

# Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 17th August, 1977

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

## STANDING ORDERS

### *Suspension*

On motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Leader of the House), resolved—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as to enable the "Death Duty Assessment Act Amendment Bill", the "Death Duty Act Amendment Bill", the "Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill" and the "Acts Amendment (Pensioners Rates Rebates and Deferments) Bill" to be taken on receipt of Messages from the Legislative Assembly and to have precedence each day before the Address-in-Reply, and to be passed through all stages at any one sitting.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FIFTH DAY

### *Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 16th August, on the following motion by the Hon. R. G. Pike—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency—

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

**THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON** (North Metropolitan) [5.04 p.m.]: Mr President, in speaking to the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech, I should like to say there are a great many issues that are worrying the people of this State. These issues are the result of the actions of the Government which is presently in control of our country. The problems are due in a large part to the policies that are being implemented by it.

We have heard, in two of the replies to questions asked today, about attempts by the Government to lay the blame somewhere else. I think even members opposite must realise the

time has passed when that can still be done with any sort of credibility.

We all remember very clearly the promise of the Premier (Sir Charles Court) that he would overcome unemployment in this State within six months, and that was to happen in 1974. We know how serious that problem has become in the period he has been in control of the affairs of this State. In the same way, the economic issues and the social issues that we face now as a nation have all been exacerbated by the type of policies that the Liberal-National Country Party Governments have adopted.

Following the State elections, I would like to join with other members in greeting the new faces in this House. I made some reference to that in my speech on the Supply Bill. I should also like to pay some tribute to the members who are no longer with us and, in particular, I should like to make a reference to the former leader of the Labor Party in this Parliament (Mr John Tonkin).

His high intelligence and capacity, and his wealth of experience were universally recognised. His passing from the political scene is a matter of great regret amongst the people at large. Mr John Tonkin has those qualities of integrity and honesty that result in great regret being expressed by people in our electorates when we speak to them about his retirement from politics. They do not have such feelings for all members of Parliament. There is unfortunately a very great mistrust of politicians in general, yet John Tonkin was a man about whom we would not hear those sort of things said. That is a tremendous tribute to him. His competence as a Premier was undoubted. Members will recall how he came to government with a \$10 million deficit in the Treasury. Talking about coming into government when the State was in a bad situation, it was bad when the Labor Government came into office in 1971. Under John Tonkin's skilful and competent administration, the affairs of this State stabilised and improved. The defeat of the Tonkin Government in 1974 was one of the unhappy events experienced by Western Australia. We are really starting to reap the harvest of that defeat today.

John Tonkin had a genuine feeling for the people and he was regarded somewhat as a crusader and one who takes up worthy causes. He was not always respected for the causes that he supported, and he was the butt of some jokes as a result of this. However, some of the causes which he took up, such as his dogged pursuit of the return to use of the Tronado machine for the treatment of cancer could not be demeaned. John

Tonkin was aware of the large numbers of people who would benefit from the Tronado machine and we know that even now one machine continues to be used in this State. It would have been a fitting finale to John Tonkin's career had he been successful in bringing the return to public use of the other Tronado machine. However, we win some and lose some, and there is still debate on that particular issue.

I should also like to remark on the Hon. Stan Dellar who sat alongside me in this House for a period of six years. He had a very dry sense of humour which helped to ease the debates that took place here and to make them more bearable at times. Not all members are easy to listen to, but we knew when Stan was on his feet he would have something of interest to say—something pertinent to the discussion—accompanied by humour.

I appreciate the co-operation Stan Dellar gave me as Whip. He could always be depended upon to be present and to take part in a debate when called on to do so. He had great experience in local government which was extremely valuable to members on this side. The experience he gained from the many years he spent living in the north will also be missed in our debates.

We have been joined by two very competent people, the Hon. R. Hetherington—or Mr Bob Hetherington as he prefers to be called—and the Hon. Fred McKenzie. They both have a wealth of experience in their particular fields and they will add to the skills that we are able to apply to our discussions in this Chamber.

I should also like to join in congratulating Sir Francis Burt on his appointment as Chief Justice. He is a man who, I believe, is universally respected and will fulfill his task in a manner that will be appreciated by all sides.

In referring to the Governor I express my regret for a speech he was recorded as having made. We like to think of our Governors as being above party politics, however, in *The West Australian* of Tuesday, the 2nd August, it was reported that in a speech he gave at the opening of Local Government Week he offered the opinion that local government councillors should not be paid. That is very much a political issue and I regret the Governor chose to enter into that sort of discussion.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: How would you make that a political issue?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Because—the Leader of the House may not be aware of it—his side says that councillors should not be paid, but we on our side say they should be paid.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I have got news for you. I know a lot of Labor blokes who believe they should not be paid.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I could probably find numbers of Liberal Party supporters—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I was just going to add that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: But as far as policies are concerned this becomes a matter of political debate.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That does not make it a political matter.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: We know that Mr MacKinnon has his own ideas on various issues, but he is able to give a reply. I make that comment and express my regret.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You criticised the Governor and I thought you should justify it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I express my regret that the Governor should comment on a political issue of this nature.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It seems to be quite reasonable to me.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Members of the Labor Party see the Governor as a man who is fulfilling his role in a very competent and dignified manner and we would not quarrel with him.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am glad of that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I hope that his remarks will be regarded as an unintentional slip; it will not be repeated.

The Speech delivered by the Governor, which is really the Government's document setting out its programme for the coming session, is not one to grab the imagination of people. It shows a very thin legislative programme which, I believe, demonstrates the lack of depth and lack of imagination on the part of the present Government. It demonstrates the way in which the Government hopes to cope with the current economic situation and the administration of the affairs of our State. There were statements in that speech on which I would certainly take issue, but I do not intend to deal with it seriatim or just confine myself to the matters that were raised in that speech.

I have already mentioned my regret that the change of Government took place in 1974, and I expressed the same regret at what followed on the Federal scene. We have seen what has amounted to a power grab by our opponents, which has been carried out in a way that I believe disregarded

ethical principles. The main objective was to seize power, and the means were subsidiary to that. I have stated previously in this Chamber that, while recognising our opponents were successful in their tactics, what took place in 1975 in particular was very bad for Australia. I would have been pleased to be proved wrong but my prognosis at that time has been confirmed and the whole community expects matters will become worse and not better.

The campaign waged by our opponents both nationally and within this State—and I refer particularly to this State—has been greatly assisted by the role played by our Press and the media in general. We are unfortunate in having such a narrow choice of outlets for the expression of views.

If we are to have a healthy democracy—and I believe all members would say they supported the principle of a healthy, vital democracy—it is essential that there be a wide-ranging presentation of points of view, which can be achieved only with a Press and other media that accept it is their role to be a vital cog in the kind of parliamentary democracy in which we pretend to believe in this State. I would like to see much less pretence and much more determination to ensure that the substance is adhered to. That will not be possible unless the Press and other media in this State examine the role they are playing and accept a greater responsibility.

I am not expressing my own point of view when I say the owners of the media see that they have a vested interest in supporting the opponents of the Australian Labor Party; that is, the Liberal and National Country Parties and other organisations on the right of politics. They see those organisations as their natural friends. No-one can say they should not do that—I believe it is natural—but at the same time they must realise they have these biases and it is essential that they consciously take steps to ensure the biases do not come through in the presentation of the news.

Quite apart from the privately-owned media, I criticise very strongly the morning ABC radio programme, which is almost a mouthpiece for the Liberal Party. So many times the Premier and other Liberal Party Ministers are given a voice on that programme and it is only on very rare occasions that any member of my party is given an opportunity to express his views.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thought on balance on "AM" this morning you did very well.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am not speaking about that programme; I am speaking about the morning programme which runs from about 9.00 a.m. to midday.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: In the programme at 8.30 this morning you had a very good run. Everyone seemed to be a Labor supporter.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I thought the programme this morning gave a very honest assessment—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am sure you did.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: —of how the Budget could be viewed, but the Leader of the House would need to stretch his imagination to believe the spokesman for Synteko, for example, is a supporter of the Labor Party.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Touche!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Yet he was extremely scathing.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Only on one aspect—company tax. He liked the rest of it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: He really found nothing to praise.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: But you got a pretty good run.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I thought that programme covered a rather broad selection of people and interest groups, and their views were almost unanimous.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Would you not think the ABC was very much on your side?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would like to think it was.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The ABC is apolitical. I mean the reporters.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I think the ABC attempts to present a balanced point of view, and it is only to that particular programme I take exception. I have spoken to my leader a number of times asking him to complain to the ABC. However, that matter was introduced only by the way.

The main point I am making is the maintenance of a democratic system, which we say we believe in, depends very much on the role played by the media. We do not ask that they lean towards the Labor Party. All we ask is that there be fair reporting of different points of view and that an opportunity be given for all shades of opinion to be expressed.

I will give some examples of that aspect. One comes from the *Daily News* of 28th April, 1977, which carried the headline "Inflation rate plunges". That is a very optimistic view of the results at that time. We know the Federal Government wanted to remove the cost of Medibank from the consumer price index but, try as it might to deny it, that cost very definitely had

to be paid by the public in an unprecedented manner. It was a very significant cost to the people and for that reason it had to be included in any estimate of the cost of living in this country. So rather than the inflation rate of 10.2 per cent which the Government was emphasising, inflation was up between 13 and 14 per cent. That banner headline was wrong and it is an example of the kind of thing I am talking about.

The *Sunday Independent* of the 7th August contained another extreme example of the bias of a newspaper. Commenting on a speech made in this House, the editorial in that edition said of the Liberal Party—

Today, as a political organisation, it is further to the left of the political spectrum than Labor was in the early 1950s.

If that is that newspaper's view of the Liberal Party, we can imagine what its view is of the Labor Party and what likelihood there is of it containing a reasonable expression of the views of the Labor Party.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thought it was generally agreed the members of the Labor Party had become hidebound reactionaries.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I concede the Leader of the House would hold such a view. I have not found it is generally held by the public.

When a newspaper such as the *Sunday Independent* expresses that kind of point of view, the public very quickly come to see it as a biased newspaper and judge it accordingly. It is interesting to note that following the 1975 coup *The Australian* lost 25 per cent of its readers, which is an indication how the public reacted to the line adopted by the newspaper.

*The West Australian*, however, is much more subtle in the way it manages its news, so that any bias is less discernible to the public, who may not realise the bias in fact exists. I will give the example of the referendum of the 21st May, in regard to which the Government spent public funds to promote a "No" case, which was the case for the Liberal Party. In my view it was a complete misuse of public funds to use them in the interests of the policies of the Liberal Party.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: It was in the interests of the State as well, though.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is the Minister's view. In fact, the majority of people disagree with it.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: That might be so but it does not say it was not in the interests of the State.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The headline

in *The West Australian* was fairly small and said, "WA 2.1 per cent stops clean sweep". In other words, despite the support by the Premier for a "No" case on two of the questions and his very indifferent support for a "Yes" case on the other two questions, the people of the State in fact supported three of the questions—

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You would expect them to support two, would you not?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: —and very nearly had a majority for the fourth question. If *The West Australian* had been doing its job fairly, I believe the headline would have been "Rebuff for Premier" because he was definitely rebuffed. He went to great lengths to try to persuade the people to vote against those questions and all he gained was a very narrow majority against one of them.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I do not believe he really tried very hard.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Everyone thinks he fought with both hands tied behind his back.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It was not a small effort. However, that is not the question I am pursuing.

I am concerned—as I think all people would be who say they believe the Westminster style of parliamentary democracy is the right kind of system for this State—that the Press and other media fulfil their proper function in the system.

The Government has been failing, and because it has been failing democracy in this State has been lost, and the people are suffering as a consequence of it.

I would like to raise many issues but time, of course, will defeat me in any attempt to cover them all, although I am aware I have unlimited time.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: That is good news.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am sure members would weary before I would, so I will not test their powers of endurance.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: It is "Be kind to members week" is it?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We are appreciative of your undying mercy.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would like to be thought of as a considerate person. I will mention briefly some of those issues; and this does not pretend to be a full list, but it will give an indication of some of the many problems we are facing, both major and minor. The State has been inflicted by this Government as well as by the

Australian Government with a running battle of industrial confrontation with the trade union movement. We have seen time and time again how issues which may have been resolved within a reasonable space of time have been blown up eventually to assume major proportions with confrontations and strikes and all the difficulties for the public which accompany such action.

It is perhaps notable that *The West Australian* this week saw fit to carry an article which indicates there is a change in the industrial climate. I have been informed this change may have followed the visit of Sir Charles Court to Japan, where he was probably told in brief that he should pull his head in and deal with the unions here in a rational and reasonable manner.

Let us look at just a few of the recent headlines. "Court spurns union's call" is one which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 21st June. On the 23rd June, the *Daily News* carried a headline stating, "TLC raps Grayden, but . . . Bosses to back Government hard line." Then, on the 24th June in *The West Australian* there was a headline, "Government criticised and supported."

Those headlines represent a small sample of the sort of thing that is occurring. I am sure other members on this side would like to develop that topic. However, industrial confrontation has been a serious problem in this State and if in fact the Government has been told to pull its head in we can perhaps hope for a lessening of confrontation.

Then there is the issue of our electoral laws. In my view this is one of the overriding issues in our State at present, and I believe the most recent changes have introduced what can only be termed as one-party government in this State. That is an issue I will take up later.

While this confrontation with the unions has been going on, the Government has said very little about the role being played by the large companies in this State which in the main control price levels, which in turn are a major factor in inflation. Most of those large companies, and particularly those which control the food industry, are not based in Western Australia but are nationally or internationally based. If we read the recent financial pages we find those companies are doing well, but at the same time we are seeing large numbers of small businesses going bankrupt. In fact, the number of small businesses going bankrupt has reached a record level at this stage.

We hear very little from the Government or the Press on this serious issue, yet it is a great problem for many of our citizens. However, little action seems to have been taken to assist these

small businesses or to examine the situation to ascertain their problems.

I turn now to the question of unemployment. Again unemployment has reached a record level and this affects mainly the younger people in the community—the school-leavers—because they are missing out on work experience. Often when these young people apply for a job they are told persons with experience are preferred. This is the case particularly with children of concerned parents who want to see their children do well and so keep them at school until the end of the 12th year to bring them to matriculation level. Other parents perhaps do not care as much or are less ambitious and allow their children to leave school at 15 or 16 years of age to get jobs, and those children are filling vacancies; but the older ones are missing out because they do not have any experience.

So we have a growing group of these young people in our community who are not only unemployed but are missing out on career opportunities and perhaps getting to the point where through no fault of their own they are becoming unemployable.

During the election the Premier promised to provide 100 000 jobs, but now he seems to be very reluctant to tell us precisely where they are to be found. On the 3rd August I asked a question in this place in respect of where the jobs were to be located and what were the details; all I received was a list of five projects, and nothing more. Yet a gentleman by the name of W. W. Mitchell was able to supply information in far more detail in an article appearing in *The West Australian* on the 19th May. He listed the various areas where work would be created, and the number of jobs that the Liberal Government would provide.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Presumably Mr Mitchell satisfied you, did he?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: No, had he satisfied me I would not have asked the question.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I thought you were dissatisfied because the Premier could not tell you.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It seems rather odd to me that this public relations consultant and Liberal Party policy adviser, as he is described, is able to give the figures publicly, but when we ask for the information in this Parliament—the place where reliable information should be given—we receive only the skimpiest of information. I would have thought the Government would have been eager to grasp the opportunity to say where these jobs would be created, and that it would be proud to do so.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: We are very reserved.

The Hon R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would say so! And so are the jobs; unfortunately the 26 000 unemployed people out there find the jobs are not reserved for them, because they cannot find them.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: If you have 100 000 jobs you can still have some people out of work.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I thought this was going to be the cure for unemployment in this State; so that is an odd remark from the Minister. At any rate, I will not speak at length on this matter. Let us take the North-West Shelf as an example. Informed opinion says development will not go ahead until the 1980s. Development will not occur this year, next year, or the year after; the jobs will not be available until some time in the 1980s.

In respect of the iron ore industry, my leader tells me iron ore is piled in great mountains in Japan, so much so that the Japanese hardly know where to put the next shipment.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Japan might capsize!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Yes, perhaps the mountains of iron ore were the cause of the recent volcanic eruption.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Perhaps Japan will tilt and the iron ore will all slide away into the ocean!

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: They are having trouble controlling their piles at Port Hedland.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: They call them heaps.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is another serious problem.

In regard to education we find much the same sort of problems in funding and in the unsatisfactory control of costs, and also we have the pre-school issue. I am sorry Mr Lewis is not here tonight because yesterday he commented on my silence on the matter of pre-school education over the last year or so. I assure him that if I have been silent it is not because I have not been concerned but because the Government has demonstrated quite clearly that no matter what one might say or how bad the system is or what ill-effects it might cause, it is determined for its own private reasons—which are not apparent to anyone else in the community—to press ahead with this system. At present it is continuing to develop the policy on which it started out. It got to the point where it was felt the word of the Minister could no longer be trusted because no matter what assurances were given, they were not sustained.

There is a pre-primary centre at the

Doubleview School, and during the week I asked a question about it.

The Minister said that the parents had been told that once these temporary premises in the old Bristol building, which is quite unsatisfactory, were provided, that was all there was to be; they need not look to the Government for anything more, and the Government could give no promise that a permanent structure built, one would assume, to APA standards would be provided. The original request did not come from the Doubleview Parents and Citizens' Association; it came from a group of parents in the community who found that this pre-primary scheme, which operates on school boundaries, had barred their children from the existing kindergartens at Scarborough, Innaloo, Woodlands, and Wembley Downs. They were in the centre of this circle of former pre-schools, now pre-primary schools, and were unable to send their children to them. They were being most unjustly disadvantaged by this misconception of a scheme dreamt up by some unknown persons in the Liberal Party for unknown reasons.

To overcome that problem some parents, I believe, went to the Minister and said, "Can we have a facility in our community?" The Minister said, "I shall let you put your kids into the old Bristol prefabricated Doubleview School, but do not dare ask me to do anything to improve it." That is the situation. The P & C at Doubleview Primary School was not involved in that, but it has been told the same sort of thing—that it cannot, believe it or not, make the demand. That is a most incredible situation. They have been told to stay there and keep quiet and not dare to ask the Government to provide a pre-primary school of the standard that everybody else around them enjoys. All the other centres were built before this crazy scheme came into effect. I believe that is most unreasonable and completely unjust to the parents concerned. On their behalf I register a very strong objection to what has gone on and to the scheme in general.

If Mr Lewis believes there is no opposition, I have with me a letter from the Shire of Wanneroo asking me to resist the changes on behalf of these—

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: What date is that letter?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The 5th August.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: Which year?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Would the honourable member like to read the letter? It is the 5th August, 1977, and it is signed by N. S. Bennetts, Shire Clerk. I assume the honourable

member thinks I am quoting something from a couple of years ago. That might be the sort of thing he and his party do, but it is not the sort of thing I would do.

I now turn to the opinion of the Teachers' Union on its dealings with the Minister on this subject. A review of what has occurred since 1974 appeared in *The Western Teacher* of the 24th March, 1977. I quote—

At the time, they believed what future action has shown to be incorrect opinions, and made assumptions without sufficient evidence. The Minister was extremely skilful at this stage by not giving definite answers to questions from the Union and hence avoiding a possible confrontation. This is a legitimate tactic which, in this case, was highly effective. The issue also affected the unity of the Union since many members were highly critical of the action of the Union leaders.

In conclusion, the Government achieved its objective and the opponents of the scheme failed, even though recent evidence shows that they had a sound case.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I wish you would tell us what you are talking about.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am happy to enlighten the Minister. I am saying that the promises and assurances given by the Minister on this issue have been found to be a very unsound basis on which to base opinions, decisions, and actions. That sort of opinion is expressed in this article in *The Western Teacher*. I quote—

This abrogation of assurances could have been necessitated by a change in circumstances such as a lack of funds or the provision of new information, or could be part of a long term strategy. In either case, the parties who accepted them in good faith should have strong doubts about accepting such assurances from this source in the future.

I really brought that up for the benefit of Mr Lewis because he felt that I had come to accept that the pre-primary scheme was desirable. I do not accept it and I have found nothing that would encourage me to change my views about it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Does it not alarm you that you are so out of step with reality?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is a pity that some acknowledgement of reality had not been taken into account by the Government and by Mr MacKinnon at that time.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I really think it is a great scheme. The whole nation is embracing it

now—not only this nation, but also most countries in the world.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr President, I am sure that the Minister does not really believe that I shall accept that statement.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: At the weekend I looked at seven or eight schools in Canberra where it is effective.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If we look at the schooling arrangements in all the other States we find that there are differences.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They are all coming to this idea very rapidly.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr President—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is such a good idea.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I think the other States have gone on in the way they have always gone on.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is not the way it is in Queensland.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: They continue to divide their school years in the same way they have always done. We have a slightly different system in this State, as the Minister should know.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are switching to the commencement of the school year now, are you?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is what was involved in the Minister's scheme. In the latest moves the present Minister for Education is finding that there are difficulties in what he is proposing because pre-schools cater not only for five-year-olds, but also for four-year-olds. It is incredible that he is allowing this move to go ahead. This is only one of the things of which the present Minister was not aware, just as the previous Minister (Mr MacKinnon) was not aware of a large number of things that were done in kindergartens and pre-schools when he took up this proposal.

I have no doubt that the present Minister and this Government will continue in the same bull-headed way in carrying out this policy. Doubleview Pre-primary School is only one of the centres in this sort of condition. It is not the worst one. We listened to the recitation of the faults of the school at Salmon Gums which Mr Stubbs gave us.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That was the fault of the building, not the system.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Despite what

the Minister said, the assurance was given that APA standards would be adhered to. They are not adhered to at Doubleview or at Salmon Gums. The Minister surely is not going to pretend that that sort of building and the sort of conditions under which they operate—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Of course, I insist they are.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: So the system is at fault.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I have been to Salmon Gums. You have not.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: There are many places I have not been to; and there are many other places I have been to. I do not say that I have been everywhere any more than the Minister would claim to have been everywhere. That is a further problem that we have.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There are some problems in your mind. It is not a real problem.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I have to ignore the Minister in order to continue, but these things are not in my mind. I have papers here which I could read to let honourable members hear all the problems, but we will be having a debate on pre-primary schools and I will save them till then so that we can deal with the problem in depth.

I turn now to the problem of federalism. If we believe the assurances given by Ministers that this great scheme will do everything for Australia, they are as valuable as those given in respect of pre-schools. It is a policy which is causing divisions in the Australian community and disrupting the processes of government; it is also causing great concern with regard to the funding of all sorts of programmes. I believe the policy was dreamt up as a way of getting rid of a number of policies that were brought in by the Whitlam Government, and it has very little else at its base. It is another one of those things which is preventing any degree of national unity amongst the Australian people, because I believe we are Australians as well as Western Australians; and I hope that would be the position of all members.

The Art Gallery Board is another issue. It is incredible this Government should have acted to put a lid on any criticism concerning that issue. It is a very serious problem and yet there is a very great fear amongst the staff that if they say anything they will lose their jobs.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Would you tell me—

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I shall come back to that, if the Minister does not mind.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are a member of one of those boards. Tell us how the Government interferes. Be a bit honest.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I turn to the question of metropolitan domestic water supplies. This is one of those issues in which I believe the Government was protected by the Press at a time when the matter should have undergone great public discussion because of the serious problem that was growing at the beginning of the year. All mention of it was squashed apparently because we saw nothing before the State election and then afterwards, as I have said previously, there has been very little comment.

Maybe the Government hopes that we will get sufficient rain to prevent a serious problem at the end of the year. However, if members followed the pattern they would realise that over the last couple of years there has been a slight climatic change which has resulted in drier seasons. The prediction is that this trend will continue. Although the recent heavy rains are encouraging, they are symptomatic of this sort of climate. Slightly higher temperatures and drier air tend to cause these rather heavy falls. Probably we will have a few more heavy showers but, overall, a diminished rainfall.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I can see you are an expert on the weather as well. Can you tell us whether it will rain next week?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the Minister likes to keep up with what occurs in the country as I attempt to do, he would know the long-range weather experts—

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Are you talking about Mr Walker from Queensland, or are you competing with him?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the Minister does not like my opinion, he can always refer to other authorities.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You might be able to sell your skill

*Sitting suspended from 6.03 to 7.30 p.m.*

The PRESIDENT: Honourable members, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the House of a delegation from the Legislative Assembly of Sabah, Malaysia. This delegation, which is led by the honourable Speaker, is on a goodwill visit to Australia and New Zealand, and I feel sure that honourable members will offer them a warm welcome.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton may proceed.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr President, before continuing with my speech, I endorse your remarks in reference to the delegation from



Sabah. I trust that their attendance here will be of some value to them and perhaps give them some guidance on the way that they conduct themselves in their own parliament. We are traditionally seen as a more dignified House, being an upper House. That is not always the case, as the President reminded us before the tea suspension.

Before the suspension I was speaking about the problems that had arisen in the State as a result of the administration of the Liberal-National Country Party coalition Government in Western Australia, exacerbated by the policies adopted by the same coalition Government in Canberra. I was referring to the problem of domestic water supplies. I want to proceed at speed so I intend to cut short some of the comments that I wish to make. In support of my claim that conditions have deteriorated markedly in Western Australia and Australia as a whole, I will read a number of headlines and supporting statements on that point. In the *Industry News* of June/July, 1977, there is a heading, "Manufacturers' optimism", but when we read further the article has this to say—

The downturn in industrial output was less marked in the June quarter. However, the contraction in the volume of new orders received was rather more severe with less than one third of respondents working at a satisfactorily full rate of operation, and insufficiency of new orders continuing to be nominated as the chief constraint on increased production.

I am picking these extracts up as they are placed in my file. I have not put them in date order.

In *The West Australian* of the 23rd May, 1977, the headline appears, "Ruin feared for small businesses".

In the *AAA Australian News*, that is the Australian Automobile Association publication of April, 1977, under the heading, "A sad reflection on the Government's road priorities" the following comments appear—

In the light of the sum of those grants the importance placed on roads by the Government must be very little indeed.

In *The West Australian* of the 25th May, 1977, we find the heading, "Textile industry 'at end of line' ". Again in *The West Australian* of the 4th June, 1977, there are the headlines, "More bad news in stock levels" and "Jobless figures deteriorating".

In the same paper of the 25th May, 1977, we find the headline, "Survey: No recovery in confidence", and on the 28th May, 1977, there

(18)

appears the headline, "BHP to shut down SA blast furnace". In the *BHP News Review* of March, 1977, we find the comments, "Improvement unlikely to be maintained" and "Crude steel output remains subdued".

In the ACMA news brief of March, 1977, there is the following extract—

#### Promises, Promises

Australian Manufacturers Export Council president, Brian Harrod, has written to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for National Resources and Overseas Trade, Doug Anthony, calling for immediate implementation of a two pronged export incentives scheme.

Mr Harrod attached a submission from the council for a scheme which could be initiated from July 1, 1977.

He said in his letter that the Labor Government had dismantled previous incentive schemes and one of the promises on which the present Government rode to power was that the schemes would be re-introduced and updated.

Of course, the Labor Government had in fact introduced its own export incentive schemes which were demolished by the present Liberal Government; and that exacerbated the problem for exporters.

In *The West Australian* of the 12th March, 1977, there is the headline, "Fall in job advertisements is biggest for two years". I could continue on that note for much longer.

A very serious situation is arising in Australia. Very little is being done by this Government, and very little is contained in the Budget brought forward by the Federal Treasurer (Mr Lynch) yesterday, to give any sort of encouragement to the people.

I was going through a list of issues that were affecting the State and I will just quickly run through more of those. There is the question of energy resources and uranium; and the need for research and development to overcome the problems.

We have a terrible disease in this Government: I call it "me-too-ism". Whatever the Whitlam Government did this Government had to do also. It was a "me too" situation and it continued in that manner with the Fraser Government. The Whitlam Government introduced the Small Businesses Bureau and we had to have one here also. If the Whitlam Government introduced a legal aid scheme, we had to have one in this State, and the list goes on and on. If an industrial

bureau was suggested by the Fraser Government then we had to have one here as well.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: We had a legal aid programme before one was introduced by the Whitlam Government.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It reminds me of the situation where the youngest boy in the family is trying to establish a place for himself, and he says, "Me too. I am going to do that", but of course he is not able to do it as well as the elder brother. That is what has happened here. The Industrial Relations Bureau died a natural death. It simply was not applicable in this State.

Then there is the situation with petroleum retailing. We have the argument with the Transport Workers' Union which Mr Masters has been telling us about. There has been a problem with petrol retailing for a long time. This Government chooses to ignore it, and allows a confrontation to take place between the dealers and the petrol tanker drivers. It suits this Government politically to do so.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: That is absolute rubbish and you know it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the honourable member was honest with himself he would agree with me. It is a demarcation dispute. It does not suit the Government's purposes apparently.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You know as well as I do what the dispute is about. Do not try to pull the wool over my eyes.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You know what the situation is.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The situation is that that issue could have been resolved two years ago.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Well, tell us how.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It could have been resolved two years ago by drawing a line of demarcation, but the Government objected to that.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: In other words you would have allowed the tanker drivers to have their way and control the fuel supplies of this State.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It could have been resolved by drawing a line from which each could operate. Mr Brockway, who claims to be so badly disadvantaged in all this, has managed to build up a business where he now has 17 drivers employed. If that is happening, how is he being disadvantaged? He has obviously been able to

spread himself and to increase his business, despite his claims about the Transport Workers' Union operating against him. Within the area of need, there is a role that he can play. I would not deny him that, any more than other members on my side. Demarcation disputes are not uncommon. They happen in all sorts of areas. The WA Automobile Chamber of Commerce has agitated for a long time to get this Government and other Liberal Governments to take some action on its behalf, but that does not suit the Government's purpose. This Government believes that by continuing the dispute it will gain political capital.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Have you read the newspaper tonight? Do you know the tanker drivers have gone on strike again because Mr Brockway had picked up some fuel?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I know the glee with which the member makes that statement.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Joy be damned!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: We have a problem with the medical profession. We never hear the honourable member for West or anyone else on his side complaining about the militancy of doctors. Day after day we hear complaints about the lack of service from the medical profession. There was an article in the paper in the last day or two complaining because people cannot obtain after-hours service and consequently there is an increased demand on Princess Margaret Hospital. If members opposite are consistent they would be making some complaint about this sort of activity, but they see the doctors as their friends. It does not matter about the public—the people in need who suffer because of this. This Government takes no action. It is afraid to take action because it might offend the doctors.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Do they stop other doctors giving service?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Do not talk to me about service from doctors.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Do they stop other doctors from giving service? That is what the unions are doing in the transport situation.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is the patients who want the service.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Patients are customers.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is the patients who are in real need and not the other doctors. The doctors are trained to provide a

service to the public and that is what they do not do.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Give us an instance.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Perhaps it is only fair for me to acknowledge that many doctors do provide a service. However, a very militant group is operating for its own benefit, and it does this at a cost to the public. Yet this Government does nothing about the doctors. At the least opportunity the Government will criticise an organisation such as the Transport Workers' Union. No matter how much Mr Cowles is hated by the public, he has brought a fair amount of stability to the transport industry which was previously in a very bad state. I am sure members opposite would not quarrel with that—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Do you think it is stable now?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Members opposite cannot deny that nowadays the members of the Transport Workers' Union are able to operate with a prior knowledge of their income. There is some stability in the industry which was not there before Mr Cowles arrived. I regret that Mr Masters and his friends do not recognise—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I recognise the facts—you don't.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: —what that means to the people in the industry. It is very easy to be destructively critical and not to recognise the need that was apparent in this industry. Mr Cowles has filled this need.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Are you supporting the comment that he is a moderate man?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I did not say that.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I said: Are you supporting the comment that he is a moderate man?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I said that Mr Cowles filled a need. He has created stability and order for his members.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would like the members who are so rudely interjecting to cease.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Thank you, Mr President.

There are problems also in the City of Stirling. We have heard all this propaganda from the Liberal Party and its friends that there should not be politics in local government. We have seen the most dreadful display of politics in local government from Liberal Party supporters in the

City of Stirling; that is, the sacking of Mr Mullaley. I cannot say too much about that matter because court cases are pending and the matter is *sub judice*. However, I understood that Mr Prince, who was dismissed from that shire formerly, had been appointed by the Minister for Local Government (Mr Rushton) and that seems to me to be a very strange occurrence. There is a rumour current that on the retirement of Mr Easton, his likely successor will be Mr Prince. That would be the most disastrous situation I could foresee following the recent events there. If the Minister has such action in mind, I suggest that he looks very seriously at the way he is going.

There is a lot more I would like to say about this situation. There is the link between Mr Prince and his former business partner, Mr Oliver, who followed him in appointment to the shire. This was not a healthy scene, and it was followed subsequently by the appointment of former employees of these gentlemen. That simply made the situation worse.

At the time that Dr Luketina was seeking election to the Stirling City Council, I attempted to warn people of the likely consequences. The Press chose largely to ignore what I was trying to say, and I regret that my predictions about what would happen came true. I formed my opinions because of a particular meeting I attended of Woodlands ratepayers when I heard Dr Luketina speak of his intentions in regard to administrative arrangements.

Because time is running short I will not proceed with some of the other matters I had intended to raise.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Good decision!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would like, however, to make some further comments about the Art Gallery. Mr President, by interjection, Mr MacKinnon asked me about the Museum Board. I would like to say to him that to me the board appeared to work extremely well. I hope that he, as Minister, had no cause to complain of my membership on that board.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The point I wanted to make is: Who has the right to appoint the top administrative officer? You implied that the Government did. I asked you a simple question.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Let us cover the question first of all. As far as I could ascertain, the staff of the Museum are extremely content. There are some frustrations because of lack of funds which means that there are some things the staff want to do which they cannot do. However, apart from that there is no dissension

and we all attempt to work closely and co-operatively together.

Apparently that is not the case with the Art Gallery Board, and I believe this is because there is a serious objection to one person on the board. Mr Summerhayes has been a member of the board for as long as I can remember; I think all the time I have been a member of Parliament he has been a member of the board. However, he has now been appointed as the architect responsible for carrying out the construction of the new Art Gallery. Many of the current problems have arisen because not only is Mr Summerhayes on the board of management of the Art Gallery and he is the person employed by the board of management to carry out the tasks, but also he is on the intervening body—the planning committee—which is responsible for making decisions. So if any problems arise in the construction process, or if there are any conflicts between the staff in regard to the implementation of the design and what is best suited for the Art Gallery, the staff find that their avenue of appeal is circumvented because of the position held by Mr Summerhayes.

This gentleman can take these matters to the planning committee and on to the board so that his point of view has dominance. I suggest to the Government that such a situation is untenable, and that if Mr Summerhayes had regard for the proprieties he would ask to have himself removed from the board for the duration of the construction of the building. I am not criticising him as an architect.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You realise, of course, this is practically all baseless gossip, better carried out over a back fence than in a Parliament.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am sorry to hear the Leader of the House make that remark, because I would have thought even the Minister would recognise that the current situation is serious. Things have come to such a sorry state that the staff feel they should withdraw their services from the Art Gallery. So I cannot see how the Minister can say sensibly that it is a satisfactory situation and that what I have said is just over-the-back-fence gossip.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am no longer the Minister responsible.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Government refuses to recognise a very serious situation. However, I am concerned about it, and I believe the public will be concerned also. Perhaps if everything were going smoothly, the situation I have explained to the House could be

regarded as acceptable. However, it is completely beyond the bounds of what should be considered common decency in Government practice and in business practice. I repeat that the Government should take steps to see that Mr Summerhayes resigns his position, at least for the duration of the construction of the building so that the finger of criticism cannot be pointed at him, whether or not it is justified. The situation should not be allowed to continue.

As I said earlier in my speech, I believe the major issue facing the people of Western Australia is the question of our electoral laws. Because of the amendments to the legislation which were passed in 1975, a one-party system of government has been created in this State. The changes have introduced into the Legislative Assembly a system that has applied, with modification, in this House for a period of 85 years. During that period of time there has been no change of power in this Chamber. I have no doubt that some members of the Liberal Party saw that as a very desirable situation, and thought that it should apply to the Legislative Assembly also.

On the broad issue of the votes of the people, the Labor Party has no objection when a majority of people supporting a party allows that party to get into government. At the last State election the Liberal-National Country Party coalition, as Mr Masters told us the other night, gained 55 per cent of the vote.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: 54.7 per cent.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Near enough to 55 per cent. In that situation, I fail to see why the Government parties cannot support a more democratic voting system in Western Australia. If the conservative parties are able to persuade the people that they deserve to be in government, then that is the choice of the people. However, in the past we have had a situation where the Labor Party has obtained in excess of 50 per cent of the votes and yet it has not gained power. I would like quickly to quote a few figures.

In 1971, the Labor Party polled 50.4 per cent of the votes for the Legislative Council, and yet it gained 26.6 per cent of the seats; that is, four out of 15. In 1974 the Labor Party gained 48.3 per cent of the votes and 33 per cent of the seats; that is, five out of the 15. For any fair-minded person who honestly believes in the Westminster style of democracy, that should be completely acceptable, but instead of that being the case, we find the Government parties have taken steps to see that the system is further entrenched.

I would like to consider the 1975 amendments

to the legislation, from the point of view of percentages of voters in the metropolitan area. Of the total enrolment over the whole State, 66½ per cent of the electors reside in the metropolitan area. In the Legislative Assembly, 49 per cent, or 27 seats, are allocated to metropolitan area electors. The figures for the Legislative Council are 37½ per cent; that is, 12 seats.

In the rural area, which contains 33.5 per cent of the voters, there are 51 per cent of the seats in the Legislative Assembly, or 28 seats, and in the Legislative Council, 62.5 per cent or 20 seats. So, on a State basis, that represents a total of 55 seats for the Legislative Assembly and 32 seats for the Legislative Council.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

I therefore move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion—

However, we deplore the fact that the electoral laws of Western Australia are based on malapportionment of electorates, and that this Government has failed to introduce legislation to provide for electoral reform; in particular:

- (1) Quotas for seats in the Legislative Assembly to be based on the principle of one person, one vote, one value,
- (2) The Legislative Council to be a fully representative House either by making the provinces more equal in numbers of electors or by introducing a system of proportional representation for the election of members to that House.
- (3) Country members to be given greater assistance to enable them to adequately represent their electors, for example, by:
  - (a) The provision of electorate allowances commensurate with the difficulties and disabilities involved.
  - (b) The provision of adequate staff.
  - (c) The provision of free transport for electoral purposes.
  - (d) The provision of better telephone facilities including the right for electors to reverse charges when contacting their members.
  - (e) More generous postal allowances.
  - (f) Provision for more than one office in the electorate where necessary.
  - (g) Subsidised city accommodation where required for parliamentary purposes.

The PRESIDENT: Is there a seconder to the amendment?

**THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON** (East Metropolitan) [8.06 p.m.]: Yes, Mr President, I second the amendment and in doing so I wish to make it quite clear for the benefit of the Leader of the House that tonight I am not talking about socialism which he sometimes seems to think when we are talking about electoral justice. I am talking about representation and democracy.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: How are you so sure of what I am thinking, before you have even started to speak? I thought you were a professor of political science, not of psychology.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member proceed with his speech and disregard interjections.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Mr President, I was basing my comments on a reported statement by the Minister in the Press, which I will not quote here.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is very impertinent, is it not?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: The Minister gave me the impression that he seemed to think electoral justice was equated with socialism.

I wish to talk about representation and about democracy. I suggest to the House that the Parliament of Western Australia is a representative Parliament—as many members of the Liberal Party have said both inside and outside this House. However, it is not yet a democratic Parliament. It is based on the Westminster system, which was originally established as a Parliament to represent certain classes of people in the country.

Members may not know—although I hope most do know—that the original name of the House of Commons was the House of Communes, or communities. The House of Commons represented communities; it represented sectional groups within Great Britain. Originally it consisted of two burghers from each borough, the solid property owning burghers from boroughs or towns and two knights from each shire, the land-owning knights from the shire. In other words, the House of Commons began as a propertied house and continued as such during the 19th century.

When we are talking about representation, we must work out what we are trying to represent. Are we trying to represent property? Are we trying to represent broad acres? Are we trying to represent people? Originally, of course this Parliament was established as a House representing property owners, as I mentioned earlier in my maiden speech. It is quite easy for members to check this statement by reading in

*Hansard* the debates on the Constitution Bill in 1899. Both Houses were elected on a property franchise, in order to make sure that only people with a stake in the country, only the solid, suitable, wealthy property owners were represented—because, of course, they were regarded as the only people who should be represented in this House.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Were all property owners of those days wealthy?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Some were, some were not.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Well, only the wealthy ones got a vote, did they?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Perhaps the Minister should read the Constitution and find out what they did get.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: That is what you said.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are not the only person who has ever studied politics, you know. You have no real need to give us a lesson. We all went as far as primary school.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I thank the Minister for his help.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Some of us have been listening to this sort of stuff for 20 years.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Let the professor continue.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member disregard interjections, and proceed with his speech.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Thank you, Mr President.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Mr Cooley says they were all wealthy.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I said nothing of the sort.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Since then, as a gesture to democracy, adult franchise has been introduced in both Houses.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We are moving along into modern times now, are we?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I should like this House to move along to modern times; in fact, I would like this House to move right into the 20th century and become a House that really did represent people as people. I should like this House and the lower House to be real democracies, and that is what I am suggesting we should do. I wish the Government would do

something about it instead of entrenching a malapportioned electoral system in both Houses as it did in the last redistribution.

What are the arguments for malapportionment, for having anything other than one-person-one-vote-one-value? There are a number of arguments which can be advanced. There is an argument that in some ways there is an elite of people in the community—an elite simply because they have a stake in the country or they own property or because they do a particular kind of job or for some other reason are superior to other people and therefore should have a vote while other people should not. An argument can also be advanced that such people should have more votes than other people. In fact, at one stage last century it was suggested by, I think J. S. Mill, the progenitor of liberalism—that is, liberalism with a small “l”—that people should receive a vote according to their degree of education.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: How many votes would you get under such a system?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I know the Hon. Gordon Masters would not advocate such a system because he does not seem to have a very high opinion of ex-lecturers or ex-professors. Be that as it may I would not advocate it either because, as has been so widely pointed out by interjection—of which I took a tiny bit of notice—if we look around the University of Western Australia, which I had time to do, we would see that not everybody there has any particular political learning or affiliation or even sense, although they may be quite eminent in other areas. I can see no basis for arguing that anybody should have more votes than anybody else or have any kind of set representation because of their property, their education or the kind of work they do, be they doctors or farmers. If anybody in this House wants to argue along those lines, I shall be interested to hear him do so. I certainly do not expect to find anybody taking advantage of my invitation.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Then why bring it up?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Another argument that might be put forward is the special disadvantages argument. This is sometimes used to justify the rural weighting that we have in our electorates. As the Hon. R. F. Claughton pointed out, this is a system whereby we have approximately two-thirds of the people of this State represented in the Legislative Assembly by 27 members, while the remaining one-third of the people are represented in the Assembly by 28 members; and in this House, the same two-thirds

are represented by 12 members, and the remaining one-third are represented by 20 members. It is argued that some people—namely, those in the rural areas—have special disadvantages, and I am not disagreeing with that argument; I will turn to that point later.

But if we are going to argue for special disadvantages, then people who live in the rural areas of this State are not the only people with special disadvantages. If members and people in the community who argue that people should have special representation because of their special disadvantages also argue that, say, Aborigines should have two votes or even three votes—instead, of course, as some people argued in the Kimberley; namely, that they should have no votes—I might take more notice of their argument.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Who has argued that?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: We might argue that the unemployed should have two votes because they are specially disadvantaged. The same could be applied to people suffering in our society. I will not advance that argument because I do not think it is a good one.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: No-one else has.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am glad of that. It has demolished another argument because we are in agreement on the fact. We all reject the two arguments advanced for special voting rights and I am glad we have reached this consensus in the House and hope it will continue. Unlike Mr Lewis—I am sorry he is not here at the moment—I do not want to lecture people because they agree with me. I am happy when they do, particularly if they sit on the other side of the House.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are due for a fairly miserable life here then!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am sorry to hear that. It is an interjection which does the Leader of the House no credit.

Another argument sometimes used concerns productivity.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Who by? I am hearing these arguments for the first time.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am sorry about that. Perhaps the honourable member should read the *Hansard* speeches from another place and the Press reports. I will continue to develop my arguments in my own way if members do not mind, and I am sure you will not object, Mr President.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Did you pick them up on the campus?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It is argued sometimes that because the rural dwellers, particularly the farmers, produce more, and also produce a great deal of our export income, which is true, they must have some kind of special representation.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Who has argued that? Have you ever heard that said?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It is rather peculiar when this argument is advanced. Apparently in a moment members opposite will agree with me completely and then I will not understand why the Government does not introduce a decent and balanced electoral system. No doubt they will demolish me with their superior arguments in due course, and I will sit and learn.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You don't believe that. You don't believe anyone could submit an argument superior to your own.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I have had it happen to me even by students in tutorials.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I find that impossible to believe.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am basically a humble person.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Absolutely incredible.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: This competition is very poor.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member should ignore the interjections.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Thank you. I will do so and continue my speech.

If this argument is advanced, the Pilbara situation is very odd. The Pilbara produces a great deal of our export income and at present has an enrolment of 15 209. The figures I am quoting now were given to Mr Carr by the Chief Secretary, and therefore I assume they are correct.

The Pilbara has 15 209 whereas the quota in the agricultural, mining, and pastoral areas is 8 737. In other words, apparently one-vote-one-value can apply to the Pilbara as far as the metropolitan area is concerned because its enrolment is almost that of three seats in the metropolitan area. The seat of South Perth has 15 442, Perth 15 583, and Nedlands has 15 552. All of them are well below the quota, I might add, as heavy growth since their last distribution has put quite a number of seats well above the quota.

Some people have argued that we must give more votes to farmers or miners because they produce more of our wealth. I find this argument difficult to follow because, in fact, the farming community in Australia is one of the most efficient in the world, unlike our manufacturing industries. That is generally accepted. Our farming community is efficient because it is highly mechanised as a result of the work done by manufacturing industries to provide the machinery to enable the farmers to be efficient and, of course, the trade unionists who work in those industries.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Now tell us another fairy story! What a joke!

Several members interjected.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am quite unmoved by the raucous noise from members opposite because I know that what I am saying is true.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: The productivity and efficiency of our farms is a co-operative affair due to the work of the people in the cities as well as those in the country. No one group is responsible. We are glad to say that no longer do farmers have to hew their sustenance with sticks or primitive ploughs. Farms are highly developed and mechanised, as they should be.

There are times when I am very perturbed about the prosperity of the rural community. We must build it up and develop it and I will be interested to hear members of the National Country Party, particularly as I sit in the House, teach me how we might do this. I shall certainly be pleased to listen. I enjoy listening to some people.

I submit that there is no argument at all for a malapportionment of electorates because of special productivity. If there is an argument, I believe it would be a good idea if we balanced the Pilbara with the rest of the agricultural, mining, and pastoral areas, instead of tucking it up into a little seat all by itself.

One other principle advanced by some people has some merit, particularly in the past. I am referring to the geographical argument. We all know that members who represent large rural electorates have a great deal of travelling to do and they experience difficulty in performing their electoral duties.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Now you are getting to the facts.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am aware

of this because my father-in-law in South Australia at one stage represented the largest electorate in that State—the old electorate of Whyalla. He had to travel on the sugar train every now and then for a week to meet people on the railway route to Western Australia. I am aware of the difficulties facing members representing large rural electorates. However, we must ask ourselves whether these problems cannot be overcome in other ways.

A friend of mine who works in the Geography Department at the University of Western Australia—I suppose that makes him suspect to members opposite—once suggested it would be good if we had equal electorates, with rural electorates having two members each with half a vote. In this way they would service the electorate, but I do not know whether the system would work. It certainly was an interesting and ingenious proposition which I am sure members opposite would not entertain because it came from the university.

We must consider what can be done. We in the Labor Party—I nearly referred to “we on this side of the House” but someone would have said I have not been here very long, and I admit that—have always advocated equal electorates, but this would make the country electorates so much larger. Apparently members opposite are quite content and agree with the statement I heard someone make recently; that is, that politicians are not worth much. Members opposite agree and do not want to multiply the number. However, I do not agree as I think some politicians are worth quite a deal. In my humility I am not including myself because I have yet to prove myself. I am sure that Mr Masters will tell me I am unlikely to do this; but we will see.

It seems to me that the problem can be overcome by other methods. This means expenditure of money on which I know the Government is not terribly keen. This is the reason we have suggested in our amendment that members from rural electorates should be given better electoral allowances and more staff if this would help them. It is well worth inquiring into. We could have a committee to look into the needs of members from rural electorates. They could have free transport for electoral purposes and I do not see why we should not provide light aircraft or helicopters for use in the electorates if this would help the members do their jobs better.

If we are talking about the importance of representation and the need for a member to represent his electors, then we must consider how we can provide better services which will allow him to do this.



When our Constitution was first drawn up there were no phones or motorcars, but there were railways and hence we were provided with gold passes to help us along, but not much else. This placed members in great difficulties.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: They had State ships.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: We might also consider whether we should provide more than one electorate office and subsidise city accommodation as is done in other States. Again, if I may cite the Hon. Ronald Loveday from South Australia whom I knew because I married his daughter, he had accommodation provided in Parliament House in South Australia. This was not under the Dunstan Government, either, but under the Playford Liberal Government. When the House was sitting accommodation was provided at Parliament House for the convenience of members from rural areas.

Rather than suggest we malapportion electorates in order to enable members to service their electorates better, we should seek other devices. I accept the view—I sometimes wonder whether other members do, but perhaps I will be told in due course because I am seeking information—that each individual in a community is responsible for himself. This is why I am a liberal democrat. Each individual should be enabled to develop himself as far as possible and he should be given the maximum freedom. I will not develop that theme now for members but will do so at some other time.

Each individual should be encouraged and enabled to develop his moral personality by which I do not mean he has to agree with the sort of morals I have, although I think it might be a good idea. I am not degrading my own morality, but some people find it old-fashioned and quaint. I am suggesting that each individual should be responsible to himself. To be moral one must have freedom to choose between moral acts. Compulsory morality, as the author Lord Lindsay has said, is a contradiction in terms.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I am pleased to hear that. You might change the ALP pledge if that is the case.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I will give a lecture on that some other time.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: God forbid!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I do not want to take up the time of the House on the subject tonight.

I am quite proud to have signed the ALP pledge freely—in a voluntary organisation—and to have joined the party whose principles I believe

in. Therefore, I do not seek to ease out of my conscience. If I do not like the Labor Party I will leave it. If I do not like some of its policies I will vote against them inside the party.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It is a pity you cannot operate in a House of Review.

The PRESIDENT: I will be interested to hear the honourable member's views with regard to this amendment.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am sorry, Mr President. I have allowed myself to be misled. I argue that each person knows his own interest best, or should be allowed to decide his own interest best, and he should have an equal opportunity because he shares equal humanity with all other humans in the State and he should share an equal opportunity to choose the Government.

What we do in our representative system, as far as the lower House is concerned—although I have some reservations about the right to reject supply in this House, but I will not develop that theme at the moment—and what we do under the Westminster system of a modern mass electorate is to develop two—or 2½, with due respect to the National Country Party—parties which offer alternative policies for the electors to choose between.

Although we go through the format of electing individual members, as was done in the 19th century, we all know that people are, in fact, electing a Government through voting for parties, particularly in the lower House. I would be the last person to state that in your electorate, Mr President, there is no personal vote, but people generally vote for parties and vote Governments in or vote Governments out. Therefore, I would argue everybody should have an equal right to vote a Government in or vote a Government out. Until everybody has that equal right, we do not have a democratic system.

I am open to correction, but it was reported in the Press—and I know we cannot always accept those reports—that the Hon. Neil McNeill stated we had a democratic system because we had adult franchise. That is not good enough. The people had adult franchise under Hitler in Germany and they had adult franchise under Stalin in Russia. I think we would want a little more than that to claim we had a democratic system.

It seems to me what we need is equal voting rights. The point is, of course, that in the lower House we need to choose Governments; because it is the custom and because people are expected to do it—and they are used to doing it—I am quite sure the electorate would not accept anything else

because of the method of using single electorates in the lower House, which seems to operate quite well if it is not under a malapportioned system.

A malapportionment was illustrated in South Australia when the Walsh Government was elected with a 57 per cent vote. In the following election the Duncan Government vote dropped to 53 per cent, and it was defeated. That produced an outcry. I am not saying that has happened in this State yet; I am saying that if we do not change the electorate laws on distribution soon, it may happen. If it does happen the people will raise an outcry as was done in South Australia. We may even get a Premier with a conscience, as was the case in South Australia with Steele Hall. He felt something had to be done, and he reviewed the system to a certain extent and produced a vote where the Labor Party won 50 per cent—but he lost the election. He was quite happy to take that action because he believed in democracy.

For that reason, I think we must go for a system of quotas based on one-vote-one-value in the lower House. However, what are we to do in this House. We have to ask what is the role of the House, or what the role of the House might be. People can tell me what they think the role of this House is.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I think it has changed; it has now become a lecture theatre.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: No, I do not think so.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: One lecture does not make it a theatre.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: The role of this House was originally to make sure that property owners who owned more property than the electors of the Legislative Assembly were represented. Then the role of this House became one to protect the rights of property owners because the electors had to have property franchise. The role of this House now, by the apportionment of the electorate, is to make sure the Liberal and National Country Parties have an almost permanent majority.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That is rubbish

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It is not.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: If the member refers to *Hansard* he will find that his party agreed to the present franchise because it thought it would get control of the system, but it was not able to.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am not interested in what my party thought in the past, but what I and my party think now; that is, this House is a malapportioned House which is

keeping the present Government in power with a false majority.

It is possible for there to be a majority in this House if only 15 per cent of the electors in the right electorates voted for the Liberal-National Country Parties. That is a theoretical possibility, of course; I am not suggesting it would, in fact, happen in practice, although it might one day happen that 15 per cent of the electors will vote to office a Liberal-National Country Party Government. However, I am not hoping this will happen because we need a vigorous two-party system where both parties can have a possibility of controlling both Houses.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Giving the people a choice.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: If, as some conservatives have argued—and here again I quote Sir Arthur Rymill from South Australia—the role of the upper House is to make sure that the will of the people is asserted and that the Government in power will do desirable things.

I do not find this to be a very happy argument because it is on the assumption that the only group of people—the only party—which will bring our society into disrepute and damage our society is the Labor Party. It implies that the conservatives can never bring in savage and repressive legislation. Of course, conservative Governments—particularly if dominated by the right wing—can be just as radical and suppressive as some people claim radical Governments can be.

I do not accept that argument, but if we are to advance an argument then the obvious thing to do is to make sure the rural vote is listened to. That is why the electorates are malapportioned to make sure that the members opposite have a captive majority, and they do not have to worry greatly about country areas. However, if we had a State-wide system of proportionate representation, then both parties would have to seek all votes in all areas.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Did you not seek votes in all electorates at the last election?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I do not know whether Mr MacKinnon did, in fact, suggest that such a system would produce a domination of the metropolitan area, but I have heard that argument advanced by other people. I do not agree that would be the case at all; it would mean we would all have to look to all areas. In fact, quite often one would think that the Labor Party controlled the metropolitan vote. I wish this were true but, in fact, both the Labor Party and the Liberal Party fight for the

metropolitan area quite vigorously. Sometimes they get in, and sometimes we get in.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: It is refreshing to hear you say you would control the vote.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I would like to control the vote as a result of people voting freely. But that is not true, and it is not likely to happen in a democracy unless our policy appealed to the electorate, and we received the support of the voters. I admit the superiority of our policy but not everybody sees it.

In fact, if we had proportional representation we would have to seek the votes of all the electors. All parties would canvass both metropolitan and rural areas.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: The Labor Party was seeking votes in my province earlier this year.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: So were some other members of the Liberal Party.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Proportional representation would benefit the votes of the State as a whole. It is therefore with pleasure I second and support the amendment moved by the Hon. Roy Cloughton.

**THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON** (South-West—Leader of the House) [8.41 p.m.]: That was an interesting address. I was hoping someone would explain the amendment moved by Mr Cloughton, and it was very ably done. I want to hasten to assure the Hon. Robert Hetherington that I know some very nice people from universities, and there are a number of them whom I like.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The Minister is not suggesting there are some nasty people at the universities is he?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I do not make that suggestion. The Hon. Robert Hetherington seemed to imply I thought people who went to universities were nasty.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Only some of them.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I was not suggesting that at all.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The member made an awful lot of guesses at what I thought, what I liked, and how I argued.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I do not think he mentioned your name.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes, he did. He mentioned my name several times, and referred to me quite definitely on a number of occasions. It is, of course, a trick of rhetoric practised on audiences, which cannot answer

back, by those who have had a tremendous amount of practice.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The Minister has had very little experience of universities if he considers that audiences cannot answer back.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: All the arguments come back to "what I like". I repeat; I know some very nice people who have been to universities and who actually work in universities. Indeed, I like a considerable number of them.

I think we have seen tonight the reason that most of us congratulated the Hon. Robert Hetherington for his meteoric rise; he is a very capable speaker. I must admit that I found the general content of Mr Cloughton's speech preferable.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I wonder why?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: One might wonder why, but the reason is that I think he talks on a greater variety of subjects. He has not got that narrowness of approach to a philosophical argument.

I think the best example of a speech was the very successful effort made by the Hon. Fred McKenzie. There are people who judge the success of their speeches by the degree to which they are reported in the Press.

The two best speeches presented were those made by the Hon. Fred McKenzie and the Hon. Tom McNeil. Of all the speeches made that of the Hon. Fred McKenzie was the best; it was common sense, down to earth, and factual. It appeared accordingly in a two-column, eight-inch report.

The PRESIDENT: None of which has anything to do with the question before the Chair.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am glad you brought that up Sir, because there are a number of matters I want to speak on.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: When is the Minister going to start?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Those of us who have been here for some time recognise the amendment as the same type which has often been moved since I first came into this House 22 years ago.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The amendment may be tiresome, but the reasons are quite refreshing.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I do not think so. There is a fundamental and basic difference between the arguments of the Labor Party and those of the Liberal Party. The Labor Party argument has to do with power for the Labor

Party; power for the representatives, and the absolute right to get their hold on authority.

We the Liberals argue in terms of the interests of the people represented—the voters. If we analyse the proposals put forward by Mr Hetherington, that is the last of his interests. Let me explain.

Over the years there has indeed grown up a proposition that certain people should be represented. I would not presume to go back to my fifth and sixth standard lessons in what we used to call history—and what is now called, I think, social science—and give the kind of rundown which was given us by the Hon. Robert Hetherington. It was too long ago that I was in those classes and took an interest in those matters. Nevertheless, I can still remember them, and I can remember them well enough not to need to be constantly reminded of them.

We have always seen bodies set up to which the people went because the bodies existed to help different groups of people. Over the years the form and structure of those bodies have certainly changed. The Hon. Mr Hetherington has told us all about that. He said the changes were made on the basis of property and all kinds of other reasons. But to this day people are sent to Parliament as representatives of groups of people.

It is a trick—and it is little more than a trick with words—to talk about the State as though we were elected as a State; and it is very naughty because anyone who is here knows the only people elected in that way are senators. We are elected seat by seat. That is a fundamental and basic fact.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not think anyone is arguing it is not.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: People are arguing it is not. If the Leader of the Opposition analyses his deputy's argument he will find this thread is running through it all the time. Let me give an example. If in a House of 50 we held 26 seats and Labor held 24, and Labor found it had fallen on hard times and did not oppose any of the seats we held—which is not likely to happen—even though, Labor had won those seats, it could probably say there were 1 million voters and Labor actually got 400 000 votes and won the 24 seats. But the Labor Party would say, "We got far more of all the votes which were cast than the other people got and we did not win an extra seat."

We must look at each individual seat—the ones which were opposed and those which were not opposed—and get a range.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I thank the Minister for his lecture. I have done all this.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: And the honourable member comes up with all the wrong answers. Members opposite are saying we are elected right across the State, but we are not. They also throw about with gay abandon the word "democracy", and I was delighted to hear Mr Hetherington say tonight that Nazi Germany, Stalin's Russia, and so on had adult franchise. Most of those countries called themselves democracies. It is probably the most misused word in parliamentary circles.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We agree again.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I do not know where a democracy exists, and I have yet to hear anyone who expounds these arguments even begin to define the term. Mr Hetherington knows better than I—because he lectured in the subject—that we have a representative system. As I understand it, we have a representative, responsible Government.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That is what I started off by saying.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yet the honourable member goes on all the time about democracy. When we get down to basics, we find we are run electorate by electorate, and within the electorate everybody who wants to vote can vote and everybody who wishes to vote for the ALP can vote for the ALP.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Some can vote for the National Country Party if they want to.

The Hon. W. M. Piesse: Some do want to.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Let the National Country Party speak for itself.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Mrs Piesse just did.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: The Minister is demeaning democracy. I find it understandable.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: What a funny attitude these fellows have! I am not demeaning democracy; I am saying—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You don't believe in it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: All I am saying is everyone seems to have his own meaning for it. Of all the political systems I know about, the one which seems to lead to totalitarianism with inexorable certainty is socialism.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Why do you not stick to democracy?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Very well, we will come back to representative Government. We even had to sit here and listen to the kind of discussion Mr Hetherington indulged in today at a time when we had four seats in this House

which were shared by Liberal and Labor members.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: There is no reason why you should not.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: No reason at all. It only proves that seat by seat we have a perfectly fair system, and our system is a seat-by-seat system.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You do not believe that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I do. It is still the system followed in the United Kingdom to a very large extent. We hear the argument that we need scientific exactitude—one person one vote and a perfectly equal electorate.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I did not say that. I talked about numbers.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Members opposite say the system should be as near as possible to exact. But when we come down to tin tacks, if we want scientific accuracy and total fairness, there is no doubt in my mind the only system we can have is a nation-wide or total area system of proportional representation. If we want that system we must be prepared almost automatically to put up with virtually regular instability of government.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That is not true. It is not borne out by the events.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It was true enough of France for long enough to wreck it.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I do wish you would check your facts.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I wish to talk about one other aspect of proportional representation. I was quoted correctly when I said that with proportional representation there would be concentration of interest on the city, and again we would lose the main thing to which we cleave; that is, the right of the individual voter to representation and to be able to talk to his representative with some degree of ease.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Nobody suggested it for both Houses.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am fully aware of that. I can read.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: You did not hear him, then.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I did not hear Mr Hetherington when he spoke on the radio, so I went to the trouble of obtaining a transcript of what he said.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I wish you would get me one.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I will get a copy of it for the honourable member. I did not say that if we had proportional representation the Labor Party would only look after the city and would thereby win seats. The Labor Party is not liked well enough in the city for that means to serve its purpose. What I did say was that anyone who got the endorsement for his party could in fact concentrate on the city and pay very little attention to country areas.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I think you are mistaken there.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am not mistaken.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That is a matter of opinion, and my opinion is different.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I will back my years of sheer experience against the honourable member's years of academic theory.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I will back my years of experience on that one, not the theory.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I think that is the way it would work.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Let us try it and see.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I have no interest in trying it—

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I bet you haven't.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON:—because I was here when the Hon. Gordon Hislop moved for the change to the form we currently have. Probably the only other member who was here at that time is the Hon. Norman Baxter. When that change took place the Labor Party was quite confident that under that system it would win seat after seat.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is not correct.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes it is.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Produce the facts. You cannot make a statement willy-nilly. Give us some reasons for saying that.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I would like to hear evidence.

The PRESIDENT: I would like the Minister to continue.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am waiting for an opportunity to do so, Sir.

I do not know what the honourable member thinks. I cannot turn back the clock. Just as the Leader of the Opposition tells me he was there and saw certain things happen, I am telling him I was here and heard people talking about it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not dispute that some people thought that but they were wrong.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: They were wrong. Here we have individual seats in which everybody has a vote, and we have had the situation where a seat has been held at the same time by a Liberal member and a Labor member, one having won it at an election and the other at a by-election. Yet we hear this constant talk about the undemocratic system.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Because there was a redistribution of boundaries between elections.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: They happened on exactly the same day.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: How many times has it happened? Once.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: How often do they take place on the same day?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Members opposite should sit down quietly and read the Hon. Robert Hetherington's speech, with all his talk of democracy and there being no way in which we can have a balanced election in this State. As members read it they should remember there was a day in this Parliament when two members of Parliament were elected for the same area, one of whom was a Labor member and the other a Liberal member. If that is not democracy, I do not know what is.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You are extrapolating from one example.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: It is a recent example.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: It is not enough.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the interjections please cease.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I reject totally the thesis put forward by the ALP on this occasion.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Would you give him a doctorate for that thesis?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Good Lord, no; not even if I liked him more than I do. I do not want to go into the details of all this. People talk about helicopters as though they were as cheap as motorcars.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you think motorcars are cheap?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: People talk about using helicopters; I feel they are about the most unsafe thing ever invented.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: You have a light aircraft owner sitting behind you, and he had to

get out of it because he could not use it all the time.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The sheer logistics of this amendment are absurd for the situation in this State. We have a situation that has grown up and it will change.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It is not a bad try, though.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I know, and it is aimed at Mr Withers, Mr Moore, and a few others like them.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the Leader of the House direct his comments to me?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes, sir; thank you for reminding me. I do not want to go into such details in respect of this amendment, because I think it is quite absurd and it leaves itself open to all sorts of nonsense.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: "All sorts of nonsense"! The only person giving the nonsense is you.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am not the type of person to put up with the sort of stuff in this amendment. Mr Dans must be aware of it because he must have approved it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: And supported it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This amendment is only a bit of a come-on for members in remote areas—a bit of gilding on the cake. I sincerely hope we will take the whole matter of this Chamber step by step. This House will change in time, but certainly we must oppose the sort of changes proposed in this amendment.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We would like you to consider any change.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Mr Hetherington has been here only a couple of weeks; perhaps he does not realise this Parliament is different from the last one. Changes are occurring all the time. I would ask him to be a little patient, although I admit he has done remarkably well for a new member. I hope he does not stroke Mr Dans too much.

I hope members will support my argument and reject the amendment outright.

**THE HON. D. W. COOLEY** (North-East Metropolitan) [9.04 p.m.]: Mr Cloughton should be congratulated for bringing this amendment before the House because it gives us an opportunity to indicate to members—although they should already be aware of it—the inadequacy of the electoral laws.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: A number of new members would not be aware of it.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I appreciate that,

but perhaps it will be reported in the Press and perhaps people outside the Chamber will be given the opportunity to understand the situation.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: The Press deadline is at 8.30. Mr Claughton made sure he got in all he said by that time.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The important point about the amendment is that it gives us the opportunity to explain our case, and we have a very strong case. In all respects this is a logical and well prepared amendment, and it cannot be refuted.

We heard the Leader of the House speak, and he was not able to advance any argument at all to refute the argument put forward by Mr Claughton; the reason is that those behind him cannot support the present system because basically they are people with high moral standards—politics aside—and they know there are injustices associated with the present electoral laws. They cannot sustain a proper argument to refute that.

Miss Lyla Elliott and myself would be remiss if we did not rise to our feet and express our views in respect of this matter, because in the North-East Metropolitan Province there are five Assembly seats comprising Maylands, Morley, Mt. Lawley, Swan, and Dianella. Maylands has 17 173 electors on the roll; Morley has 16 323; Mt. Lawley has 16 626; Swan has 16 095; and Dianella has 16 646, making a grand total of 82 863 electors on the roll of the North-East Metropolitan Province.

When we look to the north of the State—and we are aware there are special problems there, but special reforms should be proposed by the Government to overcome those—we find there is a total of 3 633 electors in the Gascoyne electorate. In the electorate of Murchison-Eyre there are 2 110, making a total of 5 743 electors in the Lower North Province, compared with 82 863 electors in the North-East Metropolitan Province.

If Miss Elliott and I did not object to that situation we would be doing a disservice to the people we represent. The simple fact is that we are here to represent the viewpoint of all those electors, whether or not they voted for us in the election. But when we cross the floor to vote we are voting for 82 000 people, while the two members for the Lower North Province are voting for 5 743 people; and the vote of those two members ranks equal to the vote of Miss Elliott and myself. I submit that is not a good situation, and something should be done to rectify it.

In the amendment we speak of the principle of

one-vote-one-value, which is a very democratic principle as I understand democracy. However, I think it is a forlorn hope to expect the Liberal Party to agree to this at the moment. On the other hand, at least some attempt should be made by the Government to rectify the situation.

I am very disappointed no reference is contained in the Governor's Speech to any electoral reform. Some mention is made of amending the Constitution, but not to alleviate this anomaly. It is wrong for a Government to go along year after year allowing this situation to prevail.

I have had a large number of my constituents in this building in the past three years. Some, although not all, of those people are very politically aware; and those who are aware were staggered when I told them that I represented 82 000 people while some members in this place represented less than 6 000 people. They just could not believe it. The Government has a duty, just as we all have, to highlight this situation and to make people aware of the injustice associated with our electoral laws.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Do you explain to those people that the other members have to cover a far greater area than yours?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I would say I would have more trouble contacting my 82 000 people than members of the Lower North Province would have contacting their 5 000 people.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You should try travelling around the north.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: If I started now I would not be able to contact all my electors before the next election.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Nor can I.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am not saying that members in remote areas should be cut off from their constituents.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Do you provide each elector with a jet?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I did not say anything about planes or helicopters.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member please cease the conversation and address the Chair.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Yes, Sir. The point I am trying to make is that the amendment makes provision for members in remote areas to be in touch with their constituents.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: All the people; that is the important thing.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Let us not kid ourselves; do not tell me that Mr Withers contacts everyone in his province.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: All your electors can visit you at a cost of 40c.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr Withers may try to kid his electors and himself, but let him not try to kid us. No-one can overcome the fact that the present system is unjust when Miss Elliott and I represent 82 000 people while another two members here represent less than 6 000 people. That just cannot be justified.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I can justify it.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: As I indicated earlier when the Leader of the House was absent, members with a moral conscience cannot justify that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I just did.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Members opposite are moral people, and they just cannot refute this argument; and if they try their arguments fall to the floor because they have no logic.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You could not have been listening, because I justified it.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: With all due respect to Mr MacKinnon, he did not justify the situation by a long stretch.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I will have a few words to say about that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You terrify me.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You know very well I don't.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Have you ever thought that over 20 000 people disagree with you when you cross the floor?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I do not follow that.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I am talking about those who did not vote for you.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I do not represent only Labor electors; nor is that the attitude of the Labor Party. I come here to represent all my electors, and when someone comes to my door I do not ask if he voted Labor or Liberal. I represent the people, and their voice should be heard in this place, because this is supposed to be a so-called people's Parliament—although under the present system this simply is not a people's Parliament.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: At least when Mr

Withers walks across the floor only 3 000 people are disagreeing with him.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Only the other day there was a redistribution of Federal electoral boundaries, and the biggest electorate in the world on the basis of one-vote-one-value had to have its boundaries extended to accommodate this situation.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That is ridiculous.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: If that is good enough for the National Parliament, then surely it is good enough for us.

In this amendment we are saying there should be proportional representation to give people the opportunity to have their views better expressed in this place. After all, members opposite—and I say they are wrong—believe this is a House of Review and that it should continue to be a House of Review, representing all points of view.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Your party will not allow it to be a House of Review.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: There must be winners and losers in every situation.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You are very often the loser.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: However, we have been losing for 87 years now and the situation has gone past that of being democratic. It is not a fair situation at all. I am not a mathematician, because I did not attend university, but I daresay members of the ALP in this Chamber could poll up to 60 per cent of the vote of the people under present circumstances and still be denied a majority in this House.

This is the kind of situation which caused opposition to develop in another State because the conscience of the people was so shaken by the fact that the Labor Party had 56 per cent of the vote but could not be the Government. That caused a revolution in the Liberal Party.

At least they did it in South Australia and something should be done here. Surely members opposite must believe in alternative Governments. Let us face facts. What has been the situation over the years in Western Australia? Labor Governments have been in office but they have been Labor Governments without power because of the restrictions that have been put on them in this place—a place to which people are not elected in a truly representative manner. Proportional representation would go part of the way to satisfying the requirements of the people of our State.

When I have gone out into my electorate numerous people have said to me, "Why does the



Labor Party not get out of the place and let the conservatives have it to themselves?" Sometimes I think that would not be a bad idea. It would bring about the destruction of this House and the injustices that go with it. Surely before we get to that situation we ought to have a chance to supply a greater number of elected representatives to this House if it is the wish of members opposite to maintain this place.

I may be getting away from the point, but we are always told, whenever there are disputations in other places, that the Liberal Party believes in fair play and abides by the umpire's decision. The voters of Western Australia are the umpires with regard to electing representatives to Parliament. Members opposite do not believe in the umpire's decision because we on this side of the House can obtain 50 per cent or more of the votes and still not have any power or a majority in this place.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: It is a rather bad analogy to talk about the umpire's decision. It seems to me that there is a member of your party challenging the umpire's decision at this moment.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: One thing about us is that we do not change the rules half-way through the game.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not think you should discuss that in here.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I am not discussing it.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: My contribution is based mainly on the fact that I, along with Miss Elliott, represent the largest number of people in any province in this State, and I think something ought to be done to correct the anomalies evident in the gross malapportionment of voters.

The HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [9.18 p.m.]: The amendment moved by the Hon. R. F. Cloughton is one of the worst and weakest amendments I have heard for some time in this House. It is a very weak attempt by the Labor Party to bring up an issue which has been aired in this Chamber over many years. I should think that one honoured former member of this House, the late Ruby Hutchison, would be ashamed of the very weak attempt that has been put forward tonight on this issue, because if ever there was a fighter for this particular cause it was the honourable Ruby Hutchison, whom we all admired. Members who have spoken tonight have done a very poor job indeed.

In his remarks the Leader of the House referred basically to the system by which members are elected. They are elected province by province and not proportionally. Therefore, we have a direct responsibility to the electors in each

province, and long may it be that we can answer to these people personally.

I now propose to show that the Labor Party's approach to this matter is an utter sham. I intend to refer to figures which applied to the system of electing members to this House during the final year or so of the Hawke Labor Government. I refer to the electoral figures for the Legislative Council in 1958. I have particularly selected these figures because it was the last Council election under the Hawke Administration before it lost office in 1959 when the Brand Government took over.

Subsequent to this, of course, we know that the election of 1965 was held under a rearrangement of the provinces whereby the number was increased to 15 and the number of members representing each province was decreased from three to two. Today we operate under this system except that we now have 16 provinces, an increase of one. That sort of representation before 1965 served the Labor Party very well and we did not hear any talk of bringing about electoral change when it suited its purpose to have this sort of representation.

In 1958 the North Province, as it then was, comprised three Assembly electorates; namely, Gascoyne, Pilbara, and Kimberley. The total number of adult franchised electors for those three Legislative Assembly electorates was only 4 585 and they returned three Labor members. We must remember that in that year voting for this House was on a different franchise altogether. It was not an adult franchise system, and voting was voluntary and not compulsory.

In 1958 the number of voluntary voters on the roll for North Province was 1 674. They elected three Labor members. We did not hear any protest from the Labor Party then.

I shall refer now to the North-East Province in 1958 which also, according to my research, returned three Labor members. The number of adult fully franchised electors entitled to vote for Legislative Assembly seats in that province totalled only 8 769. It is interesting to note that in the Metropolitan Province, which returned three Liberal members, the total number of fully franchised adult voters, according to the Assembly rolls, was 99 628. I repeat the figures: Metropolitan Province with nearly 100 000 electors, returning three Liberal members; North Province with only 4 500 electors; and North-East Province with only 8 769. The Labor Party loved it that way. What a sham it is for the Labor Party to move this amendment and to talk about

electoral justice when it perpetrated this sort of thing and loved it!

In the year 1958, according to my calculations, in this House there were 13 ALP members, nine Liberal members, and eight Country Party members—a total of 30 as the House then was. I think it is relevant to the amendment to mention these matters because the amendment refers to the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. Therefore, the figures have relevance and they tie in. I do not think I need, to use a pun, to labour the point on this sham of an amendment.

I should like now to refer to the Westminster system. We are very jealous of our system because it is based on the Westminster system of parliamentary democracy. I have some information regarding the situation in the United Kingdom. In 1970 there was a redistribution of electoral boundaries in Great Britain and the charter for the redistribution of electorates for that year included the following things. It is headed: "Rules for the Redistribution of Seats". Clause (3) states—

There shall continue to be a constituency which shall include the whole of the City of London and the name of which shall refer to the City of London.

Clause (4) states—

So far as is practicable, having regard to the foregoing rules—

(a) In England and Wales—

No county or part thereof shall be included in a constituency which includes the whole or part of any other county or the whole or part of a county borough or metropolitan borough.

(b) No metropolitan borough or any part thereof shall be included in a constituency which includes the whole or part of any other metropolitan borough.

(c) No county district shall be included partly in one constituency and partly in another.

Clause (5) states—

The electorate of any constituency shall be as near the electorate quota as is practicable having regard to the foregoing rules, and a Boundary Commission may depart from the strict application of the last foregoing rule if it appears to them that a departure is desirable to avoid an excessive disparity between the Electorate of any constituency and the electoral quota or between the electorate thereof and that of neighbouring

constituencies in the part of the United Kingdom with which they are concerned.

Clause (6) states—

A Boundary Commission may depart from the strict application of the last two foregoing rules if special geographical considerations, including in particular the size, shape, and accessibility of a constituency, appear to them to render a departure desirable.

Following those guidelines in 1970 there was a redistribution, and it is interesting to note that the electorate with the greatest number of voters, excluding London, was an electorate called Antrim South with 113 645 people on the roll. The electorate of Orkney and Zetland had 25 103; Ladywood had 25 294; Merioneth had 25 395; Montgomeryshire had 29 951; and the smallest was Western Isles with 22 040. I refer to these figures because they show that the electorates in this State are along similar lines to those in the Westminster system operating in Great Britain today.

I have the latest figures supplied to me from Westminster dated the 28th June, this year. I do not propose to read them all, but one or two are very interesting indeed and the concept of one-vote-one-value seems to go out of the window. I shall pick some figures at random. The county constituency of Newton had 100 635 electors; North Cornwall had 54 047; Northwich had 53 483; and Rother Valley had 96 084. The following set of figures is very interesting. I assume these two electorates adjoin each other. One called Gateshead East had 63 904 electors, and Gateshead West had 30 180 electors, which is less than half the number in the adjoining constituency.

There are numerous examples. I shall quote only one more. Wallsend had 90 179 electors and Walsall South, which I presume is an adjoining electorate, had 59 178 electors, a difference of more than 30 000. So this situation is neither unusual nor diabolical in the mother of Parliaments in Great Britain. Therefore, Mr President, I believe that the amendment before the Chair is completely unproven and that this House will reject it.

There are one or two features which Mr Hetherington raised and to which I would like to refer. One was this great feature of the Labor Party going out into country areas and canvassing for votes, if we had a proportional electoral system where the whole of the State was one electorate. This presupposes, of course, that no parties at the present time are canvassing for

votes in country areas. If this is the case, I do not know what I have been doing since I have been standing for election because I do this every time. I go out canvassing for votes in country areas and I am sure that other members canvass for votes in country electorates as well. It is utter nonsense to say that the ALP does not woo the voters in the country areas. This is an utter sham.

I would like to quote some comments made by Mr Hetherington in his radio broadcast. I listened to it because I happened to be driving in my electorate at the time and I had the radio on. I heard the whole session. I was fascinated and I subsequently managed to obtain a transcript of what was said. I heard the broadcast on the radio, and reading the transcript I believe it to be a true copy.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Show it to me and I will let you know whether it is.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I will quote what the honourable member has said—

We would love to get out and chase votes in the country and if we had a one-man-one-vote system on proportional representation where both parties had to fight for the country vote and it wasn't handed to them on the platter, the country people would do much better.

What an insult to country people, Mr President, to think that the Labor Party had not tried already. I suggest the honourable member get out into the country and learn what happens away from the metropolitan ring-road.

The honourable member also said on that programme—and he was referring to the Legislative Council—

Our policy at present is ultimate abolition, but at present we want to modify and if it works well we may change our policy—

I emphasise the words "may change our policy". The Labor Party did not change it in 1958 when the Hawke Government held the reins of the Treasury. Of course members opposite want to abolish the upper House. Of course they want to abolish all the upper Houses in Australia. This is nothing new. We have heard it before and it is in their platform. This is subterfuge. This amendment is designed to weaken the structure of the House and deny the rights of the people to representation on a needs basis.

There are others in this Chamber more able than I to talk about country areas, but I happen to know in South West Province; which I am privileged to represent, it is quite a task to keep up with the electors and the needs of the area. I

know that the members for North Province, Lower North Province, and the other country provinces have greater physical difficulties in covering the areas involved, but to suggest that under the amendment proposed that additional electoral offices would help to keep them in touch with the electors is another matter.

We are offered free transport. That is very nice up to a point, but one cannot travel all the time. If one is travelling all the time one does not see one's constituents, unless they happen to hop on their bicycles as one is passing by. Better telephone facilities are mentioned: telephone facilities are not 100 per cent in the country, but they are good at the present time. Better postal allowances is referred to in the amendment: at the present time I believe most members have reasonable postal allowances. As to the provision of free transport for electoral purposes, members opposite do not really understand what is provided at the present time so they are babes in the wood. They do not really understand what they are talking about.

This amendment is a complete and utter sham. I have never heard such rubbish. I would hope that the House completely rejects it. There are many other arguments that I could weary the House with, and I have a wealth of material here. I have made speeches before in the House on this very subject, and I am even getting tired of it. I have tried to vary my speech for my own benefit; I am not too concerned about the others. It is something we have had a look at from time to time and my main concern is that people be represented in the voice of the Parliament of Western Australia no matter where they may live. In order to do this it is necessary that the electorates are geared to members and not to numbers. If there is proportionate voting over the whole of the State there is no doubt in my mind that the country people would be severely disadvantaged.

They would be severely disadvantaged simply because it is a numbers game. The greater number of votes are in the metropolitan areas and the bigger country centres; and the people in the smaller hamlets and on rural properties would have very little say whatsoever. If the Labor Party were in command it would be only reasonable to expect this, when one studies its base of power. Its power base lies in the industrial base.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I wish it were.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: It has the Caucus system under which Labor members abide by whatever they are told to do.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Whatever they vote.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Members opposite

generally represent very highly industrialised areas and they will chase the votes in those areas. Of course members opposite will do so because they are in that situation. Thank goodness I am not in that situation and I hope I never will be.

We have a far better system at the present time for people to be represented throughout the length and breadth of this State under this personalised system of members being elected province by province, where members have to answer specifically to the electors in those areas. I would hope that the motion is rejected out of hand.

**THE HON. LYLA ELLIOTT** (North-East Metropolitan) [9.37 p.m.]: I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment moved by the Hon. R. F. Claughton. Contrary to members opposite, I feel that the contributions made by the Hon. R. F. Claughton, our deputy leader (the Hon. R. Hetherington), and the Hon. D. W. Cooley were excellent. They contained facts. They have not sought to denigrate the members on the other side. I was very surprised at the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon who, because he had no argument and no facts with which to answer what had been put up by this side, sought to denigrate a new member of this House. I was very surprised and very disappointed.

This is a subject that I have spoken on in this Chamber many times, and like my colleagues I have spoken on many other subjects in this Chamber. However, it does not take long for a Labor person entering this Chamber to realise what a sham and hoax it is. The Hon. V. J. Ferry talked about the amendment being a sham. Any Labor member entering this Chamber very soon finds out that the electoral and parliamentary system of this State is a hoax on the people of Western Australia. Anyone who does not admit that is either not quite honest or has his head in the sand in an ostrich fashion.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You are not disappointed because you did not get any votes, are you?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I believe Mrs Hutchison, a previous member of this House would turn in her grave if she heard the things that the honourable member had to say.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: She would be right behind me.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: She fought for the principles embodied in this amendment because she realised what an undemocratic House it was and how it was not functioning in the best interests of the people of this State.

Nobody can dispute this. It does not matter whether there is a Liberal-National Country

Party Government or a Labor Government in office in the Legislative Assembly; if the faceless men in the Liberal Party decide that a piece of legislation introduced by any Government in the Assembly is not to be passed, it is not passed by this Chamber, irrespective of whether Labor has received a majority of votes in the Assembly and has been given a mandate to act on behalf of the people.

This has been the position since 1890; there have been 39 Legislative Council elections since then and although the Labor Party has achieved record majorities on many occasions in the Assembly it is very strange that not once since 1890 has it obtained a majority of members in this House.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: They certainly did not do very well in the last elections, did they?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Nobody denies it. It is history.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We cannot win them all the time.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You cannot win any of the time.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It is not only the Labor Party which maintains this and which has been saying this for a long time. In the editorial, of *The West Australian* of the 30th March this year the following comments appeared—and this did not come out of the *Western Sun*, the Labor Party's journal; it came out of *The West Australian* newspaper.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: An unbiased publication!

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The editorial had this to say—

The basis on which the Legislative Council is elected gives the ALP virtually no prospect of winning control of it . . .

This is *The West Australian* speaking, not the Labor Party.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: We realise the policies they have.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The editorial was on the Government's proposed legislation to alter the powers of the Legislative Council, and it continues—

The proposed legislation would have far greater significance if it signalled a willingness on the part of the Court government to embrace genuine reforms of the Legislative Council. Unfortunately no such intention is apparent.

The minimum reforms needed are to break

down the grotesque weighting of non-metropolitan votes and to match the Council's powers with responsibility. The powers are extreme; the Council should be directly accountable to the electorate for their use.

Till those things are done the Legislative Council will remain an apology for a democratic chamber.

Those are precisely the things we have been saying in this House for many years.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: Since when has *The West Australian* been an authority on it? Can you tell me why *The West Australian* is such a great authority?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It is not only *The West Australian*. I wonder if the honourable member would accept the United Nations Organisation as an authority. Perhaps he will not accept the editorial writer of *The West Australian*, but he may accept the United Nations Organisation.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Do you recognise them as an authority?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I would be very surprised to hear that he did not. I would be very surprised if members opposite went on public record in this chamber —

The Hon. Neil McNeill: I will have a view on it if your read it. I do know something about the United Nations. I would be one of the few members of this House who have attended the United Nations proceedings.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I would be very pleased to hear the honourable member's views. I would be very surprised, Mr President, if the Hon. Neil McNeill would go on public record in this chamber as saying that he is opposed to a principle which is contained in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What makes them so sacred?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: How many representatives of Australia do we have in the United Nations?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Now we have some indication of just exactly what members opposite think of human rights for the people of this State.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We know that.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: As the Hon. Neil McNeill, and no doubt his colleagues, will not accept the editorial writer's comments in *The West Australian*, I would just like to read part of

the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: Was not Australia one of the signatories to it?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Australia is a signatory.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: That was what I said.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It would be to our shame and disgrace if we were not.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Do you think the United Nations should work by the principle of one-vote-one-person-one-value?

The PRESIDENT: Order please! The honourable member should disregard the interjections of members opposite.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It is very difficult, Mr President, but I shall try.

The PRESIDENT: If the honourable member addressed her remarks to the chair she would probably find she would not get any interjections.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I thought I was doing so, Mr President. If they are not interested, I am sure you would be interested, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: I am very interested.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: In the section from the declaration which deals with equal voting rights, it says this—

The will of the people . . . shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What is your definition of "equal suffrage"?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I come back to the word "democratic" because we are told in this State we are supposed to live under a democratic system. My dictionary gives the definition of the word "democracy" as: Insisting on equal rights and privileges for all. I do not know whether the Liberal Party and the National Country Party support that definition, but I am sure that the great majority of the people of this State would accept it. Do the citizens of this State enjoy equal rights and privileges? Let us look at the electoral scene.

Under the present boundaries for the Legislative Assembly, one-third of the voters can elect a majority of members. This means that 33 1/3 per cent of the voters of this State are able to elect 28 members in the Legislative Assembly. The situation in the Legislative Council is even worse in that 29½ per cent of the electors are able to elect 18 members. We are told constantly by

members opposite that we are not good enough to win a majority of seats, and that is why we do not control the Legislative Council.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: That is true.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: That is a very interesting interjection from Mr Tozer; he says it is true. Let me refer him to the figures for 1971 and 1974. In 1971 the Labor Party polled 50.4 per cent of the votes for Legislative Council candidates, but it won only four of the 15 seats. In 1974 it polled 50.12 per cent of the votes, but won only five of the 15 seats. On the other hand, in 1974 the Liberal Party polled 42.53 per cent of the votes but won 60 per cent of the seats. Is that a fair, democratic, and equitable situation?

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: You did not listen to our leader's explanation.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What explanation?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The Leader of the House did not give an explanation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You hurt me to the quick.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Members opposite cannot answer those figures. I do not think the Leader of the House would dare to dispute the figures I will now give.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Tell me.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: A person living in my electorate has a vote worth one-fourteenth of the value of the vote of a person who lives in Cue.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He has about 25 times the chance of getting to see you whenever he has a complaint.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That has nothing to do with it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I would not agree with you; it is a vital principle.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: When one's electorate contains 86 000 constituents, it is difficult for them all to see their member if they have a problem.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It may be difficult for you to see them all, but it is not difficult for them to see you.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: It is difficult if they all turn up at one.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: How would you like 80 000 people to knock at your door?

The PRESIDENT: Order! Would the honourable member address the Chair?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I was expecting that interjection.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You asked me to interject.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Of course, we heard the same old red herrings about remoteness, and so on.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is no red herring to the people who live there.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The amendment is designed to—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: This amendment is a lot of rubbish.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: —give some assistance both to members and to the electors in remote areas in order to overcome some of the problems of distance.

Let us come a little closer to Perth and here Government members cannot use the same argument about distance and disadvantage. Incidentally, I must explain why I am using different figures from those used by Mr Cooley. A question was asked just recently in the Legislative Assembly, and Mr Cooley may not be aware that in the answer given it appears that the North-East Metropolitan Province now has 86 000 electors; that is, an increase of 4 000. This is the explanation of the difference between the figures used by Mr Cooley and those used by me.

Government members support a weighted vote in certain areas because of distance and disadvantages. However, let us consider the electorate which is right next door to the electorate represented by Mr Cooley and me, and I am speaking of the West Province. A person living in Kalamunda or Mundaring has a vote which is worth nearly four times that of the vote of a person living in Midland. In the reply to the question to which I have already referred, we were told that there are 26 000 electors in the West Province. Surely Government members cannot use this argument about distance in regard to the West Province. They cannot say that a person living in Kalamunda or Mundaring is seriously disadvantaged, and therefore requires a vote worth four times as much as the vote of a person who lives in Midland!

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: Where is the boundary of that province?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Residents of Kalamunda and Mundaring have the same telephone service, the same morning newspaper, the same television reception, and the same transport facilities as do the residents of my electorate.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: It is only recently they have had the same telephone facilities.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: So the argument about distance and disadvantage falls down very badly. Of course, Mr Hetherington dealt very ably with the question of disadvantaged people in the metropolitan area, so I will not go into that matter.

Another fraud perpetrated on the people of Western Australia, and one which I am really tired of hearing, Mr Deputy President, is that this Chamber is a House of Review and it is not a political Chamber at all. Of course that is nonsense. It is not a House of Review; it is a House of reaction.

The Hon D. J. Wordsworth: That is a good one.

The Hon LYLA ELLIOTT: If any member is not sure what the word "reaction" means, I suggest that he should look in the dictionary where the definition is given as: A backward tendency from reform or progress. That is precisely what happens in this Chamber.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I agree with you.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Just tonight during the debate we heard Mr Withers interject and say that this is a House of Review. What nonsense! When the Tonkin Government was in office, 21 Bills were rejected in this Chamber. This was legislation which would have meant a great deal to the people of Western Australia had it been passed.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: How many did that Government drop off the notice paper?

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Oh, he is back!

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: This wonderful Government dropped the Bills off the notice paper.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: These Bills posed no threat to democracy or to the welfare of the people of the State. They provided for such things as improved consumer protection, improved industrial conditions for working people, advanced insurance facilities, electoral reform, and other things. However the faceless men in the Liberal Party, the insurance companies, or big business—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: It was the Labor Party that dropped them off the notice paper.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: —thought that the legislation posed a threat to vested interests. They did not give a thought to the people of Western Australia.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: The Tonkin Government dropped from the notice paper Bills to provide for machinery safety.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: This is a House of reaction. When the Court Government came to

power, every single piece of legislation passed by the Legislative Assembly was passed also in this place.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You know what happens to legislation we do not like; it does not get past the party room.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: We are told constantly that this is a House of Review and that the Liberal Party does not bind its members. In fact, Mr Deputy President, when you were speaking earlier, you mentioned that the Caucus of the Labor Party bound its members, and you implied that members of your party were not bound.

The Hon. R. Thompson: He cannot answer you back.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: If you will forgive me, Sir, that is a lot of nonsense. We saw a good example of this when the members of the Liberal Party were quickly whipped into line because they dared to vote against their party when the Liquor Act Amendment Bill was introduced last session.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Are you including all Liberal Party members in that?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: We were under the impression it was a non-party Bill.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order please!

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: We understood that the Liquor Act Amendment Bill was nonparty legislation. Certainly this was so as far as our party was concerned, and we assumed that this principle extended to the Government parties. Labor Party members did not all vote the same way. In the initial stages of the Bill, we found Government members were silly enough to believe they could act independently, as their consciences guided them. They crossed the floor to vote against clauses of the Bill on several occasions, but what happened then? They were taken outside and quickly whipped into line. They returned to the Chamber and voted the other way. Nobody can deny what happened.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Who was whipped into line?

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: We can only gauge this by the way everyone voted.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: *Hansard* records what happened with the voting.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: That is a deliberate misrepresentation, and you know it is.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Mr MacKinnon also gave us the impression that we should not be supporting changes in the electoral laws.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I hope I did better than that; I hope I convinced the majority of the House.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Last year in this House I read out a comment from *The Bulletin* where a writer described the philosophy of the then Federal Liberal-National Country Party Government. He said that Government favoured a 19th Century conservative philosophy. Mr MacKinnon interjected when I read this article and said, "What is wrong with that?" When he was speaking about change tonight I was reminded of his attitude on that occasion. I am inclined to think he is still living in the last century.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: At least he lives as a leader.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: For sure you'll get on.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am not too sure what he means.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I believe that we, on this side of the House, have shown that our electoral system is not democratic.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Here we go again.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: We have shown that the franchise for people in this State is not equal, that this Legislative Council is not a House of Review, and that therefore we badly need electoral reform. We should be able to be proud of the sort of Government we have; it should be a democratic Government representing a majority of the people. Therefore, I hope that this Chamber will support the amendment.

THE HON. J. C. TOZER (North) [9.59 p.m.]: I rise briefly to oppose the amendment moved by the Hon. R. F. Claughton. I believe both the Leader of the House and you, Sir, in your capacity as the member for the South-West Province, adequately explained the situation. However, it seemed to me that as a member for an outlying province, I should comment on the amendment. I do not think anything new has been introduced in this motion tonight or in the arguments presented, but I believe it is important that we should look at one or two of the geographic facts of life.

Of course I do not have to tell members that my province includes the two Legislative Assembly electoral districts of Kimberley and Pilbara. That is about one-third of a million square miles in area, and about one third of the land mass of Western Australia. There are 30 main centres in the area, and that is not counting missions, mining camps, and pastoral properties.

If I lived in Broome, as the geographical centre

of North Province, I would be about 800 road miles from Kununurra, 800 miles from Onslow, and about 800 road miles south to Newman. It is a pretty big and cumbersome area.

I turn now to the amendment itself. Leaving aside paragraph (1) for the present, paragraph (2) in the amendment seeks to make the Legislative Council a fully representative House by making the provinces more equal in numbers of electors. In other words, the amendment seeks nearly one-vote-one-value. If this is introduced for North Province, we will find the area will include the electoral districts of Pilbara, Kimberley, Gascoyne, Murchison-Eyre, and half of Greenough. In other words, we would have three-quarters of the land mass of Western Australia, an area somewhat bigger than the Federal electorate of Kalgoorlie.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I might have known you would try to draw your own boundaries.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: The sort of thing that is being proposed in the first part of paragraph (2) involves precisely that. So, perhaps the mover of the amendment is suggesting we have a North Province comprising an area of some three-quarters of the land mass of Western Australia.

The alternative provided in paragraph (2) is a system of proportional representation for the election of members to this House. Without reservation I say that the introduction of such a means of electing this House would automatically disfranchise every single person in North Province. There is no way at all that any representation would be achieved.

We can compare it with what is done in the Senate. Quite frankly, it is as impossible for anyone from an outlying area, such as the Kimberley, to even gain endorsement by one of the main political parties as to get anyone to vote for him if any party were silly enough to endorse him. How could he be endorsed, when clearly the party's electoral strength was centred in the metropolitan area, where three-quarters of the population live?

Let us look at the work done by our senators. Firstly, I turn to Senator Fred Chaney. He is a good student, but had never been in the north before he was elected. But he is a man who has been prepared to go up and learn since he has been elected. I can recall that Senator Ruth Coleman came north once, but I cannot recall since 1974 she has been there more than once.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You have a bad memory.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Senator Drake-Brockman was elected to the Senate in 1958. He



came up with Sir Robert Menzies for the opening of the Ord Dam. I cannot recall him being there since, but he must have been; it would have been too bad for him to have made only the one visit.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I think he was up there a month ago.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: He is the most travelled senator in Western Australia.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: I am not being positive about these statements. I turn now to Senator Durack. That is a famous Kimberley name.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: And he is a good senator, too.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Since 1970, we have seen precious little of him. Senator Gordon McIntosh has been up there recently with Mr Robert Hawke.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: He goes up there frequently.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Senator Peter Sim is a regular visitor to the north; he is one man who has given good representation. Senator Andrew Thomas is the surprise; how he got endorsed on a party ticket, living as far north as Northampton, I do not know. However, he managed to achieve that incredible feat. Senator Thomas has indicated he will take an interest in the north in his time in the Senate. Senator Peter Walsh writes regular letters to the northern Press, but I can remember him being up there only twice, although he may have been there more frequently.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I am sure he does not bother to call on you.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: I realise that, but I have fairly good spies up there and, by and large, I am kept informed on the movements of these fellows. Senator John Wheeldon has been a senator since 1964. I do not know how often he has been north, but it would be very seldom.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: He used to go up there when he was President of the Young Liberals.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: The last I have to mention is Senator Reg Withers, who would fall within the same category. What I am saying is that not one of those 10 senators has any background in northern matters. They are men who have had to learn about northern matters since their election. Some have been keen and have tried to learn, but most have made no real attempt.

In fact, this is exactly what would happen if the Legislative Council were elected on proportional

representation. It would be quite impossible to get a northern member into this place. What in fact we would do is disenfranchise the people in all the outlying areas.

Clause (3) seeks to give country members greater assistance. This is an interesting one because it claims to provide better representation for electors by providing members with additional staff. One of the worst things that can happen to a parliamentary representative is to be given one of these outlying offices. I quote one example. We have an excellent Federal member for Kalgoorlie (Mr Mick Cotter). He has an office in Port Hedland with a girl sitting and answering a telephone all day. This is a fine thing, but by golly, it does not replace personal representation. Mick Cotter has been told this all too often.

It is an unfortunate thing that a staff member is no good to an elector. An elector does not want to talk to someone in an office. They want to get their message to the member concerned. It is absolutely impossible for the member for Kalgoorlie to spend adequate time in Kununurra, Broome, Geraldton, Esperance, or Wiluna to personally interview his constituents. It is just not physically possible for him to give adequate representation to places scattered over such a wide area.

However, that is what the Opposition is suggesting can be done by a proportionally representative Legislative Council. Area representation goes by the board if we adopt the amendment that is before us tonight. I suggest I could name communities which have never been visited by the current senators or the member for Kalgoorlie. That is not a blame on the parliamentarians; it is physically impossible for them to do it. We do not want that for the members who make up the Legislative Council.

To return to the Pilbara, I refer to the comments of Mr Hetherington. He made quite an issue of this matter, but I do not think he made a point at all. I do not have to tell him; he knows that the boundaries of the Pilbara are defined by an Act, and are not related to any quotas. However, the Pilbara electorate will be changed in due course. I was impressed by the arguments put forward by the Leader of the House when he was talking about elections being determined on an electorate by electorate and province by province basis. He mentioned there is an evolution going on in electoral laws and, of course, a very major change was made to this Chamber in 1965 and there will be further changes.

What does Mr Hetherington suggest we do with the Pilbara—split it down the middle so it

had the same number of electors as other electorates? There is no way that would be an adequate thing to do. What will happen is that within the next few years places like the dual towns of Port Hedland and South Hedland and the conurbation embracing Dampier, Karratha, Roebourne, Wickham, and Pt. Samson will be regarded as provincial cities in exactly the same way as Bunbury, Geraldton, and Kalgoorlie, and each, in fact, will have its own parliamentary representation. This is the way the Pilbara electorate will be split up by amendments to the Statute, as and when it is appropriate to do so.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Are you saying the Liberal Party has already made a decision, and you are telling us before a Bill comes before Parliament to be debated?

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: If in fact the Liberal Party has made a decision of this nature, I know nothing of it.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: You seem to be telling us what is going to happen, as though you had inside information.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Mr Ferry alluded to these northern seats. The fact of the matter is that Kimberley, until 1968, had never been held by other than a Labor Party member. Similarly, North Province had always been a Labor seat until Bill Withers won in 1971 and I took over in 1974. Prior to 1974, Pilbara was a Labor seat, as was Gascoyne. In 1977, these seats and the other half of Lower North Province were held by members representing Government parties.

Prior to these days, the members representing those seats were illustrious characters like the Hon. Frank Wise, many times a Minister, and once a Premier; the Hon. Harry Strickland, a Minister; the Hon. Arthur Bickerton, a Minister; and the Hon. Danny Norton, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr President, the Labor Party wants to forget that numbers have anything to do with the people elected to these seats. It is the men who are standing and occupying these seats and the policies put forward by the political parties that endorse them which count. I wonder whether the Hon. Claude Stubbs and the Hon. Ron Leeson agree with the arguments put forward by the Hon. Roy Cloughton tonight.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: They had better!

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: They have provinces small in numbers compared to North Province, but I have never heard anyone here complain about their electorates.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Their boundaries are

subject to change, while yours is fixed; and you know very well there is a gerrymander operating in the Pilbara.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: I think that the sooner the Australian Labor Party decides it is going to contest these seats and truly contest them with candidates and policies, the more chance it will have of winning back some of these seats which traditionally were held by their party. I oppose this amendment, and I hope the Legislative Council throws it out in the manner it deserves.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [10.14 p.m.]: I did not intend to enter this debate, and I mean to be brief. I fully support the amendment moved by Mr Cloughton and I compliment Mr Hetherington on his explanation of the reasons for the amendment. I think everyone would agree that the arguments advanced by Mr Bob Hetherington tonight—whether one agrees or disagrees with his philosophy—were a breath of fresh air. He has brought into this Chamber a totally new approach to this very vexed question, and I do not think any fair-minded person would disagree with that statement.

Tonight, we have heard all the old arguments put forward. Perhaps some have come from our side, but nonetheless they have come. I congratulate Mr Bob Hetherington on the manner in which he put his views forward. I believe the amendment moved by Mr Cloughton is a well-founded amendment which is worthy of support.

The intellectual capacity of Mr Hetherington to marshal his facts correctly, and to place them before this House, put the Government in a very difficult position with regard to answering those arguments. This was very well demonstrated by the feeble effort of the Leader of the House. I do not think it does the Government or the Opposition, for that matter, any great credit at all to reflect on the previous occupation of a member delivering a speech, no matter where he comes from. The fact that Mr Hetherington was at one time a university lecturer has nothing to do with his right to sit in this Parliament. I support the democratic principles which allow anyone in this community to put himself or herself forward for endorsement to stand for Parliament; and if he or she is successful, then he or she becomes a member of Parliament. What a very shallow argument I would advance if I were to go round this Chamber saying, "You have no right in fact to advance the arguments that you are advancing because before you entered Parliament you were so-and-so." I do not think we should proceed along those lines. Every man has a right to offer himself to the electorate and when he is elected he

enters this House. I should not like to see this kind of activity continuing because I do not think it is any good.

When an amendment such as this is put forward in such a well-founded manner and with the competence shown by Mr Hetherington, it deserves to be answered in that manner. That is what Parliament is all about. All we heard tonight was a load of cant, bluster, and sophistry. I do not think it did the Government any good at all.

If we forget our political allegiances for the moment, one of the things that disturbs me when the old arguments are trotted out about how many constituents there are in a particular area in the present system, which is under challenge by the community, is the fact that the electors, whether they elect National Country Party members, Liberal Party members or Labor Party members, should always have the right to be able to remove that member if he is not doing his job.

Under the system we operate—let us call it a gerrymander—in order to make some seats safe for some parties other seats must be made safe for other parties. I suppose it could well be said that I represent one of those seats, because of the type of area it is, that could be considered to be a reasonably safe Labor seat. No doubt Mr MacKinnon represents a seat that could be considered to be a safe Liberal Party seat. In some cases members who represent such areas would be returned to Parliament even if they never saw a constituent or never answered a telephone call. But I do not think this is the way Governments should operate.

Tonight I was having a private conversation about the situation that occurred in the United Kingdom. We all know that in that country there is no compulsory voting. I do not wish members to gain the impression that I am a fan of compulsory voting because I believe that if one looks at the number of informal votes it does not matter whether voting is compulsory. But in the United Kingdom if a member upsets his constituents, whether there be 50 000 or 100 000 on the roll, he is on the sidelines as quick as a flash, as George Brown found out. I think this is the kernel of the matter.

Whilst it does not say so in this amendment, we are now suffering from the effects of executive Government and if members were more answerable to the electorates there would be far better representation, irrespective of who was in Government. There would also be a far greater incidence of executive Government listening to the voice of the elector in the South-West

Province or in the North Province. His voice may be heard, but it is not being heard at present.

One of the offshoots of this situation is the current rate of dissatisfaction in the community. We are always looking for cures but never looking at the causes. One of the causes is that people are no longer represented by this system in the manner they should expect to be represented. I do not care who speaks about this matter—there is no representation today for the ordinary individual elector.

We talk a lot about industrial unrest. Let us be quite frank about this situation. In this country year in and year out most of the industrial progress has been made by Parliaments. If we go back through history we will find that most of the improvements in working conditions were made by the mother of Parliaments in this country—the Parliament of New South Wales. I shall not say which party was in power at the time. But we have abdicated that area and no longer do we think about representation for the small man for whom we are all pleading tonight. This hopelessly lopsided situation will continue until there is a catastrophic turn about of events. I am not saying that revolutions will occur or that there are communists under the bed, but people are getting sick of the situation.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Even migrants under the bed.

The Hon. D. K. DANCY: I am not going to say whether there are English or Irish migrants under the bed or, for that matter, Italian migrants under the bed. But when an argument is advanced we must at least try to answer it. I think Mr Hetherington put forward a quite new approach to this question. This question is gathering pace in the community. There is not a great deal of pace at the moment but it is slowly picking up. People are beginning to think about it. It has been thought about in New South Wales and it will be very interesting to see the result of the referendum in New South Wales as to what will happen to the upper House in that State. It will also be very interesting to see the results of the next South Australian election, which will be held with new boundaries, despite the Liberal Party's efforts of appealing to the Privy Council to have them changed. South Australia appears now to be one of the most enlightened States in Australia. There may be other reasons for this which are bound up in our history, but I do not wish to go into them. There is no guarantee that the Dunstan Government would win the next election. I should like to think it will win—it holds a majority of one at present—but at least the people are confident that they have a chance of changing the

Government in order to have a fresh look at things. After all, Mr MacKinnon said recently that we never have Labor Governments here.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Just repeat that, would you?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Mr MacKinnon said that in this State we rarely have Labor Governments. There was a Labor Government in power in this State for 14 years.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am aware of that.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Mr MacKinnon forgot it the other night. The younger generation and even some of the people who are around today will not support for very much longer a system such as this that does not allow their voice to be heard in this place. It is not a question of gerrymanders or of which boundaries there should be; it is a question of representation. Whatever the number of people on the roll there is such a thing as community interest. There are such things as people living in certain areas and people having traditional allegiances to certain parties. One of the disadvantaged parties in this place is the National Country Party. Its members are quite capable of pushing their own barrow so I do not wish to go any further in that regard, but I should like to hear from them because they represent a lot of people in this State.

All I am saying is that in future we must have a reasonable reply to a reasonable suggestion, irrespective of which way the vote goes. The duty of any Opposition is to put forward its point of view and even if the number of Opposition members in this place is reduced to one we shall still be putting forward counter arguments if we think they are correct. That is our job and we are entitled to do it. I think it ill-behoves anyone here to cast reflections on the occupation of any member of Parliament. I hope I never engage in that kind of activity. Once again I congratulate Mr Hetherington for introducing a breath of fresh air. If we keep plugging away on this matter we will gather more strength as we go along.

This Parliament has been in existence for only 89 years and when we think of the time it took the United States to come round to one-vote-one-value we are only fledglings. I think success will come to us much more quickly because the lines of communication are more open to the people today in the form of the electronic media.

I commend the mover and seconder of this amendment. I commend the amendment to the House and I hope that all fair-minded members of this House of Review will exercise their

democratic rights to vote in a democratic manner and will support it.

**THE HON. R. G. PIKE** (North Metropolitan) [10.26 p.m.]: I rise to oppose this amendment. Whilst the Labor Party is pledged to the abolition of the Legislative Council in this State and the Senate in the Commonwealth Parliament, and tongue in cheek its members propose a voting system change for this House in the name of so-called proportional representation, they seek the numbers to destroy this House. That is what we are really debating tonight. We are not debating a proposal for a system of proportional representation at all.

We need to get back to grass roots as far as the Labor Party is concerned; and I refer to the Labor Party generally and not specifically the members of this House. I draw the attention of this House to this pledge. This is what they all signed—

I hereby pledge myself to adhere to and uphold and support the principles of the ALP. I accept without reservation to be bound by the constitution, rules, platform and policies of the ALP and I will take no action to repudiate them.

That is what we are all talking about here tonight, because what we have here are the tin soldiers of the Labor Party doing as they are directed to do by the Trades Hall that we heard so much of tonight from Mr Cooley. By bringing forward the platform for the abolition of the Legislative Council the Labor Party is merely attempting to mislead the public of Western Australia.

As the honourable Mr Tozer has mentioned it, let us consider the Labor Party's attitude to the Senate. In November, 1975, the Senate acted and the bicameral system was seen to be working. Again the hypocrisy of the Labor Party can be seen in the following example. Up till 1970 Labor Party leaders repeatedly confirmed the power of the Senate in the terms of section 53 of the Constitution. In particular, in 1959 Mr E. G. Whitlam supported a report again accepting the Senate's power to reject supply. Again in 1970 when he thought he had a chance of attaining Government by defeating the Gorton Government, he said—

#### *Point of Order*

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I take a point of order. I submit that the honourable member is reading his speech and is improperly dressed.

The PRESIDENT: There is no point of order. I recommend to the member that he get on with his comments, and whilst I may have appeared earlier to have had some trouble with my eyes, I

certainly have none with my ears. The honourable member may proceed.

*Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: Thank you, Mr President. I repeat that in 1970, when he thought he had a chance of defeating the Gorton Government, Mr E. G. Whitlam said—and I refer to the hypocrisy of members opposite when they talk about the policy of the Labor Party with regard to the right of the upper House to reject supply—

We will vote against the Bill here and in the Senate. Our purpose is to destroy this Budget and the Government which sponsored it.

Then after Malcolm Fraser became the Prime Minister of this country as a result of the Whitlam Government being dismissed by the Governor-General, and after all the publicity that had been given to it, very interestingly Senator Georges said—

If we had the numbers we would also refuse supply.

It should be recalled that before 1962 there were 10 provinces in the Legislative Council, and in speaking here I am refuting in detail the proposition put forward by the Leader of the Opposition when he claimed their so-called valid argument had not been answered. The 10 provinces in the Legislative Council each returned three members and, numerically, the provinces were weighted against the Liberal and Country Parties.

There were 13 Labor members in the Legislative Council, 12 of whom were returned from four provinces having an aggregate of 85 000 potential voters. The 13th Labor member was elected in the Suburban Province, which also had two Liberal members. A total of 17 Liberal and Country Party members were returned from provinces representing a total of 246 000 potential voters.

The comparison is stark; 85 000 voters returning 12 Labor representatives, and 246 000 voters returning 17 Liberal and Country Party members.

The Hon. Ruby Hutchison, a Labor MLC, in 1963 introduced several Bills for a general franchise as opposed to the so-called property franchise then applying, and finally the proposal was supported by Dr Hislop provided the boundaries were equitably redistributed, and also that voting was to be compulsory. The Labor Party agreed without a voice of dissension, and those provisions were implemented.

The new boundaries that were announced in 1964 gave the Labor Party a likely 12 seats and, possibly, 14 seats if it won both seats in the marginal North Metropolitan Province.

*Points of Order*

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Mr President, I must rise on a point of order. Standing Order 72 states—

Except when introducing a Bill or by leave of the President, no member shall read his speech.

I claim the Hon. R. Pike is reading his speech.

The PRESIDENT: I must agree that since giving my earlier ruling the member has given me reason to believe he is reading his speech. As I suggested yesterday, members should read their Standing Orders which clearly indicate they are not allowed to read speeches. I suggest the member continue with his remarks and observe that particular Standing Order.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I thank you for your ruling, Mr President, and I ask for another ruling. I notice that in other instances when speaking on this matter, members—including Mr Dans and Mr Tozer—without exception when standing have had notes in their hands. I also make the point, with respect, that we are now dealing with specific statistics. It is not possible for me to remember all the lists of figures which I am quoting so I crave your indulgence. It is my hope you will allow me to refer to my notes, and read the paragraph or the sentence before I state it to the House. I thank you.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member was asked to proceed with his speech, whilst at the same time observing the Standing Order referred to. It is not necessary for him to explain to me what other members have been doing, and to the references they have made to their notes. I suggest he proceed with his speech.

*Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I will do my best to follow your instruction, Mr President. In 1965, which is the year to which I was referring and in which the 10 Labor members were returned, the Liberal Party not only won the North Metropolitan Province, but also the Lower North Province and the South-East Province which had been expected to go to the Labor Party. The best the Labor Party could have expected on the old boundaries was 15 seats, if they had won the other marginal Suburban Province.

The Labor Party, then realising the

impossibility of controlling the Legislative Council, receded further and further, and is now campaigning on the basis of one-vote-one-value for the Assembly, and proportional representation for the Council. For decades the Labor Party had an unfair electoral advantage in the northern portion of this State, by virtue of holding all the seats in this sparsely-populated northern section from Carnarvon northwards.

During the last 10 years the influence of the Labor Party has progressively declined to the point where, at the last election, its representation in this area was reduced to zero; all the seats now being held by the Liberal Party.

It has been a fundamental principle of Liberal Governments that representatives be elected to Parliament on the basis of representing a constituency or a particular area. The Labor Party now proposes to change the electoral system, having been substantially defeated at the last State election.

The Labor Party proposal, for proportional representation on a State-wide basis in the Legislative Council, is a characteristic fraud. The system of proportional representation which is proposed will not necessarily ensure that the party, or parties, winning a majority of the votes will obtain a majority of the seats.

With your permission, Sir, I will quote from *Hansard* of the 16th March, 1972. I intend to quote what Mr Mensaros had to say, and I might add this is a specific refutation of the point made by the Hon. Des Dans. Mr Mensaros stated—

Let us suppose we have 10 electorates each with 10 voters and each electing one representative. It could easily happen that in six of those electorates six people in each voted for Labor; therefore 36 people would have elected six Labor members. It could further happen that in each of the other four electorates 10 people voted for Liberal and that the remaining four people in each of the first six electorates also voted for Liberal. In this case 36 votes would have produced six Labor members and 64 votes only four Liberal members. This is a hypothetical example which shows that the equal distribution of electorates does not solve the problem . . .

I will now pass on to the "Dunstanmander". Earlier the Hon. Des Dans referred to South Australia. In countering the ALP campaign for equal electorates in the Legislative Assembly, and proportional representation on a State-wide basis in the Council, there are two basic points to remember. The first of these is that the Liberal

Party believes in equality of representation. That would be impossible under the one-vote-one-value system, because members of the Legislative Assembly representing remote areas would not be able to physically service their electorates.

#### *Point of Order*

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: On a point of order, Mr President, one can be very tolerant with new members. Apart from mentioning one-vote-one-value, the member has not quoted a figure during the last five minutes, yet he is still reading his speech.

The PRESIDENT: I would ask the member to cease reading his speech. I would like him to proceed, and to obey Standing Order 72. If the honourable member is not reading his speech, would he advise me because it appears that he is reading his speech.

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

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: Mr President, I now come to a difficult situation in regard to the "Dunstanmander" to which I am now specifically referring. I have to yet refer to figures in order to make my point. I have not yet quoted any figures, on this subject. However, does this mean that every time a Labor member looks at his notes I will have to raise a point of order?

The PRESIDENT: I want the honourable member to get on with his speech in regard to the amendment.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: Thank you, Sir. I will be brief because I have nearly finished. In answer to the query raised by the Hon. Grace Vaughan, I will now quote some figures.

The new boundaries in South Australia, in which all 47 seats are nearly equal in enrolment, have created one seat which takes in 70 per cent of the area of the State. The same would occur in Western Australia. The second point is that an electoral system ought to allow the party winning a clear majority of the vote to win a majority of the seats. I am sure that members of the ALP will agree with that.

Under the new Western Australian State boundaries, despite the inequality of numbers, the ALP will win 28 out of 55 seats if it obtains 51 per cent of the vote. Nothing could be fairer than that.

In South Australia, under the so-called one-vote-one-value system, the Liberal Opposition would need at least 54 per cent of the vote to win a bare majority of Assembly seats. Mr Don Dunstan has created a "Dunstanmander" which

will enable him to continue as Premier, even if up to 55 per cent of South Australians vote against him. Labor electoral "reform" will produce a similar situation in this State.

The following table sets out the numbers of seats the ALP and the Liberals would win in South Australia, according to their share of a two-party vote. The figures are in tabulated form, and are as follows—

ALP Vote %	Number of Seats	Liberal Vote %	Number of Seats	Total
55	30	45	17	47
54	29	46	18	47
53	26	47	21	47
52	26	48	21	47
51	26	49	21	47
50	26	50	21	47
49	26	51	21	47
48	25	52	22	47
47	25	53	22	47
46	23	54	24	47

Proportional representation was used for the first time in the 1975 State election in South Australia. With only 47 per cent of the primary votes, the ALP was able to win six out of 11 Legislative Council vacancies. This is another aspect of the "Dunstanmander" which the ALP in Western Australia hopes to apply to our Legislative Council.

The ALP's assertion that the present boundaries of the Legislative Council give it no chance of a majority is not correct. Prior to the last election the ALP had good prospects in the North, Lower West, Lower North, North Metropolitan, and South-East Metropolitan Provinces, and in 1971 it came close to winning the South-West and Lower Central Provinces.

A great strength of the existing system of two-member provinces is that the electors can choose on election day the party and members for whom they will vote. What better example of this do we have than the election for the North Province in 1971, when the electors went to the ballot box and on the same day elected one Liberal member and one ALP member; namely, Mr Withers and Mr Hunt. A system which facilitates such freedom of choice should be maintained.

The ALP is absolutely hypocritical when it proposes this system to the House, tongue in cheek, and applies an entirely different system within its own party structure. The interjection we can anticipate is, "What the Labor Party does is its own business." However, it says, for instance, that Tasmania, Western Australia, and Queensland should have the same voting

entitlement as the larger States have. It endeavours to thrust down the throats of the Australian population a system of proportional representation which means that for all time in this State we will be standing here dedicated to the real proposition of the ALP which is the kernel of tonight's submission by the Opposition; that is, not the reform of the upper House but the abolition of the upper House, and particularly the abolition of the Senate. If they propose abolition of the Legislative Council, using the means of proportional representation, why do they not propose proportional representation for the Legislative Assembly? Again, it is consistent hypocrisy.

To conclude, I say that for a long time in Western Australia—indeed, since the establishment of the Legislative Council—the voters of this State have shown a continued and increasing tendency to give the conservative parties more votes on the day of the election than they are prepared to give to the Labor candidates for upper House seats.

In Gosnells the Labor candidate for the Legislative Assembly received approximately 1 300 fewer votes than did the Liberal candidate for the upper House. In my own seat of North Metropolitan Province on the same day, the voters who gave Mr Bertram a majority in Mt. Hawthorn gave the Liberal candidate for the upper house almost 5 per cent more votes than the Labor candidate for the upper House.

The voters in Western Australia are not prepared to give the socialist, centralist Labor Party a vote for the upper House because they do not trust that party. Labor members seek to change the voting system because they remain in opposition in this House and the Legislative Assembly.

**THE HON. R. THOMPSON** (South Metropolitan) [10.50 p.m.]: I sincerely support the amendment moved by the Hon. Roy Cloughton.

I think the last speaker has some fixation about the platform and policy of the Labor Party and the pledge which is signed by people who join the Labor Party. When Mr Pike joined the party the wording of the pledge was different.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Mr Dans will be cross with you.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: When Mr Pike signed—

The Hon. R. G. Pike interjected.

*Point of Order*

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Mr President, I must ask Mr Pike to withdraw that remark. There were no communist candidates for the Labor Party and I want him to withdraw the remark.

The PRESIDENT: Tell me the remark you want withdrawn.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: He said, "Where are all the communist candidates for the Labor Party now?"

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I withdraw the comment in the terms in which it was made and I restate—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. G. PIKE:—"Where are all the communist candidates now?"

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member is paying total disregard for the Chair and has no right to speak when he is asked to withdraw his comments. He must withdraw them and take his seat. I take strong exception to the honourable member's endeavouring to invoke his will on this House.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I stand corrected, Sir.

*Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I was making the point that the pledge Mr Pike signed when he joined the Labor Party contained additional words. He seems to be hell-bent on trying to denigrate the Labor Party. With your permission, Mr President, I will quote a letter which was written to the Press at the time Mr Pike was seeking Labor endorsement for the seat of Collie. It is headed "Political Switch" and reads—

Comment was made by R. Pike, of Floreat Park, (West Australian, Jan 17) of a 1973 ALP conference decision relating to a reference of certain legislative powers to the Australian Parliament. These powers are to be held concurrently by the Australian Parliament and the States.

He attempted to use this to justify the undemocratic nature of the Legislative Council and its power to block Government legislation.

As an ex Collie resident I recall Mr Pike joining the Collie branch of the ALP. At the time he told me personally that after making a close study of the major parties' policies, the ALP offered more to the whole community (not a section) than the other two parties.

After being a member for three years he

made it known he intended to seek selection against the sitting member, the late Mr H. May.

When he found out the feeling of the members he dropped out of the party and later contested the Collie seat for the Liberal Party without success.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It continues—

His record and his stand on State rights conveys the impression of a measure of political opportunism.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member does not appear to be speaking to the amendment. I suggest he confine his remarks to the amendment moved by the Hon. Roy Cloughton.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: Mr President, I claim to have been misrepresented.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member will sit down. The Hon. Ron Thompson.

*Point of Order*

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I rise on a point of order.

The PRESIDENT: What is the point of order?

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I understand if a member rises in his seat and claims to have been misrepresented, he has a right to state where he has been misrepresented.

The PRESIDENT: Would the honourable member indicate to me the Standing Order which gives him that right? The Hon. Ron Thompson.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: What the honourable member is referring to occurred 20 years ago.

The PRESIDENT: I have asked the Hon. Ron Thompson to continue his speech and to confine his remarks to the amendment before the Chair.

*Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would like to make one observation before I come to the amendment. Mr Pike quoted a number of facts and figures which he claimed justified the gerrymander in South Australia. He failed to mention that when the Labor Party had five members in the Legislative Council in South Australia it caused a rift and even a breakaway movement in the Liberal Party because a section of the Liberal Party in South Australia believed in electoral reform. It was only by the grace of the Legislative Council in South Australia that the Dunstan Government was able to proceed with the redistribution of boundaries.



The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Which pledge did Mr Dunstan sign when he was a member of the Liberal Party?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have no knowledge of Mr Dunstan's being a member of the Liberal Party.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I have because I was there with him at the time. I do not switch, either.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will accept what the honourable member says.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: He did not stay in it very long.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Thank the Lord!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I think Mr Pike, being a new member in the Chamber and probably being inexperienced in political debate—

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I do not need your patronage, thank you.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: —may not be aware of what took place in this Chamber prior to the last redistribution. I was Leader of the Opposition at the time and I questioned, requested, examined, tore apart, and asked for some explanation from the Leader of the House, who was the Minister in charge of the electoral laws of this State. We found in this Chamber a map with red and black lines on it. We could not find out who drew those lines; the Minister would not tell us. They were certainly not drawn by the electoral commissioners. The boundaries were gerrymandered by the Liberal Party and presented to Parliament; and the electoral commissioners had to act on those boundaries. No sensible electoral commissioner would draw a boundary through the middle of Armadale and divide community of interest. The lines were drawn for the purpose of gerrymandering seats.

We hear much about radicals, communists, uprisings, and people who are discontented with our society. This is the kind of thing that they are discontented about. I do not know whether they are radicals or communists. I know they are anarchists and that the anarchist movement is rife throughout the world. Those people will not accept the standards we dictate and the outmoded policies of Governments. They are causing the fomenting trouble among young people throughout the world and right here in Western Australia. The demonstration at the Murdoch University was an example of this.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Which one was that?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I think the Prime Minister and the Premier were present.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Others were present. I

think you should speak from knowledge rather than hearsay.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This House has to face up to electoral change. It must give equal representation because the people will not accept the plea of the Liberal Party in relation to remoteness which we have heard over so many years that it is not funny or even entertaining; it is just stale. A member of the Liberal Party told us tonight that remoteness did not matter any more because communications had overcome it.

That was not a problem; but even if it was a problem let us consider what is contained in this amendment to the Address-in-Reply.

Mr Tozer objected to the amendment because he did not believe proportional representation would allow members fully to service Western Australia. He illustrated that 10 senators could not service Western Australia properly, and I would agree with him. However, I think 32 members of the Legislative Council can properly service Western Australia; if they cannot, they should not be re-elected. I know members of the Labor Party service their electorates very well and work tirelessly. No doubt members of the Liberal Party do the same.

I would sympathise with Mr Berry and Mr Moore. I would not like to have a province that large; however, with such a small number of voters I am sure they could service them adequately over a three-year period.

The trend of the argument from the Government—and it has put up very little opposition—seems to be that it is all right for me to have over 60 000 electors, and it is all right for Mr Berry and Mr Moore to have less than 6 000 electors. However, does not that mean to say that because I have 60 000 electors, I have a lot more work to do? Of course it does. This is where malapportionment comes in. If the voting figure is 10 to one in favour of me, would members opposite say I am entitled to 10 times the salary of Mr Moore and Mr Berry? Logically that is the answer.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Workload and numbers do not relate, because in developing areas you end up with a higher work load.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course, that is not a developing area at all; the area of which I am speaking is actually losing people as a result of the policies initiated by the Liberal Government and the false promises it made. I think the term used was that the Liberals bought the Kalgoorlie seat with a crook cheque.

Of course, Mr Berry and Mr Moore will be sadly disillusioned when they find a certain

railway line is to be closed down, possibly just after Christmas. This is the sort of service in the developing areas members opposite are talking about!

The Hon. W. R. Withers: No, I was referring generally.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: How will proportional representation cure that?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I think under the Liberal Party system it would be quite logical to arrange that Liberal members be allocated periodical trips through regions. For example, they would not all need to go to Broome for the Broome festival, nor would they all need to go to the Beverley races because Mr Baxter has a horse racing there; but it would mean that the parties would canvass the State. The canvassing would be done thoroughly because if members did not do their job properly they would not be considered for re-election by their parties, let alone by the electors.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Do you think that applies to the senators now?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, I think they are in a special position, just as members of the House of Representatives are. Those members are in Canberra probably more than they are in Western Australia. Irrespective of party affiliation, they have my sympathy; I would not be a Federal politician under any circumstances.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I wonder whether you would be a country politician.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: We realise the disadvantages suffered by country members. If the honourable member cares to study the amendment he will see we refer specifically to country members and say they should be assisted by the provision of electorate allowances commensurate with the difficulties and disabilities involved in their electorates. The amendment then goes on to refer to the provision of adequate staff, and the provision of free transport for electoral purposes. I am sure Mr Gayfer is very busy in his electorate. I know he travels great mileages and wears out motor cars. I have seen him at work in his province and I would not say anything against his activities because he does his job thoroughly. The amendment then goes on to mention the provision of better telephone facilities, including the right for electors to reverse charges when contacting their members.

#### *Point of Order*

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: Mr President, I rise on a point of order. My point of order is that under Standing Order 81 no member may read extracts

from newspapers or other documents except *Hansard*, referring to debates in the Council during the same session. The honourable member is reading from the motion—

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is no point of order.

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

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr President. The amendment goes on to refer to more generous postal allowances and the provision of more than one office in the electorate where necessary. Do not tell me this would not greatly assist country members, because it would allow complaints to be made to their offices and enable them to deal with matters more quickly than if they have only a secretary stationed at Parliament House. If country members have secretaries only in Parliament House, then they have not a home base and all their mail must come to Parliament House.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer interjected.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I do not know whether Mr Gayfer would want three or four wives or whether he would want three or four homes; but at least we are being extremely generous in this recommendation.

This would provide a burden on the State and you, Mr President, know my views in respect of the burden of this House on the State. I have said we could get rid of this House for the cost of a \$5 rubber stamp. That is my opinion of the work done by this House, but I will not canvass that matter at this time. We are stuck with this Chamber, so we have to do something to allow it to function democratically and fairly.

I think justice is the keynote. We hear many people speaking about law and order, a subject on which I will entertain the House tomorrow for an hour or so. What we are speaking about now is law and not order; it is a law, but an unjust law which has been with us since the turn of the century.

The Liberal Party will rue this day if it decides not to change the electoral laws very quickly to enable electoral justice in Western Australia. If the Commonwealth Government has realised it is necessary to provide as near as possible for one-vote-one-value, surely the State Government should realise it. The longer the Government shrugs off the problem, the worse will be the reaction against it eventually.

The last point mentioned in the amendment is that it is proposed to subsidise city accommodation where required for parliamentary purposes. Surely this would be to the benefit of

country members if they are disadvantaged as greatly as they claim—and I do not dispute that they are. I feel this would be another benefit for them.

Therefore, what are they arguing about? No-one has refuted that the provisions of the amendment are not good. They propose benefits to country members, but those members seem to be totally opposed to the amendment. After hearing all about their remoteness over the years and all the difficulties they experience, it is not common sense to me that they will not accept the amendment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It makes common sense if you have the sense to see what is common in it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Before I sit down, I would like to refer to the position in the Pilbara. Something like 15 250 people voted in the Pilbara in the last election. When the Bill to amend electoral boundaries was before the Parliament prior to the last election, I questioned at length the then Leader of the House regarding what would happen in that situation. He accepted that it was a gerrymander inasmuch as he said he realised it was out of balance and something would have to be done about it pretty soon. We had plenty of time to do something about it then; I even suggested alterations to him.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: It was not a gerrymander.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course, when we have 15 000 voters in one electorate compared with 4 000 in another, and 6 000 in another—

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Look at the definition of the word. It is not gerrymandering, it is malapportionment.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Well, no matter by what name it is known, it stinks, does it not? The then Minister knew that it stank, and he admitted it by saying someone would have to do something about it, and that is recorded in *Hansard*.

Of course, now it has been acknowledged by Mr Tozer that somebody should do something. However, he went further; he said that in the future—over the horizon—someone should look at this. Will it be the Liberal Party? It will not touch it because if it went into the matter it would have to put some of those voters into the Kimberley, Murchison-Eyre, and Gascoyne electorates; and that would adversely affect the chance of the Liberals in those seats because political views change and in those areas the people change from time to time.

Therefore, the Liberal Party would not bring

justice to the north-west of this State. When the then Leader of the House had the opportunity to do something about it he said, "We will do something about it in the future." This is a good amendment. I support it, and I trust the House will support it.

#### *Personal Explanation*

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: Mr President, I seek leave of the House to make a personal explanation under Standing Order 74.

The PRESIDENT: Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I shall be very brief. I refer to comments made by the previous speaker when he referred to my membership of the Labor Party. He did not mention that it was in fact over 20 years ago. That is the first simple point.

I am in interesting company, of course, because I understand that Labor parliamentarians Wheeldon and Dunstan started off as members of the Liberal Party.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Make your explanation.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: Yes, Sir. My personal explanation continues. It is regrettable that the honourable member seeks to attack personalities rather than arguments with typical socialist lack of fairness.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Come on.

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

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [11.15 p.m.]: Mr President, I suppose one might say that we have virtually been goaded into rising from what one might term the "cockey's corner"; certainly that is so in the eyes of some of those who seem to support this amendment. However, I say at the outset that I have no intention of supporting it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Goodness me; I thought you said you would.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: No, I did not. The amendment before us speaks of quotas in the Legislative Assembly being based on the principle of one-vote-one-person-one-value; that the Legislative Council be a fully representative House; and the third part goes on to say that country members should be given greater assistance, and it then gives about 10 financial rewards.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Perks.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Perks, to try to make it a little more appetising for us to accept the proposition before us. This is very similar to what was put in front of the Queensland

Government many years ago when the proposition was put to abolish the upper House, and the members therein were paid their salaries.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: They were paid their salaries for the rest of their lives.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Yes. They were paid their salaries for the rest of their lives, and I believe there are still two in existence who are getting that salary. So I understand the last part of the amendment to be a piece of bait, but it does deserve some comment. The argument put before us so far seems to be surrounded by the word "democracy" and we are told that we are undemocratic; we are told that anybody who has these weighted voting arrangements must be undemocratic.

It is very interesting to note that in 1954 the Hon. A. R. G. Hawke introduced a Bill designed to give 23 seats in the metropolitan area; 23 in the agricultural area; three in the north-west; and three in the eastern agricultural-eastern goldfields area. Again this must be said under the guise of democracy, or otherwise it would be an undemocratic move; yet it was moved and supported by the Labor Party.

In the United Kingdom in 1965 a direction was made to the commissioners when they were drawing up all the electoral boundaries. They were directed that (a) there must be a community of economic, social and regional interests; (b) there must be a means of communicating and of travel; (c) the density and the sparsity of population must be taken into consideration; and (d) the remoteness and distance of the electorate must also be considered.

Of course, as we know, the United Kingdom still has the principle that this is contained in the 1965 Act, which is the Act under which the commissioners of this day work. I am sure members would not call England undemocratic by any means and it is certainly the mother of our Parliament.

We should also look at the Senate arrangements. In Western Australia we have 8 per cent of the Australian electors, but we have 16 per cent of the Senators. This is not challenged and yet it is based on the same principle as pertains in respect of this House. It is also interesting to note that the United Nations have equal representation from each country. Certainly it would be rather interesting to see the development of the United Nations if it were proportionally represented by, say, China, India, and a few of the other nations. It would certainly be detrimental so far as Australia was concerned.

One could also look at the Australian Labor

Party federal executive and find that it has equal representation from each State. Therefore the Australian Labor Party must be undemocratic, especially when it has the same number of members on its federal executive from, say, Tasmania which has 500 000 people as against, say, New South Wales, which has five million people. I believe the arguments and philosophies of democracy attached to this are ludicrous in the extreme, and they are certainly outweighed by the disabilities that would befall the electors as a whole if representation was on a proportional basis for all the States.

The Hon. R. Thompson said a while ago that the 10 senators would find it difficult to cover the State because there were only 10 of them, but we could have 32 upper House members of this Chamber covering the State; therefore it would be easier. I cannot understand that argument at all because one would have to cover the whole of one's electorate to win one's seat. To make sure one was doing the job, one would have to realise the whole of one's seat is not a 32nd of the State—it is the whole of the State. Therefore, one would have to do what the 10 senators were doing, so it does not make any sense at all to argue for representation on a proportional basis.

I believe I can speak as well as anybody about representing a country electorate. For 12 years I represented an Assembly electorate in the country and that Assembly electorate comprised six shire councils. I worked very hard covering that electorate and I was employed full time going around and visiting the six shires. I then transferred to the upper House and I now represent 26 shires. Having established a reputation as an Assembly member, I find it hard to live up to that reputation, but nevertheless it is impossible to service the whole of one's electorate in the manner in which a city-based member may believe it is possible to.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Hear, hear!

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Quite frequently in this House I see city members approach the Whip and say, "I will be back in an hour. I want to shoot out to a P & C meeting", and they are back in time. If I want to go to Paynes Find to attend a P & C meeting I will take two days to do so, and I will be lucky to get back and remain awake in the Chamber after that meeting.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You must have improved your driving.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I will not mention any names, but I always remember this true story. There used to be a member called Mr Bill Young. I was having a drink with him at the bar one

night when we were joined by a city-based politician—I should say parliamentarian.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is better.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: This city-based parliamentarian said, "I have had a cow of a week; I put five gallons of petrol in the Mazda and I have been flat out". Bill and I looked at each other and we took out a piece of paper and totalled the consumption of our cars. We would have to have a 2 000 gallon rain-water tank tied to the back of the vehicle to provide it with petrol for a year. Last week, for the benefit of Mr Hetherington, I travelled 1 560 miles.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That does not surprise me.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I had to spend four days in the city, but each night I drove something like 400 miles out to a town, addressed a meeting, and then came back ready for the next day in the House; I had to do the same thing again the next day. This can be substantiated by looking at my diary and I will table it if members opposite want to have a look and see exactly what is entailed in servicing an electorate such as mine. I do not believe anybody would disagree with me.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We believe the honourable member.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I do not care what the Opposition bases its amendment on it is not going to make any difference to the fact that country people want to see their members and they want some form of representation.

Several members: Hear, hear.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Let me get back to the 26 shires.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Their wives like to see them now and again too.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Each of the 26 shires have every mortal thing that one would find in a city electorate. There are hospitals, hospital committees, schools, P & Cs, scouts, CWAs, and the shire councils themselves. Nine times out of 10, unless it is a large shire or town council, as I have in Narrogin and Northam, the people definitely need the assistance of the local member to receive what is an automatic entitlement in the city electorates. It is automatic down here to be provided with these things. Tell me, in the electorate of South Perth, where a bitumen road is needed. Tell me where, Mr President, in your electorate you need a new hospital or something like that; tell me where you need another school or a water supply. Frankly, Sir, I wonder what you do with your time.

Nevertheless, members opposite say people are

people and we should be representing people by putting in water schemes; by training creeks to run the right way; and by building bitumen roads.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What about getting rain?

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Well, even down to getting rain. Mr Baxter went to Dalwallinu last week—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: And did a rain dance.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER:—and did a rain dance and believe it or not, he is a pretty good member because it rained not long after! This is a fact; it is utterly impossible and the size of our electorates is getting ridiculous now. My electorate was enlarged considerably at the last election. Mr Baxter fought that election; and I have to fight the next.

The task is virtually impossible with 29 shire councils. If one visited them once a fortnight it would take a year to do so, without visiting their hospitals, their schools, and all the other associated things. One cannot manage it. Each town has all the organisations complete in every detail, and they represent people; they represent people's leisure, people's enjoyment, people's work, and community spirit. They want to see their member just as much as the city member wants to be seen in his electorate, except that when he is seen at functions he happens to be seen by a lot more people. He is not necessarily badgered by a lot more people, but he is seen.

On the question of housing, I should imagine in South Perth one would be pestered every day to have more State houses supplied. I should imagine they would want them in South Perth by the thousands, but I do not know where they would be put. Out of my 26 shires, I would have about 20 on my back now wanting State houses. They are all different, and the point is that a number of the things a member is doing for his shire are in direct opposition to something that is required by another shire. One gets into the invidious position where one cannot please them all, so one tries to please 50 per cent and get 50 per cent of the votes anyway; that is what is happening. To base the whole matter on a question of enlarging the constituencies is simply not practical. We would get into a larger area with more people but in my book this is not workable.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I am glad you recognise all those problems.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I was amused to listen to one of the members who said, "Well, get an aeroplane or a helicopter," and if that was not said tonight I am imagining things. I believe it

was either the Hon. Grace Vaughan or the Hon. Lyla Elliott who made that statement. It was the Hon. Lyla Elliott.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I believe it was the Hon. Grace Vaughan.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: "Get a racing car; that will get you around", was another suggestion. I had a funny experience. I decided five years ago that this electorate work was getting tough and if I could cut corners and go straight across I would get there all the quicker.

So I started to learn to fly an aeroplane. Then I found out, after 12 hours' flying time, when I was on a solo flight, when I thought I had landed the plane, that the machine was still 20 feet above the ground. Then I realised there had to be another reason that I should not continue to learn to fly that plane.

I found a very good reason. With a recognised pilot I took an aeroplane down to Albany one Sunday morning to meet someone who was in port, with the idea of getting back to York at 2.30 to open a polocrosse match. We landed all right; no worry about that.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: That is obvious.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Twenty feet up?

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: No. When we went back to the plane a storm had moved in and I was still there the following Tuesday morning. No way could I send 258 miles to Corrigin for my motorcar. All the time I believed that the clouds would roll away and I would get out. What I am saying is true. To make the situation more embarrassing, at my expense I had to entertain the pilot and he drank a carton of beer. He was a very nice chap, but rather expensive to entertain for two or three days.

I can tell members of another incident. I hired an aeroplane to come to Perth to sign some important papers. We nearly had a prang. A storm moved in and we didn't get out that day at all.

Mr Masters, who has done many hours of single engine plane flying would know I speak the truth. It is very difficult to be able to guarantee that one could, by plane, traverse the whole of one's electorate.

It would be very interesting to city members of Parliament who would not understand the situation in the country to learn that if one goes to a dinner at 6.30 p.m. and then has to leave to attend another function at 10 p.m., a plane would be of no use at all. As a matter of fact, a car is not much use either because one has to drive

oneself into the ground to get between point A and point B.

Mr Hetherington will smile when I tell him that on two nights a month I sleep in my car. This is true, but he would not believe it. Some members might ask me why I do it because it is a silly practice. I sleep in my car because I get tired of driving and the distances are so vast—for no other reason except that I run out of time. The only suggestion not included in the amendment is an extension in the number of hours in a day; that might be helpful. It is virtually impossible to cover these electorates now, so I do not see how we would get on if the electorates were increased in size.

When Mr Thompson was talking I interjected and suggested that as well as the provisions in the amendment it should refer to another wife; and that is another statement. Mr MacKinnon, you, Sir, and I know that when we put our heads down in Perth on four nights of the week we have no wife here. My wife and I have a business to run in the country. Someone has to run it and there are only the two of us, and so she runs it. Some members might say, "Give it away; you should not be running a business." I do not run it; she does. Consequently, I am down here on my own, and I am not the only member in this position. It is all right for metropolitan members because they can go away from this place to a home.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: If we get home.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: You are making me wonder what the Assembly members in your area do.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I have done this for many years. I have no objection, but I would object if I had to represent the whole State. It is just not on.

The Opposition has referred to an increase in electorate offices. The electors want personal representation, not secretaries. It would be possible only for secretaries to run these extra electorate offices.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Do you not have any Assembly members where you live?

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Mr Cloughton knows that representation in Parliament is a numbers game.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I'll say I know.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Each one must obtain as many votes as he can for himself.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: We know all about the numbers in this Chamber.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: In case the Labor Party does not know, parties do not win votes in

country areas; individuals do. They vote for people they know and can understand. They do not really worry about the party. That is my opinion anyway.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: How do I get around to 80 000 people?

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I have lived in a group of apartments here with 64 residents, and I guarantee that I saw 32 of them today with no trouble at all. I had only to stand at the entrance, and it cost me nothing—not a gallon of petrol. The people walked by me and greeted me. The honourable member knows that when she is fighting an election she has merely to stand at a bus stop and she would meet about 10 000 people.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You do not know much about city electorates if you say that.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I find that it is just as hard to represent the little Shire of Trayning as it is to represent Northam or Narrogin.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is just as much work.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Yes. Trayning has as many organisations. Everything is the same, and it is equally hard to represent Trayning as it is to represent Narrogin. One has about 500 people and the other has about 4 000. So it is silly to say that it is undemocratic not to do what the Labor Party suggests. I say it would be undemocratic if we did do it. In my book it is just not on. With regard to the subsidies for city accommodation these should be provided now. We do not need to wait for an amendment like this.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: They are not in though.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I have been paying hotel bills for 16 years now. All right, possibly I can afford it, but there are plenty of members representing country areas who cannot.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You are apparently supporting a bit of our amendment.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I am saying that a subsidy for city accommodation should be provided now. I was about to say that the accommodation for Mr Leeson, Mr Dellar, and a few more I know personally should have been subsidised. Some members sleep down here four nights a week and virtually run two homes. This amendment will make no difference to that situation.

The hour is late so I will just say again that I do not believe I should support the amendment. Someone says that farmers are being favoured. If this is the case, so are miners and waterside

workers people on the roads, and shire council workers. Not only farmers are favoured, so it is ridiculous to say anything to the contrary.

While on the subject of farmers, I wish to say that farmers make farming. They do not make tractors, I know; but machinery just made farming a little easier. It certainly did not improve our working conditions much, because there are still only 24 hours in the day.

THE HON. A. A. LEWIS (Lower Central) [11.39 p.m.]: I will not delay the House for very long. Members can read at length my speeches on this subject if they refer to *Hansard*.

The hypocrisy of the Opposition in moving this amendment is highlighted by the fact that in the days when it held all the North Province seats there was no talk of one-vote-one-value for the north of the State. The Labor Party did not want to know about it at that stage. Gradually, as the party lost them all, its attitude changed.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You will be accused of being repetitious. You should have listened to the earlier debate.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You make your own speech.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am grateful to the Leader of the House for giving me permission to make my own speech! I am not grateful to Mr Claughton who is making his usual inane remarks.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You will be the third member who talks about this tonight.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It would be very good if Mr Claughton would listen and understand, but during the time I have been in the place he never has.

I congratulate Mr Gayfer on his speech because he does understand a little about politics in both Houses of Parliament. I share some of the experience he has had, although I have had not as long an experience as Mr Gayfer in the lower House. It would be magnificent if some of the people who talk and interject in this place could have the benefit of a little experience in the other place. They would then know, as Mr Gayfer has said, that there is very little difference in the duties of a lower House member and an upper House member if each is doing his job as a member of Parliament. The only difference I find is that the work load is three times as great because of the area one represents and the work one must do if one is conscientious.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I have five Assembly districts in my province.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I should not really

answer that interjection and I know that you, Sir, will castigate me if I do; but I will. Mr Cooley could get up and, as part of his daily exercise programme, walk around his electorate before morning tea.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: That shows how little you know about the seats.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member make some comment about the amendment before the Chair?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will make plenty of comment if you desire. Before doing so I wish to say that I thoroughly agree with Mr Gayfer's contention that people do not merely want to consult a secretary; they want personal representation, and that is the point Mr Gayfer was making. I suggest that the one-vote-one-value proposal is on a par with my suggesting that we give votes for the production of an area. This could be export production or any other kind. We could multiply by eight the city electorates because they are not producing the nation's wealth and we could make the seats smaller in the country. That kind of argument is as ridiculous as the Labor Party's concept of one-vote-one-value.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: A great deal is produced in my electorate.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: And a lot of noise is produced by its member.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: A lot of good sense too.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Unfortunately this House has never heard that good sense.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Perhaps you could come to the North Province one day.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: He talks so often that we cannot hear because his old voice fades into the background—as he should.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Sarcasm is no attribute.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member please stop interjecting?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Thank you. Mr Gayfer has dealt fully with some items which ought to be given to the salaries tribunal. It is a wonder that the Labor Party even submitted proposal No. 3 because in reality the points in it should be submitted to the salaries tribunal; it really has nothing to do with us.

I see in the amendment the Labor Party's belief that it knows more about how people want to be represented than does anyone else because it is the expert on people. We hear members oppose

telling us this all the time. It is amazing some of us are elected at all.

I took exception to Mr Pike saying the Labor Party got anywhere near the Government parties in the Lower Central Province, and I am sure the Hon. Winifred Piesse did too.

I listened very carefully to all that speech. The fact is that the Labor Party polled just over one-third of the votes but in reality it did not get anywhere near winning the seat. I cannot remember off hand what Mrs Piesse's majority was, but I think it was in the vicinity of about 4 000 votes while my majority was about 3 000. As a male chauvinist pig, I find it hard to admit that a female did so much better than I did!

Tonight we saw the Labor Party play the game it has tried to play so unsuccessfully in this House, in another place, and in the electorate, for so long. Would it not be novel, Sir, if we heard some original suggestions from the other side of the House about electoral boundaries? If Opposition members could just once bring up something which could be considered constructive for the people within this State rather than pure socialist dogma, I would be very happy. So I oppose this amendment in its entirety, but being a gentleman, if the Hon. Lyla Elliott wishes to interject, I will let her.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Are you agreeing with us it is all a game?

The PRESIDENT: Order! Please let the honourable member finish his speech.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I thought, Sir, being a gentleman, I ought to give the honourable member a chance to interject. I do not consider it a game; I consider it a fairly dinkum business. If the honourable member wishes to count the numbers if a division is called on this amendment, I think she will decide also it is a fairly dinkum business.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: It is a fraud.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I object to words of that sort. The public of this State deserve better than those mouthed criticisms such as fraud and deception. We hear these words on so many occasions from the Labor Party. When Labor members cannot find much of an argument, they use clichés, especially when they have no valid arguments to which an electorate will listen. As I was going to say before I waited for Miss Elliott's interjection, I oppose this amendment because it is just another example of the Labor Party stacking on another one of its turns without any semblance of a new idea being brought forward in this House.



**THE HON. F. E. McKENZIE** (East Metropolitan) [11.48 p.m.]: I rise to support the amendment, and at the outset I feel I ought to thank Mr MacKinnon for his kind remarks that my speech the other evening was one of common sense.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It was very good. I was judging by the fact that *The West Australian* gave you more space than it did the others.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: After what the Leader of the House hears tonight, he will not say the same thing.

The hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do not spoil a good record.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I heard his remarks earlier, and I am afraid I cannot support his opposition to the amendment. Rather I feel I must agree with what Mr Hetherington had to say.

I first became a union official—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Rapidly becoming an academic, I think.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: —for one major reason. I believed a rule of the union was not democratic. This rule was that union officials, once elected to that particular union, had a life tenure.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do you think they could bring that to Parliament? If you put that on the amendment, we might go for it.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I came into this House, and I looked at the numbers. I found there were 22 Government members, but only 10 members on this side of the House, notwithstanding the fact that in 1974 and the recent election of 1977, the Labor Party polled in excess of 45 per cent of the vote on each occasion.

I have spoken to many Government members since I have been here, and I believe most of them are reasonable people; in the same way that I believed people in my union were reasonable. I am pleased to say that I was able to convince those reasonable people in the union that the rules ought to be changed. I am not so confident that I can do the same thing here, but nevertheless I will try. It is for this reason that I rise at this time.

I agree that there is an argument for both sides. However, when one hears a member, such as the Hon. H. W. Gayfer, speak about the problems he has in servicing his electorate, I wonder whether this proposition of proportional representation is not in fact a good proposition. I assure the honourable member that I would be quite happy to share some of those 26 shires with him. So I

support the proposition on the basis of proportional representation.

I bear in mind that in another place we do not have proportional representation and the electors can be serviced on a personal basis by all members in that House. At the 1971 election, the Labor Party gained 50.4 per cent of the vote in this House, and yet it won only four of the 15 seats. In my opinion that is not a reasonable proposition. Proportional representation would provide a fairer distribution, and therefore I support it.

It seems to me that since adult franchise was instituted in 1964 or 1965, the position has worsened somewhat. I heard Mr Ferry say earlier that in 1958 there were 13 ALP members in this Chamber, nine Liberal Party members, and eight Country Party members.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Doesn't sound very good for the Country Party, does it?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: We find today that the Liberal Party, with approximately 40 per cent of the votes, can control this House in its own right. So I do not believe that is a fair proposition either.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You know I was right about you; I think you are the best speaker on that side.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Thank you.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: For how many years did you win that position in the union after you managed to have the rule changed?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: It took me six years to get rid of that rule. I was due for election again in 1978.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are a very nice reasonable man.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The Labor Party acknowledged the fact that I had brought democracy into that union, and it thought that probably I was worth a try in the Legislative Council. That is how I happen to be here. I again thank the Leader of the House for his remarks.

I do not intend to speak for any great length of time because I realise the lateness of the hour. However, I thought I ought to rise to let members know my feelings about the situation here. I believe there is some basis to the argument about representation for the electorates on that scale, and that it is difficult in large electorates. I believe the only way to overcome all these hardships is with proportional representation, and it is for that reason I rose to speak.

I realise the situation that exists in this House cannot continue forever, and that we in the Labor

Party have a duty to highlight to the public the inadequacies of the system. We have to raise this matter here time and time again; I know Government members will become sick and tired of hearing the same old arguments, but sooner or later we will get our message through to the public. The message got through to the public in South Australia, and even the Liberals in South Australia eventually acknowledged that a principle was at stake.

In a submission last year to the South Australian Boundaries Commission, the President of the Liberal Party endorsed the principle of one-vote-one-value, and he endorsed it in these terms—

If this redistribution is to truly reflect the principle of one vote one value then it is imperative that it prevents Government being retained or claimed with an electoral support of less than 50 per cent of the two party preferred vote . . . . The essential feature of any fair electoral system must be that any party or coalition which obtain 50 per cent plus one of the two party preferred vote should be able to form a government.

Those were the words of the South Australian President of the Liberal Party, and I trust honourable members will bear them in mind. If the proposition we put forward to members is not satisfactory to them, I hope they will do something about the situation themselves. The Hon. A. A. Lewis mentioned this, and because the present system is unjust it cannot continue. There will be a continuing programme by the Labor Party to see the electoral system is put on a more equitable and just basis.

**THE HON. GRACE VAUGHAN** (South-East Metropolitan) [11.57 p.m.]: I have just a few words to add to the debate, and I wish to refer to some arithmetic I have been doing during some of the more boring speeches from the Government benches. I assure you, Sir, that unlike one of the previous speakers I do not have a script from which I am reading, nor do I have a script writer waiting in the wings to prompt me later.

My little bit of arithmetic applies to the members in this Chamber who represent the largest and the smallest provinces on the basis of the number of electors. These members are the Hon. Lyla Elliott, the Hon. D. W. Cooley, the Hon. N. F. Moore, and the Hon. G. W. Berry. Of course my examples relate to the extremes in the voting strength of electorates.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer said he did not know what you, Sir, and I, who represented the province with the greatest voting strength before

the redistribution, did with our time. If he refers to *Hansard*, he will see that I studied this matter quite exhaustively at the time of the Electoral Act Amendment Bill, when I talked about how many hours of the day we would need to spend if we attempted to see each of our 94 000 electors at least once in our six-year term. I admit that arithmetic is not my long suit, but I have double-checked my figures, and I do not believe I have made a mistake.

It seems to me that the present incumbents in the provinces with the largest number of electors—the Hon. Lyla Elliott and the Hon. D. W. Cooley—would need to work seven days a week for six years in an attempt to see all of their 86 000 constituents. By this I do not mean that these members of Parliament would have time to visit all their constituents, but rather, as Mr Gayfer said, they could stand at bus stops and receive visitors at their electorate offices or at Parliament House. Without taking into account the hours spent here in the Chamber, these members would have to see 40 people every day for seven days a week. That would be a pretty monotonous business, and certainly not one that would make good legislators of them because they would not have time to study legislation.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: No commercial traveller in the country could see more farmers in a day than that.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: In regard to the Hon. N. F. Moore and the Hon. G. W. Berry, they would be able to go through their electorate—allowing for say 60 days in the year when Parliament is sitting—and working five-day weeks when Parliament is not sitting they would have to see only five of their voters a day during their six-year terms.

I am presenting this extreme to show how true is the first section of the amendment which I am supporting. How true it is that this Government has failed to introduce legislation to overcome malapportionment. Many speakers tonight while opposing the amendment have in fact supported it; and I think probably the Hon. Mick Gayfer did this more adequately than anyone else did. What he pointed out is in truth that proportional representation would be one means by which we can overcome some of the difficulties that we are aware exist.

What has been suggested by Mr Cloughton refers not only to how electoral reform could be brought in; it is saying in effect, "Let us have a look at malapportionment throughout the electoral districts and see what we can do to rectify the situation." And if we are going to be

consistent in regard to the matter of allowances or distance—and Mr Gayfer very sincerely and adequately demonstrated the disadvantages of country representatives—no allowance will make up for the loss of the democratic right of people in the North-East Metropolitan Province who have 15 times less voting value than the voters of the Hon. N. F. Moore and the Hon. G. W. Berry.

If we are to be consistent with electorate differences to compensate for disadvantages in the country we will have to examine many more factors than those we have heard tonight. I have been considering the various seats which have just under or just over 8 000 voters, and half of those seats are within 70 miles of the metropolitan area. So those members have all the advantages of country members, while the Hon. Mick Gayfer—who has an enormous province, and my heart bleeds for him—is in a terrible situation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Don't overdo it.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Imagine the honourable member having to sleep in his car! That is terrible; although I am aware he has a great big Mercedes Benz which is about 25 feet long.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: If you want to plough a big field you use a big tractor.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I am sure his car is better to sleep in than, say, a Mini Minor which may be all that some other member can afford.

However, I do not want to be facetious about this because it is a serious problem. If we are to be consistent surely we should have some formula to ascertain what disadvantages there are, and our weighting should be done according to distance, disadvantage, and maybe even according to the calibre of the Legislative Assembly members in one's province.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Ken McIver is one of mine.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Mr President, there you are! This may have some bearing on the matter because the honourable member would not have to compete so much if he did not have such a competent Legislative Assembly member in his province. Perhaps he would not have to chase around so much looking for votes. However, I am sure that is not the reason Mr Gayfer chases around; I am sure he does it because he wants adequately to represent his electors.

I think what has been said here tonight only goes to show that we do need some electoral reform, and those people who deny it are hiding their heads in the sand.

If we do present time and time again arguments which the Government finds repetitious, then—and I misquote Shakespeare here—"Methinks they doth protest too much."

THE HON. I. G. PRATT (Lower West) [12.05 a.m.]: Mr President, sometimes I become amazed by the arguments put up by the Opposition to convince themselves of the things they speak about. We are here to represent people, and that is something that has been said many times this evening. I think what we are discussing is people, and that the principles we are applying to the matter should be applied to people.

At the end of Mr Cloughton's amendment, he refers to some perks or privileges that should be given to country members. I am sure Mr Gayfer, Mr Ferry, and other country members will be very pleased when the ALP decides to make these submissions to the salaries tribunal, and suggests that country members receive such privileges; because that is all it is necessary for the Opposition to do if it wants members to be given these privileges. There is no need to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply; the Opposition need only to make a submission to the tribunal, and if the submission is worth while it will receive serious consideration.

We have had talk about proportional representation over the State for the upper House. Mr President, if we had that situation we would be faced with the position where the State was everybody's responsibility. If we get back to human nature, the realists among us will admit that something which is everyone's responsibility is no-one's responsibility. Under such a situation the electors would not receive the individual attention they receive now from Legislative Councillors.

I am here in this place to give my electors individual representation. I am available to them at all times, and they take full advantage of it. I do not think I would have the same rapport with my electors if they stretched from Esperance to Derby. They would not get the chance to know me well, and I would not get the chance to know them well.

The reason I speak tonight is to make reference to what the people want, rather than what members with varying philosophies think the people should want. Without the 1971 election the Opposition would have been lost tonight, because its members kept going back to that year and the fact that they nudged over 50 per cent at that time. In the last two elections much of their campaigning has been in respect of what they call an undemocratic Legislative Council. They have

issued pamphlets specifically condemning the Legislative Council.

They have condemned the way Legislative Councillors are elected, the areas they represent, and the proportion of people they represent; but where has it got them? It has got them nowhere because the people are not interested in what they are talking about. The people are happy with the present situation.

A specific comment made by Mr Dans was that our system was under challenge by the community. When we consider what has happened in the voting for the Legislative Council over the past two elections, we can see it is not under challenge by the community at all. It might be under challenge by very noisy sections of the community, but it is definitely not under challenge by the community as a whole.

We heard Mr Thompson say this House has to face up to change because the young anarchists will not accept our traditional parliamentary system. Should we change our system because a small, noisy section of people, labelled by Mr Thompson as anarchists, decides that we should do so, when the State as a whole exhibits at election time that it approves of the situation and does not want a change? Let us face it; if the public do want a change at a time when they are urged by pamphlets and publicity issued by the Opposition that our parliamentary system is wrong, surely they would make their wish for a change known in the ballot box. They have not done that. They have shown they believe very firmly in the system we have.

Much has been said about the Armadale railway line, which I cross several times every day. That line forms part of the boundary between three upper House provinces: Lower West, South-East Metropolitan, and West. This boundary was supposed to be a great desecration of democracy. However, let us look at the votes that were recorded in those areas.

Let us consider your vote, Mr President. Surely we could not say there was any censure of the system evident in your vote. Let us look at the vote of the Hon. Neil McNeill. Surely we could not interpret his vote as being any censure of that boundary line. The same applies to the Hon. Neil Oliver on the other side of the line in West Province. Surely no person would look at the voting figures with common sense and assume that they in any way reflect censure by the people in respect of that boundary. This amendment is an echo of the socialist idea that people should want what it is decided they should want; it does not matter what the people actually want.

I repeat that if the proposition put forward by members opposite is desired by the people, the people would show that in the ballot box; and they just have not done that. They have shown in the ballot box—particularly in the three years which are the point of dispute—that they approve of the system. I oppose the amendment.

**THE HON. N. E. BAXTER** (Central) [12.13 a.m.]: I will be very brief at this early hour of the morning. However, I felt I should rise from "cockies corner" and support my colleague, Mr Gayfer, in this debate. I do not object to the Labor Party moving amendments such as this. It is consistent with what has happened in the past, and it shows members opposite are tenacious in their approach to the Legislative Council. Now and again they think up a new scheme from which they can visualise some benefits accruing to them which might enable them to get a few more seats in this House.

However, I am certain members opposite knew very well when they introduced the amendment that they had as much chance of succeeding with it as they have of selling ice cream to an Eskimo.

It is rather surprising that members of the Opposition who have spoken in the debate tonight all represent city areas. I wonder whether members such as the Hon. Grace Vaughan have ever faced a situation such as that I was faced with last Thursday week. I had to leave Perth at 4.00 p.m. after the afternoon tea break in this Chamber, and drive some 180 miles to Dalwallinu to attend a meeting of farmers in a drought area, who wished to discuss the problems associated with the lack of rain.

**The Hon. R. F. Cloughton:** Do people never meet in the city?

**The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon:** Yes, and they have to drive all of 10 miles.

**The Hon. N. E. BAXTER:** As I was saying, I left here at 4.00 p.m., drove to Dalwallinu, attended the meeting, and left there at 10.00 p.m. I arrived home in the very early hours of the morning. I wonder if the Hon. Grace Vaughan would realise that was one of many such instances which occur during the year.

I think she would shudder at the idea. I represented six State Assembly seats in Central Province from 1950 to 1965.

**The Hon. R. F. Cloughton:** Not all at once?

**The Hon. N. E. BAXTER:** Yes, on a voluntary franchise basis, and I can tell members that at the end of that period I was looking like a hunted kangaroo dog. I had to cover a territory extending from Lancelin right down to Wanneroo, circling

the metropolitan area, taking in Armadale and Byford down to Serpentine, the hills area and the Swan. My territory extended to the other side of Mukinbudin and Beacon, down south to Humphrey's Bridge and beyond Pingelly. It was no easy task to get around that area.

Members talk now about introducing proportional representation. I was astounded to hear the Hon. Ron Thompson state that the parties could designate which parts of the State members should represent. What a stupid, farcical idea! I have long believed that the introduction of proportional representation into Australian politics has been the greatest farce ever perpetrated on the people of Australia, and I say that advisedly.

Let us consider what happens during Senate elections. Endorsed candidates are put forward by the various parties as part of a group or team, and the first two candidates from the Liberal Party team, and the first two from the Labor Party team have no chance of being beaten; they must receive a quota. So, they have no need to turn a hair; as long as they remain sweet with their parties, they are home and hosed.

But it is a different story for the candidates battling for the fifth seat which, normally, is won by the National Country Party. What has Tom Drake-Brockman had to do over the years? He has had to cover this State from one end to the other trying to obtain votes. He has no chance of obtaining a quota in the country, but he must also canvass electors in the metropolitan area and in every corner of the State. It is an unenviable job, and I doubt whether members of this Chamber would wish to have such a system operating here.

The honourable member spoke about malapportionment of electorates. One can consider that whichever way one likes, but the fact that there is a 2:1 quota operating does not necessarily make for malapportionment.

Mr Hetherington referred to the fact that country people were not necessarily disadvantaged. Anybody who does not believe country people are disadvantaged should have another look at the situation, because in almost every sphere, country people suffer by comparison to their city counterparts. In most cases they must drive further, in particular from the farming communities; they must pay freight from and to the city on all goods; if a country dweller wishes to go to the seaside, as a rule he must travel some distance; if he wishes to visit the opera, he must travel to the metropolitan area, because there are no operas in the country. If a farming property is to be connected to electricity, the owner of the

property must contribute to the cost, whereas metropolitan residents are connected simply as a matter of course. Even outlying areas, such as Wanneroo, which once took part in a contributory scheme, now have electricity connected at no cost. These are all disadvantages involving extra inconvenience and cost to country dwellers.

This Government has been accused of failing to introduce electoral reforms. I believe the 1964 legislation providing for full adult franchise for the Legislative Council, and altering the system whereby two members represent each province was a very good reform, and one for which the Brand-Nalder Government should be congratulated. This was introduced in 1965 and has worked very well. At the time the Labor Party was expected to gain 14 seats, but the fact that it gained only 13 was simply the will of the people. Since that time, ALP representation has dropped slightly as has the National Country Party representation. Each time there is an adjustment to electoral boundaries the situation changes slightly, and we accept that.

I can think back to a time when the electorates to the north of this State both in the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly were represented only by members of the Labor Party. That just shows what can happen over the years.

I have worked out some approximate figures to ascertain what would happen if proportional representation were introduced for elections to the Legislative Council. Under proportional representation, with a quota of approximately 38 000, the Liberal Party would probably finish up with 16 members, the Labor Party with 15 members, and the National Country Party with two members. In addition the National Country Party would have little chance of gaining more than two members as the State's population grew; in fact, it would be increasingly difficult for us to maintain that representation in this House. I do not believe the Opposition honestly expects us to support such a proposition, just as I would not expect members opposite to support an amendment which worked to their disadvantage.

The amendment suggests that country members should be given greater assistance to enable them adequately to represent their electors. The first suggestion is to provide increased electorate allowances. From time to time the Salaries Tribunal considers this matter and increases our allowances and at this stage I believe they are adequate, even for some of the larger provinces.

Another suggestion is the provision of "adequate" staff. I go along with Mr Gayfer and other members in believing that no amount of

staff will ever compensate for personal representation, particularly in country electorates. Country people like to see their members, not some secretary in an office. The suggestion that there should be a proliferation of secretaries throughout country areas, particularly in some of our larger provinces would bring about a situation where we would be over-womanised, and our electors would get very sick of that.

I do not know how the suggestion for free transport could be made to work.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: We could use trains in our area.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: But what about the members who are not serviced by trains? Is it suggested that the Government should provide the running expenses for their motorcars, including petrol, oil, and tyres? This situation would become completely farcical, just as the matter of electorate offices is becoming a farce. I never did support this move.

Paragraph (d) states—

The provision of better telephone facilities including the right for electors to reverse charges when contacting their members.

I am sure my constituents do not mind telephoning me when they wish to discuss something. In fact, I have never had one constituent complain to me about the fact that he has had to pay for a telephone call to his local member.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: They ring you up and tell you to ring them back before the pips stop.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I do not believe this would serve any good purpose.

The Hon. M. McAleer: Do all your electors have telephones?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: No, but if they do not they either use a neighbour's telephone, a public telephone, or the telephone at the post office. The next suggestion is for more generous postal allowances. This is also a matter determined periodically by the tribunal. I have not heard of any member going broke because of insufficient postal allowances. I believe they are adequate.

Another suggestion is the provision of more than one office in the electorate, where necessary. How in the name of heaven can a member serve more than one office in a large province? We would have girls sitting on their tails most of the time doing nothing, for the simple reason that the member could not get around to service those secretaries and keep them operating.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I thought you were going to keep it short!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Since electorate offices have been established in this State, a great deal of time has been spent doing nothing by the various secretaries, because the member has not had the time to visit them.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: You have just proved that you do not do as much in your electorate as we do in our metropolitan electorates. I always visit my electorate office.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Since I have been a member of this Parliament I have heard it said time and time again by various members that they are the hardest-worked members in the Parliament. Honestly, I have been here too long to swallow that one.

I find myself agreeing with the last suggestion, which is for subsidised city accommodation where required for parliamentary purposes. This should have been introduced many years ago. We need a system of accommodation to cater for country members who must attend parliamentary sittings and other parliamentary business. I recall when I lived in Beverley for three years, and when I used to live on my property, 40 miles out; I used to drive to Parliament every day, which is a fairly long drive.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You have a choice: Support the amendment or we will buy you a sleeping bag.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I think I will put up with the sleeping bag. Apart from that small item, I cannot support the amendment.

When Mr Dans was speaking, he made the point that there was a great deal of dissatisfaction in the community about representation in the Legislative Council. Perhaps there is dissatisfaction amongst the Labor constituents in Mr Dans' electorate for the simple reason they do not have a majority in the Legislative Council.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I was not referring only to this State, but also to Australia as a whole.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The people who talk about dissatisfaction should come down to my province. They would not hear anyone expressing dissatisfaction about the Legislative Council or their representation in Parliament; other country areas, too, seem to be fairly happy with the situation. I oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

**Ayes—8**

Hon. R. F. Cloughton	Hon. R. Hetherington
Hon. D. W. Cooley	Hon. F. E. McKenzie
Hon. D. K. Dans	Hon. Grace Vaughan
Hon. Lyla Elliott	Hon. R. Thompson

**Noes—18** (Teller)

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. N. F. Moore
Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. O. N. B. Oliver
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. W. M. Piccse
Hon. H. W. Gayfer	Hon. R. G. Pike
Hon. T. Knight	Hon. I. G. Pratt
Hon. A. A. Lewis	Hon. J. C. Tozer
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. W. R. Withers
Hon. M. McAleer	Hon. D. J. Wordsworth
Hon. Neil McNeil	Hon. G. E. Masters

(Teller)

**Pairs**

<b>Ayes</b>	<b>Noes</b>
Hon. R. T. Lecson	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs	Hon. R. J. L. Williams

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. Thompson.

*House adjourned at 12.34 a.m. (Thursday)*

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**MINING**

*Gold Prices*

61. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Mines:

Since the price of Gold was fixed at \$US35.00 in 1934—

- how many increases in price have occurred;
- what were the dates of the increases, and the amounts at the time; and
- what were the various causes of the increase in prices?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- Two.
- December, 1971, from \$US35 to \$US38; February, 1973, from \$US38 to \$US42.22.
- Both increases caused by devaluation of the \$US.

**GREENOUGH BY-ELECTION**

*Statement by Premier*

62. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

In a speech of the Premier given at the opening of the Greenough by-election, and reported in *The West Australian* of the 27th March, 1975, he announced the appointment of a top level working party

to examine ways to protect people's lives from increasing controls and regulations—will he advise—

- who were the persons appointed;
- when did they report;
- what recommendations did they make; and
- what action has been taken on these recommendations?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

I assume the honourable member means the 27th September, 1975, and not the 27th March, 1975.

I invite the attention of the honourable member to the Legislative Review and Advisory Committee Act, 1976, passed by Parliament last year, and the reasons leading up to its introduction.

This Act is expected to be proclaimed and operative later this year.

In addition: Action has been taken to protect the privacy of citizens. The Government has accepted entirely the recommendations of a committee it set up to study the problems of safeguarding information given to and held by State Government agencies and public servants. The general question of privacy in the age of computer data banks and electronic eavesdroppers has been referred to the Western Australian Law Reform Commission so that it can co-operate with the Commonwealth Law Reform Commission in a study of the problem.

**MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT**

*Expenditure*

63. The Hon. H. W. GAYFER, to the Minister for Transport:

What has been the total expenditure by the Main Roads Department in each of the last seven years?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

1970-71	\$56 616 470
1971-72	\$66 692 632
1972-73	\$69 157 956
1973-74	\$71 077 131
1974-75	\$82 487 433
1975-76	\$93 705 767
1976-77	\$110 092 697

The above figures include work undertaken by the department on behalf of other authorities.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

*North Province*

64. The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Leader of the House:

If any citizen in North Province became aware of—

- (a) a person defacing or damaging or removing Aboriginal paintings or rock carvings; or
- (b) a person emptying oil into a tidal creek; or
- (c) a person littering the area at a scenic spot, whether within or outside a national park; or
- (d) objectionable emissions and fallout emanating from an industrial plant and creating abnormal airborne pollution;

to whom should he report the occurrence?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (a) A police officer.
  - (b) An officer of the Public Works Department.
  - (c) In the former case, a National Parks Authority ranger. In the latter, the shire clerk.
  - (d) The regional administrator, who will transmit it to the correct quarter.
- As a point of information, the Department of Conservation and Environment is formulating proposals to station an environmental officer in the Pilbara to be a contact point in respect of many of these problems.

## QUARANTINE

*Norseman Check-point*

65. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Agriculture:

With reference to the agricultural quarantine check-point at Norseman—

- (1) What plant diseases have been detected each year since the commencement of checks?
- (2) During that time, what diseases have been detected in stock?
- (3) How many articles have been confiscated?
- (4) (a) Are confiscated articles destroyed at the check-point; and
- (b) if so, by what method?

- (5) How many vehicles have been examined since commencement of the checks?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) and (2) The function of the checkpoint is to monitor the entry of plant and animal material for the purpose of preventing the entry of pests and diseases rather than to identify diseases and pests. Prohibited conditions noted affecting plants have been brown rot in cherries in 1972, 1973, and 1974; and codlin moth each year and fruit fly in 1972 and 1973.

No scheduled animal diseases have been noted.

- (3) 44 012.

- (4) (a) Yes.
- (b) Incineration.

- (5) 190 567 to the 30th June, 1977.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INDUSTRY ECONOMICS

*Establishment*

66. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Federal Affairs:

- (1) Is the Government aware of the establishment of the Bureau of Industrial Economics by the Australian Government?
- (2) As this will involve an extension of Government into the private sector, and into areas of State responsibility, does the Government intend to protest to the Australian Government?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) The Government is not aware of the establishment of a bureau of industrial economics. However, it is aware of the creation of a Bureau of Industry Economics and the proposed creation of a bureau of labour economics by the Commonwealth Government.
- (2) It is considered that the establishment of these bureaux are within Commonwealth power and may be of benefit to the Australian economy. Their performance will be observed in relation to the State's interests.

## RAILWAYS

*Meckatharra-Mullewa*

67. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister for Transport:

Would the Minister advise the annual



tonnages carried on the Mullewa-Meekatharra railway line for each of the financial years 1967/1968 to 1976/1977 inclusive?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

	Net Tonnes
1967-68	98 000
1968-69	113 000
1969-70	61 000
1970-71	93 000
1971-72	90 000
1972-73	71 000
1973-74	89 000
1974-75	94 000
1975-76	85 600
1976-77	90 000

### SKELETON WEED

#### *Location and Control Measures*

68. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Where was skeleton weed first discovered in Western Australia?
- (2) Since discovery, in what districts have there been outbreaks?
- (3) Is there any evidence that it has been completely eliminated where control measures have been undertaken?
- (4) What are the control measures recommended by the department?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Ballidu.
- (2) On properties in the districts of Geraldton, Mullewa, Miling, Badgingarra, Pithara, Moorine Rock, Narembeen, Wanneroo and Esperance. On Westrail and industrial land in the districts of Perth, Kwinana, Swan Shire, Toodyay, Bungulla, Hines Hill, Merredin, Burracoppin, Walgoolan, Westonia, Southern Cross, Koolyanobbing and Coolgardie Shire.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Spot spraying with the residual herbicide Tordon 50-D.

### RAILWAY ROAD BUS SERVICE

#### *Boddington-Albany Highway*

69. The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the Westrail bus service from Albany Highway to Boddington was discontinued quite some time ago owing to low passenger usage?
- (2) What was the estimated annual cost saving brought about by the discontinuance of this service?
- (3) Would the Minister provide an estimate of the number of passengers required on a return trip basis to justify two trips per week in and out of Boddington from Albany Highway?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes, in March 1976.
- (2) Approximately \$6 000 annually.
- (3) Twelve full fare paying passengers.

### HIGH SCHOOL

#### *Balga*

70. The Hon. R. G. PIKE, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Balga High School received a grant of \$36 000 under the Disadvantaged Schools Scheme for this financial year?
- (2) If the answer to (1) is "Yes" is there a delay in implementing recommendations where staff are involved?
- (3) Will schools be allowed to transfer moneys not spent on staff (as a result of this delay) to areas of equipment, or to increase staff under one of the areas approved by the scheme?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. It is necessary to decide the working conditions for the non-teaching personnel on the programme before appointments can be made. The matter is under investigation at present.
- (3) The school has listed its projects in priority order and transfer of funds to items of lower priority is accepted practice after approval is granted by the department.

### SEWERAGE TREATMENT

#### *Domestic Plant*

71. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has the Metropolitan Water Board examined the feasibility of the "flush and forget" domestic sewerage plant developed by Mr S. Beaumont of Victoria?
- (2) If so, has a decision been made on its use in Western Australia?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) This system is currently under investigation.
- (2) No.

## PARLIAMENT HOUSE AND ELECTORATE OFFICES

### Staff

72. The Hon. D. W. COOLEY, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Are members of staff and clerical workers employed at Parliament House, and members' secretaries employed at electorate offices, permitted to become members of the Civil Service Association, a trade union, or an industrial organisation appropriate to their trade or calling?
- (2) If not, what is the reason for the prohibition?

The Hon. G. C. MACKINNON replied:

- (1) and (2) The Premier's understanding is that it has been traditional for all Parliament House staff not to become members of any industrial organisation. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, all staff have always been "award free"—i.e. not specifically covered by any industrial award or agreement.

## EUROPEAN WASPS

### Location and Control Measures

73. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) To what extent have European Wasps been found in Western Australia?
- (2) What damage do they do—
  - (a) in built up areas; and
  - (b) farming areas?
- (3) What control measures are necessary to contain the problem?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) A survey has shown the wasp to be limited to an area of 8 km radius from Fremantle.

- (2) (a) Foraging wasps may enter dwellings and can inflict a painful sting.  
(b) The wasps attack late varieties of soft fruits and interfere with picking schedules. They are also a pest of commercial bee hives.
- (3) The policy of the Department of Agriculture is one of eradication. The detection of nests has resulted from favourable public response to the publicity campaign. This campaign will continue.

## TEACHERS

### Remedial

74. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many remedial teachers have been appointed to high schools?
- (2) How many more are required?
- (3) What funds were allocated for this purpose in—
  - (a) 1976; and
  - (b) 1977?
- (4) What is the source of these funds?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) 86.
- (2) Requirements are assessed annually in terms of the special needs of the schools.
- (3) (a) and (b) Funds are not specifically allocated for this purpose.
- (4) Not applicable.

## BUILDING BLOCKS

### Costs

75. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Housing:

Further to the Minister's reply to my question regarding the cost of land and housing on the 16th August, 1977, will he advise how many lots were created in—

- (a) 1974; and
- (b) 1975?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

It is assumed that the honourable member refers to lots created in the Metropolitan area under 3 000m<sup>2</sup> and on this assumption the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning has advised me as follows—

- (a) In 1974, 10 601 were created; and
- (b) In 1975 as a result of diminished confidence in the industry due to the economic policies of the Whitlam Government in Canberra, 7 847 lots were created.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### TRANSPORT

#### *Reduction in Federal Grants*

1. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Transport:
  - (1) Is the Minister aware that grants to Western Australia under the urban public transport assistance programme have been decreased by 25.5 per cent for Western Australia in the last Federal Budget?
  - (2) What will be the effects of this cut on the upgrading of urban public transport within Western Australia, including railways?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for notice of this question. I have also given him notice in return that I did not think his figure of a 25.5 per cent decrease was factual; indeed, I doubt that it has any authenticity at all. However, at least he will get a reply from me on urban transport which perhaps is all he is looking for.

- (1) The urban public transport assistance programme is a 5-year plan under which the Commonwealth Government made \$2 available for every \$1 approved by the State for projects approved by the Federal Government.

Western Australia, with a relatively simple urban public transport system was one of the first States to be able to present a plan and has received \$4.93 million in Commonwealth funds under this plan.

I might add that our application was in the early part of this scheme, and so many Government applications were received that the Whitlam Government was unable to make a payment in one year, and the following year the incoming Liberal-National Country Party Government also was unable to make a payment.

However, in this year's Budget for the 1977-78 fiscal year we see that the Commonwealth has allocated \$51 million for the urban public transport system programme, \$5 million of which is for new works which have not been formally approved. These are the first funds to be allocated for new works since 1974. Western Australia will apply for a share of this \$5 million, and will also receive some money which it is owed from previous allocations.

- (2) During the years in which no moneys for new projects were received, Western Australia chose to finance some new projects entirely by itself—that is, without contribution from the Commonwealth. Therefore State matching funds plus non-matching funds have totalled \$7.1 million over this time.

### NATURE CONSERVATION

#### *Reduction in Federal Funds*

2. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:
  - (1) Can he explain to the House why Western Australia's allocation in the Federal Budget of payments for nature conservation purposes was reduced from \$250 000 to nil along with Queensland and South Australia?
  - (2) Will he also state why Tasmania and New South Wales had their payments reduced to \$150 000 and Victoria increased to \$500 000?
  - (3) What will be the effect on Western Australia's nature conservation programme of the discontinuance of these funds by the Federal Government?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the warning he gave me of his question; because of the shortness of time, I have accepted that all his figures are strictly factual, and I answer on that basis.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is understood.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: My reply is as follows—

- (1) Yes, I think so. Last year, \$250 000 was granted under nature conservation grants for the purchase of land. It was totally used for that purpose. I would consider the most reasonable explanation of the reduction to no grant this year is the disastrous economic plight in which the nation was left by the Whitlam administration. I do know that the present Liberal-National Country Party Government is making every effort to return the nation to a solid financial basis. As we have no outstanding commitments for the purchase of land to add to our nature parks it would appear that the Commonwealth Government has seen fit to reduce our allocation this year. I would suppose that the same reasons are applicable also to Queensland and South Australia, although I have no firm knowledge of their situation.
- (2) I also have no knowledge of the situation in Tasmania, New South Wales and Victoria. I have not had time to telephone those States to ascertain if they knew of any reason.
- (3) There will be no finance from Commonwealth sources available for land purchase to add to our nature parks this year.

#### HIGH SCHOOL

##### *Hampton*

3. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education—

- (1) Is the Minister aware—

- (a) that since the 3rd February, 1977, there have been 54 incidents of malfunction or breakage of windows at the Hampton Senior High School;
- (b) that faults in design and material are apparently responsible for this;
- (c) that whole panes of glass have crashed onto the walkway areas used by students and staff;
- (d) that the incidents are increasing with the age of the school?

- (2) In view of the dangerous condition of these windows and the frightful prospect of a student or teacher being seriously injured, perhaps fatally, will he order that structural alterations take place at Hampton Senior High School immediately to replace the faulty windows with a safe design?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) and (2) As the honourable member is aware, the Minister for Education visited Hampton Senior High School at her invitation and discussed the problems to which she refers. An investigation is being carried out in conjunction with the Public Works Department in order to ascertain what structural alterations are required to ensure the safety of all persons associated with the school.

#### HIGH SCHOOL

##### *Hampton*

4. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education

In view of the urgency of the matter, I would ask the Minister whether he has any knowledge as to when the report will be brought down indicating when the action will be taken by the department?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

I am only speaking on behalf of the Minister for Education and I will pass on that request.