resignation. If the Minister is producing figures because he does not know what are the true costs, he is not keeping a proper check on his department, and should resign for incompetence. The Minister has no choice but to follow either of those courses; he is condemned, whichever is the truth.

That is why I suppose a further investigation would be useless, because no matter what it turned up—whether the Minister knew or did not know—he should resign; that is fundamental. However, because we are inquisitive people and have some responsibility for the proper operation of this State, I believe we should know what is the reason for the Minister misleading the House and the public in such a way.

Certainly, if the House were to connive with the Minister either in his ignorance or in his misleading of the State, we would be equally culpable with him in the fiasco which is occurring over the closure of the Perth-Fremantle line.

In conclusion, I wish to make a passing comment on a Cabinet reshuffle carried out by the Premier. The Minister for Transport has had no luck at all since taking over the Transport portfolio. He has faced one scandal and fiasco after another. It must be said that during his

period as Minister for Local Government, things ran fairly smoothly for him. Now we find the new Minister for Local Government copping a broadside in exactly the same newspaper. That ministerial shuffle made by the Premier for reasons he has not explained has proved to be an absolute disaster. The present Minister for Transport has been in trouble week after week, while the Minister for Local Government, who is not with us tonight—possibly, she is out insulting the Local Government Association again.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Gosnells to relate his remarks more closely to the amendment before the Chair.

Mr PEARCE: Mr Deputy Speaker, in fact I was being generous to the Minister for Transport in the sense that if the Premier had left him where he was, he might have done both the Minister for Transport and himself a favour.

I support the amendment. Many questions have been asked, and none answered. Unless the Minister can honestly produce the answers, he has to go.

MR T. H. JONES (Collie) [10.38 p.m.]: Mr Deputy Speaker, it is not my intention to traverse the ground already covered by my colleagues.

Mr Skidmore: I will do that later.

Mr T. H. JONES: However, it is my duty tonight to support the amendment moved by the member for Canning and so strongly supported by my leader.

It would be true to say that until tonight we did not know the true situation; it was a secret of the highest order. Nobody knew whether the submission made by the Friends of the Railways was correct; we did not know whether reports had been compiled within Westrail.

If anyone were to read *Hansard* he would agree that the reply of the Minister for Transport to the amendment to the Address-in-Reply motion was one of the weakest efforts ever heard from a Minister of any Government in Western Australia. The Minister failed to answer any of the criticisms levelled at him. The amendment criticises the Minister for his misleading statements in regard to the proposed closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway line. It states that the Minister has disseminated grossly misleading information about proposals for the electrification of suburban railways and has sought to discredit the Friends of the Railways by falsely claiming their proposals would cost about \$120 million.

It is a pity not all the public of Western Australia receive copies of *Hansard* so that they could see for themselves that the Minister failed

to answer one of the criticisms contained in the Opposition's amendment.

The Opposition sees it as its duty to move such an amendment in the Legislative Assembly tonight. We have a responsibility to protect the interests of the taxpayers of Western Australia in this very important issue, and we would be failing in our responsibility were we not to raise this matter. Members opposite seem to regard this as a laughing matter; I can assure them it is not. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition and all those who sit behind him would like to go to the people of Western Australia tomorrow or the week after on this very serious issue.

I do not know whether Government members are aware of the fact, but the credibility of the Court Government is diminishing daily. One has only to travel around the countryside and canvass the views of the people—even the Government's own supporters in the rural sector—to find they are not happy with the Court Administration. In fact, there are many specific instances about which they are not happy. They are unhappy that legislation is not adequately discussed before it is introduced; they were not happy about the introduction of the Bills relating to referable dams and off-road vehicles; and there are a whole host of other matters about which even shires and farmer organisations were not consulted by the Court Government.

This Government has ruled with a very heavy hand. In Donnybrook last week the fruitgrowers were critical. When they asked the Minister for Agriculture for a referendum on the fruit-fly baiting scheme their request was denied by the Minister. The supporters of the Government have become critical of that Government. The Government is condemned by its own supporters. People condemn the heavy-handed and dictatorial policies implemented by the Court Government in Western Australia.

I would like to know who is directing whom. We asked that question in the 1960s, when the Government foolishly moved to oil for power generation. We made the statement—members opposite can laugh; it is not a laughing matter. Some of the members opposite would have been still at school at that time. The member for Pilbara would not know what I was talking about, because he would still have been going to school with his school bag when this decision was made. We have asked the question many times: who was guiding whom? Was the Brand Government telling the State Electricity Commission what to do, or was the State Electricity Commission telling the Brand Government what to do? We know who was telling whom what to do. That is

relevant to the tragedy facing us today. In my view, the mechanical engineers or the hierarchy of Westrail are not telling the Government what to do, or even advising the Government.

I will stop for a moment to ask a question. Can any member on the Government side tell me of any part of the world or any part of the Commonwealth of Australia where closures of passenger rail services are taking place? Can any member tell me? No, all members are silent because such closures are not occurring. Members would know if they have travelled the world and studied transportation systems as I have done that the move is towards the extension of electrified systems wherever possible.

Mr Sibson: Where there are millions and millions of people living. You are talking about large population regions.

Mr T. H. JONES: I will return to the population question. The member for Bunbury would be very knowledgeable since his world tour. I will be waiting anxiously for his contribution, when he will indicate to me where I am wrong.

Mr Rushton: Melbourne and Sydney are both pulling out rail services.

Mr T. H. JONES: And what is Queensland doing?

Mr Rushton: They are very sad about the cost.

Mr T. H. JONES: The Minister knows the situation as well as I do.

Mr Sibson: Where there are low population densities, they are taking the railways out right throughout the world.

Mr T. H. JONES: What are they doing in London at the moment?

Mr Rushton: What are they doing in Sydney?

Mr O'Neil: Tell us about the Muja power station.

Mr T. H. JONES: I do not have to tell the Deputy Premier anything about the Muja power station. The Government has not overcome the \$80 million cost.

In reply to the member for Bunbury, I say that the Government has allowed the railway system to run down. Some of the units currently being used on the suburban rail system have been in service since 1924. That cannot be denied. The member for Swan said by interjection tonight that some of the rolling stock had square wheels. Is that the way to attract people to the use of public rail services? Of course it is not.

Mr Rushton: Why didn't you do it in your three years?

Mr T. H. JONES: We did not have the opportunity in our three years as the Government because the Brand Government left a bankrupt economy to us.

Mr Sibson interjected.

Mr T. H. JONES: I see that the member for Bunbury is making his usual speech sitting in his seat. I would welcome the opportunity for him to rise and make a contribution instead of making all his speeches sitting in his chair.

Mr Rushton interjected.

Mr Davies: Bring yourself up to date. Once again you are displaying your complete ignorance. Why don't you read the Wilbur Smith report? Wait till the member for Welshpool gets up and tells you the truth. You will be so embarrassed. You have just further displayed your ignorance.

Mr Rushton: You have egg on your face.

Mr Sibson: Would the member for Collie please resume his speech?

Mr T. H. JONES: At least the member for Collie is game to rise to his feet. I am not suppressed by my leader, as the member for Bunbury is suppressed by the Deputy Premier.

Mr Herzfeld: Don't talk rubbish!

Mr T. H. JONES: The member for Mundaring can talk. He did not once refer to the proposition before the House. He has spoken nothing but rubbish since he came here a couple of years ago. His little contribution hardly improved the standing of the Parliament of Western Australia.

To return to what I was saying: if the railways want to attract custom, they have to provide a service. It cannot be denied that some rail units have been in operation since 1924. Is that a method of attracting people to the metropolitan transport system?

I am surprised that the Government is still considering the closure of the Fremantle-Perth section of the rail line, in view of the threatened oil crisis. An announcement was made last week that petrol and fuel rationing may be introduced. The Deputy Prime Minister made a statement yesterday that the interests of the farmers will be looked after if petrol rationing has to be introduced. That is the situation. We can all laugh. The member for Bunbury can laugh his head off; but we know, if we do our homework, that petrol rationing has been in effect in New Zealand for some time. On Sunday afternoons in New Zealand nobody can use private vehicles. We should not kid ourselves. It will happen in Western Australia.

We are in the situation that the rationing of fuel is threatened. The Government says it will

scrap our rail system and put more buses on the roads. The buses will consume more fuel—

Mr H. D. Evans: Some dealers cannot get fuel in Western Australia now.

Mr T. H. JONES: This amendment is timely. We are considering the rationing of fuels. We should be looking at alternative energy sources. We should be looking at the electrification of our railways. We have not any alternative. If there is an alternative, members should let me know. The Opposition knows of no alternative.

This is a common-sense approach to the problem. It is a great pity that the Stephenson report has not been given more weight. Many people criticised Professor Stephenson when he made his report to the Government in the 1950s. In that report he said that the metropolitan railway system should have been electrified then. The Government of the day made the mistake of not doing so. We will suffer for that decision in the future.

No-one can argue that Professor Stephenson's prognosis of the situation was not correct. If members study the report, they will see that Professor Stephenson recommended to the Government that the metropolitan system be electrified. If that recommendation had been carried out, we would not have been in the hopeless mess we are in presently.

I pose the question: who likes commuting on buses? I ask the question of Government members who have to commute from one point to another. One catches one bus at a certain point; changes from that bus to another bus at another point; and so on until the destination is reached. Is that the right way to travel? Would members of Parliament suggest they would like to find themselves in that situation?

Mr Rushton: How would a train do that job?

Mr T. H. JONES: The train would make it much easier than the road system. What about the congestion on our roads? Can any member say he is happy with the metropolitan system at the moment? Are members happy travelling along the freeway during peak hours? Are they happy travelling north of the city or over the Narrows Bridge? Of course they are not, because the congestion on our roadways is evident now. All the Government will do with the closure of this line is cause further congestion on our roads. Our roads cannot cope with the current traffic.

I could go on and on in this way. The Government has erred before on the matter of power generation and in many other areas. This cannot be denied. Its error with power generation cost the State \$80 million. The Government in

those days made a move in one direction while the rest of the world was moving the other way, and that is precisely what the Government is doing again. It is burying its head in the sand.

I realise I cannot talk about nuclear power tonight, but the Premier is still hell bent on building a nuclear power house in this State, irrespective of what the public polls are showing.

Mr Sibson: From what you have said tonight you would have started a nuclear plant yourself; you said we needed alternatives.

Mr T. H. JONES: I wish I could support the member for Bunbury with something; I would be over there in five minutes!

This is a serious situation and at least now we know the cost involved. We know the Westrail employees have been subjected to the direction, "Please, no statements to be made." We know also that the figures submitted by the Friends of the Railways were very close to the true cost. From where does the Government get its expertise so far as the cost of electrification is concerned? I have pleasure in supporting the amendment before the House.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool) [10.51 p.m.]: Firstly, I would like to bring in the Minister by way of interjection—which I know will be most disorderly—and I am sure he will oblige. I would like him to indicate whether my summation of the Government's present and past policies is in fact as I see them. For instance, in April, 1969, a statement was made by the then Minister for Transport (the Hon. Ray O'Connor) to the effect that the Perth-Fremantle railway line should be kept open. In other words, he said it would be folly to give away the right-of-way represented by the Perth-Fremantle line.

Mr Rushton: Are you taking that from the FOR report?

Mr JAMIESON: Yes.

Mr Rushton: It is not in context.

Mr JAMIESON: I will go on with this. At a later stage, the Premier—

Mr Rushton: That is a good start!

Mr JAMIESON: —at a dinner, made a statement to the effect that the Perth-Fremantle railway line would remain.

Mr Rushton: The reserve will remain.

Mr JAMIESON: No. This was before the decision to shut down the line. This was some time last year. At another time I saw the then Minister speaking on television and saying that all the railway lines would be closed down and busways established in their place. This stance

was quickly changed; however, the comment was made just the same.

I illustrate all this, because as I understand it the present Government policy, as from the 1st September, is that the Fremantle section will be closed down. I think the Minister will agree with me that over a period of time there have been changes of policy on the part of the Government.

Mr Rushton: There would be an attempt to upgrade the metropolitan transport system.

Mr JAMIESON: That is not the question I asked. Was it not a fact that over a period of time the Government's policy changed?

Mr Rushton: From the time I have been involved—not just as Minister—the policy has been consistent.

Mr JAMIESON: This is where the Minister really plays with straws. Constantly he gets up and says that the Labor Party is not in a very good position because in 1972 it put through legislation which, among other things, had as its intention to do what the present Government is preparing to do now; that is, to close the Perth-Fremantle railway line.

Unfortunately the Minister does not go on to consider matters that can be found in other documents which appear later. On page 5 of the report in brief of the Perth Central Railway Feasibility Study, it can be seen that the feasibility study was to do certain things. I will not read it all. The report is available from the library. I shall quote as follows—

The Study was required to have regard to the purposes of the Perth Regional Railway Act, 1972 but was not limited to these purposes.

Further on it states—

Investigation was required of all reasonable general alignments, both horizontal and vertical, for railway alternatives which satisfied the constraints that:

- (1) The railway must, in the first stage, connect with the existing suburban lines to Fremantle, Midland and Armadale;

That is a clear indication that whatever policy we had before was superseded. When we went into government we were faced with Nielsen's original report calling for busways. We would not cop that; it was not our Government's policy. The Liberal-Country Party Government held on to that policy. We modified it and subsequently it was further modified when Wilbur Smith was called in to make a report. The study was commissioned on the 13th October, 1973. We

were no longer in power when this study came to hand, but there is further documentary evidence if the Minister wants it. Of course, the Minister does not want the evidence; he is not interested, preferring instead to talk to one of his colleagues instead of listening to me. The next time the Minister rises to speak he will say something stupid again. This is characteristic of the Minister.

Now available in the library is the latest printed copy of the Australian Labor Party's platform. This, too, will clearly indicate to the Minister what the situation was. This platform operated from the 2nd September, 1976. It was reiterated in 1978, but the print is not available at this time. On page 73 of the booklet we find item 13(b) which reads as follows—

- (b) Up-grade, extend and electrify the suburban rail services so that this mode of transport can be used to its maximum capacity, using Collie coal as the major energy source.

So it is very clear in documentation just exactly where this party stands. There is no doubt about it. We do not know from one moment to the next where the Liberal Party stands on this issue, because it seems to change its tack so often. Having established that policies from either side do change from time to time, and one can learn only from the latest written information what the Government's policy is, it is very clear that the Minister knows little of what he is talking about when he refers to the 1972 Perth Regional Railway Act.

We know what was in that Act. We know we changed horses half-way through the legislation; but it was a matter of fluency, and we moved to a base where we clearly stated our policy. There is no doubt where we stand. There is no need for the Minister to try to make political capital out of something that has long since been superseded. It was only a progress stage at any rate. The matter had to come back to Parliament after a full report was made on the feasibility and financial situation.

The present Government chose not to do that. The report has been printed and put away in the usual pigeon-hole for whoever wants to use it in the future.

If we are not to take any notice of the chief mechanical engineer then of whom are we to take notice? Tonight it has been said we should take notice of Mr McCullough. With all due respect to Mr McCullough as the Commissioner of Railways, it is true that he has been involved in railway administration for many years. However,

he has not been working in the assessing section or in the mechanical or civil engineering fields for a number of years. He has been an administrator solely; therefore, he would have to rely on his advisers in matters such as the day-to-day running of the railway system, costing, and the like. He would probably be relying on people such as the chief mechanical engineer (Mr Pitsikas) who submitted the original report which has been referred to. It has been said that it is not a report; it is a memo. It might be possible to find a difference in these two terms if one consulted a dictionary, but it is a fact that this document constitutes advice from one person to another. It is a report on the position as seen by one person in the railways to another person. It certainly looks as if it was the best available advice that could be found.

Where did it go from there? It went to the people the Minister for Transport now wants to hide behind. It went to the Director General of Transport, the Commissioner of Main Roads, the Chairman of the MTT, and the Commissioner of Railways. I have dealt already with the Commissioner of Railways. He would have to rely entirely on the figures given to him by his departmental officers in so far as the day-to-day financing of the railway system is concerned.

I should like to deal with the other people who are advisers, because I know them well, probably better than does the Minister himself. They are reasonably good officers. The Commissioner of Main Roads is excellent at his own particular task, but his task is civil engineering in the field of road construction. He specialises in that field. He knows nothing of rail systems.

As a matter of fact when I was overseas with the commissioner and had to take him along with me to investigate a number of the underground railway systems, they appeared to bore him. He was not interested in them at all. They were out of his field. He knew about surface roads and he is excellent at his job. He certainly did not know anything about railways and he was not prepared to go along with them. He has not given any indication to me during the times I have had discussions with him that he has a great deal of sympathy for railway systems. In fact he showed much interest in the busways in a number of areas where I could not see any sense in them at all. I could not understand whether these busways were satisfactory for the people they were supposed to be serving.

I should like to deal now with the Chairman of the MTT. He is a very efficient officer in his own particular sphere. He is a man who, if not constrained by the necessity to follow Government

policy, would be making statements about this matter and, probably like the other civil servants—

Mr Rushton: He has already made a statement which supported the Government's move.

Mr JAMIESON: Of course the chairman has made such a statement. All these men have made such statements.

Mr Rushton: You asked, "Why does he not make a statement?"

Mr JAMIESON: I said he is likely to make a statement at some later time, as did the former mechanical engineer who has retired, as to what he really thinks; but at this stage he is bound by loyalty to the Government, as is proper. I am not arguing that point.

Mr Rushton: When your colleague, the member for Balcatta, telephoned me and challenged me to state that in fact the Chairman of the MTT had disagreed with the Government's decision, I asked the chairman when he was in my office a couple of days ago whether in fact that was the case. He indicated that it was not and that he had already stated publicly he supported the Government's move.

Mr JAMIESON: What would the Minister expect him to do?

Mr Rushton: The member for Balcatta was implying otherwise.

Mr JAMIESON: Does the Minister think the chairman is mad?

Mr Rushton: When he is in my office he says what he thinks.

Mr JAMIESON: He would not be so irrational as to say to the Minister for Transport that he did not agree with the Government's policy.

Mr Rushton: Are you saying that all these men are "yes" men?

Mr JAMIESON: These men are all efficient officers in their own right.

Mr Rushton: They are certainly not "yes" men.

Mr JAMIESON: I should like to turn now to the contract man, Mr John Knox. He can perform any task given him and he can perform it very quickly and efficiently. For example, when we asked him to provide details for a system of underground railways in Perth, he came back next morning with a scheme when the matter had been put to him at four o'clock on the previous afternoon. It was obvious he had worked all night on the problem. As a result of telephone calls all over the world he obtained a reasonable estimate of the cost of tunnelling. He is a magnificent worker, but he does exactly what one wants him

to do. Of course, if he gets away from doing exactly what one wants him to do, he returns to his own basic training. Other members have said in this House—I have not made this statement—that he still has the fumes of the Shell Co. of Australia Ltd. in his nostrils. Those are not my words, but they have been used in relation to Mr Knox. It was his fundamental training and he returns to it.

I have mentioned these men individually to indicate their particular attitudes. I thought the statement made on the radio last night by Mr McCullough was extremely weak and apologetic. He obviously was not aware of what was going on in his own department, because he would not have made such statements on radio had he known this memorandum existed.

Mr Rushton: That is not an internal Westrail report which is being referred to. That is what you have to wake up to. That is not something official put out by Westrail.

Mr Davies: Show us one which is.

Mr JAMIESON: Where does one get one's official information in Westrail? On whom does one rely? Mr Pitsikas, as far as the Minister is concerned, is not able to provide official information.

Mr Rushton: I am suggesting the branches were invited to make comments and they did so. This memorandum came in as a comment from this source 10 days later and, according to the people who are responsible officers of Westrail, it was totally invalid.

Mr JAMIESON: I should like to ask the Minister who in fact said it was invalid.

Mr Rushton: The responsible officers in Westrail.

Mr JAMIESON: I should like to know who the Minister would regard as a responsible officer above Mr Pitsikas. I have already said Mr McCullough could not provide this information because of his own inability. He was not in a position to provide the information or to have dealt with the matter himself. Therefore, I want to know who the responsible officers are between Mr McCullough and Mr Pitsikas.

Mr Rushton: Very responsible, professional officers are answerable to him.

Mr JAMIESON: I should like to know who the responsible officers are above Mr Pitsikas.

Mr Rushton: They are in their own fields. Mr Pitsikas is in the mechanical field. He is not in the electrical or civil engineering fields.

Mr JAMIESON: He is not in the civil engineering field, but I do not believe such a man

would be so stupid as to fail to consult with his colleagues:

Mr Rushton: This presentation by Mr Pitsikas is an updated version of Mr McCullough's submission.

Mr JAMIESON: I cannot agree with the Minister.

Mr B. T. Burke: Why are you denigrating Mr Pitsikas?

Mr Rushton: I am telling you it is my understanding.

Mr JAMIESON: It cannot be the Minister's understanding if he has read the *Daily News* tonight.

Mr Rushton: Do you believe everything you read in the newspaper?

Mr JAMIESON: I do not believe everything I read in the newspaper, but this is part of the report: "The cost of \$120 million for electrification of the railway line contained in the policy statement is apparently an updated figure from the Wilbur Smith report and it includes the cost of undergrounding."

Mr Rushton interjected.

Mr JAMIESON: The Minister's interjection indicates that he has not read the final part of this report which said—

With the elimination of the costs involved in the transition to standard gauge and by using overhead wiring instead of the third rail system, the costs can be reduced to a figure below \$50 million.

Obviously, the Wilbur Smith report envisaged the third rail system which is much more expensive than the overhead wiring.

On page 13 of the report the total estimate for construction ranged from \$16.7 million for the existing diesel railway to a maximum of \$145.8 million for the Murray Street-north-west railway plan. That one involved undergrounding. In updating those figures it would be fair to consider the CPI and other aspects. Accordingly we can say that between June, 1973, and March, 1979, there has been a 100 per cent increase. Let us be generous and work on a 100 per cent increase.

Mr Rushton: A bit more than that was allowed.

Mr JAMIESON: That may be so, but let us allow for a 100 per cent increase. This would increase the estimate for upgrading the diesel rail system to \$33 million and to \$290 million for the complete undergrounding and north-west spur.

Mr Rushton: When you deal with electrification, you must consider the cars and vehicles.

Mr JAMIESON: Just a moment. I am coming to them. They are not discarded at all. The total system equipment cost for the most likely scheme for railway cars and buses estimated at December, 1973, prices—which I am upgrading for the purpose of this argument—ranged from \$111.8 million for the busway system. At this time it would represent \$223 million.

For the Murray Street-north-west railway the figure is \$135.7 million, which would now be in excess of \$270 million. These figures were thoroughly researched at the time by Wilbur Smith and do not differ greatly from those in the FOR submission.

Mr Rushton: They are nowhere near close.

Mr JAMIESON: The Minister keeps saying that, but does not indicate where they are not close. He will not produce any documentation. He just sits there and keeps saying, "They are not" because someone said they are not, but no-one knows who said it, except perhaps John Knox. He will produce a figure overnight. He did so for me on one occasion, and what happened? I was torn to pieces by the Minister and by the present Minister for Labour and Industry in this House. The present Minister for Transport said that Mr Knox did not know what he was talking about. The Minister can refer to *Hansard* to ascertain what was said on that occasion. I wish to point out that he is the same gentleman to whom we are referring now, and surely the Minister is not trying to suggest that now the gentleman knows what he is talking about. He is the same person.

Some people will produce whatever is required of them. In this instance the estimate provided will depend on how fancy the electrification will be. That aspect must be decided before any comparative figures can be compiled.

The figures made available to us by the FOR are fair and reasonable.

I wish to draw the Minister's attention to the fact that no mention has been made of the cost of the busway from Fremantle. He has certainly not considered it. Again updating the Wilbur Smith figures, we can estimate that the busway alone will cost \$20 million, because this particular busway is the most difficult of all those in the metropolitan area. It has a number of viaducts and cuttings and they would all have to be substantially strengthened and widened. It would probably require retaining walls placed on the cuttings and maybe built-up walls on the outside of the viaducts where they extrude onto the existing road systems so as to create a proper path for a system. So at that rate another \$20 million would be required. Consequently we

would be spending a great deal of money whether for a busway or for the electrification of the railway line. We must look at the optimum; we must take into consideration our aim. We should not merely consider what is cheap and nasty.

Recently on a radio talk-back programme on this subject I heard a person say that if we wanted the cheapest system and one which would not require much financing, we would have to go for the busway. This same opinion was expressed right throughout the Wilbur Smith report, by Nielsen and in the PERTS report. Any report on the subject clearly indicates support for the cheap and nasty.

It is true that it is possible for a system to be established cheaply, but it must be paid for in the long run because eventually a tracked system will be adopted as it is the only effective one. The tracked system should have been adopted at the time the report was submitted and it should have incorporated the north-west spur at a reasonably early date. If the Government had concentrated on the problem instead of playing around with bus and other systems, we would not be facing the present problem.

One point I wish to make in this regard is that we do not know how deeply involved the multinational companies are in our railways. About a week ago on a talk-back radio programme—many members would have heard this programme—Professor Barnett, a lecturer, clearly indicated that in a number of cities in America, the Exxon oil company, together with ESSO and the Goodyear tyre company, had bought up a number of these private rail systems and turned them into bus commuter systems. I suppose that would be a good investment on the part of those companies. Their products would be heavily involved in the systems now, whereas none would have been in use previously.

It is not easy to find a solution to these problems. One thing we do know is that we will always be able to provide electricity, whereas we do not know whether we will always be able to provide fuel for our bus services. We are now destroying the option because we are discontinuing a railway line which we know we would be able to service.

Mr Rushton: You would be retaining it in reserve.

Mr JAMIESON: It would be retained in reserve but when we put things in reserve we are putting them in reverse. We go backwards because there is no opportunity to go forwards. In recent times the only survey of any note which will give any reliable figures which can be

updated, other than that involving the Brisbane system—

Mr Rushton: They had to enlarge and upgrade their system. They have taken those out in their assessment. One interesting thing is that people are comparing the Brisbane and Sydney systems, but of course in the long run they have taken the cheaper of the two systems. If you know you are going to have electrification—

Mr JAMIESON: Of course, neither of the systems is applicable here.

Mr Rushton: The Brisbane system is applicable here, leaving out the extras.

Mr JAMIESON: When the figures are used the Minister says it is not a fair comparison.

Mr Rushton: The figures have been compared with Brisbane, which is the most up-to-date system in Australia. I have been told that FOR have taken the cheapest factors from one system and the cheapest factors from another system, and the member opposite and I know that does not work.

Mr JAMIESON: Getting back to railcars, I think they could be modified. Obviously the figure given to the Minister for railcars was for the most expensive and luxurious available.

Mr Rushton: No.

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, it was, and I defy the Minister to prove otherwise. The figure was for the BART system category. It was not for the standard type which the Australian Railways were promoting here originally.

Mr Rushton: The figure was based on the Brisbane railcar which has electrification on the carriage. That is the reason it is so dear.

Mr JAMIESON: We seem to be getting into a cross-Chamber argument which will not solve anything because the Minister has his own ideas. He is not sure of the source of his figures. He is trying to box the position until such time as he will get away with what has happened. However, I warn him that the electors of Dale will not take this matter lightly.

Mr Rushton: They will enjoy the improved rail services.

Mr JAMIESON: They will be suspicious about what is to happen next. Governments which oppose railways get into trouble.

Mr Rushton: The Labor Party has got into trouble.

Mr JAMIESON: The Labor Government closed some lines in the goldfields where there was nobody to use them.

Mr Rushton: The Labor Government in New South Wales is closing rail services, and the Liberal Government in Victoria also is closing rail services.

Mr Davies: Not the urban services.

Mr Rushton: The Labor Government moved to sell out our railways.

Mr JAMIESON: That might have been a good idea, too. I notice that as a result of rail disposures the budgetary position in both Tasmania and South Australia has improved. Those States still have main line rail services. Tasmania does not have a suburban rail service.

Mr Blaikie: Tasmania did have a passenger rail service.

Mr JAMIESON: Where?

Mr Blaikie: It ceased to operate only this year; it was cut out by the Commonwealth.

Mr JAMIESON: It ceased to operate some time ago.

Mr Blaikie: About two months ago.

Mr JAMIESON: It is longer than that. I was there two months ago. The member had better go back to Busselton.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Will the member resume his seat? Could I prevail on the member for Vasse and the member for Canning to desist from cross-Chamber conversation? The member for Welshpool.

Mr JAMIESON: In South Australia, where the main line has been lost, the metropolitan commuter service has been retained and extended. I have mentioned that previously in this House. There is no indication that the metropolitan service will stop, and that State is contemplating an extension of the system in a northerly direction. That is a must, because there is no alternative to ensuring the future of that area.

It ill-behoves the Government to try to close the railway at this stage—so close to an election. Nowhere in the world is there any evidence of passenger services between major cities closing down. The Minister is not able to present an instance. It is not likely that any such service will cease because those with a sensible appreciation that the future is not clear are taking care not to get into the position where they will not be able to modernise their transport systems.

There is no doubt it would be possible for us to have an electrified system operating within five years, but nothing destroys a proposed system quicker than a Government not wanting it to exist. The advisers to this Government do not

want it to exist in this State. With all due respect to the Government's advisers, those at present in senior positions do not want an electrified railway system in metropolitan Perth. I would face up to any Government adviser in public debate because I know I would be able to extract from him, in front of a public audience, his true attitude. There is no doubt about that. While the Government accepts advice from that sort of adviser we will not get a better system. The system will be changed to busways. The advisers want more and more busways, but they will not overcome the problem for the future.

I hope that before very long there will be a change of Government and a change of pattern. We do have a policy. In the first place we inherited a policy from an outgoing Government of 12 years. That Government intended to go into busways. We carried on and received further reports and we reached the stage where we thought we could do some justice to the City of Perth, rather than give it a rough deal. The Minister is now giving Perth a rough deal, and he is trying to defend himself in that situation.

The Minister has provoked the Opposition into moving this amendment. The amendment challenges the Minister because we believe he misled the public and the Parliament with regard to the proposed closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway. Certainly, he does not have any facts or figures on which he can rely. He has some figures out of John Knox's third drawer. Those figures were put on the Minister's table and they have now become Holy Writ.

Mr Rushton: You know the figures have been supported by the Commissioner of Railways and the other members of the committee.

Mr JAMIESON: The commissioner would not have as much knowledge about estimating costs as has Mr Knox. Mr Knox has been in touch constantly with world authorities on this sort of thing over a number of years. If he has not learnt somewhere along the line some sort of cost structuring, he will never learn. However, how he presents those costs is the problem. He will present them in the way he knows the Government wants them. With due respect, that is the way he has always worked. He is a contract civil servant and I suppose he will continue to work that way. If we were in Government we would want the job done in that manner.

So it is of no use the Minister going back to him and saying it is the advisers who are at fault. The Minister must accept the blame for the whole system because when he first took over the job he went to the advisory people and said to them, "If

you want the railway closed I will put it through Parliament for you." I support the amendment.

**MR B. T. BURKE** (Balcatta) [11.30 p.m.]: The Opposition is not surprised at the developments into which the Minister for Transport has plunged his Government and I do not believe many members on the Government benches can tonight be very pleased with the Minister's performance on the eve of an election, which from all indications from Ministers and Government members, will be held somewhat prior to the scheduled date next year. No member on the Government side of the House can be happy to be reading on the front pages of daily newspapers quite damning accusations and allegations concerning one of the Government's senior Ministers.

At the same time the Opposition is not surprised at the state into which this Minister has plunged his Government; we all remember his performance when he was Minister for Local Government. It was said of him at that time that he once signed a leaf which blew through the window and landed on his desk, that indecision marked most of his decisions, and that his performance was faulty in the extreme.

If any member on the Government side of the House is prepared to say he or she is pleased to be reading in the daily Press such damning allegations and accusations against a senior Minister, I will pause to allow that member to interject. It is not very remarkable that there is silence, because it is quite clear that nobody on the Government side of the House can be pleased to be reading that sort of thing in the daily Press. Only a Minister of the calibre of the one who endeavoured to defend himself tonight would attempt to say this publicity is good publicity and that he was surprised to read that when he acted hastily he received such rave notices. If that is what he calls rave notices, I can only agree with the member for Gosnells who said earlier that the Minister is on the slippery slide downhill at a great rate.

It is significant to consider who rose to defend the Minister and his actions. Of course, there could be no worse or less capable defender than the Minister himself, who in a rambling speech lasting some 30 minutes produced his usual number of sentences which, before being straightened out, lacked nouns, and those which had nouns had no verbs, and those which had predicates had no subjects. The strain throughout his whole contribution was one of nonsense. Had the Minister not damned himself before tonight, he proceeded tonight to demonstrate to the House that he lacked the intelligence, ability, and

integrity to hold down the position he has been allocated.

The Minister's defence was bolstered by a startling contribution by the member for Mundaring who, by virtue of his distance from the centre of things in this place, is sometimes difficult to hear; and that is a blessing in disguise on most occasions. I think you will agree with me, Mr Speaker, that at the same time the Government's performance in defending the actions of its Minister leaves a great deal to be desired.

**Mr Blaikie:** The Speaker does not agree with you at all.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** I credit the Speaker with more intelligence than anyone is prepared to credit the member for Vasse.

I want to deal briefly with the way in which the Minister for Transport attempts to turn the tables on the Opposition when he speaks of the denigration of senior civil servants. There has been no greater denigrator in this debate than the Minister himself when he continually accuses Mr Pitsikas—

#### *Point of Order*

**Mr BLAIKIE:** Mr Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order. I do not believe the member who is speaking has referred to the subject under discussion, and I ask that you direct him to continue in that vein.

**Mr Jamieson:** That makes a lot of sense, that does.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Balcatta has barely commenced his speech and I imagine if he has not in these few opening words confined his remarks to the question before the Chair he will get around to it in the next few seconds.

#### *Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It was said in Biblical times to be a miracle when a donkey spoke but to listen to the member for Vasse is to realise how times have changed.

I continue to answer some of the points which were raised by the Minister in his contribution and by the member for Mundaring in his feeble support of the Minister's position. If that is not the proper role of debate in this House I do not know what is. The member for Vasse raised a point of order which illustrates his lack of knowledge of the cut and thrust of debate which is so often referred to by the Chair.

I want to mention one or two specific points which indicate and compound the incapacity of

the Minister whom the Opposition has seen fit tonight to call upon to resign. I want to refer specifically to the Chairman of the Metropolitan Transport Trust and ask the Minister why it is at this crucial time in the development of the transport systems in this State that the man who is perhaps the most knowledgeable public servant on public transport within the State chooses to reject a Government call to continue in the position he occupies for another six months. Perhaps the Minister would care to deny that the Chairman of the MTT was asked to continue in his position for another six months.

Mr Rushton: I can say to you that the allegations you made the other day were false, and that on this occasion Mr Shea indicated he wanted to retire when his contract expired, which I think is in fact the 15th January.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Mr Speaker, I know you will be interested in the question, and the answer which the Minister failed to provide on that occasion. So I say once again to the Minister that he has the opportunity now to deny that he asked the Chairman of the MTT to remain in his position for a further six months and that the Chairman of the MTT, at this crucial time in the development of the State's transport systems, chose to turn down that request. Perhaps through you, Mr Speaker, the Minister would care to say whether or not that is true.

Mr Rushton: It is public knowledge and generally known that Mr Shea was asked by me whether he would like to continue on and he said he would not, that he had made up his mind that at the end of his contract he would leave and had committed himself—I think he is going overseas.

Mr B. T. BURKE: It is like drawing teeth but the Minister has now said one of the leading public servants in the field of public transport in this State has chosen at this crucial time in the development of the State's transport systems to reject a request that he stay in office for another six months.

The second matter I want to draw to attention is that the Minister has denied statements and claims that Mr Shea during last year, 1978, visited Germany specifically to inquire into the availability of and make arrangements to purchase articulated buses which would replace the train service from Perth to Fremantle.

Mr Rushton: You are wrong in that.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Let the Minister deny that in September last year Mr Shea visited Germany.

Mr Rushton: I said Mr Shea went to Germany in February to make inquiries into the link buses.

You have been making false allegations and have been found out once again.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Once again I ask the Minister whether he is prepared to admit Mr Shea was in Germany last year.

Mr Rushton: You made false allegations that Mr Shea went to Germany in September to arrange the contract for link buses. You were found to be wrong.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Minister still refuses to answer the question. I will ask the Minister another question. Perhaps the Minister is prepared to admit, to acknowledge, or to concede that the right-hand drive chassis for these articulated or link buses are already in Western Australia.

Mr Skidmore: Deathly silence.

Mr Jamieson: He does not want to get into trouble again.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Minister is not prepared to answer the question because he knows that had Mr Shea visited Germany in February to arrange the contract, the necessity for Mercedes Benz to rearrange its production line for the right-hand drive chassis, together with the delivery period, would make it impossible for those chassis to be in Western Australia. Of course, the Minister knows that the chassis are here, and yet he wants us to believe that Mr Shea was in Germany in February—just a few short months ago—to arrange the contract, and that the rearrangement of the production line and the delivery have been effected since then.

The Minister is not prepared to answer questions.

The Minister is damned by his own silence; damned by his own incompetence. If the Minister is pleased to see the chief officers scuttling the ship at an alarming rate, as has been happening, the Minister is of no use as a Minister. In fact, the Minister's incompetence as the Minister for Local Government has been compounded by his incompetence as the Minister for Transport. We have seen the way he has been prepared to come into this House previously to give us wrong figures when talking of the amount of revenue to be raised by the petrol tax which replaced the road maintenance tax. That faulty performance is matched by his present performance which leaves so much to be desired. He attempts to make excuses for ripping up a rail service that the majority of Western Australians have said quite clearly they want to remain.

I will dispel any doubts which may be felt by members on the other side of the House. The

Perth-Fremantle rail service will become a major election issue, and it is an election issue that will do nothing but harm to the chances of the Government. It is an election issue which has already caused division within the Government ranks, and it is an election issue which will result, in cohesion with other issues, to bring about the defeat of this Government at the next State election.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

## Ayes 18

Mr Barnett	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bertram	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr McIver
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Pearce
Mr Carr	Mr Skidmore
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr H. D. Evans	Dr Troy
Mr Harman	Mr Wilson
Mr Hodge	Mr Bateman

(Teller)

## Noes 27

Mr Blaikie	Mr Old
Mr Clarko	Mr O'Neil
Sir Charles Court	Mr Ridge
Mr Cowan	Mr Rushton
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Mr Grewar	Mr Sodeman
Mr Hassell	Mr Spriggs
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Stephens
Mr Laurance	Mr Tubby
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Watt
Mr McPharlin	Mr Williams
Mr Mensaros	Mr Young
Mr Nanovich	Mr Shalders
Mr O'Connor	

(Teller)

## Ayes

## Pairs

## Noes

Mr Bryce	Mr Grayden
Mr Grilli	Mr P. V. Jones
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr Coyne
Mr Taylor	Mrs Craig

Amendment thus negatived.

*Debate (on motion) Resumed*

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Watt.

*House adjourned at 11.46 p.m.*

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### TRAFFIC: LIGHTS

#### *Albany Highway-Royal Street Intersection*

885. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it a fact that the Thornlie traffic endeavouring to turn right into Albany Highway having travelled down Royal Street, is banking up excessively, brought about by the fact that there is no trickle light on the Albany Highway traffic lights?
- (2) If "Yes" will he have this matter investigated with a view to having a trickle light installed?
- (3) If "No" why not?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Traffic from Royal Street wishing to turn right into Albany Highway is causing traffic wishing to proceed straight ahead to Wanaping Road to bank up since these flows are constrained by site limitations to share a common lane.
- (2) The signal installation already operates in a three phase mode and an additional phase to allow the right turners from Royal Street to clear could not be provided without adding to the overall delays at the site. Having regard that the right turners constitute less than 2 per cent of the site users in the morning peak, arriving at about one every minute only, it is proposed to ease the congestion in Royal Street by banning the right turn during the morning peak period.
- (3) Answered by (1) and (2).

### WATER SUPPLIES

#### *Meter Checking Fee*

886. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is it a fact that as from 1st July, 1979, the public will have to pay \$15 instead of the current \$8 to have their water meters checked?
- (2) If "Yes" is this intended to deter people from checking their excessive water accounts?

(3) Can the Minister further advise if any public notification of such a proposed increase has been made?

(4) If "Yes"—

- (a) what date; and
- (b) in what publication?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes, but the payment is refunded if the test shows that the meter is in error.
- (2) No. It is the cost of conducting the test.
- (3) All inquirers are aware in advance of the cost of the test.
- (4) Not applicable.

### TRANSPORT: AIR

#### *Perth Airport*

887. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it a fact that a technical committee is inquiring into the relocation of the Perth Airport?
- (2) If "Yes" have two options been recommended without any environmental study, one of the options being an additional runway at Perth Airport, plus additional surface facilities such as extensions to the terminal, etc.?
- (3) Is it also a fact that to relocate the airport the estimated cost is \$285 million?
- (4) If he is aware of (1), (2) and (3), will he advise the House—
  - (a) Has he been kept informed of the technical committee's findings;
  - (b) will the information from the technical committee be made available to the local authorities affected by the proposals;
  - (c) has any consideration been given to the preparation of legislation to compensate residents affected by the possible increase in noise levels due to the proposals as suggested in (2);
  - (d) if the option not to extend Perth Airport is to be considered what area is suggested for its development?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Environmental considerations have been taken into account with all options and these considerations are the subject of continuing attention.
- (3) Until the final report is released, I am not in a position to discuss its findings.
- (4) (a) My Director General of Transport is a member of the technical committee. He is keeping me fully informed.
- (b) Both Perth City Council and Belmont City Council are represented on the committee. Other local authorities will have access to the report once it is released.
- (c) The question of noise levels is currently the subject of thorough investigation by the Department of Conservation and Environment.
- (d) Until the final report is released, I am not in a position to discuss its findings.

#### FOSTER PARENTS PLAN OF AUSTRALIA

##### *Registration as Charitable Organisation*

888. Mr BATEMAN, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Will he advise why he will not register Foster Parents Plan of Australia as a charitable organisation?
- (2) Will he also advise if it is fact that he has warned this organisation it will be prosecuted should it distribute literature or solicit funds?
- (3) Will he further advise what criteria he uses in deciding which charitable institutions should be registered?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) The advisory committee, established under section 10 of the Charitable Collections Act, 1946-1949, after considering the information supplied with the original application, advised that the prevailing situation was catered for adequately by the overseas aid organisations already licensed. This advice was accepted.
- (2) I have not so warned the organisation.

- (3) Section 11 of the Act requires the Minister to refer all applications made to him to an advisory committee for consideration and report. The same section establishes the criteria to be used by that committee. In the absence of any indication to the contrary it has been customary to accept the committee's advice.

#### RAILWAYS

##### *Rail Cars*

889. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Would he advise the current situation re tenders for 10 new rail cars as announced by him prior to the end of the last session of Parliament?
- (2) Would he also advise what is the total cost of the rail cars and if the Federal Government will be making any financial contribution?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Tenders received for design and supply of five powered rail cars and five trailer cars for use on the suburban passenger service are currently being evaluated.
- (2) (a) Until the evaluation has been completed the total cost will not be known.
- (b) No financial assistance will be provided by the Federal Government in 1979-80. In subsequent years application will continue to be made to the Federal Government for assistance under the State Grants (Urban Public Transport) Act.

#### CYCLES: CYCLEWAYS

##### *Belmont City Council*

890. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Would she indicate the length, location and total cost of cycleways constructed in the Belmont Shire some years ago from Whitlam and shire RED funds?
- (2) What was the objective of constructing these cycleways?

- (3) Have the construction of these cycleways made a noticeable increase to cycle usage in the shire?
- (4) If so, can she indicate the relative statistics?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (4) The information sought by the member is not normally available in my department. It is suggested that the member should direct his inquiry to the City of Belmont.

### EDUCATION: SCHOOLS

#### *Doors: Safety Glass*

891. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it a fact that the Uniform Building By-laws require the use of safety glass in doors in public buildings?
- (2) Does the Minister's department conform to this requirement in schools?
- (3) Has the Minister's department been made aware of a recent accident at the Eastern Hills High School in which a student received severe lacerations to a hand severing two tendons, in an accident involving a glass door?
- (4) What type and thickness of glazing was in the door at the time of accident?
- (5) What type and thickness was used to replace the broken door?
- (6) What action does the Minister propose to take to ensure all fully glazed doors in schools are fitted with safety glass?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) In some circumstances, yes. Uniform building by-laws clauses 53.4(3) and (4) require every glass door to be fitted with safety glass unless the door is provided with a transom or decoration sufficient to make the glass plainly distinguishable.
- (2) and (3) Yes.
- (4) Ordinary float glass, thickness unknown.
- (5) 6 mm laminated safety glass.
- (6) The standard specification for schools requires the use of 6 mm toughened float or laminated safety glass.

### WATER SUPPLIES

#### *Consumption*

892. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Would the Minister indicate the aggregate water consumption for the metropolitan area for 1978-79 and each of the 10 preceding financial years?
- (2) In each year what was the percentage contribution of ground water to meeting the demand?
- (3) Would the Minister please indicate the years in which restrictions on usage applied?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Consumption—  
'000 kilolitres

1978-79	119 398
1977-78	106 629
1976-77	173 939
1975-76	194 073
1974-75	181 228
1973-74	172 394
1972-73	156 757
1971-72	155 016
1970-71	148 078
1969-70	144 656
1968-69	127 358

- (2) Groundwater—  
per cent

1978-79	41
1977-78	50
1976-77	21
1975-76	16
1974-75	12
1973-74	10
1972-73	11
1971-72	10
1970-71	8
1969-70	11
1968-69	4

- (3) 1978-79, 1971-78, 1973-74 (9 days) and 1968-69 (1 day).

### RECREATION: SPORT

#### *National Sports Lottery*

893. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Recreation:

- (1) What is the attitude of the State Government to the proposed national sports lottery?

- (2) Has he been consulted in the matter by the Commonwealth Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Ellicott?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Over the last five years the Commonwealth Government's financial commitment to sport and recreation has been minimal compared to that provided by this State.

The promotion of a national sports lottery would siphon necessary moneys from existing State lotteries and be a further abdication by the Commonwealth in an area in which it clearly has a responsibility.

- (2) Yes.

#### WATER SUPPLIES: CATCHMENT AREAS

##### *Land Clearing: Permits*

894. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Have any appeals against refusal of clearing permits in any river catchment or water reserve area been received?

- (2) If "Yes" then—

- (a) how many such appeals have been received and from what area did they come;
- (b) how many of those appeals have been heard;
- (c) how many have been upheld by the Minister?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) (a) Ten in the following areas—

Warren River water reserve	4
Kent River water reserve	3
Denmark River catchment area	2
Wellington Dam catchment area	1

- (b) Five have been heard.

- (c) Two have been upheld to date, one being in part only. Decisions on the other three are pending.

#### WATER SUPPLIES: CATCHMENT AREAS

##### *Warren River: Report*

895. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has the report on the Warren River catchment reserve which he indicated in his letter of 16th February, 1979 was being compiled and a copy of which would be forwarded to me, been completed?

- (2) (a) If "Yes", will the Minister table a copy;
- (b) If "No" to (1), when is it expected to be completed and available?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The scope of the report referred to in the letter of 16th February, 1979 was subsequently expanded under the title of "Clearing and Stream Salinity in the South West of Western Australia". On the 2nd August copies of this report were forwarded to the honourable member and to other members whose electorates cover or abut the catchment areas.

- (2) The report has been released for general distribution and a copy is hereby tabled.

*The report was tabled (see paper No. 249).*

#### WATER SUPPLIES: CATCHMENT AREAS

##### *Land Clearing: Denmark, Kent, and Warren Rivers, and Wellington Dam*

896. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) How many applications for the clearing of uncleared land have been received in each of the following areas:

- (a) the Wellington Dam catchment area;
- (b) the Denmark River catchment area;
- (c) the Kent River water reserve;
- (d) the Warren River water reserve?

- (2) How many of these applications have been approved in the area?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) 263
- (b) 34
- (c) 103
- (d) 205.

- (2) (a) 233
- (b) 30
- (c) 86
- (d) 179

Figures to 30th June, 1979.

## WATER SUPPLIES: RATES

### *Rebates: Pensioners*

897. Mr WILSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) When the recent circular was sent out to pensioners holding property under purple title, notifying disallowance for rebate of rates, was any attempt made to sift out those situations in which all the owners under a particular purple title were pensioners?
- (2) Can the Minister confirm that in a case where all the owners of a property held under purple title are pensioners, that rates and rebate and deferment benefits would apply?
- (3) If "No" to (2), why would they not apply in these cases?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes, where pensioners are in all other respects eligible for the concessions. However, legal problems could arise depending on the type of concession chosen by the pensioners. If all the pensioners choose to avail themselves of a rebate of rates there would be no difficulties. It is where some choose deferment of rates that problems arise, as the liability for amounts deferred falls against the property as a whole and therefore against all the pensioner owners, including those who may have chosen the rebates.
- (3) Not applicable.

## HIRE-PURCHASE ACT

### *Amendment*

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

What consideration, if any, is the Government giving to the introduction of amendments to the Hire Purchase Act to guard against situations in which an innocent party to an agreement for

purchase of an item is forced to bear the burden of a bad debt incurred by a signatory to a previous agreement for the purchase of the same item?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

A *bona fide* purchaser for value without notice of a prior encumbrance will acquire good title to goods which are the subject of a prior existing credit agreement under proposals for new uniform credit laws currently before the Standing Committee of Commonwealth and all States Attorneys General. Such a proposal is contained in a draft for a relevant chattel securities Bill.

## HOSPITAL

### *Swan Districts*

899. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Can he say whether consideration is being given to the upgrading of the Swan Districts Hospital including the provision of emergency facilities?
- (2) If "Yes" can he say when an announcement may be expected on the Government's intentions?

Mr YOUNG replied:

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

## TRAFFIC: DRIVERS' LICENCES

### *Photographs*

900. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Can he say whether there is any proposal to introduce a system of photographs on drivers' licences under consideration?
- (2) If "Yes" can he say when it is likely to be introduced?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) This matter is under investigation.

## POLICE

*Firearms: Regulations*

901. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Can he say whether any consideration is currently being given to changes to the firearms regulations?
- (2) If "Yes" what is the nature of the proposed changes?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) No.

## FISHERIES

*Herring*

902. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) Can he say what action has resulted from the request of the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife that the South Coast Fisheries Parliamentary Study Committee declare herring to be a food fish only?
- (2) What other efforts are being made by the Government and the department to implement a policy of having herring declared a food fish only?
- (3) What is the present state of progress resulting from these efforts?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The South Coast Fisheries Parliamentary Study Committee recommended as follows—

The Committee has found no support outside the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife for any proposed use of the powers in Section 38 of the Act to require that certain species of fish be used only for food (human consumption); and accordingly, no further declaration in terms of the section is recommended.

In particular the Committee has been told:

- (i) that a declaration of herring as a food fish would distort the market as certainly less than 50% of the catch of that fish is used as food;
- (ii) that a declaration of tuna as a food fish would not affect the present practice as all tuna can

be sold profitably for processing for human consumption and practically none is used as bait

and therefore it is recommended that no declaration be made in respect of these species.

- (2) and (3) The matter has now been referred to the General Fisheries Advisory Committee for consideration and report to me, taking into account the recommendations of the parliamentary committee and the many representations received from angling associations and other representative bodies.

## HOSPITALS

*Staff Levels*

903. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Can he confirm a recent press statement to the effect that staff levels in hospitals were being maintained?
- (2) Can he also confirm that 15 of the 27 nurses who recently completed their training at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital were told that there was no work for them in spite of the fact that they were told at the commencement of their training that employment prospects were very good?
- (3) What criteria were used to distinguish between those who were offered jobs and those who were not?
- (4) Were any of those not offered jobs breadwinners with large families?
- (5) Is the hospital continuing to offer jobs to nurses from New Zealand and the Eastern States while turning away those locally trained?
- (6) If "Yes" to (5), why is this situation allowed to occur?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I understand that 10 graduates who indicated a desire to be employed at the SCGH could not be offered an appointment.  
Training schools must train more nurses than they themselves are able to employ in order to assure availability of staff for other hospitals.

- (3) The graduate's suitability for the particular vacancy available.
- (4) The details of the graduates are not known.
- (5) and (6) Local graduates are preferred; however, sometimes it is necessary to employ other than local graduates to obtain staff with the necessary experience in certain specialised areas.

#### TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLES

##### *Holden Vans: Purchase by Public Works Department*

904. Mr WILSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

- (1) Can the Minister confirm that his department recently purchased a number of six-cylinder Holden panel vans for use by maintenance staff?
- (2) If "Yes" how many such vans were purchased?
- (3) Was any other type of vehicle considered for the purpose and if "Yes" on what basis were the Holden vans selected?
- (4) Does the purchase of these vans comply with the guidelines laid down in the Government's recently announced fuel conservation policy?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Holden six cylinder panel vans have been delivered in the June-August period for use by building maintenance employees.
- (2) Sixteen vehicles.
- (3) Vehicles of this type are bought under a period contract. The most suitable vehicle available under the contract current when the orders were placed was the Holden six cylinder panel van, bearing in mind the necessity to carry tools and equipment.
- (4) The 16 vehicles were requisitioned by the Public Works Department on the 15th November, 1978 and Government Stores orders were issued on the 31st January, 1979. The Government's statement of fuel conservation policy was not issued until the 11th July, 1979.

#### HOUSING: RENTAL

##### *Koondoola, Girrawheen, Balga, and Nollamara*

905. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Can he say whether the State Housing Commission is proposing to erect rental units on lot 821 Binstead Court and lot 516 Moorhead Way, Koondoola, in the current financial year?
- (2) If "Yes" what type of units are to be erected on these sites and when is it expected that work will commence on them?
- (3) In view of his answer to question 2392 of 1978 and 611 of 1979, can he say what modifications, if any, have been made to the proposals for these sites in response to the Shire of Wanneroo's request that the commission have regard for objections from existing residents in the vicinity to proposals previously advertised?
- (4) (a) What plans does the commission have for the construction of rental units on other sites in Koondoola, Girrawheen, Balga and Nollamara, during the current financial year;  
(b) what types of units are proposed; and  
(c) when is work expected to commence on the respective sites?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) and (2) No.
- (3) Lot 821 Binstead Court—  
No modifications are required by the Shire of Wanneroo; however, when the land is serviced the commission proposes offering for sale a number of single and duplex residential sites. The balance is to be developed for medium density housing in accordance with the Shire of Wanneroo's requirements.  
Lot 516 Moorhead Way—  
No modifications are required by the Shire of Wanneroo and this site will ultimately be developed for the commission's use.
- (4) (a) to (c) No decision on the provision of rental units on the sites referred to will be made until such time as the commission is advised of the details of allocation of 1979-80 funds from the Commonwealth under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement.

## ROADS

*Hotham Road, Grand Promenade, and Grandstand Road*

906. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the status and scope of plans for the Hotham Road bridge realignment?
- (2) Has the Main Roads Department made any recommendation for the development and recognition of Grand Promenade in Dianella and Bedford as an arterial road?
- (3) What consideration has been given to the recognition and development of Grand Promenade and Grandstand Road as arterial roads together with the realignment of the Hotham Road bridge as part of a new major cross city link?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) There are no plans to realign the Hotham Road bridge.
- (2) Grand Promenade is an arterial road under the classification system adopted by the Commonwealth Government.
- (3) Both Grand Promenade and Grandstand Road are recognised as arterial roads. The Shire of Bayswater has recently formed a special committee to consider traffic problems in this area and this committee has had preliminary discussions with the Main Roads Department.

## HOUSING: BUILDING SOCIETIES

*Terminating Insurance Contracts*

907. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Can he confirm that the regulations governing the right of terminating building societies to tie clients to a particular insurance company for home insurance, have recently been amended to legitimise this practice?
- (2) If "Yes" when were the amendments gazetted?
- (3) Can he say whether the amendments were made following a particular approach for this to be done?
- (4) If "Yes" to (3), from whom was the approach received?
- (5) If there was no special approach made requesting the amendment, on what basis was it made?

- (6) What consideration was given to the effect on individual borrowers, presumably those in the lower and middle income groups dependent on low interest loans, who are now prevented from seeking competitive rates for home insurance?
- (7) What provision, if any, has been made to ensure that prospective borrowers will be fully informed of this situation at the time of negotiating a loan?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) Western Australian regulations have not been amended, but the Commonwealth Trade Practices (Removal of Exemptions) Regulations were amended earlier this year so that they no longer override a State law authorising terminating building societies' tied insurance arrangements.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) and (4) An approach was made by the Federation of Building Societies of Western Australia to amend the regulations to permit tied property insurance for terminating building societies, and the Building Societies Advisory Committee recommends an amendment.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) When making the recommendation consideration was given to—

The competitive premium rates of recognised insurance companies; the resultant need to increase the management fee charged—equivalent to 1 per cent interest rate—if commissions paid on insurance premiums were taken away from societies.

In Western Australia the allocation of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement funds to terminating societies are dependent upon loans raised from financial institutions, and this has had the effect of receiving more funds from insurance companies as a percentage of total funds than in other States where terminating societies are prominent.

- (7) Secretaries of societies are advised to fully inform approved borrowers of property insurance arrangements when loans are approved.

**HOUSING: ABORIGINES***Balga, Lockridge, and Coolbellup*

908. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Can he say whether the Aboriginal Housing Board of WA has yet been fully established?
- (2) If "Yes" was the board consulted about the commission's experimental policy which involves the placement of Aboriginal families in flats in Balga, Lockridge and Coolbellup?
- (3) Was the decision to adopt this experimental policy made by the board of the State Housing Commission?
- (4) If "Yes" to (3), when was the decision made?
- (5) If "No" to (3), who was responsible for the decision?
- (6) What is the considered basis for the policy?
- (7) For how long is it to be regarded as experimental?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) The Aboriginal Housing Board is progressing towards becoming fully established.
- (2) No.
- (3) to (6) It has been a long-standing policy of the commission to assist Aboriginal applicants in the normal Commonwealth-State rental housing scheme where they are considered to meet the normal criteria which is applicable to all other applicants.
- (7) Does not apply.

**EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOLS***Building Programme*

909. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Can he confirm that as a result of cuts in Commonwealth funds for capital works for education the building programme for high schools will be restricted to one new high school per year?

- (2) What will be the overall effect on the schools building programme of these cuts and what changes will be necessary to forward plans anticipated for the next three years?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) No. The 1979-80 building programme contains one new high school because there is minimum growth in secondary school numbers at present, and is not influenced by Federal decisions on funding.
- (2) Forward planning will be finalised when capital funds are known, but priority will be given to the provision of new pupil places.

**SEWERAGE***Morley Area: Timetable*

910. Mr WILSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Will the Minister indicate the present extent of the area covered by the following sewerage reticulation areas—15C Morley and 15D Morley?
- (2) What parts of sewerage reticulation area Morley 15C are to be completed in terms of the finance allocations showing in the board's development plan works programme summary for—
  - (a) 1979-80; and
  - (b) 1980-81?
- (3) When is work due to commence on the laying of sewers in sewerage reticulation area 2A Morley and what is the anticipated date of completion?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) A plan of Morley 15C was published in the *Government Gazette* of 27th July, 1979, page 2103.
- (b) Area 15D is still subject to detailed design, but its approximate boundaries are as follows—Grand Promenade, Surrey Street, Pola Street, The Strand, Walter Road, Woodhall Street and Elsegood Street.
- (2) Exact details of the construction programme are not available at present and will be subject to the availability of funds.

- (3) Work has started in Morley 2A and is expected to be completed by June, 1980, subject to the availability of funds.

## HEALTH

### *Mental: Treatment*

911. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Could he please advise the number and percentage of involuntary admission patients—relative to voluntary admission patients who were admitted to approved hospitals in each of the past five fiscal years?
- (2) What are the mental health services current findings of the effect of electro convulsive therapy on patients: reference Dr Bell's statement on ABC news of 14th February, 1979?
- (3) (a) Does the mental health services currently condone the use of psychosurgery treatment;  
(b) if "Yes" under what conditions and why;  
(c) if "No" why?
- (4) How many patients from approved hospitals have been unconditionally discharged (not including deaths), and how many patients have been conditionally discharged (not including deaths) over each of the last five fiscal years?
- (5) (a) What is the current total number of psychiatric patients being treated in psychiatric after care or out-patients units; and  
(b) of these patients, how many have been on after care for a period of one, three, five and 10 years or longer?
- (6) How many minors have been voluntarily and involuntarily admitted to approved mental hospitals over each of the past five fiscal years?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) to (6) In view of the detail in the reply, the better procedure may be to table the answer.

*The paper was tabled (see paper No. 250).*

## HEALTH: ASBESTOS

### *Building Materials*

912. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Health:

Relating to health risks associated with the use of asbestos in building materials, can he advise:

- (a) the membership of a sub-committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council; and
- (b) what findings, if any, has this committee made?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (a) Professor L. Davidson

Mr H. Robinson  
Mr C. Russell  
Mr I. Crawford  
Mr C. T. Oliver  
Mr J. Baird  
Mr J. Sheather  
Mr C. J. Raper  
Mr B. Virgona  
Dr J. C. McNulty  
Dr J. Milne  
Mr G. Major  
Dr N. M. Mitchell.

- (b) A report is not yet available.

## ABORIGINES

### *Employment: Government Departments*

913. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) What action has taken place in respect of the employment of more Aborigines in Government departments following a request from the Prime Minister to the Western Australian Government on 18th October, 1978?
- (2) How many more Aborigines have been employed?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) The State Government, in co-operation with the Commonwealth Government, is engaged in a national strategy to provide employment and training opportunities for Aborigines. Departments and authorities have been required to participate in the strategy by—  
(i) identifying positions where Aboriginality could be a significant factor in the performance of the duties associated with the position;

(ii) nominating areas within the organisation where Aboriginal trainees could be placed under the NEAT scheme.

(iii) generally providing employment opportunities for Aborigines.

The Prime Minister's request of 18th October, 1978, referred to this employment strategy.

(2) Since the scheme commenced in September, 1978, a total of 121 Aborigines has been employed.

## HEALTH: HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL

### *Request Concerning Amendments to Bill*

914. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Health:

Will he table the minutes of the particular meeting of the Health Education Council wherein the decision was made to seek legislative change to the status of the Health Education Council as presented in the Health Education Council Act Amendment Bill 1979?

Mr YOUNG replied:

No. However, the minutes are available at Health Education Council and may be inspected by the member. I have their permission to quote the extract required by the member from their minutes of 5th September. That extract reads—

“The Chairman called the attention of the meeting to the Committee of Review Report. He gave a brief outline of the history of the Council and asked for comments on the Report.

After lengthy discussion it was moved:

that the Council receive the Report of the working party and approve it in principle and further that the Council recommends to the Hon. Minister that the Health Education Council Act be amended to make the Health Education Council itself an advisory body to the Minister. That the staff of the Health Education Council be absorbed into the Public Health

Department as a Branch with their job security guaranteed. That the Executive Officer and staff will continue to function at their present location.”

## COURTS

### *Police*

915. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

Under what circumstances can applicants from the police courts to an appeal court have access to the tapes of the police court hearing?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

Tapes of proceedings are not made available to any person. A transcript will be prepared and certified upon application and payment of the appropriate fees by a party to the proceedings.

The tapes as such are used to facilitate preparation of transcript where transcript is required for appeal purposes.

If any dispute arose at a Supreme Court hearing as to the accuracy of the transcript, no doubt a judge could direct that the matter be checked with the tape.

## EDUCATION: SCHOOL

### *Camballin*

916. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many children attend the school at Camballin?
- (2) Of this number how many children reside at Camballin and how many travel from Looma?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) There are 94 children on roll.
- (2) Children are distributed as follows—

Camballin	9
Liveringa	2
Looma	83

## HOUSING

*Homeless Persons Assistance Act*

917. Mr HARMAN, to the Premier:

- (1) Has he received advice from the Australian Government that assistance provided under the Homeless Persons Assistance Act will end this year?
- (2) If so, what is the exact nature of the advice?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) No.

## ELECTORAL: STATE ELECTIONS

*Premier's Interest, and Kimberley By-election*

918. Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a rule that he takes a keen and closely detailed interest in election campaigning in many electorates during a State general election?
- (2) Was the Kimberley election of 1977 an exception to this rule?
- (3) Was he aware of any intention on the part of members of the Liberal Party to adopt certain illegal procedures in the Kimberley electorate leading up to and on polling day 1977?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) I find it difficult to grasp the significance of the member's question because, in the course of any general election, the leader of a political party is expected to take an interest in the overall campaign.  
In some seats—for obvious reasons—the participation is more detailed than in others.
- (2) No.
- (3) No, nor am I aware of any illegal procedures.

## HEALTH: TOBACCO PRODUCTS

*Deaths and Advertising*

919. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that for each road death in Western Australia about three Western Australians die slow and often agonising deaths from illnesses caused primarily by the smoking of cigarettes?

- (2) Has he now changed his position on cigarette advertising from one of support of advertising to something else?

- (3) If "Yes" when did he change his position?

- (4) What is his present position and why?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) to (4) The present situation that Cabinet will consider the aspects of advertising of tobacco products is not a question of whether or not I have changed my position.

An assessment of the question will be made because there is medical support for such an appraisal.

## ELECTORAL: STATE AND FEDERAL ELECTIONS

*Comparable Value of Country and Metropolitan Votes*

920. Mr BERTRAM, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Is it a fact that in State elections electors living in Fitzroy Crossing have a vote worth approximately 17 times the value of the vote of people living in the Scarborough, Balga, Whitfords, Karrinyup and Mt. Hawthorn electorates?
- (2) If "No"—
  - (a) what is the comparable value of those votes;
  - (b) is it not a fact that in Federal elections all of the aforesaid people enjoy votes of almost equal value?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) (a) In electing a representative to the Western Australian Parliament in each of the districts referred to, each vote is equal.  
N.B. There is no electoral district of Balga.
- (b) As at the date of the Federal Election held on the 10th December, 1977, the division of Kalgoorlie which was numerically the smallest was 63 728 electors and Curtin division, the largest, had 72 892 electors. The honourable member is entitled to draw any assumption he likes from those statistics.

## FACTORIES AND SHOPS

### Registration Fee

921. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) What is the reason for the latest increase in registration fees for factories and shops?
- (2) What are the latest increases in each category in monetary and percentage terms?
- (3) What were the increases in each category in monetary and percentage terms imposed in May, 1975?
- (4) What were the fees prior to May, 1975?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Fees are reviewed on a regular basis. Increases have occurred in August, 1971 and May, 1975, and will occur in September, 1979. This latest increase brings the Western Australian charges into line with those applicable in other States.

(2) to (4)

Number Employed	Fees Payable Prior to May, 1975	1/5/1975 Increase		1/9/1979 Increase	
		\$	%	\$	%
1-2	4	1	25	5	100
3-5	6	4	67	5	50
6-10	15	5	33	10	50
11-20	24	11	46	15	43
21-30	30	20	67	25	50
31-50	45	30	67	25	33
51-100	90	40	44	45	35
Over 100	90	40	44	45	35
Plus for each additional 50 persons or part of 50	45	30	67	25	34

## ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

(No. 2)

### Inquiry, Invalids, and Prisoners

922. Mr BERTRAM, to the Chief Secretary:

Relevant to the Electoral Act Amendment Bill (No. 2):

- (1) What were the "certain aspects" required to be inquired into by Judge Kay?
- (2) Did this Parliament have any say as to what those "certain aspects" would be?
- (3) Was one of those "certain aspects" the procedure whereby certain lawyers who were at the material time members of the Liberal Party used their legal knowledge and expertise to deny Aboriginal voters their lawful vote?

- (4) (a) Will he produce the joint report of the Chief Electoral Officer and the Crown Solicitor to the Attorney General and himself and to which he referred in his second reading speech;
  - (b) If "No" why;
  - (c) if "Yes" when?
- (5) Which of the recommendations made by Judge Kay are not implemented in this Bill and why?
- (6) Which of the recommendations of the joint report referred to above are not implemented in this Bill and why?
- (7) Why was Judge Kay not asked to inquire into the fundamental question as to why the people of Mt. Hawthorn, Scarborough, Balga, Whitfords and Karrinyup should continue to be discriminated against in all State general elections in that possibly each of their votes is worth in value a mere fraction of the value of the votes enjoyed by each of thousands of other Western Australian electors?
- (8) (a) Did either or all of the members for Scarborough-Karrinyup-Whitford or the Hon. R. G. (Bob) Pike, M.L.C., for the North Metropolitan Province, give their support to the terms of reference given to Judge Kay;
  - (b) If "No" which of them did not?
- (9) (a) When clause 13(a) becomes law will it be a criminal offence for a devoted husband to say to his invalid wife who for years has been physically unable to visit a polling booth on State election days: "Dear, will I phone our local member and ask him to arrange a postal vote for you";
  - (b) if "No" why;
  - (c) if "Yes" if the member makes the arrangements required upon receiving a request from the said husband to do so, will he (the member) also be guilty of a criminal offence under clause 13(a);
  - (d) if "No" why?

- (10) How is it intended that prisoners entitled to a postal vote will be adequately informed of this right without any person breaching the provisions of clause 13(a)?
- (11) (a) Will a candidate be permitted to forward a how-to-vote card and other electoral material to a prisoner;
- (b) how will a non-Government candidate be able to ascertain which prisoners who are on his electoral roll will be in each and which prison on polling day?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) The "certain aspects" required to be inquired into by Judge Kay were the terms of reference enumerated in pages 1 to 3 of the report of His Honour A. E. Kay on the Electoral Act Inquiry 1978 tabled in the Legislative Assembly as Paper No. 10 on the 3rd April, 1979.
- (2) No. However, if the honourable member is not aware, the Bill before the House entitles both him and the Parliament to express an opinion as to these aspects.
- (3) No. However, as indicated in the second reading speech, the Government caused inquiries to be made concerning questions to be asked of electors on polling day which resulted in the proposed amendment to section 119 contained in clause 20 of the Bill.
- (4) (a) No.
- (b) These were specific matters referred to the Chief Electoral Officer and the Crown Solicitor for report and advice.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (5) Recommendations 1(ii) and 3(iv) relating to prisoner voting.  
Recommendation 5(i) which will be incorporated in the regulations.  
Recommendation 5(iii) relating to the use of a thumb mark by illiterate voters.  
The decision not to include recommendations 1(ii), 3(iv) and 5(iii) were decisions of the Government.
- (6) All recommendations of the joint report referred to in (4) above have been included in the Bill.
- (7) The question is not within the terms of reference relating to the Electoral Act.
- (8) (a) and (b) The terms of reference were set by the Government as is normally the case in such matters.
- (9) (a) to (d) Assuming the member is sincerely concerned and not being facetious, the answer is "No". If a person qualifies on any of the grounds listed in section 90 he could be advised of his rights to apply for a postal vote. I have no knowledge that any person has been prosecuted in the circumstances outlined in the question under legislation which now exists in the Commonwealth and other Australian States.
- (10) Through normal media channels. The State Electoral Department inserts paid advertisements in newspapers regarding postal and other voting facilities. Prisoners have access to such channels. The department may arrange with the Department of Corrections to display notices regarding postal vote eligibility and facilities.
- (11) (a) Yes, subject only to normal prison regulations relating to communication with prisoners.
- (b) By inquiry at the last known place of residence of the prisoner or by approach to the Department of Corrections.  
The reference to a "non-Government candidate" is not understood. Perhaps the honourable member could oblige by defining such a person.

## ELECTORAL: STATE ELECTIONS

### *Enrolment Claims*

923. Mr BERTRAM, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Why are each of the other qualified persons listed below excluded from being witnesses to enrolment claims namely—
- (a) the Chief Justice;
  - (b) justices of the Supreme Court;
  - (c) judges of the District Court;
  - (d) magistrates;
  - (e) commissioners for affidavits;
  - (f) commissioners for declarations;
  - (g) school teachers;
  - (h) local government councillors;
  - (i) Members of Parliament;
  - (j) classified civil servants;

- (k) local government clerks;
- (l) ministers of religion;
- (m) parents—spouses—children—brothers or sisters of a claimant;
- (n) any person possessing direct knowledge of the relevant facts;

- (2) When did it first become lawful for another elector to witness an enrolment claim card?
- (3) When did he first become aware that the present system of witnessing claim cards was no longer a just one?
- (4) What were each and every of the factual circumstances brought to his knowledge which persuaded him to alter the present system of witnessing enrolment claims?
- (5) Why does he say that the witnesses who are listed in clause 8 of the Electoral Act Amendment Bill (No. 2) and who do not have personal knowledge of the facts constitute better witnesses than those people who do in fact have personal knowledge?
- (6) Will the claim still be valid if the witness turns out to be a dud, or has not complied with the requirements of clause 8 of the aforementioned Bill?
- (7) Is it intended to appoint more justices of the peace in order to cope with the new requirements as to witnessing?
- (8) How much time does he think is reasonable for an electoral claimant to lose in obtaining a signature of a qualified witness?
- (9) (a) How many qualified witnesses live in Nedlands;  
(b) what is the area of that electorate?
- (10) How many of each of the qualified witnesses reside in Kimberley electorate and how many of each of such witnesses live in each of the following towns—
  - (a) Broome;
  - (b) Derby;
  - (c) Fitzroy Crossing;
  - (d) Halls Creek;
  - (e) Kununnurra;
  - (f) Wyndham?
- (11) What questions must a witness ask in order to be satisfied that the statement in the electoral claims are true?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) The Government adopted Judge Kay's recommendations contained in recommendations 1(iii) and 6(i) as a result of his conclusions after hearing evidence submitted to the Electoral Act Inquiry in 1978.
- (2) In 1899 section 33 of the Electoral Act required that claims be signed by the claimant in the presence of an adult witness and attested.  
In 1907 section 204 of the Electoral Act required that, in addition to other specified witnesses, claims could be witnessed by any elector of the same province or district provided the witness was not under the age of 21 years.
- (3) to (5) See reply to (1) above.
- (6) If any irregularity is discovered before enrolment, sections 44 and 47 would apply. If discovered after enrolment, section 48 could operate. Further, if a complaint can be substantiated that a witness has not complied with proposed section 42(3) or the present section 193, action may be taken against the witness.
- (7) Justices of the peace are not appointed solely for the purposes mentioned in the question.
- (8) Judge Kay apparently gave this matter serious consideration. See pages 11 and 12 of his report tabled on 3.4.79.
- (9) (a) The total cannot be ascertained as it is not possible to determine the addresses of qualified witnesses, with the exception of justices of the peace of which there are 55 who reside in the locality of Nedlands.  
(b) 23.22 square kilometres.
- (10) It is not possible to ascertain the number of qualified witnesses in Kimberley electorate without a great deal of research. In any case, any figure obtained would not include electoral officers who are appointed for duty on polling day.  
However, again excluding electoral officers, the following number of specified witnesses are located in the towns referred to—
 

Broome	21
Derby	16
Fitzroy Crossing	4
Halls Creek	5
Kununnurra	14
Wyndham-Port	
Wyndham	15

- (11) The witness under the proposed amendment would be required to satisfy himself to the same extent as does a witness now under existing section 193.

- (c) \$2.7 million  
(d) \$5.0 million  
(e) \$3.8 million  
(f) \$0.5 million

### ABORIGINES

#### *Noonkanbah Station: Sacred Sites*

924. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

Will he table a survey by the W.A. Museum of sacred Aboriginal sites on Noonkanbah station?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

No.

### POLICE: ACT

#### *Sections: Government Advertisements*

925. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

What was the cost of placing newspaper advertisements throughout Australia on the Government's stance on free assembly and sections of the Police Act in June of this year?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

\$21 611.18.

### STATE FINANCE: REVENUE

#### *Estimated Increase*

926. Mr DAVIES, to the Treasurer:

What is the estimated gain in revenue in 1979-80 resulting from the increases in the following charges as announced in June—

- (a) metropolitan domestic water charges;
- (b) metropolitan non-residential water rates;
- (c) domestic electricity charges;
- (d) industrial/commercial electricity charges;
- (e) metropolitan sewerage rates;
- (f) metropolitan drainage rates?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (a) \$1.8 million assuming consumption in 1979-80 is equivalent to that in 1978-79.
- (b) \$1.4 million

### EDUCATION: SCHOOLS, HIGH SCHOOLS, AND NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

#### *Fire Extinguishers*

927. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many primary schools in Western Australia have fire extinguishers installed?
- (2) How many do not?
- (3) Is fire extinguishing equipment compulsory in private schools?
- (4) How many—
  - (a) Government high schools;
  - (b) private high schools,
 have fire extinguishers installed?
- (5) What regulations exist for fire safety in—
  - (a) primary schools;
  - (b) high schools?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (5) The information sought will take time to collect and advice will be forwarded by letter.

### CONSUMER AFFAIRS

#### *Pilbara Prices*

928. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

Will he table the survey on Pilbara prices released by him on Tuesday, 24th July, 1979?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Yes. The report on a comparison of prices of grocery items in Perth, Port Hedland, Dampier and Karratha, Tuesday, 17th July, 1979, is tabled herewith.

Information now received by me indicates that a substantial reduction in prices has occurred and monitoring will continue.

*The report was tabled (see paper No. 251).*

## FOSTER PARENTS PLAN OF AUSTRALIA

### *Registration as Charitable Organisation*

929. Mr DAVIES, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Can he give any indication when a decision will be made on an application for registration of the Foster Parents Plan of Australia in Western Australia?
- (2) Is he aware that some donations to the plan have been suspended as a result of his Government's action in failing to register this organisation in Western Australia?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) A second application for registration will be considered by the advisory committee on 9th August. The committee's report will be considered as soon as possible after being received by me. See also answer to question 888.
- (2) No.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### RAILWAYS: FREMANTLE-PERTH

#### *Closure: FOR Submission*

1. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In view of the fact that it has now been established that senior Government advisers believe the proposals of the Friends of the Railway contain "no basic errors of fact or figures", will he now suspend all moves aimed at achieving the closedown of the Perth-Fremantle passenger rail service by the 2nd September pending further Government consideration of the Friends of the Railways case?
- (2) If not, why not in light of the fact that the Government's previous claims in support of its case for the closure have now been found to be seriously wanting?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) The Leader of the Opposition is again working on assumptions. The responsible officers of Westrail have no support or substantiation of the FOR case. In short, the answer is "No".

## INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE

### *Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd.*

2. Mr BLAICKIE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Has he seen newspaper reports indicating that the recent settlement of the industrial dispute at the Hamersley Pilbara project was a victory for the trade union movement?
- (2) What were the claims that brought about the dispute?
- (3) What has been agreed to?

Mr Jamieson: What was the cause of the length of the delay?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

The cause of the delay was the non-negotiable items put forward by the unions. The answer to the question is as follows—

- (1) Yes.
- (2) There were five claims made by the unions. The first was in regard to the anniversary date of service; the second was in regard to paid meal breaks; the third was the redundancy clause; the fourth was the sick and accident benefit claim; and the fifth was the 40 per cent overall increase in wages.
- (3) Had the unions negotiated their claims 10 weeks ago as they did one week ago, the claims would have been settled then with perhaps the same results being achieved. The unions achieved what they wanted in respect of the anniversary date, but this was not the case with the other issues they claimed were not negotiable. For instance, the paid meal break in an effort to obtain a 37½-hour week resulted in a 40-hour week remaining. The unions wanted all of the ACTU recommendations with regard to redundancy accepted, but only four of the 13 were finally agreed to.

The sick and accident benefit claim was negotiated and the claim for a 40 per cent weekly wage increase which would have resulted in \$80 or \$90 extra was finally settled, but the figure was between \$7 and \$10. If these points had been negotiated, as they could have been, the people and the workers in the Pilbara would have saved themselves and the State a good deal of money and face.

### RAILWAYS: ELECTRIFICATION

#### *Metropolitan Passenger Service*

#### 3. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Transport:

Would the Government be prepared to conduct an inquiry into the development of an electrified rail passenger service covering the whole of the metropolitan region, extending north and south between Two Rocks and Mandurah, with particular regard to—

- (a) reducing the demand for fuel oil;
- (b) improving the economics of the public passenger transport system as envisaged under the corridor planning concept;
- (c) preventing deterioration to and, possibly, improving the living and general environmental conditions for people in or near the State's capital city; and
- (d) providing a future useful and viable market for electricity generated at the State's proposed nuclear power station.

Mr RUSHTON replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question, the answer to which is as follows—

- (a) to (d) The Government has already moved to undertake studies of electrification, not only for rail passenger services but also of appropriate freight sections of the Western Australian railways. The Premier, when speaking at the centenary celebrations of Western Australian railways in Geraldton on Saturday, the 28th July, 1979, made a public statement on this question. I have been instructed by Cabinet to press on with studies so that I

can advise the Government as early as practicable on all matters of electrification so far as Western Australian railways are concerned. This goes far beyond, but includes, passenger services.

Amongst other things, I am to indicate the timing that might make it practicable in the light of current energy costs and availability to electrify sections of the freight services as well as any passenger services that might lend themselves to electrification.

The extension of rail passenger services through the northern corridors, using the land provided in the Mitchell Freeway is already under study and part of this study would include electrification.

Whilst no specific study has been directed at a line going south to the Rockingham and Mandurah centres, it is intended to undertake these studies in due course.

The objective behind the honourable member's question is greatly appreciated and he can be assured that the points he has enumerated are being taken into account in the studies. At this stage I cannot be precise as to when the first phases of these studies will be completed, but the Premier's instructions to me are to feed them in progressively to Cabinet rather than wait until the total studies have been completed.

In the meantime we have a lot of information on what is involved in the electrification of existing metropolitan passenger services.

### ZIMBABWE RHODESIA

#### *Prime Minister's Actions*

#### 4. Mr STEPHENS, to the Premier:

I have not given any notice of this question, but I feel that the Premier will be able to give an answer to it. It as follows—

As it is important to make a stand against communism and its insidious methods of infiltration, will the Premier assure this House that he will make the strongest

representation to the Prime Minister condemning his actions which support the communist-influenced and supported front line States in Southern Africa against the legitimate interests of Zimbabwe Rhodesia?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I would prefer to give a considered answer to the question; therefore, I ask the honourable member to place it on the notice paper. My views on this matter are well known and they are not necessarily on all fours with those of the Prime Minister.

#### RAILWAYS: FREMANTLE-PERTH

##### *Closure: Tabling of Documents*

5. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will the Minister make public by tabling in this House tomorrow all internal Government reports on the proposed closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway, the submission of the Friends of the Railways and all associated matters?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) A document has been released already of which I believe the honourable member has a copy—if he has not, I will supply him with one—which summarises the consultations which took place between the Commissioner of Railways, the Commissioner of Main Roads, and the Chairman of the MTT. This summary of the FOR submission has been given to the Director General of Transport and it held that the FOR submissions could not be substantiated.

It is possible the member is referring also to a report by Westrail. Therefore, I will examine that report to ascertain whether any policy statements are contained therein and I will give consideration to the member's request.

#### RAILWAYS: FREMANTLE-PERTH

##### *Closure: Accuracy of Information*

6. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Transport:  
In light of the fact that the Minister has claimed that the cost of the proposals of

the Friends of the Railways for suburban rail electrification are about \$120 million when, in fact, his own advisers in Westrail say that the cost is, as claimed by the FOR, less than half that amount, what guarantees can he give that all the other information he has put before the public on this issue is any more accurate than his costing of electrification?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

Much of the content of this question is innuendo; but I will endeavour to answer it in the following way: The member should realise that the responsible officers of Westrail have estimated the cost of electrification of the present passenger rail transport system for the suburban area, at a figure of approximately \$109 million. The figure of \$120 million referred to by the honourable member was contained in the central city report and was escalated to present values.

The member referred to a memorandum which was released and which I believe relates back to Mr McCaskill. I understand he is the source and it goes back to the days when he was in the department. In fact, the responsible officers of Westrail have found it to be invalid.

Omitting certain items which can be deferred at the present time, the correct figure in the opinion of Westrail is approximately \$109 million. However, one must have regard for the fact that if we commenced detailed design planning for an electrified system at the present time, the figure we would arrive at would be approximately \$200 million which would be the cost at the time work was carried out. One must consider these matters to have a full understanding of the costs of electrification at the present time.

#### RAILWAYS: FREMANTLE-PERTH

##### *Closure: Westrail Employees*

7. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In view of the revelations of the past 24 hours which have cast grave doubts on the Minister's credibility and that of the

Government over the closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway and over urban transport policy, will he now ask the Premier to give to all Westrail employees the right to speak out freely, openly and publicly on these issues?

(2) If not, why not?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

(1) and (2) No valid doubts have been cast on my credibility in the last 24 hours.

Mr B. T. Burke: You never had any.

Mr RUSHTON: I should like to quote from a statement made yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition which commences with the words, "If the revelations are correct. . ." He then indulges in a great deal of innuendo which is not a practice which does him any credit.

Mr Davies: I was honest enough to make that concession. You are not honest enough to do that.

Mr RUSHTON: The Leader of the Opposition was thinking about the laws of libel; that is what he was thinking about.

Mr Davies: No I was not.

Mr RUSHTON: Other members have done this also. As far as I am concerned the Commissioner of Westrail and his officers have a responsibility to carry out a Government policy. They must carry out that policy faithfully. As we have seen in this place, from time to time papers are leaked and misconstrued. They are then presented to outside sources. It does the Leader of the Opposition no credit to be a party to that type of action.

It is wrong for the Leader of the Opposition to believe that members of the Public Service should be encouraged to release documents or papers to the public, regardless of which Government the public servants are committed to serve.

#### RAILWAYS: FREMANTLE-PERTH

##### *Closure: Leaking of Document*

8. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Transport:  
Will the Minister give proof to the House of an instance where I have been a party to releasing or leaking

documents, in particular, the "phantom" document which has been published in the Press and about which the Minister said he knew nothing yesterday? This document, however, appears in the *Daily News*. If the Minister cannot produce evidence that I have been associated with the document in any way, will he withdraw and apologise?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

I said that the Leader of the Opposition was, by way of innuendo, challenging my credibility and I refuted that.

Mr Davies: You have a look at what you said.

Mr RUSHTON: The Leader of the Opposition then referred to a "phantom document" about which I knew nothing. The newspaper which refers to this document makes the same statement. It says, "internal Westrail report". The commissioner has reiterated that this document is not an internal Westrail report. It is not a report; it is a memo and comment. It was sent to the body responsible for evaluating the contents of the FOR report.

Mr Davies: Prove or apologise!

#### POLICE

##### *Fitzroy Crossing*

9. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:  
(1) Has—  
    (a) consideration been given and/or  
    (b) a decision been made  
recently to transfer the police sergeant at Fitzroy Crossing?  
(2) Has any Government or other political pressure been applied in this matter?  
(3) If "Yes"—what, when and precisely by whom?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) to (3) The matter of the deployment of officers of the Police Force is entirely one for the Commissioner of Police and no pressure has been put on him by me or by any member of the Government to take action regarding any member of the Police Force.

## RAILWAYS: FREMANTLE-PERTH

### *Closure: FOR Submission*

10. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Was the advice of Westrail's Chief Mechanical Engineer that there were no basic errors of fact or figures in the submissions of the Friends of the Railways on suburban rail electrification, considered by the Government before commenting on the FOR decision and confirming the closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) If I understand the member correctly, he is asking whether a report came forward from one of the branches and whether that report was considered.

Mr McIVER: A report from the Chief Mechanical Engineer, not from a branch.

Mr RUSHTON: It is my understanding, as a result of discussions with the Commissioner of Railways, that he asked for comments from the branches and this material was forthcoming. The comment referred to by the member, apparently was an updating of the figure Mr McCaskill put forward when he was in the department. It is my understanding that Westrail found this comment to be invalid. I am not fully aware of the amount of consideration given to the matter within the department; but I know Westrail submitted a full report to the Director General of Transport which enabled him to co-ordinate the responses from the various sources and make a submission to me. I handed this submission to the Government and it was based on all the material presented by Westrail and the other groups involved.

If the honourable member has read the report he will know that the Director of Transport in consultation with other senior officers of the other sections involving transport made that report.

## POLICE: PROSTITUTION

### *Policy and Penalties*

11. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the different approach taken by the stipendiary magistrate on the one hand, and certain

justices of the peace in the Kalgoorlie Court of Petty Sessions on the other hand, over the fining of women engaged in the running of premises for prostitution?

- (2) What is the policy adopted by the police in respect of the arresting and bringing before the court of women operating the Kalgoorlie Hay Street brothels?
- (3) Does the Police Force enforce an unofficial code of conduct in respect of the running of such brothels?
- (4) What action will the Government take to put an end to the lottery whereby certain brothel keepers are being fined \$5 for the type of offence for which other brothel keepers are being fined \$150?

Mr Tonkin: This Government condones gambling.

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) I read the opinions expressed by the magistrates and justices of the peace as well as the determination by the bench in respect of these matters, so I am aware of the situation.
- (2) to (4) In order that I might give the honourable member a considered answer I suggest he put the balance of the question on the notice paper.

The SPEAKER: I will allow three more questions without notice after this one.

## INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

### *Provocation by Premier*

12. Mr TONKIN, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that in the March, 1979, quarter the number of working days lost in Western Australia was 24 600 while in South Australia in the same period only 13 700 working days were lost, something like half the number although the South Australian work force is considerably larger than in this State?
- (2) Is he aware that for the year 1978, 197 900 working days were lost in Western Australia compared with only 79 100 in South Australia—less than half—for the same period?

- (3) Will he now admit that his blueprint for attempting to win the State election in November is to stir up as much trouble as possible in industrial relations as shown by his use of the Police Force for purely political purposes and his determination to prolong the agony in the Pilbara in order to prove his communist conspiracy theory?
- (4) Will he now resign in order to make way for a statesman who will not turn Australian against Australian and who will work to heal the bitter divisions in Australian society which have been the result of his divide-and-conquer approach to politics?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (4) I find the question disgusting and not worthy of an answer.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind members of the rulings I have made previously with respect to giving Ministers an opportunity to answer questions, particularly those which are asked without notice. It appears that on a couple of occasions during question time today members have forgotten those rulings. I want it to be known that I have every intention of ensuring that members are given the opportunity to ask their questions without harassment just as Ministers are to be given the opportunity to answer them in a like manner.

## EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

### *Job Creation*

13. Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that the Australian Bureau of Statistics has compiled figures which show that since 1974 the Western Australian work force has increased by 30 000, of which some 19 700 workers were employed by the State Public Service?
- (2) As that has been his Government's performance during the past five years does he remain confident of creating an additional 70 000 jobs to fulfil his election promise prior to the next State election?
- (3) If so, does he intend to increase drastically the size of the State Public Service to achieve that aim?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) The member for Balcatta likes to ask this sort of smart trick question. I am not quite sure of the figures he quoted and the dates he mentioned; but at least he has admitted that the work force in this State has increased during the life of this Government.

Mr McIver: So has the population.

Mr B. T. Burke: You have 70 000 to make up.

Mr O'Connor: The figures you quoted were wrong.

Mr B. T. Burke: They were not wrong.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to remind the honourable member that the work force in this State has been increasing—even on his figures—and he certainly took the worst he could. If he looks at the Australian average during that period he will find that this State is by far the best performer and as far as numbers are concerned I suggest he check the election promise because the targets for industrial development in this State, which I declared at the last election, will be exceeded in good time.

## HOSPITAL

### *Swan Districts*

14. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Health:

Referring to question 899 and the answer given to the member for Dianella—

- (1) Did the Minister receive a deputation of interested people who sought to have the Swan Districts Hospital upgraded?
- (2) If so, did the deputation request that the bed capacity of the hospital be significantly increased?
- (3) Does the Minister's answer mean a rejection of the proposal to increase bed capacity at the hospital?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) to (3) I did receive a delegation of interested people regarding the Swan Districts Hospital. The nature of the delegation was to put before the Government the feelings of those people; that is, that the Swan Districts Hospital should be upgraded, and that more bed capacity and certain out-patient and casualty facilities should also be provided. I made it clear to that particular deputation that in respect of the possible provision of a casualty section at the Swan Districts Hospital they should discuss this matter further with the then Director General of Medical Services because it appeared in the light of all things to be impractical. I understand they did that. I think discussions were further held between the then Director of Administration and those people regarding the growth of population in the general catchment area of the Swan Districts Hospital.

I can only conclude that that deputation was unable to convince the then Director of Administration that their figures were correct. If the member for Swan would like to have a more specific answer to the question, including the history of the matter, I will be happy to supply it.

Minister could foresee this question. Will he table the committee of review report to which he referred in his answer today?

Mr YOUNG replied:

I will ask the council whether it would be prepared to allow me to make it available to the honourable member and if so I will be happy to comply with the request.

The SPEAKER: Notwithstanding the fact that I said there would be only three more questions, I will allow the member for Gosnells to ask the final question.

# JOHN GILL ADVERTISING

*Takeover by D'Arcy MacManus and Masius*

16. Mr PEARCE, to the Premier:

On the 28th November last year I asked the Premier a question regarding the Eastern State advertising agency D'Arcy MacManus and Masius and the proposed takeover of the Western Australian owned agency, John Gill Advertising, and whether the Government planned to direct business to either of those companies.

The Premier promised to provide me with the information. I did not receive it as the Premier promised, so I referred the matter again to the Premier on the 26th April, 1979. I was again promised the information would be sent as soon as possible, but I still have not received it. Does he think he may be able to provide the information for me before the first anniversary of my question?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I will have a look at the particular question. I am sure there would not be any reluctance on the part of the department to provide information. I will follow it up for the honourable member.

## HEALTH: HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL

### *Request Concerning Amendments to Bill*

15. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Health:

My question is supplementary to question 914 today dealing with the Health Education Council. I think the