

# Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 26th October, 1978

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

## PORNOGRAPHY

### *Exploitation of Children: Petition*

MR BRYCE (Ascot—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.16 p.m.]: I present a petition from 281 constituents which reads as follows—

The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of State Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia, Western Australia respectfully sheweth:

That we the undersigned, having great concern at the way in which children are now being used in the production of pornography CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT to introduce immediate legislation:

1. To prevent the sexual exploitation of children by way of photography for commercial purposes;
2. To penalise parents/guardians who knowingly allow their children to be used in the production of such pornographic or obscene material depicting children;
3. To make specifically illegal the publication and distribution and sale of such pornographic child-abuse material in any form whatsoever such as magazines, novels, papers, or films;
4. To take immediate police action to confiscate and destroy all child pornography in Australia and urgent, appropriate legal action against all those involved or profiting from this sordid exploitation of children.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will protect all children and immediately prohibit pornographic child-abuse materials, publications or films. And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

I certify that it conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No. 37).

## PORNOGRAPHY

### *Exploitation of Children: Petition*

MR TONKIN (Morley) [2.18 p.m.]: I have a petition which I will not read to the House because it is in the same terms as the one presented by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It has 154 signatures. I have signed that it conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No. 38).

## METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

### *Introduction and First Reading*

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

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

### *Chairman*

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I wish to announce that I have been advised by the member for Murdoch (Mr MacKinnon) that he has this day been elected as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

## APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

### *In Committee*

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Clarke) in the Chair; Sir Charles Court (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Before proceeding to the Bill we will deal with the Estimates and begin with Part 1: Parliament. I would like to make it clear to all members that when I call a particular part such as Parliament, that will be the appropriate time to talk generally on that item. When we get to the specifics of the items, debate will be allowed only on that particular item and I shall be quite firm and will ensure members deal only with the items set out. I will not allow members to roam from that item; members will not be able to debate the matter in a general fashion. If they wish to do so members will have to be alert and speak when I call the various parts, such as Parliament.

### Part I: Parliament—

**MR JAMIESON** (Welshpool) [2.23 p.m.]: I shall take some time to deal with aspects of conditions faced by members of Parliament because I feel it is a long time since it has been properly examined. The Premier seems to have discarded any responsibility or worry about this matter for some time and has relied upon the judgment of the commission to handle matters associated with members of Parliament, such as offices and concessions, etc.

I have often indicated to this Parliament that parliamentary life in regard to salaries is not a happy one, certainly not for myself. I have never been one who has liked to judge his own worth as far as salaries are concerned. Parliamentarians on both sides of the Chamber being as I have known them, would, if they were in private enterprise, buy members at their price and sell them at their own and probably make a big cop. That may or may not be the case with a number of members, but nevertheless they are all members of this Parliament and they are entitled to a reasonable remuneration.

I have never been one to judge this matter myself; I do not like having to judge salaries. However, when one finds that the members of this Parliament are on the lowest base salary of any Parliament in Australia, I think something has to be done and members themselves have to say something about the matter to their leaders.

I checked as late as this morning on the salaries of parliamentarians in the other States and the closest base salary to ours is the one applying in the South Australian Parliament. Their figure is \$21 300. Queensland was next with \$25 750 and then we go to the astronomical figures in New South Wales and Victoria. Tasmania uses the average of all base salaries as at the 30th June each year, so naturally theirs is quite high also.

If we were being paid an exceptionally high, above average salary, or something not in accord with the norm, we might not need the associated privileges and travel assistance, etc., that we need at this time. However, the comparison is there which shows that we start off in the first place behind every other State.

It should be remembered that one could travel across Tasmania in a day, as could be done in Victoria. The situation is a little different in South Australia, but the effective part of South Australia—that is, the south-east corner—where all the population is, can be easily travelled. In the more remote areas of that State there are

two Commonwealth railway lines, one running to the north and the other to the west, and there are lesser lines to the peninsular.

Disregarding those three southern States, which do not have the peculiarities of a State such as Western Australia with its vast distances, we then consider New South Wales and Queensland, where there are much better facilities available for members to move around those States.

I do not want the Premier to get excited about imprecise and so forth. I think the craziest scheme any Premier has allowed to come into existence was the one in Queensland. The *Courier-Mail* illustrated the case of a young man who had been a member of the Queensland State Parliament for just three years and during that time he had been to London twice. After he lost his seat he went to London and back with his wife at the expense of the State. No-one can convince me a system which will allow that to happen has any sense to it at all—except perhaps to the fellow who took advantage of it.

**Mr Watt:** Were those trips by the young man legitimate or a fiddle?

**Mr JAMIESON:** There would be little chance of getting any of that money back from a fellow such as that, although it might be possible to get it back from sitting members. The situation was that Mr Speaker looked at a travel request and told the members they could use a certain amount of their air entitlements, or whatever. The scheme had no chance of success.

I might refer to Bruce Small. He went for trips around the South Sea Islands after he ceased to be a member of Parliament, and booked the expenses to the Parliament. This sort of action obviously brings members of Parliament into ridicule in relation to travelling allowances; but so does the situation which exists in this State. The members of Parliament here are in a worse position than they were at the beginning of the century.

When the State Shipping Service was established members of Parliament were permitted to go for trips on the State ships. The only thing against it was it took a long time to go north and return. Consequently not too many members took the trouble to go. The trip was usually for about a month or six weeks and during that time the State provided the accommodation. Members were looked after and provided with everything they required. I had the opportunity to go on the *Koolinda* and, later, the *Kooluna* during my time in Parliament. They provided accommodation equivalent to that available at a first-rate hotel. In fact, it would not be possible to get any

better accommodation in the north-west in those days. The ship would stay at a port sometimes for two days while the cargo was off-loaded. The only amount which members had to pay was a nominal amount, equivalent to about \$1 a day. That is the sort of accommodation which was available to members of Parliament in the past.

Also in those days railway travel was available, and again accommodation was provided at the Government's expense. I am referring to this matter because the Premier seems to think a big deal is involved in the 10 days in a three-year period which was granted in recent years. In the old days if a member went to Wiluna he was provided with first-class accommodation on the train. The trip took three days and he was provided with first-class accommodation all the way.

It is true that he had to buy his own pie for 6d. and a pot of beer for 6d., but that was not a strain on the purse!

Likewise it was possible to go to Esperance and Albany in similar accommodation, and to make an overnight trip to Kalgoorlie. However, the service to Albany has now bit the dust. We are losing all the time, and the situation is getting worse and worse. The Premier might reply by saying that on the other hand members have access to finance for the purchase of motor vehicles. I admit that is a fairly expensive business these days. However, the more transport a member of Parliament has available to him, the more he is expected to use it, and motor vehicles gobble up the dollars these days and, from what I hear from country members and from what I know from my own travels as a private member, it is obvious there is not much left. However, that is getting on to allowances within the electorate, and one might say that form of travel can be funded legitimately from the allowance.

I do not know whether a sufficient allowance is provided. I am not prepared to argue that. I say again that I would hate to be the judge of my own salary and allowances. I have not liked to get involved in that subject, but one must get involved in some instances.

We do have a tribunal, but when a member writes to it in reasonable terms he does not even get a reply. At least in the days before the Premier introduced the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Act of 1975, if a member wrote to the Secretary of the Parliamentary Salaries and Allowances Tribunal he would receive a reply. This is not the case these days.

The Premier chided me about the salary range of the Leader of the Opposition, and he said it was too low. That is recorded in *Hansard*. I did not take any action while I was the holder of the position, but afterwards I did because I realised the situation. In every other State, except where the salary of the Leader of the Opposition is higher than that of a Minister, the ministerial salary applies to the Leader of the Opposition. This is the only State where it does not. I drew this fact to the attention of the tribunal, but I did not receive a reply. Since then I have again drawn the matter to its attention because I thought that it would be due for consideration again, sooner or later. It is the office itself which is concerned, and something should be done about it. The Leader of the Opposition in this State should not be receiving a lower amount than that received by the Leaders of the Opposition in the Eastern States. We are the State which is marching on and pushing ahead, so the salaries of parliamentary members should not be below those in Tasmania, South Australia, and Queensland.

My comments are leading to the subject of air concessions for members of Parliament in this State. For a long time in this Parliament I have advocated an improvement in this regard, so I cannot be accused of taking action latently. As a matter of fact, before the last Labor Government came into office I was consistently on my feet indicating that some action should be taken on the matter, and those days travelling concessions of members were in accord with those listed in the Executive Council minute No. 1575 which dealt with the subject. It reads—

Executive Council Minute No. 1575 dated 10th July, 1968 is hereby cancelled. This Minute to take effect from 1st January, 1970.

The minute paper was not dated, but it is numbered and could easily be checked. It then gave the air concessions which were to apply from the 1st January, 1970. That was the minute of the last Government which was in office before the Labor Government was elected. I am trying to prove to the Premier that he has not done anything over the period he claims additional concessions have been provided.

I do not want him to say that the concessions have been improved in respect of overseas tours, because I have already indicated that I do not agree the combined system can work. Those tours should be kept separate from internal transportation of members within the State in which they are elected. That is quite a different aspect and should not be confused with overseas tours. Certainly improvements have occurred in that

respect. In fact, they have not only improved here but also in other States and we are merely keeping up with them.

After 25 years in this Parliament I had the opportunity to undertake a study tour overseas. It is true that I went over twice when I was a Minister, but they were very quick tours to conferences, and they were on the other side of the world so I spent most of my time getting there and back, with five or six days at the conferences. There was not much time for me to see anything that was not connected with the conferences. However, today, because of the more generous conditions applicable to members of Parliament, some members who are in their first term in Parliament have been able to go overseas.

I was here 18 years before I went overseas, and then I did not know until the last minute whether I would be going, because the then Leader of the Opposition would not agree to a pair on that night. A plane came back from the East and a fellow Minister who had been to a conference and had arrived home and gone to bed, was asked to come in here and take my place on the pair list at 2 o'clock in the morning. Until then I had no indication I was going.

I will not go through the whole charade about the time it came down to two and a name was pulled out of the hat, and the one whose name came out of the hat went away, while the next time they did the same thing the one whose name stayed in the hat went away, and I missed out on both occasions. I was getting a bit unlucky.

Mr Sibson: You cannot blame your colleagues for that, of course.

Mr JAMIESON: The pulling out of the hat related to a CPA activity. It had nothing to do with my colleagues. When members come into this place and enjoy the conditions of overseas travel which now prevail they presume those conditions have always existed. For instance, when I first came into the Parliament our party got one trip away every nine years. That is why nobody took any notice of the CPA in those days; it was not worth anything. Nowadays all members are paying attention to it because they think there might be a study tour or something like that at the end of the rainbow.

Mr Tonkin: What does "CPA" stand for?

Mr JAMIESON: The other CPA the member for Morley is thinking about might be a bit more generous than the Government.

Mr O'Neil: They might give one-way tickets.

Mr JAMIESON: Unfortunately, this is the problem we have struck. One has to wait until one is invited by a Government or some body

or person, which causes one to owe something to the company store. That should not be the case. I do not consider I have any obligation to Western Mining, Lang Hancock, or anybody like that, but because they know of my interest in certain fields they have invited me to have a look at things in the State which all members should be able to see if they so desire. The private people should not be obliged to fork out for such things. One has some moral responsibility to be grateful to those people.

For instance, when we were dealing with the bauxite matter, how did we get a look at that? Alwest was prepared to charter aircraft, fly us over the scarp, and show us what was happening and what was intended. Governments have a responsibility to do that. I do not want the Premier to say millions and millions of dollars would be going down the drain. That is a lot of tommyrot. Later on I will show him where he can find the money to implement an improved scheme—not next year or some other time but this year.

I come back to the position with trips in 1970. I think it is worth while listing them so that at least members who are interested can pick up *Hunsard* next week and, the study having been done for them, compare the situation at that time with the present situation. What the Premier keeps saying in letters, which I will read out, gives a false and stupid impression of the situation. The minute that was submitted to the Executive Council sought approval for the following—

- (1) Members of Parliament representing the North Province or the Kimberley, Pilbara or Gascoyne Electorates shall be entitled to eight return trips per calendar year to and through their constituencies.
- (2) Members of Parliament representing the Lower North Province or the Murchison-Eyre Electorate shall be entitled to eight return trips per calendar year to and through their constituencies, except between Kalgoorlie and Perth.
- (3) Members of Parliament representing the South Province and the Roe Electorate shall be entitled to eight return trips per calendar year to Esperance.

The next one should be noted—

- (4) The Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to six return trips per calendar year to any part of the State.

The concessions in respect of other members of Parliament were—

- (5) Members of Parliament residing at Geraldton shall be entitled to a single journey either from Geraldton to Perth or from Perth to Geraldton once each week while the House is in session.
- (6) Members of Parliament residing at Esperance shall be entitled to a single journey either from Esperance to Perth or from Perth to Esperance once each week while the House is in session.
- (7) The wives of Ministers and the wife of the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to one return trip within Western Australia per calendar year.
- (8) The wives of Members of Parliament representing the North and Lower North Provinces and the Kimberley, Pilbara, Gascoyne and Murchison-Eyre Electorates shall be entitled to one return trip per calendar year to and through the husband's constituency, subject to the concession being granted as an alternative to any concessions on the Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission vessels allowed to the wives of Members of Parliament.

Of course, members in the north were allowed unlimited access to the State Shipping Service. That needs to be understood. They used to take their cars down to Fremantle, have them loaded, taken up north, and unloaded, and then loaded back on the ship again to return to Fremantle when the session was about to commence. That was standard practice for all members north of Gascoyne when I first came into Parliament. I have been down to Fremantle to help them load their cars and grease them so that the sea air would not get to them, and to help them when they picked up their cars on their return.

Those are the conditions which applied up to the time the Labor Government came to office. I believed those members had a right—not a privilege—to visit their electorates, and I indicated very strongly to this Chamber and my colleagues that if I were in a ministerial position in Government I would take some action to improve the situation. I am sure the Premier would have a fit at the thought of his Minister for Works doing what I did, as the Minister for Works at the time, in taking a minute to Cabinet about this matter. I suppose it would have been said it was nothing to do with the Minister; it was a Treasury or Premier's Department matter.

Because of the promise I had made, however, on the 13th June, 1971, I took a minute to Cabinet, which was approved. It allowed unrestricted air travel within the State for the Leader of the Opposition. I made that move first because I thought it was inherently unfair that the Leader of the Opposition was not able to move around the State as freely as he wanted to. Six journeys a year—what a lot of rubbish! That was nonsense when we had a regular airline. I probably started to cut off my own head by enabling the Leader of the Opposition to have unlimited travel around the north-west, because we started to go bad from that time.

Mr Sibson: You knew you would need it in the future, though.

Mr Pearce: What an idiotic interjection!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the member for Gosnells to refrain from that sort of language. It is most unparliamentary.

Mr JAMIESON: I am not sure what the member for Bunbury is talking about. I understand there is a regular plane service to Bunbury, and I suggest if there is a plane today he might do well to take a trip down there instead of listening to me, because he is obviously quite satisfied with the conditions applying to members of Parliament in this day and age; but I am not.

Mr Sibson: When you were in Government you realised you would need the privilege soon.

Mr JAMIESON: We did not think that way; the member for Bunbury should know that one can never tell from day to day what is going to happen. I have given up trying to be a Nostradamus; he was the type of person who exists only once, and I do not want to be listed with him. This action was not taken at the end of our term in Parliament; it was taken at the beginning of our term, on the 29th June, 1971.

The second recommendation that was approved was for unrestricted air travel to and from and about their electorates for north-west members, and for return trips each year for their spouses. It was also recommended that eight return trips each year to and about their electorates should be permitted for country members whose electorates are served by regular air services. That covered many members who previously had not been included in the terms I have already indicated to the Chamber. That was not a bad move; at least we made some progress. We were not able to say to every member, "You have unlimited air travel rights" because we had to wait to see how it operated.

I have here a minute on the file which shows how the scheme operated. We had a little strife:

again, it was not a Labor member who was at fault. The name of the member does not matter; members who were given the privilege were entitled to use it. However, within a small time a rather large bill was incurred which was not provided for in the Estimates of the previous year, and we had not made much provision for it in the Budget of that year.

Let us consider the progress that was made. I mentioned that as from the 1st July a concession was available to members of State Parliament to travel at Government expense. A letter was sent to all members by the Premier's Department. That letter referred to the minute which I have mentioned, and then it indicated the concessions which were available.

Firstly, in respect of air travel in Western Australia, the letter said the Premier is entitled to unrestricted air travel on any regular air service within Western Australia. The same concession applied to the Leader of the Opposition. It then referred to unrestricted air travel to and about the electorates of certain members, and the eight return trips to which I have referred previously.

The part that impressed me was that six return air trips each calendar year on regular air services within Western Australia were granted to the leader of the second party having not less than seven members in the Legislative Assembly. So not only did we improve the situation of the Leader of the Opposition by giving him unrestricted air travel instead of six trips, but also we gave the leader of the other party in coalition Opposition six trips per annum.

At least the Premier could make that concession available to us, because it means that when a Labor Government is in office it is obliged to spend more on air travel for the Opposition than is the case when a Liberal Government is in office. That is a ridiculous situation.

The Leader of the Opposition, to my knowledge—and I will deal with this later—has written to the Premier on this very issue. The Premier has written back and said, "No dice". The Leader of the Opposition wanted to have available to him a given number of flights per annum so that if he needed to send a representative to the Boab Festival or some other activity he could do so. People in the north are entitled to see representatives of the Opposition attend such functions, just as they are entitled to see representatives of the Government in attendance. Many such activities occur, and many invitations are received. If the Leader of the Opposition wishes to send a representative, he should be entitled to nominate a person and the Government should be obliged

to make an allowance of a certain number of flights per annum, if it is not prepared to leave the whole matter to the judgment of the Leader of the Opposition.

In my opinion leaving it to the judgment of the Leader of the Opposition would be the better course because if he acted foolishly the facility could be withdrawn. The Premier can check on my activities when I was the Leader of the Opposition, and I am sure he will find I did not exceed the requirements in any way, shape, or form, despite the fact—as I will point out in a moment—that unlimited air travel to the Eastern States was granted to me. I think I used that facility to fly to the Eastern States on only two or three occasions during my two years in that office. I cannot see that a person in a responsible job would be liable to indulge in excesses.

It was also listed that there should be four return air trips each calendar year for the spouse of a member representing an electoral province or district mentioned in sub-item (ii), which is the one I have already mentioned. That improved the position of the wives of members by three return trips per annum.

It went on to list a return trip each calendar year on a regular air service for the spouses of Ministers and the spouse of the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly. That return trip applied to any part of Western Australia served by a regular air service. That is not sufficient for Ministers. In most cases where Ministers are obliged to take their wives to a function, the department charts an aircraft, or the charge is booked against the department. It should be an inherent right that Ministers should be able to take their spouses with them whenever necessary.

Of course, it is not always necessary; as I pointed out previously, one finishes up carrying three cases instead of one, so usually one gets out of it if one can. I suppose I am being a little chauvinistic, nevertheless that is often the case. I do not know what would happen in the case of the Minister for Local Government; probably she would look at it from the other angle because she would have her cases carried for her if her husband accompanied her.

Local Government is a portfolio in which it is necessary for the Minister to attend many dinners and functions of shires celebrating their 50th, 80th, or some other anniversary. Generally one is required to take one's spouse on such occasions, and if the Minister is unable to take his or her spouse embarrassment may be caused. This should not be

treated as some sort of undercover privilege funded through the department; it should be an inherent right.

It is not as though a Minister and his wife would want to travel to Woop-Woop for the hell of it. I pointed out years ago that if we gave the member for Pilbara the right to fly to Marble Bar every day—this was before there were any mines there and Marble Bar was the biggest town in the backblocks of the Pilbara—he probably would not want it anyway because it would drive him mad. It would drive other members of Parliament mad to fly there often. Marble Bar is a “once only” sort of town. I do not want to present a racing cup in Marble Bar either.

Sir Charles Court: A “once only” cup!

Mr JAMIESON: I last visited Marble Bar in 1946. I have been fairly active in the rest of the Pilbara, but apart from that occasion I have never visited the town. When I did visit it, I did so because the Army took me there; I did not pay my fare on that occasion, either.

Mr O’Neil: Did you go by rail from Port Hedland to Marble Bar?

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, and on occasions we had to pick up the cargo that fell from the train. That was part of our duty.

Mr Laurance: That was one of the perks of the job.

Mr JAMIESON: No, the ones who received the perks were the Aborigines up there. I do not think we ever rescued a drum of petrol which fell off the train.

Mr Sibson: You are denigrating the Aborigines.

Mr JAMIESON: No, I am not; they were very smart. Certainly they could not get it in any other way. Good luck to them; that was part of the system in those days, and they got away with it.

Other entitlements applying to members were as follows—

#### Special Weekly Air Concession.

Members residing at Geraldton or Esperance are each entitled to a single trip on regular air services between Perth and the town in which they reside, once each week while the House is in session.

In respect of interstate travel, the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly is entitled to two return trips on regular air services interstate each calendar year. After the Labor Government went out, these conditions certainly improved, and they needed to be—not that leaders

used them much more than that; as I pointed out, I did not use my whole entitlement. The list of interstate travel conditions continues—

#### One Return Air Trip Each Calendar Year.

The spouse of a Minister is entitled to one return trip or two single trips on regular air services interstate each calendar year.

Exactly the same number of trips are permitted interstate as are allowed within the perimeters of Western Australia, where those members have an obligation to their electorates. It is just not real. However, the same conditions prevail today. They apply in writing, of course; as I say, we can get over it in other ways.

The list of members’ entitlements continues—

The Leader of a second party having not less than seven Members in the Legislative Assembly is entitled to one return trip on regular air services interstate each calendar year.

Every member of Parliament is entitled to one economy class return fare to the Eastern States in one Parliament. The generosity of the Government is just amazing, when one compares it to the conditions prevailing in all other Parliaments!

I do not growl about the concept of travelling economy class. If the Government wants to introduce this principle, however, it should be done across the board. The stupid position is that if during a three-year period of Parliament a member takes up his entitlement to travel to Melbourne, he must travel economy class; however, if he decides to hop over to Launceston or Devonport, he travels first class. I do not understand it. I do not know whether this problem has been attacked in a piecemeal fashion; certainly, it has not been handled in a very scientific way.

As a result of these travel concessions being implemented, some concern was aroused, and the Under Secretary of the Premier’s Department, presumably on the instruction of the Premier—of course, he does not always seem to need an instruction, because he has certain responsibilities—wrote a letter to the Clerk of the Legislative Council on the 28th October, 1971. This was not long after we introduced this system of additional entitlements. The letter stated as follows—

On the 29th June, 1971 Cabinet approved of the provision of the following air travel concessions to Members of Parliament:—

- (1) Unrestricted air travel within the State for the Leader of the Opposition;

- (2) Unrestricted air travel to, from and about their electorates for North West Members and four return trips each year for their spouses; and
- (3) Eight return trips each year to and about their electorates for country Members whose electorates are served by regular air services.

When making this decision, Cabinet decided that any misuse of this privilege would cause the withdrawal of the privilege from all Members concerned.

I do not remember that; certainly, it is not recorded in the Cabinet minutes. Perhaps the person who was not at the Cabinet meeting had a better recollection of what occurred at that meeting than did I. The letter continued—

A statement of the actual expenditure of \$5 419.50 incurred during the quarter ended 30th September, 1971 was submitted for the information of Cabinet together with an estimate of \$17 000 based upon that rate of expenditure indicating a probable excess of \$11 000 for the full year.

On the 25th October Cabinet considered the rate of expenditure and has expressed a desire for more restraint to be exercised by Members utilising this concession, otherwise concessions will have to be reviewed.

It would be appreciated if you would draw the attention of all Members to the concern expressed by Cabinet in this matter.

I well remember this matter, and the general feeling was, "It will take a little while to settle down. Sure, it might result in some excesses, but members will get very tired of using these facilities once they start to grow feathers on their backs." Some members found it more convenient to move to Perth rather than being forever in the air.

Notwithstanding that, the argument generally used was to compare the entitlements applying in Western Australia with those provided by the Commonwealth Government, where Federal members were able to return to their electorates each weekend. One such member who has long since passed from this globe (Hugh Leslie) had the great reputation, even in the days of the old DC6B of never missing a return flight to Western Australia each weekend. God knows how many air miles he logged. These days, Federal members complain quite rightly of the long, 4½-hour drag each week to fly from Canberra to Perth via Melbourne or Sydney.

Federal members long have had the privilege—in fact, it is their right to return to their electorates as quickly as possible—of unlimited air

travel within Australia; the Commonwealth Government accepted this principle a long time ago. I realise, of course, that the Commonwealth Government has a much bigger Budget, but we should not forget it also caters for a greater number of members than the Western Australian Government.

According to the minute initialled by the Clerk of the Parliaments (Mr Roberts), that information was conveyed to the party secretaries for action, and I presume the necessary warnings were issued.

No further alterations to the concessions took place until the 29th May, 1975. I have been advocating for a long time that the three recommendations contained in the last report of the Sholl parliamentary salaries tribunal, chaired by Sir Reginald Sholl be implemented.

The tribunal clearly indicated in its report that it would not make this an immediate instruction, to be implemented as the report was received and as the other part came into operation in 1974. It gave the Government 12 months in which to take action to implement its recommendations. The report was brought down on the 21st June, 1974, which was getting very close to the Budget, and the tribunal gave the Government a fair chance to implement its recommendations.

In effect, the tribunal said to the Government, "If you have not implemented these recommendations within 12 months we will automatically reconvene under the provisions of the Act and we will make our own instructions and determinations on these various items."

Two of the recommendations were implemented on the 29th May, 1975. The Under Secretary of the Premier's Department, then Mr Davies, wrote to the President of the Legislative Council in the following terms—

I have to advise that Cabinet has approved, from 20th May, 1975, the use of Gold Passes to cover travel on M.T.T. buses—Reference Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal report, paragraph 61(b).

This was only a tiddly matter by comparison with the other entitlements for which we have been fighting. However, it was an entitlement which had been taken away from members and which members of all other State Parliaments still enjoyed. It did not matter whether it was used often or not at all; it was a privilege to which members were entitled because of their office. It applied in every other State and the tribunal considered it should apply in Western Australia, and recommended accordingly. To continue—



Under no circumstances is this concession to apply to a charter flight—Reference Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal report, paragraph 59(a).

Again the reliance is upon that. Sir Reginald Sholl, as in the Queensland case, made reference to charter flights. It becomes difficult when one starts to rely on an imprescriptible system because things are apt to go wrong. To continue—

The Cabinet is considering the recommendation concerning limited free air travel for members of Parliament to visit parts of the State other than their electorates, and you will be further advised in due course—Reference Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal report, paragraph 60.

Paragraph 60 was the vital one and dealt with the recommendation of the commission as to air travel. On behalf of the commission Sir Reginald Sholl said as follows—

In Queensland the rights are as described in the publication "Salaries and Allowances of Commonwealth Parliamentarians 1973", at pages 26 and 27, save that instead of two free return flights three are now allowed, and in respect of 10 days' travelling expenses, 12 days travelling expenses are now granted. Such rights are suspended between the issue of an electoral writ and the declaration of the poll.

I am not too sure I would agree with that phrase. Commonwealth members who are spokesmen for their various parties are able to go around at election time, speak to people in the country and put their party's views. They are entitled to be heard and the people are entitled to hear and see them. I do not think that was a very good recommendation.

It is part of that I referred to as being the recommendation of the Done committee which considered the matter in Queensland a number of years before. Sir Reginald Sholl undoubtedly took it *in toto* in respect of having a further look at it. It needs to be considered very carefully because there should be more availability of travel concessions than there is for one only member in the Opposition. This is particularly so when an election is in progress.

There was no restriction on me at the last election or at the last by-election. However, when I landed at Broome before the last by-election there were no fewer than 10 Liberal members on the tarmac. I do not know whether they were all being funded or perhaps using up their once every three years' flight. There were five Ministers there and the weight was a little heavy to carry. If those

members were there for electoral purposes—and I do not deny them that right—it is unfair that the situation should be weighted in favour of the Government; the situation should apply to both sides.

The Opposition has enough trouble trying to carry the burden of the electoral boundaries without having Ministers carried around the country for election purposes on the public pay-roll and the public purse. If they have this benefit it should be equalised so that Opposition members also can travel with a certain amount of ease. The people in the Kimberley should not be able to say, "There are a lot of Government members here but only one Opposition member." Air fares are expensive if one has to dig into one's own pocket. I shall quote again as follows—

We think that this kind of travel is overdue in this State, which is larger than Queensland and is rivalling that State in rate of growth of population and general increase in prosperity.

We recommend that the Government implement a system of allowing two such flights per annum per member, or one flight per member with wife, with 10 days' travel allowance for the member at the rates applicable to a Minister. Such flights should be non-cumulative beyond a year.

In other words, we were to get two flights each year and 10 days' travel allowance. This was the recommendation we were entitled to think would be implemented and reference was made in that last letter I mentioned to the effect it was still receiving consideration.

When the Premier did away with the Parliamentary Salaries and Allowances Act and introduced the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Act, he said the new body would have exactly the same power and could take over and implement anything the previous commission had been dealing with. He very clearly made that statement when I suggested that situation was not apparent in the new Act. The Premier went back to the draftsman to have the matter clarified and later returned and said the matter was as he had explained it.

Basically, the recommendation was for two return flights each year within the State and 10 days' travel allowance each year—not once in every three years. That was the recommendation referred to in the letter dated the 29th May from the acting secretary of the Premier's Department to the Hon. A. F. Griffith, the President of the Legislative Council.

It is worth considering the next list of entitlements granted to members of Parliament for air

travel at Government expense. This was for travel by regular air service as at the 6th November, 1975. It is the next publication that deals at length with these situations.

The Premier's position is no different from what I indicated previously; the position of the Leader of the Opposition is no different. Reference is made to the leader of a second party and this would apply when the Labor Party was in power. There would then be two Opposition parties and their leaders would both be entitled to air fares. Of course, it would be necessary for the National Country Party to have seven members and I do not think that would occur at present. I quote as follows—

The Leader of a second Party having not less than 7 members in the Legislative Assembly is entitled to six return trips each calendar year on regular air services within Western Australia.

Part 4(a) is as follows—

- (a) Each member is allowed once in each three years, on a noncumulative basis, one return trip by regular air service to any part of the State.
- (b) In respect of the visit, the member is entitled to up to 10 days' travelling allowance at the rate applicable to a Minister;
- (c) travel vouchers are to be issued on a "through-flight" basis, in order that visits can be restricted to the particular regions and not encompass the whole of the State.

I do not understand what that means. The sensible action to take would be to buy a ticket from Kununurra and if one wanted to stop at other places on the way to Perth, one could do so. It is ludicrous to have this restriction. It will not impose extra costs on the Treasury. If a member breaks his journey he will have to organise it with MMA and it is clear the member is receiving only one ticket. It continues—

- (d) The Entitlement is to be suspended between the issue of a writ for an election and the date of declaration of the poll.

This is inherently bad because it gives Government members an unfair advantage. Government Ministers can be paraded through the Kimberley, the Pilbara, or the Gascoyne. The Opposition does not have the advantages bestowed on Government Ministers. One return trip each calendar year for the spouse of the Leader of

the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly to the Eastern States and the north remains in this schedule.

The Premier is entitled to unrestricted interstate air travel. The Leader of the Opposition also when travelling on business connected with his official duties is entitled to unrestricted air travel. That change was made on the 6th November, 1975.

I agree with that change; but I found personally because of commitments in this State I was unable properly to take more trips to the Eastern States than could be taken previously under the old regulations. However, if the Leader of the Opposition wishes to attend a meeting in the Eastern States it is a legitimate charge upon the public purse and he should be entitled to travel to that meeting free of charge. The Leader of the Opposition should be entitled to free travel, irrespective of the Government in power.

The leader of the second party having not less than seven members in the Assembly is entitled to one return trip to the East and the spouse of the Minister is entitled to the same privilege. The situation in regard to Bass Strait travel has remained unaltered.

In my capacity as Deputy Leader of the Opposition, on the 10th November, 1975, I wrote to the Premier. The letter reads as follows—

As indicated during the budget debate I have compiled current detail on air travel for private members as obtaining at present in each of the other Australian States.

It would appear that members in this State are a long way behind in this field, and due to the size of the State should be a matter which needs rectification at an early date.

In view of the decision arrived at by the Sholl tribunal it might be advisable to refer this and any other information the Government may possess on the subject matter to the present tribunal for consideration and recommendation.

So that the information may be available to all parties concerned I have forwarded a copy of this correspondence to those persons who would be concerned with air travel concessions.

A copy of that letter went to all Cabinet Ministers, the Secretary of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, the Secretary of the Parliamentary National Country Party, and the Secretary of the Parliamentary Labor Party.

I received a reply from the Premier on the 2nd December. It reads as follows—

As requested, I have sent the papers on to the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal for information and consideration.

I have also listed the matter for further consideration by Cabinet.

On the 21st April the Secretary of the State Parliamentary Labor Party wrote to me and suggested it was time the matter was raised again as we had received no further correspondence from the Premier since the 2nd December. At that time I was the Leader of the Opposition. The memo from the Secretary of the Parliamentary Labor Party reads as follows—

In view of the fact the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal considers the question of air travel one for the Government, another approach to Court may be worthwhile in this matter.

Evidently, as a result of submitting the papers to the tribunal the conclusion was reached that it was a matter for Government decision. However, I had not received a reply. That is the third occasion on which no indication of the situation had been received from the tribunal.

On the 10th June, once again in my capacity as Leader of the Opposition, I wrote to the Premier. The letter reads—

Further to my letter of 10th November, 1975, relating to Members' air travel within Australia and your subsequent reply of 2nd December, 1975, I am requesting your further advice as to whether Cabinet has discussed this matter as yet.

On the 14th June I received a reply from the Premier indicating as follows—

The matter has been considered by Cabinet, and the following liberalisation of entitlements have been approved, and is to take effect from the commencement of the next elected Government:—

Members should take note of the words "the next elected Government" which mean during the time of the next Parliament. The letter continued—

1. One return economy class air fare to Melbourne for a private Member and his spouse once in the life of each Parliament;
2. Air fares only prevail by regular air service, and do not include any intra-state travel within the other State;
3. No travelling allowance payable to either the Member or his spouse;

4. No restrictions to be imposed on Gold Pass rail travel because of the introduction of the air fare.

That matter needs to be clarified, because parliamentary members in the Eastern States are allowed much greater use of interstate air travel and this has no effect on the gold pass. Of course the pass is more useful to a member in the Eastern States. Previously members in this State could travel to Kalgoorlie, Albany, and Geraldton in overnight sleeper accommodation.

On the 26th August, 1976, I wrote again to the Premier. The letter reads—

Further to our previous correspondence regarding air travel for members and your subsequent increase in travel concessions for Members from 1st July, 1975, I now submit the following proposals:—

1. Further to the recommendations in the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal report, headed by Sir Reginald Sholl, of 21st June, 1974 (Para. 60, Page 18), I respectfully suggest that limited increased facilities for air travel be made available to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council.
2. Limited travel concessions for a staff member on such occasions as the Constitutional Convention...

The Premier improved the position somewhat in relation to staff members. When the Leader of the Opposition is on an election tour he may now take with him a research officer or Press secretary. Members of Parliament know how busy they can be when travelling; but if they filled the position of leader of the party for a short time they would realise exactly how much more work is involved.

So I indicated there was a slight concession there, but not one that had not applied to Leaders of the Opposition in all other States for some considerable time. It was something new; it was not breaking new ground. It was something which should have been and could have been made available long ago, bearing in mind that because the Leader of the Opposition in this State did not have a Press secretary previously, he could have had that concession before that time anyway.

I received a rather long letter from the Premier dated the 12th October, 1976. I will not read all of the letter because it would take up too much time. However, the Premier indicated

that so far as special occasions were concerned it was desirable to advise the Under Secretary of the Premier's Department that a special matter had arisen, and it would be considered. That was for the purpose of taking with one a staff member from the Opposition. That has been done ever since. My understanding is that the Leader of the Opposition has had to advise the Premier's Department, and request permission for an officer to travel with him.

No such arrangement must occur when a Minister takes a departmental officer or a Press secretary with him on any journey. I do not believe it should have to apply. That is not wrong because it is part and parcel of the establishment. The Premier went on to say—

As you know, this has not been agreed to for the Opposition in the past, although when in your position, I did seek a number of changes and improvements which were rejected.

Well, he did not even seek the change—which I initiated—for unlimited air travel. I did not see one representation on that matter, but it was granted because it was considered to be a right. It is of no use the Premier coming at the caper that something had been granted which had not been granted to him, because he was granting something for which I had asked.

It could have been Sir David Brand who received the initial concession, but it was about the time the present Premier became the Leader of the Opposition. So, that concession which was not made previously was allowed when the Labor Government was in office. The Premier went on to say—

Nevertheless, I have—as you know from a number of other matters—been prepared to consider the matter quite independent of any decisions which have been made previously.

So far as the Government is concerned, I have been asking Ministers to keep to the absolute minimum any staff travelling with them other than, of course, any specialist staff they have to take, such as professional advisers who are inseparable from a particular official visit a Minister has to undertake.

He then went on to say—

I have specifically emphasised the importance of economy in numbers where air travel is involved and fares have to be paid and accommodation costs incurred.

I am not arguing with that responsible attitude, although I still argue it is one-sided. That letter

was written on the 12th October. I again wrote to the Premier. I will now quote another letter I received from the Premier on this subject matter dated the 9th November, 1976. He said—

Further to my letter of 12th October, I advise that Cabinet has given further consideration to your request about the change in the travel arrangements for both the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council.

And here comes the crunch! To continue—

It has been decided that no change will be made at this stage, but it is suggested that the whole question of travel arrangements both for those holding positions such as Deputy Leader of the Opposition and backbench Members on both sides of the House, should be reviewed following the next State elections.

That was on the 9th November, 1976. The last letter which was sent to the Leader of the Opposition stated exactly the same thing: After the next election consideration will be given to the matter. In other words, no concession was granted as a result of what was stated in the letter and, indeed, there will be no concession considered until after the next election.

Mr Davies: Tomorrow never comes!

Mr JAMIESON: It is a catch 22 situation; one can never win, because there will always be another election sometime in the future.

Mr Laurance: You are persistent, and the Government is consistent.

Mr JAMIESON: It is consistent, but I do not know with what. I now come to a letter written on the 29th April, 1977. I was really verbose on that occasion. I do not intend to try my voice, or your temper, Mr Speaker, by reading the full text of the letter which I sent to the Premier. However, I repeated that in the Sholl tribunal report, clause 60, it was indicated what the tribunal thought some years previously in 1974. Amongst other things, I wrote—

It is my belief that all air travel in other States is for first class accommodation. This also exists in the case of Western Australian Members flying from Melbourne to Launceston or Wynyard and return.

The only State in which there is a restriction of class travel for private Members appears to be the Western Australian allowance of one tourist class trip to Melbourne and return with wife per Parliament.

I am not knocking that because it is an improvement, but I am pointing out that we are the only State, specifically, where that occurs. I stated further—

I must say that I find it extremely difficult to accept in this day and age that the restrictions applicable to Western Australian Members still exist and more particularly, those of my Deputy and the Leader in the Legislative Council. These two Parliamentary officers are not given specific consideration in other States, but as the unlimited scope in N.S.W. and Queensland exists for private Members, then it is really quite unnecessary to give specific consideration.

Such consideration, however, does exist in Victoria and this virtually allows the two officers referred to, the same air travel conditions which apply to the Leader of the Opposition, which is that such facilities are available when necessary for parliamentary duties.

Accompanying that letter I sent charts with which I had dealt extensively last year on this same item. I do not want to go through them again, but they clearly indicate we are badly off in comparison with the other States which are situated similarly—more particularly with regard to intrastate and interstate travel.

I refer the Premier to the Done committee report of 1965. The comments are worth repeating and recording in *Hansard* again. Mr Done was the chairman of the committee which made recommendations to the Queensland Parliament in regard to salaries and associated facilities. Recommendation 3.3f, under the heading, "Air travel—Outside Electorate", states—

There is a need for Members to study conditions throughout Queensland, so that more informed opinions can be developed for reviewing legislation. This justifies the issue of air warrants for two return flights each year for each Member to any part of Queensland. The Committee in its recommendations makes provision for travelling expenses up to ten days each year for this specific purpose.

It is not inferred that two air warrants each year would enable every Member to visit and evaluate every problem within the State and it is not anticipated that every Member would have the time available at his disposal for such visits. But by arrangement between Members, a good coverage of the State could be expected and first-hand advice could be available to Parliament.

That was the sensible decision arrived at by the Done committee in making its report, and the decision was endorsed by the Sholl committee. That committee saw nothing wrong with the recommendations of the report, and considered that they were justified in this day and age and they should be implemented.

I then investigated the situation in regard to travel for the wife of the Leader of the Opposition. During my term as leader I found it was rather galling to be invited to a function and to have to accept on my own behalf because no air fare was provided for my wife.

Members would be aware that a number of festivities are held in the north-west, and very often the Leader of the Opposition and his wife are invited to attend. A typical example is the Shinju Matsuri Festival. A ball is held, and it is a little difficult to dance by oneself.

Usually the Leader of the Opposition is expected to take his wife along to such affairs, but it is impossible to obtain an air fare for her under the conditions applying. These same conditions are applicable to the wives of Ministers, but in that case the department handles the bill and the problem can be overcome. The same situation arises with interstate travel as with intrastate travel, and I wish again to bring it to the attention of the Premier.

The provisions in regard to interstate air fares for the wives of the Leaders of the Opposition in other States is very clear. In New South Wales there is provision for four single trips a year. In Victoria, half the number of flights allocated to the Leader of the Opposition may be used by his wife. Also, there is provision for four trips to Sydney, Adelaide, or Hobart each year.

In Queensland there is provision for one trip south each year. It was evidently in connection with such a trip that Mr Burns incurred an additional cost of \$39 and became involved with the drag net provisions because he was found to be outside the area of the concessions allowed by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in Queensland.

The allowance in South Australia is 50 per cent of the base rate of \$670. However, that basic allowance of \$670 does not mean anything because it is tied to the standard air fare between Melbourne and Adelaide so it varies frequently. However, half that amount may be used on air fares for the wife of a member.

In Tasmania the allowance is for two air trips per year to Melbourne or one to Sydney. There is no allowance for intrastate travel in Tasmania, and this is understandable because of the size of the State.

I have said already that within Western Australia the wife of the Leader of the Opposition is allowed one trip per year. In New South Wales and Victoria the travel is unlimited. In Queensland the allowance is 10 trips a year, and in South Australia the basic allowance is \$200 which is indexed to the Adelaide-Mt. Gambier fare.

I wrote to the Premier on the 19th April, 1977, and drew his attention to this matter again because I had not received a reply. I wanted to know more about it.

*Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.05 p.m.*

Mr JAMIESON: Mr Chairman, as you have come to appreciate, I am not quite satisfied with the present travel entitlements enjoyed by members of this Parliament.

As a result of my letters of April, 1977, I received a communication from the Under Secretary of the Premier's Department on the 12th May acknowledging the fact he had received them. Then, on the 27th May I received another letter for good measure which stated as follows—

As indicated in my earlier acknowledgement of your letter of 29th April, the whole question of air travel entitlements for Members of Parliament and their spouses is currently receiving attention.

It is intended that investigations should be completed as soon as possible.

Undoubtedly, the Under Secretary of the Premier's Department (Mr Davies) wrote that letter only after complete consultation with the Premier.

I pointed out during last year's Budget debate the travel concessions available to members of Parliament in other States, and how members in Western Australia were being detrimentally treated. As a result of that speech, the Premier made certain remarks and it is interesting to note that these too were recorded in *Hansard*. I wrote to the Premier on the 3rd February this year stating as follows—

During the last session, on the committee debate for part one of the Consolidated Revenue Fund Estimates, I raised the matter of equitable travel concessions to Members of the W.A. Parliament.

On pages 2308 and 2309 of *Hansard* No. 11, in reply to my comments you stated, "It would be irresponsible of me to say the decision will be made before Christmas, but I hope it will be made by then. If not, it will be made fairly early in the new year and certainly by the end of January".

The Premier gave a very clear indication of what he intended to do. How much can we rely on a Premier who makes such specific statements and does not honour them? In his last letter, he stated that nothing would be done until after the next election. The Premier's letter of the 13th February stated as follows—

You will recall I undertook to study the representations you had made in respect of the arrangements which existed for travel by Members of Parliament.

I had hoped that by now we would be in a position to indicate the extent to which the Government was able to go in extending the existing conditions, but I am afraid there will be further delay.

A number of alternative ideas have been put forward which are quite radical compared with the present system, and I feel they should be fully studied before a decision is made.

It was expected the matter could be finalised, and an announcement made before Parliament re-assembles on 9th March but, on present indications, this might not be practicable.

It could be about the end of March before finality can be reached, but I can assure you the matter has not been overlooked, and is being actively studied.

Members will note the Premier once again changed the expected date "finality" would be reached.

Then of course we had the marvellous impost system. Some members on my side liked it, and others did not like it. I did not like it very much and I finished up on a committee with a representative of the Liberal Party and a representative of the National Country Party to discuss a fair and proper proposal to put to the Government.

One proposition was put forward which was very poor and did nothing to recommend itself; I put forward another proposition; and, the Hon. A. A. Lewis also put forward some sort of scheme. I think the various proposals had been in the hands of the specific parties before they were put forward at our meeting. However, they involved such an astronomical expenditure of finance they would frighten away any Government. I did not want to be associated with the main proposal because I feared it would end any real consideration of extending travel concessions to members of Parliament within this State. I have mentioned before that the matter of external travel concessions should be separately considered. Of course, after

putting forward the main proposal we heard no more from the Premier.

The leadership on this side changed. The next letter in this long fight for travel concessions was written by the Premier on the 14th July, 1978, to the present Leader of the Opposition in the following terms—

As promised when I saw you and your two colleagues (the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly), I have made a further study of your request for a change in the procedures in respect of travelling costs for the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and for your Press Secretary.

The Government's consideration of your request has not been finalised, nor do I anticipate being able to do this within the next couple of weeks.

Remember that we are into July by now, and the "final" dates previously nominated by the Premier have long since passed. The letter continues—

My main purpose in writing, therefore, is to let you know that I have not overlooked your request and will let you know the result of Cabinet's consideration of it as soon as practicable.

You will appreciate that we have to look at all these items—including the proposal for the revision of the travelling allowances available to all Members of Parliament—in the light of the current budgetary problems and strategies.

The Premier replied to the Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party (Mr Davies) on the 22nd August. He mentioned a lot of things about providing an extra overseas trip to the CPA, which had nothing to do with internal travel entitlements. The relevant part of the Premier's letter states as follows—

However, leaving all these aside, we have decided that, in the light of the present budgetary situation, the imprest proposal should be abandoned at least for the life of this Parliament, and the present travel entitlements retained.

There is, however, one exception and that is the question of study tours.

The Premier granted an extra study tour each year, which to my mind should be considered separately. So, we received nothing at all.

The Leader of the Opposition wrote further to the Premier on the 6th September this year on the subject of his own entitlements. His letter states as follows—

When we were discussing travel concessions available to Members some time ago, I made the suggestion that if it was not possible to increase the present concessions, you may be able to favourably consider some allocations being made available to me so that Members could travel in my stead on some occasions.

You will appreciate that there are many invitations received in this office which it is not possible for me to accept because of other commitments.

In many instances I feel it necessary that the Opposition should be represented. Would it be possible for you, therefore, to allocate some additional trips to me so that I can arrange to be represented as the occasion demands.

I would be happy to discuss the matter further with you if you so desire.

The last of the many letters written by the Premier on this matter states as follows—

As promised, I have made a very detailed review of both staff and transport arrangements so far as they affect the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council.

The Government is not prepared to make any changes at the present time.

I notice that there has been a considerable increase in the staff available to the Leader of the Opposition since the change of government in 1974.

We will deal with that in a minute. The Premier's letter continues—

In this I am of course embracing the Leader of the Opposition, his Deputy, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council.

Also, the transport position so far as vehicles are concerned, has been improved.

We will deal with that one too, because when we examine it in depth we can see it is hardly a statement of much consequence. The letter continues—

Having regard for the foregoing, and the transport facilities which are available to all Members of the State Parliament, we cannot see our way clear to agree to any

further change during the life of the present Parliament, and I suggest the matter be noted for review after the next State elections.

That is exactly what the Premier said before the last State election. In the meantime, he has made no additional concession except this CPA proposition. That is another thing.

He advised the CPA ages ago, when I was on the CPA, that he was giving consideration to a second trip. It is monstrous that the Premier should now make out this was an improvement.

Let us look at the improvements that he has suggested have been made to the staffing of the office of the Leader of the Opposition. Since the Premier was the Leader of the Opposition—some years ago now; and goodness knows how many staff he has now to do his bidding—the Leader of the Opposition has had appointed one Press secretary and two additional typists. I suppose one could say one typist was allocated to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The other typist works for the Parliamentary Labor Party and the members of it in the office of the member for Perth in this House. This is not an unusual number of staff for deputy leaders and the people in those positions in other Parliaments. They all have them. The Premier has not broken any new ground in allocating them. He has given nothing that would not normally be accorded to Her Majesty's Opposition.

With a change in times and a change in personnel, as happens in Government departments, there is indeed an entitlement to an increase in the staff in the office of the Leader of the Opposition. I have not taken a full count; but on what I have seen in the offices of the Leaders of the Opposition in other States, this one comes a very poor last in the provision of staff.

The accommodation, too, is pretty shoddy, or it would have been had the Deputy Premier not thought at one time that he might have had to occupy the room of the Leader of the Opposition, and he had it air-conditioned for me. I felt very happy about that, because there was no air-conditioning in it one day, and after the Deputy Premier looked at it there was air-conditioning the next day. It certainly helped a little, because the staff were in a pretty intolerable situation.

Mr O'Neil: I was thinking only of the staff.

Mr JAMIESON: The Deputy Premier was thinking of other things, too. However, that air-conditioning was appreciated.

Mr Bryce: Could I suggest you look at the deputy leader's office as well?

Mr JAMIESON: The end of the corridor was closed off. The architectural department was never very happy about that, but I do not think it has altered the appearance of Parliament House greatly. Certainly the closing off of the corridor has assisted immensely in the running of the office of the Leader of the Opposition by creating extra space where the receptionists can be accommodated. Other than that, there has been no other accommodation made available to the Leader of the Opposition since the last new section of the building was opened. I do not know what the Premier is becoming excited about. Perhaps when the next new section of the building is completed there will be additional accommodation. I am not sure, because although I am a member of the House Committee, I do not know what the allocation committee is doing. It is up to that committee to allocate the accommodation. Based on the representations I made when I was Leader of the Opposition, I assume that at least one room would be added to the office space of the Leader of the Opposition so that he can separate his staff.

Confusion now exists between the research officer, the Press secretary, and the private secretary. The provision of another room would create order out of the chaos that exists at times when people are on the phone to the different staff members in the leader's office.

Members will see that the staff position has not improved a great deal. There has been an improvement, but there have not been hordes of extra people employed there. The position is not getting out of hand. There are no expansion complaints which cannot be handled. I think the staffing position is a ludicrous excuse for the Premier to use as part of his argument for not granting an increase in fares.

Let us look further at what the Premier said in the letter, which reads, in part—

Also, the transport position so far as vehicles are concerned, has been improved.

I will tell members how the position has been improved. Before the last Parliament, or early in the last Parliament, the Premier indicated to me that he had trepidations about the limitations placed on the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—he was the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for a time—in not being provided with transport and being expected to attend functions on behalf of the leader. The Premier thought that there could be an improvement. It is true that towards the end of that year when he first became the Premier, he made available from the pool a car for the Deputy



Leader of the Opposition. I was the first Deputy Leader of the Opposition who received that concession. Until that time, there had been a gallonage concession for use with one's private vehicle. Petrol was made available to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition from the Government garage.

However, that concession also applies to the leader of the second party when in opposition; so that is not an unreal concession.

I suggest the real reason that this concession was extended was in relation to the tribunal. Tribunals have usually applied the conditions for postage, allowances, salaries, and everything else for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly to the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council. The Tonkin Labor Government had made available to the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council the use of a vehicle. Because the same conditions usually apply to the deputy leader in the Legislative Assembly, it would have been difficult to justify before the tribunal that there should be a differentiation between the two positions. I suggest that the Premier had little alternative on that occasion but to make available a vehicle to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

It is a good vehicle. It is a Holden-type vehicle. It is not a classy one. It is serviceable, and it does the job. Nobody is growling about that. However the Government is not involved in much expense in relation to that vehicle.

The Government purchases vehicles at fairly reasonable prices. Usually it is able to quit vehicles for more money than it paid for them. That comes about because of the odd situation in relation to sales tax. That position may not continue because of the change in sales tax rates. Nevertheless, the Government usually benefits from the sale of these vehicles. Local authorities do the same thing. The vehicles are equipped with air-conditioners and other accessories at tax concession rates, and when the vehicles are sold, in the final analysis the Government and local authorities obtain more money than they paid for them.

I suggest that there is nothing wonderful or outstanding in this. It helps, but it is not something which is not in existence in other Parliaments. It is not a great improvement in that regard. Certainly the Government could go further in providing the other forms of transport that I listed in the schedule earlier.

Even considering all that, we are still in the position we were in on the 31st March last year. The provisions that prevailed in relation to the

entitlements of members of Parliament as at the 31st March, 1977, look like being those which will prevail in the next Parliament.

I give an assurance to members of this Parliament that if it is at all possible after the next election, and I am in the position to do so, I will press for granting these various concessions that I have indicated, without being stupid. If the Premier wishes to bring them in gradually during the present Parliament, with two flights a year, or whatever, as the Sholl committee report indicates, that is up to him.

The Premier continues to talk about budgetary conditions. Of course that is a lot of eye-wash. In his unspent moneys from last year he made an allocation between the Loan Fund and the Consolidated Revenue Fund of an amount in excess of \$23 million. He made this allocation of about \$23 million to those two venues, which leaves another \$10 million swinging. The interest on the accumulated balance in the short term interest fund would pay for this, if he proposed a couple of trips a year within the State. Even if the Premier was not prepared to extend the allowances that were indicated in the various reports which I have read out today, then at least he would have the money to pay for them. They would not amount to anything like \$50 000 a year. The Premier will obtain that from short-term interest on the residue he has from last year's short term interest accumulation. He would have accumulated that sum by now, because he has this money in ready cash unallocated. The interest on that money would amount to something like \$250 000; so there is money available. There is no point in the Premier saying that there is no money. Of course there is money for all sorts of things.

There is money available. Is it not more important for the Premier and the people of this State, or for me and the people of this State, to have the equivalent of the money outlaid in this overseas magazine that was recently published at Government expense? Is it not better to provide additional travel for members of Parliament within their own State so that they can know what is going on?

I would be a bad judge if I thought that the people of this State would not opt for the latter; that they would want their members to be more informed; that they would want them to understand matters in many different facets. All members have expertise in different things, such as education, health, or a dozen and one different facets of government. The members have their own attitudes, and they are entitled to them. Whether or not those attitudes are accepted by the people is a different matter. They should not

be denied to these people at present because of the parsimonious attitude being expressed by the Premier. He continues to use the standard phrase, "After the next election, we will have a look at this." Of course, we will proceed exactly nowhere.

I would suggest it is time that the Premier had another look at this situation. For goodness sake, he should have a look at it from the party-political point of view of his own people. It must be abundantly clear that the situation now is that all of the areas currently served by air travel concessions, with the exception of the Kalgoorlie area, are held by members of Parliament on the Government side. I know what is going through the mind of the Premier. He would say, "Well, we have these areas. Why should we make available any concessions to the Opposition? They might extend to these people and we do not want them to extend to the people." If I had taken that attitude, I would never have moved to give the Leader of the Opposition unlimited travel concessions within the State. Clearly I did that, as I indicated when I quoted the minute which I read out.

One must take the attitude that what is for the good of the State and what is for the good of the people of the State must be put into effect in this way.

On a recent overseas trip I met a group of Federal parliamentarians in Tokyo. That was a mixed group comprising people from the Labor Party, the Liberal Party, and the National Party, or whatever is their *nom de plume* federally. That group was on a visit to Tokyo as part of an exchange between the Federal Parliament and the Diet. A group of parliamentarians travels from Japan to Australia, and a group travels from Australia to Japan each year. I dared to suggest to the Premier that we should initiate such a system as Japan is our main trading partner. We should initiate such a system for members of this Parliament.

Of course he got into a panic or a funk because at the same time the Perth City Council became involved in an argument with the Press about sending a group on a safari around the world. I defended that action to some degree; I do not consider it is advisable to have as big a group but some group should have on-the-spot discussions and make comparisons because this is important for the running of local authorities and Governments these days.

An exchange visit to the Diet would not cost very much. If we had to pay only for the air fares with the host country supplying accommodation, the members could go on

a direct flight to Japan through Cathay Pacific and if we were sending only, say, five, the cost would probably be only \$5 000 in a group booking. Japan would also provide the transport during the week or 10 days the Australians were in Japan. Likewise, on a reciprocal basis, we could look after a group from the Diet while they were in Australia.

However, I did not get very good response from the Premier. I went further and suggested that if the Treasury could not see its way clear to fund such a project, probably it would be worth inviting a group from Japan here a little later this year to get them interested in our 150th anniversary celebrations. This could be the beginning of such a scheme. The Premier was a little sympathetic and something in his letter suggested he might be further considering the matter.

I also suggested that if the Government could not provide the money to enable members to visit Japan, then provided the Japanese would act as hosts while our members were there, the members might be prepared to pay their own way. However in a paragraph in his letter he said he did not think we would get members to pay their own way. That is not a nice attitude on the part of the Premier because most members are interested in trying to accumulate knowledge and they are entitled to do so. If we could find some cheap way of sending them, we should do so provided we do not send the taxpayers broke. I would not advocate that. However, I have already suggested that abundant funds are available for the financing of travel arrangements and that we should be moving in that field.

My eyes were certainly opened when I saw the other end of the iron ore undertakings. I was surprised at the number of big companies in and around Tokyo, and it was certainly of value to me to get to know the type of people with whom we are dealing, and their different industrial outlook, as well as to observe the way they go about achieving the objectives the Premier often highlights in his discussions in this Parliament. It is important that we all have such knowledge, not only the Premier. Not many members in this Parliament have had the opportunity to observe the situation which exists in the country of our major trading partner.

On the other end of the scale they should know our difficulties, our style of life, and why we experience problems which they consider we should solve more easily than we do. If by this means we can reach a greater understanding of the situation in both countries, we will benefit and so will the Japanese.

However, it appears as though the Premier has made up his mind that the idea is off and he is not prepared to consider any more concessions in regard to air fares during the life of this Parliament. The only way he can be made to take such action is by the members who sit behind him saying, "How about bringing our standards at least to the standard that applied in the other States 10 years ago?" That it not unreasonable. If he did that we would be hundreds per cent better off than we are at present, and there is justification for it.

The people of this State are entitled to expect their legislators to inform themselves as well as they can, but they do not have that ability in this State at present, and they will not have it. For instance some years ago including the time of the Tonkin Government, a series of tours were conducted during which members of Parliament were taken through the north. This, to a limited extent, enabled members to inform themselves on the situation up there. Of course some members considered it a bore while to others it was merely a holiday jaunt. We must carry such people in all sorts of communities and associations. However, because they visited the region and spoke to the people, even they were better informed as legislators and were able to use the knowledge gained.

I think I have said enough to indicate that the salaries tribunal has fallen down on its job. It was charged with the responsibility of carrying on from the previous tribunal but it has not done this, mainly no doubt because of my friend Townsing. He has never been a friend to the elected members of Parliament, no matter what the Premier might think. Like the people in Canberra who get into top positions, he wants to have the final say. Such people form a kingdom of their own and they want to run it. This is half the trouble. Since 1975, he has been chairman of the tribunal which gave its first report on the 8th August, 1975. Now as a result we have no travel concessions anywhere near comparable with those in the Eastern States. We have the lowest basic salary in the Commonwealth. We have finished up with all the rough ends of the pineapple but none of the sweet fruit it contains.

It is time we did something. I do not want to be a lone voice crying in the wilderness because I am getting a little tired of it. I have gone through the ritual for a number of years now. I have made it clear from the various items I have quoted that I have done my bit to try to improve the lot of members of Parliament in this State so that they

can have access to their own State—not to kingdom come or somewhere else, but to Western Australia.

We merely have access to the area around Perth and then we are accused by people in other areas of not understanding their problems. They regard us as being too far away to understand their problems the same as those in Canberra are too far away to understand ours. We never will understand the problems of the people in our own State if we do not have the opportunity to converse with them on an equal footing and meet with them to hear their problems first hand.

The present situation has been brought about by the refusal of the Government of the day to face up to the problem. Instead of the Premier worrying about the imprest system and the other things he is worrying about he should consider the situation in Queensland where Bjelke-Petersen made certain provisions and then rubbished the members for taking advantage of them. That is a nice situation, but it is what Bjelke-Petersen did in Queensland. If anyone's head should be on the block it is his. It was a stupid system if ever there was one.

I do not deny that it is necessary to watch members of Parliament the same as it is necessary to watch everyone else. I fell foul of some of my colleagues when I was on the Joint House Committee some years ago and they wanted a concession on the liquor they obtained at the bar at Christmas time. I suggested that the price could not be made too low. I was quoted the prices being charged by supermarkets and smart sellers outside who were trying to drag the people in by offering cheaper beer. It was suggested to me that our price should not be higher than theirs because we do not pay rent and are not responsible for the other encumbent taxes imposed on licensed premises. I indicated at the time that we would have to be careful because there were many private enterprise members in this Parliament. Of course non-private enterprise members also like to take advantage of obtaining anything free or cheap.

When I suggested that too great a concession would be commercialised on they said, "Rubbish". The tale is worth while telling because it happened a long time ago and it probably will not cause any harm. In any case, the Joint House Committee hastened to correct the situation. The situation was that we were getting rid of beer by the truckload. The brewery could not keep up the supply. The brewery could not understand the situation. The Joint House Committee had to meet and it decided to limit the quantity of

beer available to each member. The story goes a long way back because I remember the beer was in five dozen lot cases. I can recall seeing them being offloaded from the brewery trucks onto other trucks to be taken away.

That is the type of activity which is likely to occur if care is not taken. That is the sort of thing that happened with Bjelke Petersen. He allowed the situation to get out of hand, and he rued the day he introduced the system.

To introduce a system into the Premier's Department to control the number of air fares which can be used in this State by members of Parliament, would not be difficult. A situation similar to the one I have just described could not happen because all tickets which are issued are stamped "Not to be cashed". That is the result of experience in the Commonwealth sphere. For many years some Commonwealth members used to obtain a voucher for air travel from Canberra to Brisbane, or thereabouts. They would then fly to Sydney, and cash in the remainder of the voucher. After spending some days in Sydney, they would obtain another voucher for the next part of their journey. The cost of their stay in Sydney was paid for by the taxpayers. This position has long since been corrected. I am being very open and very frank. Members of Parliament have been known to indulge in that sort of thing.

It was recently indicated that a similar situation had arisen in Queensland. Nevertheless, more consideration should be given to members of this State Parliament than is being given them at the moment. The situation at present is loaded towards one side on the basis that Ministers have access to facilities in order to travel here, there, and anywhere in the State. The Ministers have access to a further avenue. I would not even dare to suggest it should be available to private members because there would be the problem of keeping a check on the operations of the system. I refer to the charter of private aircraft where necessary. In Queensland, of course, that was allowed years ago on the recommendation of the Done committee. The system depended on the size of an electorate, and the sum of money available for air charter in any one year. That was reasonable, so long as the aircraft were not taken out of the district of the member concerned. I suppose that could be controlled reasonably well.

I am always afraid that when imprest accounts are made available somebody will find a method to fiddle with them. We could get away from that by providing direct fares, apart from overseas travel. Overseas travel, as a support system,

always should have been available. These days it is not now unusual for a member of Parliament, during his first term, to have an overseas jaunt. That was never heard of in the earlier days.

A former member for Fremantle (Joe Sleeman) stated in one of the last speeches he made in this Parliament that he had been here for 35 years and had not had one trip at the invitation of the CPA. The situation is different today. It is fair that members should be encouraged to travel overseas, not at excessive cost to the taxpayers, but on a regular basis.

Other Parliaments are realising that travel is necessary. The concession which the Premier has suggested he has made is preposterous. That concession is miles behind concessions granted to other members of Parliament. We are not catching up at all.

The revenue Budget of this State is getting up to the \$1.5 billion mark and there is no necessity for us not to spend a few measly thousand dollars to provide air travel to members within the State of Western Australia.

I ask members in this Parliament to voice their own protests. I have voiced mine. I have provided enough information to indicate that I am not trying to put forward some wild scheme. I am not asking for something that has not been granted in other Parliaments, and to members of Parliament in other States who are better equipped to move around their electorates.

The only way for us to deal with many matters is to travel by air. We have the strange situation that if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition desires to go to Port Hedland, he has a car at his disposal and he is able to use funded petrol. He is also able to draw \$48 a day for expenses. However it takes a week to travel to Port Hedland and back, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition may want to be there for one day only. A one-day visit should cost the Government just one air fare. The situation is ridiculous and stupid; there is no reason in it at all.

The air fares in the State are inordinately high. In my opinion, the configuration of first-class travel in Western Australia is similar to economy travel in other places. There should be some class between first class and economy class and the fares charged, but that is another matter.

Mr McIVER: The airline in this State is not very fussy about where one's luggage ends up.

Mr JAMIESON: That is a fact! The airline probably was aware that the member for Avon

was interested in introducing a competitor, so perhaps it might have sent his luggage by way of the competing airline!

During the course of my remarks I have indicated that over the years I have been an advocate for improvements. I do not think I have advocated any unreal or unjust improvements, but improvements which all members of the Parliament of this State of Western Australia deserve as Western Australians.

I think it would be a tremendous improvement in their capability to get around this State, I ask the Premier to have another look at it and members on the other side of the Chamber to get behind him and prod him along.

**MR BRYCE** (Ascot—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.50 p.m.]: Without any degree of organisation or pre-arrangement, it just so happens I want to make a brief comment on this part of the Estimates, related to the subject to which the member for Welshpool has already drawn attention. I want to commence my comments by asking the Premier a fairly simple question across the Chamber. Could he indicate when he last used the train to travel to the Eastern States?

Sir Charles Court: I would not like to be precise, but I enjoyed it when I did.

Mr BRYCE: Therein lies the answer to the question—so long ago that he cannot remember.

Sir Charles Court: It was on the standard gauge and that is not so long ago.

Mr BRYCE: If it was on the standard gauge I suggest it was a VIP train as far as Kalgoorlie to drive in the golden spike or something of that nature.

Mr Sibson: When did you last travel on the train?

Mr BRYCE: When there was an air strike and I was in Adelaide about two years ago. I returned home from Adelaide by train.

Mr Sibson: I went on it in June this year.

Mr BRYCE: One point of the argument which I think needs to be emphasised and elaborated upon slightly is that in the 1970s, going into the 1980s, it is really quite absurd to suggest that members of the Western Australian Parliament should be expected to communicate with the Eastern States in the physical sense by hopping on the train and taking four or five days to get to Sydney and four or five days to get back again.

Mr Rushton: Be accurate.

Mr Coyne: Inside three days.

Mr BRYCE: It is not inside three days.

Mr Old: It is.

Mr BRYCE: From Perth to Sydney it is clearly not inside three days.

Sir Charles Court: We will give you a chance to try it out next Wednesday.

Mr BRYCE: I will appreciate the thought because in fact next Wednesday I will be flying to Sydney. It is really quite ridiculous to suggest that members of the Parliament of this most isolated backwater of the southern hemisphere—that is really what Western Australia is—

Mr Rushton: Are you running the State down now?

Mr BRYCE: No. I am giving the Minister a simple lesson in geography in case he has not already realised Western Australian is the most isolated backwater of the southern hemisphere. I make the point that in view of the hours we work it is quite absurd to suggest that members of this Parliament, who very often have valid reasons for travelling to the Eastern States, should travel either by road, ship, or rail. The Premier himself cannot remember when he last used the train. I am not critical of him. There is a perfectly good reason; that is, that either as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition, a Minister of the Crown, or the Premier of this State—positions he has occupied in politics in this State over the last 20 years—he could not afford the time.

The only people in this Parliament who use the train to travel are members of the parliamentary bowling team or members who decide on infrequent occasions to take their wives and families on holiday. Very few members avail themselves of opportunities to take holidays as most people outside this institution do.

In reality, we have a very good argument, and the Premier has already illustrated it. The member for Welshpool has suggested there are some interesting reasons that the Premier refuses to be more realistic with travel facilities in the 1970s.

If I can afford the luxury of drawing attention to my own position, I find any number of people who are astonished that the deputy leader of the alternative Government in Western Australia is permitted one air fare inside Western Australia every three years. Let me ask the Premier through you, Mr Chairman, a very simple question: As a man who has occupied those senior positions in this Parliament over the last 20 years, can he in all sincerity sit there and say publicly that he believes it is appropriate for the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council and the deputy leader

of the alternative Government in this Chamber to be entitled to only one air fare inside Western Australia in a three-year period?

Sir Charles Court: As one who has held those positions for a while—I am not talking as one who has not operated under the system—I can say the present arrangements are better than the old system.

Mr BRYCE: I am asking the question in 1978, not 1958.

Sir Charles Court: I am not going to pass judgement on it. I have made my position clear. The whole question of travel arrangements will be reviewed after the next election.

Mr BRYCE: With the provision in parenthesis, "after the next election". I take it the Premier is a little frightened of the next election. Presumably he is a little worried that the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber might be given reasonable facilities to travel throughout Western Australia, to say nothing of the other States.

Sir Charles Court: If I were worried about the next election I would give the Opposition the world.

Mr BRYCE: Might I take the Premier up on his challenge? Let him prove he is not worried about the next election and be as good as his word.

Sir Charles Court: I would give the Opposition the world to get the benefit of it.

Mr BRYCE: I will express a point of view which is slightly at variance with one put to the Chamber by the member for Welshpool a short time ago in respect of the imprest account system. It is clearly understood by members on both sides of this Chamber that a considerable amount of attention was given by both the Liberal-National Country Party coalition and the Opposition party in this Parliament to the question of introducing an imprest account system for members' air travel. I do not know who was the architect of it but I think it was eminently sensible.

The member for Welshpool drew attention to the fact that a scheme of this type was somehow abused in Queensland. I think it is a great pity it was abused, but nobody in this Chamber would fail to acknowledge that Western Australia is the most isolated part of the world. We need contact with other States and with our own colleagues in other Parliaments, to say nothing of contact with people who live in regions to the north of this country.

I wonder how many members of this Chamber of the Parliament have in fact been to Japan, Indonesia and Singapore—the countries which are so vitally important to the economic destiny of Western Australia. We are often expected to pass judgment upon people and institutions in those societies, yet I would hazard a guess that more than half or even three-quarters of the members of this Chamber have never been to Japan.

Mr Barnett: I would suggest seven-eighths.

Mr BRYCE: It is possibly even higher.

Mr Laurance: I do not know whether you have checked this out, but I do not think it was the imprest account system in Queensland which was abused; it was a system whereby members could go to the Speaker and get his approval to convert air tickets to other uses—in other words, get a ticket for another destination or combine two tickets so that they could go to more distant places. It was not an abuse of the imprest account system.

Mr BRYCE: I am pleased the member for Gascoyne made that point. That was my impression but the member for Welshpool expressed it slightly differently and I was uncertain.

I would be very pleased if the member for Gascoyne would confirm the point because I could give the Premier the assurance that the members of the Parliamentary Labor Party are of the view that there is a great deal of merit in it. I am not talking of the 1920s or the 1930s; I am talking of the 1980s.

We know that negotiations reached a fairly advanced stage in regard to that scheme, and it is my understanding that the Government decided to back away from a decision because it was somewhat concerned about the anticipated adverse publicity. I would be very surprised indeed if representatives of the media decided irresponsibly to do "a job" on members of this Parliament gaining access to visit other States of Australia, or other countries of the world for that matter.

The member for Welshpool made a point which is worth repeating. Obviously the whole system would need to be supervised sensibly with a degree of care, and I certainly urge the Premier to reconsider this particular matter.

Mr Shalders: At a time when the rest of the community is being asked to tighten their belts a little, do you think we should be loosening ours?

Mr BRYCE: Can I suggest to the member for Murray that the most successful business houses and the most successful Government departments

in this State—organisations that are faced daily with challenges and which have to find solutions to many economic problems—assume that a fundamental tool of the job is the right to travel. I think the honourable member is looking at it from the wrong point of view if he believes that travel is a perk.

Any business house realises the importance of travel. Just consider the sort of travellers who comprise the clientele on aircraft that fly out of this State. Basically they are representatives of Government departments, community organisations, and business houses. These people do not regard the inconvenience of hopping into an aeroplane and flying for over five hours, including stops, through Melbourne to Canberra and Sydney, as a perk. It is not a perk, it is a headache! I find it somewhat surprising to hear the Premier voice his concern that such provisions may be abused.

Mr Nanovich: During the Whitlam era it was being abused. They bypassed the top guys and went down the ranks.

Mr BRYCE: What was being abused?

Mr Nanovich: Civil servants were flying backwards and forwards to Canberra, and you know that too.

Mr BRYCE: Does the honourable member have one skerrick of evidence to suggest there has been any alteration in the travel rights extended to public servants or bureaucrats in the national Government since 1972 with the replacement of the Whitlam Government by the Fraser Government? As a matter of fact I believe that too many members of Parliament—in this Parliament and in other Parliaments for that matter—do themselves a grave disservice by deferring to bureaucrats.

We should look at the facilities given to bureaucrats, and the opportunities they have to do their job. Look at the advantages which bureaucrats have over the elected representatives of the people. In the strict sense we are the people beyond whom the buck cannot be passed. If anything goes wrong, the bureaucrats sit back quietly and watch the Government being tossed out. It is not the bureaucrats who pay the price, but rather the elected representatives of the people. For too long there has been a parsimonious attitude. Heads of departments have made demands, and decisions have been made with too little respect for members of Parliament and too few facilities have been given to them to do the job they were elected to do. This applies not only to Opposition members, but to Government members as well.

I would like to come back to the question of attitude. It really is quite inappropriate to suggest that people will hop into aeroplanes because some privilege is attached to putting one's backside into an aeroplane seat to travel from point A to point B. Members of this Chamber who represent isolated constituents know that only too well. By virtue of my position in the lay organisation of the Labor Party, very often I have to travel interstate. I know, as do other members who are more accustomed to it than I am, that air travel is most time consuming. Anyone who thinks that a member of Parliament would travel on an aeroplane just for the sake of enjoying the ride is sadly mistaken.

We are coming to the end of a decade, and we are going forward into the 1980s. We should be approaching this question much more sensibly than we have done in the past. I want to say that the parsimony I referred to in regard to the Premier of the State was not confined to the present incumbent. On a few occasions I had some very strong differences of opinion over this matter with his predecessor, the former Labor Premier, Mr Tonkin. It was probably the battle conducted by me and some of the other members on this side of the House that managed to convince the Cabinet of the day—after very long and bitter arguments in the party room—that members of Parliament should be entitled to a secretary and an electorate office.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr BRYCE: This battle was a hangover from the 1940s and the 1950s, and it is a typical feature of the small-time thinking of some people in Western Australia. I find it quite inconsistent that the Premier can indulge himself in air charter travel—first class air service between Perth and the Eastern States and around-the-world trips as a Minister and the Premier, using these facilities to do his job very effectively—and then turn around and say by implication that his own back-benchers and members on this side cannot be trusted to be given the privilege of air travel to see their own State or the rest of the country.

It is time the Premier adopted a sensible attitude. I am fully aware that when the Premier was the Leader of the Opposition in this State he was unkindly dealt with by a former Labor Party Premier. I was quite disgusted, and I am prepared to say so publicly, about what happened to the present Premier when he was the Deputy Leader of the Opposition involving his access to the motorcar provided for the Leader of the

Opposition at a time when he was actually the Acting Leader of the Opposition. The treatment accorded to the then Deputy Leader of the Opposition left a great deal to be desired.

There was another incident when the present incumbent made arrangements to hire an additional secretary for his office and an understanding was reached about this. Somehow or other along the line that understanding was misunderstood or broken, but the present Premier was required to pay the salary of this typist for a few weeks from his own pocket. That is an illustration of meanness of the first order, and it is an attitude inherited from the 1930s and the 1940s. Now in the 1970s and going into the 1980s, when we approach the Premier to ask for certain concessions, the Premier feels obliged to say, "I have inherited a position based on the attitudes of my predecessors. We cannot do things too fast." However, on the other hand he tells us that this is a State of excitement, it is on the move, and big things are happening. We all hope that big things are about to happen, but in the meantime the members of the Legislative Assembly are being deprived of so many of these basic opportunities to permit them to do their jobs effectively.

I do not believe for one moment that the Premier thinks we would "white ant" the Liberal Party representatives of the back blocks of Western Australia. No doubt these members are doing very effective jobs, but members on this side not only have a right but also they have a responsibility to visit these remote areas of Western Australia and to acquaint themselves with the difficulties of people living there.

I suggest seriously that the time is well and truly ripe for this sort of attitude to be buried.

What about the situation in regard to the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council? I do not believe, as has been suggested by some members, that the Premier's attitude to the present incumbent is because of a personal pathological dislike of him. I certainly hope that is not an accurate assessment of the position. However, there is not one other Parliament in Australia where the deputy leader of the alternative Government or the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council does not have the opportunity to visit any part of the State at will. Not only have members of Parliaments of other State Governments been very surprised about this fact, but also the public at large would be staggered to hear of it. Even Government departments do not understand or appreciate that is the case.

Of course, it is a result at this time of a decision by the Premier in the first instance, and of a decision by the Cabinet in the second instance. I would like to urge the Premier in a sense of sheer, simple consistency with what he says in respect of the scope of this State's future, to consider the members of this Parliament—not only members on this side of the House, but also those behind him who put him where he is—and give them the benefit of the doubt; give them a little credit for being responsible members of Parliament who deserve recognition.

I do not think any occupation in Western Australia is tougher than ours, and we deserve to be treated somewhat better than we are being treated at the moment.

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Treasurer) [5.11 p.m.]: I can appreciate the feelings expressed by the members who have spoken on this part. However, I want to say in all kindness that we as members of Parliament must consider Part I: Parliament as a total thing and not just as one item. The emphasis this afternoon has been mainly on the question of transport, although reference has been made to other matters such as the emoluments of office.

I would like to remind members that they should consider the total cost of Parliament over recent years and then assess how much the conditions of members of Parliament have been improved overall, and by how much the Budget has been increased to provide for increased emoluments and other costs of members of Parliament and the parliamentary institution. As well as the Government having a responsibility, we also have a responsibility as a Parliament in this respect.

I assure members it gives me no joy to appear to be parsimonious so far as the conditions of office are concerned, including travel conditions. I assure the Deputy Leader of the Opposition this is not because of my personal feelings about the incumbent of any office. I am sure some members opposite would know that on occasions I have had to make decisions where that has been apparent. Such matters never enter my head at those times.

However, as Premier and Treasurer I must have some budgetary responsibility. I think it is appropriate that I remind members of the increase in these costs since 1970. The budget for Part I: Parliament in 1970-71 was \$379 000. In 1975-76 that moved to \$1.202 million. In the present year the budget has increased dramatically to \$2.488 million. But that is not the end of the story.



Mr Skidmore: That is inflation.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We can allow a most generous amount of inflation against those figures, and we will still find a tremendous increase. I am glad the member mentioned inflation, because I want to make it clear that we must allow for it. However, even allowing for inflation, there has still been a dramatic increase.

Mr Jamieson: What did you say the amount is for this year?

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is \$2.488 million.

Mr Jamieson: What percentage is that out of a Budget of nearly \$1 500 million?

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is relative.

Mr Jamieson: Then look at the relativity between the previous ones you quoted, and see what is the difference.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Let me have the total facts recorded. It is important that members understand the point I am making. I have referred to the figures for 1970, 1975, and the present year; but that is not the end of the story. We must then consider expenditure under Special Acts, under which members of Parliament receive their remuneration. We find in 1970-71 the provision in this area was \$319 700 for the Legislative Council, and \$554 300 for the Legislative Assembly. In 1975-76 the amounts were \$603 000 and \$1.053 million respectively. In the present Budget the provision for the Legislative Council is \$1.092 million, and for the Legislative Assembly it is \$1.863 million. Again, that is not the end of the story.

Mr Jamieson: You have increased the number of members by five, quite unnecessarily.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We then come to the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund. Back in 1969-70 the allocation for that fund was \$56 500; in 1975-76 it was \$361 000. In the present year—and I have had correspondence with the Leader of the Opposition about this—the allocation is \$1.2 million. If we add all those things together and allow the most generous amount of inflation it is possible to conceive for the period involved, we find there has still been a dramatic increase.

Part of that increase is due to an entirely different set of conditions. Breakthroughs have occurred, so far as members are concerned, in the provision of electorate offices and secretaries. Therefore, other conditions have been improved. I suggest in all sincerity there is a limit to the rate at which we can absorb increased costs.

Mr Jamieson: But you should not take away concessions which were previously available.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I could not accept, even with the most generous interpretation of the member's remarks, the fact that members could travel on State ships and by train and bus as being relevant to the present situation in which we have motorcars and aircraft.

Mr Jamieson: We had only half the population then.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Members can get emotive about this and feel quite strongly about it. However, I hazard a guess, as I have on previous occasions in respect of expenses, offices, and other emoluments, that this transport expenditure will increase. It is not a bad thing to remember the old story of *Eric or Little by Little*, because the public can be expected to absorb only a certain amount.

I believe the people want members of Parliament to be reasonably well paid and to have good conditions of office. The progress that has been made in this respect is quite remarkable. Regardless of what some parliamentarians have in the Eastern States—and I believe privileges have been abused, and I am not referring only to the Queensland incident—I want to say quite sincerely that it is not for us to place too much importance on relating what we receive to what people in other States receive.

I invite the attention of members to the way our tribunal has worked. It is competent for members either collectively or individually to make submissions to the tribunal. If members look at the findings of the tribunal fairly, they will find it has gone about its job in a sensible way, making prompt adjustments to allow for the decisions of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

Mr Skidmore: Surely you would not expect it to be any other way?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Members will have noted that the tribunal has considered other matters such as electorate allowances and things of that nature in a very sensible way. The amount that members receive by way of electorate allowances today is immeasurably better than the amount they received in the past. They acknowledge some of the problems of distance and remoteness, the amount of travel and the costs some of these members incur. They are not completely satisfactory in that some members might be too generously treated while others are not treated generously enough. However, when we

are dealing with people in a place like Parliament we cannot always be completely equitable to each member.

Mr Jamieson: I did not deal with allowances. However, Western Australia is the worst of any State in that area, too. The best is South Australia, because the least its members receive in electoral expenses is \$6 000.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Somebody must be the arbiter of these things.

Mr Jamieson: The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal should not be so rude; it should reply to correspondence.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I will come to that. I think we are very fortunate to have a tribunal which has not rushed madly into some of the extravagances of other States. The tribunal has endeavoured to get our salaries and allowances into a sensible condition.

I ask members to look at the figures. I have quoted only 1970-71, 1975-76 and 1978-79; I can go further back than that, but I believe it is not a bad period to pick. I defy any member—allowing for the most extravagant rate of inflation ever experienced in this country—to see anything but a very dramatic increase in these entitlements.

After the next election when we have absorbed some of these things in a time of great budgetary difficulty—a time when we should be setting an example to the community—transport concessions will have to be revised. I do not make any bones about the fact that they need to be revised; however, I believe that immediately after an election is not a bad time in which to do it.

Mr Jamieson: You said the exact words before the last election.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Mr Chairman, when one is a Treasurer and Premier, one has a responsibility. We have to look at a total budgetary situation. I believe the public has accepted the way we have gone about managing the financial affairs of this State. If we try to go too fast it will be like the last straw that broke the camel's back.

Mr Skidmore: As far as I am concerned, we are not going to get improved entitlements because you are too frightened.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Members are in this place for something other than just a job. They should come here with some dedication. The way the member for Swan is talking, one would think we were in an industrial arbitration tribunal instead of a Parliament. Surely there is an element of service in the matter.

I believe what has been done has been done with a full regard for a sense of responsibility on behalf of the Parliament. Members have expressed themselves very forcibly and at great length. I accept the fact they have made their comments because they feel strongly about the matter; certainly, there is no political mileage to gain from making an issue of improved concessions and entitlements. I have not ignored what has been said in the past, but when we are confronted with a situation such as confronts us this year, somebody must put on the brakes.

If members are not satisfied with the figures I have given, let them look at the amount of money the Budget has allocated to the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund. In only one year, \$1.2 million is to be put into the fund.

Mr Jamieson: One can argue indefinitely about that, because you are dealing now with actuarial figures.

Sir CHARLES COURT: That is a lot of money in one year to service a superannuation fund for a comparatively few people. We have a very generous scheme which has been made what it is very necessarily to protect some of those people who have become old and who have left the service of the Parliament and particularly, to protect their widows. I do not begrudge it, but the money must come from somewhere. If we do not put it in this year to make the fund solvent, it would have to be put in at a later date. I believe the Government has acted responsibly and that the method of accounting we have adopted is the most equitable one.

Mr Jamieson: That is a figure the actuaries have set; you do not need to put in that much.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I have to tell the member for Welshpool that the amount we have put in this year is not the full amount originally asked for by the actuary. The amount will be put in over the next few years; it will spread the burden a little more equitably over the years which is a sensible way of dealing with the matter.

Mr Jamieson: Has there ever been more money paid out in one year than income received? Ever?

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the member for Welshpool wants to adopt that attitude towards the superannuation fund he is being completely irresponsible. It is the duty of this Parliament when it is confronted with an actuarial report to face up to it and not just require posterity to pay out fantastic sums of money. It is much better to do it now.

Mr Jamieson: They never have to pay out fantastic sums.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is better to keep the fund solvent and earning income. I am not going to allow the fund to be known to be insolvent, because it is a generous fund. While I am the Treasurer, a certain amount of money will be allocated in each Budget to keep the fund solvent. It is part of the cost of Parliament.

Mr Jamieson: It is the worst fund of any Parliament in Australia.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the member for Welshpool wants to ignore this principle let him say so because he is being completely irresponsible. While I am the Treasurer we are going to pull our weight every year and not cheat and require future generations to pay what we should have paid today.

Votes: Legislative Council, \$191 000; Legislative Assembly, \$212 000; Joint House Committee, \$1 511 000—put and passed.

Vote: Joint Printing Committee, \$328 000—  
Item No. 2: Administration Expenses, \$8 000—

Mr BRYCE: I have a very simple suggestion to the Premier. It seems that practically every institution and business in Western Australia is being encouraged to do something about WAY 79, or the sesquicentennial celebrations to celebrate our 150th anniversary next year. I suggest it would be very appropriate for the Joint Printing Committee to give some thought to printing a more appropriate and detailed *Parliamentary Handbook* for 1979. It is time we gave some thought to what Parliament as an institution will be doing to celebrate the anniversary year. I know there will be lots of dinners and things.

Sir Charles Court: I understand that is under consideration.

Mr BRYCE: The preparation of a special *Parliamentary Handbook* for that year should be given careful consideration.

I have felt for a long time that the *Parliamentary Handbook*, to which most of us refer from time to time, is inappropriate in terms of the detail that it contains. It should paint a picture of members of Parliament and relate their background, and their activities. I have raised this subject on a number of occasions over the years.

Sir Charles Court: As I understand it, there is a proposition before the 150th anniversary committee now.

Mr BRYCE: To prepare one?

Sir Charles Court: Something of that nature.

Mr BRYCE: I will simply conclude by saying that sometimes comparisons are very odious. However, I have taken the trouble to look at the

*Parliamentary Handbooks* of the other Parliaments of Australia, and those publications leave ours a long way behind. The anniversary year, 1979, would be an appropriate year for us to catch up.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Joint Library Committee, \$86 000; Parliamentary Commission for Administrative Investigations, \$160 000—put and passed.

#### Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr Shalders.

### BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Taxi-cars (Co-ordination and Control) Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.

2. Law Reform Commission Act Amendment Bill.

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

### QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

*House adjourned at 5.53 p.m.*

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

2079 and 2103. *These questions were postponed.*

### HOUSING

#### *Hostel Accommodation*

2104. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

In view of the possible increase in accommodation problems for homeless young people, what consideration, if any, has been given to the need for further Government assistance for hostel accommodation for young people in this situation?

Mr YOUNG replied:

In the 1978/79 financial year, provisions have been made for a matching grant up to \$10 000 for operating costs of one organisation which is involved in providing hostel facilities for homeless youth.

The Community Welfare Department has also granted some financial assistance to similar organisations.

Currently a committee has been set up to carry out research into this problem. The committee is represented by both Government departments and persons from private organisations involved in this area.

It is hoped that as a result of this research my department will be in a better position to suggest solutions to the problem.

## EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

### *Public Works Department*

2105. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) How many of the 37 Public Works Department workers to be retrenched have so far been found alternative jobs?
- (2) Can he say whether there are any further anticipated retrenchments in the Public Works Department or any other Government department?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) Action to find employment for the 37 Public Works Department workers in alternative jobs is proceeding.
- (2) I am not in a position to answer the question.

## ENERGY: ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

### *Kondinin*

2106. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Have any concrete proposals been put forward to provide electric power from an isolated generator plant within the Kondinin Shire?
- (2) If so, can details of the proposal be given with particular regard to—
  - (a) the cost;
  - (b) the area of the shire through which the State Energy Commission will be extended;
  - (c) the proposed plant site;
  - (d) the anticipated date of commencement of the project?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) and (2) The matter of power supply within the Kondinin Shire is included in the comprehensive investigation currently being carried out by the State Energy Commission into the whole question of rural electrification.

No details can be given yet, but it is expected that the investigation will be completed and considered by Cabinet within the next few weeks.

## TRANSPORT: ROAD

### *Perishable Goods*

2107. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What amount of perishable goods are country store proprietors entitled to transport from Perth using their own vehicle for transport of the goods?
- (2) What goods are defined as perishable?
- (3) Is a permit required from the Transport Commission?
- (4) If so, what is the cost of a permit?
- (5) If perishables are transported by West-rail, what compensation is available to store proprietors if perishable goods are lost or delivered in a condition that would make them unsaleable?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr RUSHTON) replied:

- (1) The majority of country store proprietors may obtain a licence to transport all classes of goods—which could include perishable goods—in their own vehicles up to a maximum quantity of 1 tonne for retail sale in their own stores.

In addition, all country store proprietors may obtain a licence to transport unlimited quantities of fresh fruit and vegetables in their own vehicles for retail sale in their own stores.

- (2) The term perishable is not defined but is generally interpreted to mean goods which deteriorate with time but do not require controlled temperature transport—e.g. fruit and vegetables.
- (3) Yes. A licence is required for the goods referred to in (1) above.
- (4) If the licence relates to a single trip, the fee charged varies according to the distance travelled and weight of goods being carried.

For a period licence, the fee varies according to the licensed weight of the vehicle.

- (5) Westrail accepts perishable goods for transport at the risk of the consignor.

However, where departmental action causes a loss *ex gratia* payments are normally made.

## EDUCATION

*Country High School Hostels*

2108. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many students attend each of the hostels operated by the Country High Schools Hostels Authority?
- (2) How many staff are employed by each hostel for administrative and student supervision?
- (3) How many domestic staff are employed by each hostel?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

(1) to (3):

	Students	Supervisory Staff	Domestic Staff
Amity House, Albany	37	3	6 part-time
Priory, Albany....	38	2	6 part-time
Bunbury	29	2	5 part-time
Carnarvon	13	2	2 part-time
Moora	59	4	2 part-time
Esperance	84	5 full-time 2 part-time	7 part-time 1 full-time
Geraklton Boys	95	3	12 part-time
Geraklton Girls	70	2	11 part-time
Katanning	89	5	4 part-time 2 full-time
Merredin	106	3	17 part-time
Narrogin	192	8	17 part-time 7 full-time
Northam Boys	133	3	10 part-time 2 full-time
Northam Girls	90	2 full-time 1 part-time	6 part-time 5 full-time
Port Hedland	63	4	8 part-time

## EDUCATION

*Country High School Hostel*

2109. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Why is the Merredin hostel closed to students on weekends?
- (2) When will the hostel be operating on a seven day basis?
- (3) With regard to the changes in staff at the Merredin hostel, is the hostel authority satisfied that the management committee is conducting the affairs of the hostel in the best interests of students and parents?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Following the sudden resignation of the warden, the remaining supervisory staff could not adequately supervise the students over seven days a week.
- (2) As soon as suitable replacement staff can be accommodated and recruited.
- (3) Yes.

(135)

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

*Food: Consumption Date*

2110. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) What further steps are proposed concerning expanding the provision of date marking of food in Western Australia?
- (2) Does his department support the use of a system whereby foodstuffs bear a stamp which enumerates the date before which the food should be consumed?
- (3) Would he assess the method currently used by the Dairy Industry Authority in which milk containers are stamped with a number which represents the day of the year on which the milk was packaged with a view to proposing a better system?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) The wide ranging implication of date marking of food involving such complex questions as shelf life of perishable food is still being considered.
- (2) The department supports in principle the "use by" system of date stamping of food.
- (3) The system currently used by the Dairy Industry Authority has already been assessed and commented upon in the 1977-78 annual report of the Consumer Affairs Council and Bureau of Consumer Affairs.

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

*Hire-purchase Goods*

2111. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

Can he advise whether there is any binding requirement on hire purchase companies to provide hirers with a statement of account of net balance payments in the case of early completion of agreements?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

No. However, in cases of voluntary surrender and repossession there is a statutory requirement to issue a fourth schedule which sets out the relative expenses and charges in a statement form.

## RESEARCH STATION

*Gascoyne*

2112. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What has been the total cost of operation of the Gascoyne research station in each of the past two financial years?
- (2) What has been the total value of produce marketed by the Gascoyne research station in each of the past two financial years?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) 1976-77 ..... \$159 255 \*
- 1977-78 ..... \$169 141 \*
- (2) 1976-77 ..... \$16 808
- 1977-78 ..... \$28 813

\* Includes the salaries of the manager and four field technicians.

### INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

#### *Draft Legislation*

2113. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

When can the Opposition expect to receive a copy of the draft Industrial Relations Act, prepared by senior Industrial Commissioner E. R. Kelly, which was circulated to unions and employers some time ago?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

I am prepared to provide the Leader of the Opposition with a copy of the draft on a confidential basis.

Discussions are still taking place with employer organisations and the Trades and Labor Council on the recommendations. No finality has yet been arrived at.

### HEALTH

#### *Public Health Department: Federal Aboriginal Grant*

2114. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

Can he provide details of how a Federal Government financial grant for Aborigines in 1976-77, of \$5 592 217 was spent by the Public Health Department?

Mr YOUNG replied:

Statement of Expenditure in 1976-77.  
*Recurrent Expenditure*

	\$
Salaries ....	3 707 225
Travel ....	209 465
Vehicles ..	160 640
Repairs and	
Maintenance ..	209 940
Supplies ..	237 852

Administration		
expenses ....	235 278	\$
Other ....	182 192	4 942 592
Capital Expenditure ....		832 277
Total expenditure ....		5 774 869

Funds received from Federal Government 1976-77 .... \$5 592 217

Excess expenditure over funds received .... \$ 182 652

The excess expenditure was carried forward into 1977-78.

### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

#### *Contracts: Aborigines*

2115. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

Has he received a letter from the Prime Minister asking him to consider inserting a clause into specifications for State works similar to that for Commonwealth works, which requires tenderers, in areas where Aborigines comprise a significant proportion of the population, to consult with the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations regarding the possibility of employing and training Aborigines?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Yes, and I shall be replying to the Prime Minister after the matter has been considered by the Ministers involved, and then by Cabinet.

However, in the meantime, it is appropriate that I state that we have not needed prompting by the Commonwealth about the desirability of endeavouring to identify employment opportunities for Aborigines on projects—either Government or private.

It is a desirable objective, but one which is difficult of realisation.

With Commonwealth and State co-operation and the assistance of some of the Commonwealth employment schemes, we are hopeful of progressively improving results.

2116. *This question was postponed.*

### TOURISM AND ROADS

#### *Mt. Augustus and Kennedy Range*

2117. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Tourism:

Further to question 1843 of 1978, what assistance, if any, did the State Government provide in the development of the recently improved road access around the base of Mt. Augustus?

Mr RIDGE replied:

In 1977 the Main Roads Department made a special grant of \$2 000 towards the cost of the road around the base of Mt. Augustus.

## MINING

### *Cape Range National Park*

2118. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Mines:

(1) In view of the fact that the Director of Geological Surveys was a member of the Conservation through Reserves Committee's technical sub-committee, and that the CTRC's report to the Environmental Protection Authority (which included System 9) was available for public comment—

(a) did the Minister's advisors in the Mines Department draw attention to the fact that mining tenements existed in the area proposed for inclusion in the Cape Range national park;

(b) if so, when?

(2) Was Cabinet made aware that mining tenements existed in the area proposed for inclusion in the national park, prior to its endorsement of the Environmental Protection Authority's recommendations in 1976?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

(1) While a member of the CTRC technical sub-committee, the Director of Geological Survey drew attention to the fact that mining and petroleum tenements could be in existence in any of the areas being recommended for reservation and understood that full search details would be obtained from his department before action was taken to create the reserves finally agreed upon so that such tenements could be excluded.

(2) No.

## LAND

### *National Park: Cape Range*

2119. Mr TONKIN, to the Acting Minister for Lands:

Further to question 2041 of 1978:

(1) Since mining tenements existed in the area included in the Cape Range national park in 1974, how is the situation different from that of the present time, particularly bearing in mind that Cabinet endorsed the recent proposal to further enlarge the national park?

(2) (a) What is the—

(i) area;

(ii) date of application;

(iii) date of approval; and

(iv) date of expiry,

of the land leased to Messrs G. F. and E. J. Lefroy;

(b) (i) Was the Environmental Protection Authority informed of the application and/or proposal to grant this lease; and

(ii) if so, on what date?

(3) Was the Environmental Protection Authority informed of the application and/or proposal to grant the lease to M. G. Kailis Gulf Fisheries Pty. Ltd.?

(4) What other bodies, if any, were informed of this matter prior to the lease being issued?

Mr Ridge (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

(1) The land concerned was Yardie Creek Station pastoral lease until 1969 when it was acquired by purchase for the specific purpose of providing additional land for the enlargement of Cape Range National Park and tourism. The reservation made in 1974 was therefore not referred to the Mines Department. By arrangement with the Director, Conservation and Environment, following approval of EPA recommendations by Cabinet, it has been policy to refer to Mines Department.

(2) The current lease held by G. F. and E. J. Lefroy expires in the year 2015 and comprises 93 046 hectares of pastoral land. Pastoral leases on the east of North West Cape have

existed since 1904 and the Lefroy family acquired their present holding in 1932. Accordingly the other particulars requested appear to have no application.

- (3) and (4) The Kailis interests have had a processing factory on the North West Cape since 1st July, 1965 (Lyndon location 49). Commonwealth resumptions for Learmonth Air Strip extensions forced the State to provide the present site covered by a lease commencing 1st October, 1974. In these circumstances consultation with the pastoral lessees and the Shire of Exmouth only took place.

### LAND

#### *National Park: Cape Range*

2120. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

Further to question 1842 of 1978, considering that the Environmental Protection Authority (at pages ii-iii of Red Book 1)—

- (a) expressed the attitude that areas suitable for national parks are those "which either possess scenic beauty or are attractive for other reasons";
- (b) stated that "national parks are primarily for use by the people" and "provide a very important means of bringing about some relief from the increasing stresses of modern day community life"; and
- (c) understood that a "national park is an area of land or water set aside for public use by virtue of its scenic, aesthetic recreational, biological or other special features",

what is the authority's rationale for changing its mind and recommending in the same report that extension of the Cape Range national park, because "so high is the tourist potential of the area", he made a class "B" reserve rather than class "A"?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

It was desired to draw a distinction between that portion of the National Park which was to be retained solely for use by the public as a National Park, and which was classified as of Class "A", and that portion proposed for addition

where leases for tourist activities could be granted. It was considered that the classification of the latter as Class "B" permitted greater flexibility when considering leases for purposes associated with tourism.

### LAND

#### *National Park: Mt. Augustus*

2121. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Acting Minister for Lands:

Further to question 1739 of 1978:

- (1) What is the current status of land shown hatched in figure 9.13 of the Environmental Protection Authority's report to Cabinet for a proposed national park involving the Kennedy Range?
- (2) What are the dates of expiry of the pastoral leases involved?
- (3) Are any dedicated roads or road reserves presently included within this hatched area?

Mr Ridge (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) The portion shown in the sketch from Binthalya Station is held under special lease expiring 31st December, 1978, (with the consent of the National Parks Authority) to allow the former pastoral lessee to remove stock. The remainder is held under pastoral lease by the following stations: Williambury, Minnie Creek, Lyons River, Bidgemia and Mooka.
- (2) 2 015
- (3) No.

2122 and 2123. *These questions were postponed.*

### WATER SUPPLIES

#### *Goldfields: Tradesmen and Apprentices*

2124. Mr GRILL, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

- (1) How many men are employed by the Public Works Department on the Goldfields water supply scheme?
- (2) Where are those men employed?
- (3) (a) How many of the men are tradesmen;
- (b) in what categories (trade) are they employed; and
- (c) where are they employed?



- (4) (a) How many apprentices are employed;  
 (b) in what trades are they engaged; and  
 (c) where are they employed?

Mr RIDGE replied:

(1) 445.

(2) Mundaring—17

Wyalkatchem—29

Wongan Hills—9

Dalwallinu—10

Chidlow—2

Bakers Hill—2

Meckering—2

Goomalling—2

York—2

Cunderdin—26

Northam—114

Merredin—71

Mukinbudin—22

Barbalin—12

Yerbillon—4

Kellerberrin—32

Southern Cross—15

Ghooli—6

Dedari—5

Coolgardie—35

Balgari—1

Kalgoorlie—23

Widgiemooltha—1

Higginsville—1

Norseman—2

(3) (a) 92.

(b) Blacksmith—

Welder—43

Meter Fitter—8

Mechanic—6

Fitter and Turner—9

Diesel Fitter—1

Moulder—1

District Electrical Technician—7

Second Engineer—8

Carpenters—7

Mobile Fitters—1

(c) Northam

Blacksmith—1

Welder—12

Meter Fitter—4

Mechanic—1

Carpenter—1

Fitter and Turner—3

Diesel Fitter—1

Mundaring

District electrical technician—1

Cunderdin

District electrical technician—2

Second engineer—8

Carpenter—1

Moulder—1

Wyalkatchem

Welder—2

Meter fitter—1

Merredin

Welder—6

Mechanic—1

Fitter and Turner—3

Carpenter—2

District electrical technician—2

Kellerberrin

Welder—4

Mechanic—1

Fitter and Turner—3

Carpenter—1

Barbalin

Welder—1

Kalgoorlie

Mobile fitters—1

Carpenter—1

Mechanic—1

District electrical technician—1

Meter fitters—3

Coolgardie

Welders—14

Mechanic—1

Carpenter—1

Southern Cross

Welders—4

Mechanic—1

Ghooli

District electrical technician—1

(4) (a) 6.

(b) Mechanic

Fitter and Turner

Blacksmith

Welder

(c) Cunderdin

Fitter and Turner—3

Northam

Blacksmith—1

Welder—1

Kellerberrin

Mechanic—1

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

### *Cash Refunds on Returned Goods*

2125. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Is it a fact that some shops state that on no account will they refund money on goods bought?

- (2) Is it a fact that no distinction is drawn between goods returned because of general dissatisfaction and those returned because they are not fit for the purpose for which they have been sold?
- (3) Will he take action to ensure that such notices, which can possibly act to intimidate consumers into not returning defective goods, are examined to see whether they contravene the Trade Descriptions and False Advertising Act or any other Statute?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) As a general rule most of the smaller "sole trader" shops will not give cash refunds but most are prepared to give credit notes to allow for the purchase of goods of similar nature or value.
- (2) There is a distinction under the Trade Practices Act and the Sale of Goods Act between goods returned because of general dissatisfaction and because of unsuitability for the purpose for which the goods were sold. The Bureau of Consumer Affairs had previously sought, and will continue to seek adequate and appropriate remedy for consumers who have purchased goods considered to be unsuitable or unfit for the purposes for which the goods were sold.
- (3) The Bureau of Consumer Affairs will continue to examine any alleged breaches of the Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act and to take appropriate prosecution action where necessary.

### CIVIL RIGHTS

#### *Correspondence with Russian Ambassador*

2126. Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact that both Australia and the United Soviet Socialist Republic are signatories to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights?
- (2) Is it not a fact that his recent complaint to the Ambassador of the USSR in Canberra touching on the treatment of dissidents in the USSR was based on the fact that article 14 of the said covenant was being breached by the USSR?
- (3) At the time of raising the complaint to the USSR Ambassador was he aware of the provisions of article 25 of the said covenant?

(4) Does not article 25 (b) read:

"Every citizen shall have the right and opportunity without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions:

(b) to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors?"

- (5) Is it not a fact that notwithstanding repeated attempts by the Opposition to have the provisions of the said article 25 complied with in Western Australia his Government has continually refused to legislate or permit our laws to be amended so that amongst other things some people will not have a vote worth 16 times the value of the vote of other people?
- (6) Is it now his intention to comply with article 25 himself?
- (7) If "Yes" when?
- (8) If "No" why?

Mr O'Neil (for SIR CHARLES COURT) replied:

- (1) to (4) Yes.
- (5) to (8) No. The citizens of this State have the right and opportunity without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status and without unreasonable restrictions to vote and be elected at genuine periodic elections by universal and equal suffrage held by secret ballot as specified in the article referred to.

If the member is attempting to find authority for the policy (one vote one value) in the international covenant may I remind him that the international covenant does not embody any such policy. It makes no assertion of numerical equality and explicitly allows the matters referred to in the article to be the subject of reasonable restrictions.

### WATER SUPPLIES

#### *Waterways Commission*

2127. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

Further to his answer to question 1728 of 1978, what was the outcome of the

Environmental Protection Authority's consideration of the recommendations of the Swan River Management Authority which were referred to it by the Waterways Commission?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

The Environmental Protection Authority considered that the problems could best be resolved by amendments to the Waterways Commission Act. The Government accepted the recommendations as advised in a press release on 21st July and the necessary amendments are at present being drafted.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

#### *City of Perth: Smiths Lake Project*

2128. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Was it necessary for one of her ministerial predecessors and/or Cabinet, and if so which, to approve in any way the development project situated at the corner of Charles and Bourke Streets, North Perth, known as the "Smiths Lake Project" and which commenced in or about 1976 under the auspices of the City of Perth?
- (2) If "Yes"—
  - (a) why was such approval required;
  - (b) upon what evidence; and
  - (c) on what date was the approval given?

Mr Ridge (for Mrs CRAIG) replied:

- (1) Yes. The Minister's approval was required for regulating traffic in Kayle Street under Section 331B of the Local Government Act. The consent of the Governor was required under Section 266 of the Local Government Act for the sale of land owned by the City of Perth.
- (2) (a) See answer to (1).
- (b) Submission by council with documents.
- (c) (i) 28th June, 1976 (*Government Gazette* 9th July, 1976);
- (ii) 22nd September, 1976 (*Government Gazette* 1st October, 1976);
- (iii) Approval under Section 331B 17th May, 1978.

### EDUCATION

#### *Department: Newspaper Advertisements on Teachers' Industrial Dispute*

2129. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Did the Education Department engage the services of an advertising agency to prepare newspaper advertisements relating to the teachers strikes?
- (2) If so, which agency was engaged and what was the cost?
- (3) Why were the advertisements not prepared by officers of the department in the publications section or other relevant sections of the department?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) No. The publications branch of the Education Department, in conjunction with Eric White and Associates, has been engaged in preparing pamphlets and publicity material for the Education Department, and this preparation has been continuing throughout 1978. The assistance of Eric White and Associates was utilised in placing the advertisements in *The West Australian* and the information was supplied by departmental officers.

Eric White and Associates are retained by the Education Department on a contract basis for a period of one year and this arrangement commenced early in 1978.

### TRANSPORT

#### *"Transport Policies for Central Perth"*

2130. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Transport:

What action is being taken by the Government in relation to the document entitled "Transport Policies for Central Perth", the Director General of Transport's document dated December 1976?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr RUSHTON) replied:

"Transport Policies for Central Perth" is still out for public comment and response. It was always foreseen that there would be merit in generating discussion on this study concurrently with discussion of and receipt of submissions on, the City of Perth's planning scheme. In pursuit of this approach the Director General of Transport submitted the study to the Perth City Council so that the

alternatives it presented could be finally discussed during public hearings on the City of Perth scheme.

It is expected that these hearings will be completed in the next couple of months and that thereafter the Director General of Transport will be able to report to the Government on public attitudes to the alternatives he presented.

He will also be able to report on how the alternatives relate to and support the City of Perth's planning scheme in its final form.

### MINING

#### *Greenbushes Tin NL*

2131. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Mines:

Further to question 2092 of 25th October, 1978:

- (1) (a) What individual or firm has lodged mineral claim No. 268;
- (b) what area does this claim involve;
- (c) what minerals are being sought under this claim?
- (2) What are the full and precise conditions under which mineral lease No. 726 encroaching upon Greenbushes townsite has been granted?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) (a) Greenbushes Tin No Liability.
- (b) 61.5 hectares.
- (c) Cassiterite, tantalite, kaolin, lithium, bismuth, tungsten, antimony, cobalt and rare earths.
- (2) As per attached schedule.

*The schedule was tabled (see paper No. 446).*

### COMMUNITY WELFARE

#### *Maintenance Orders: Payment by Separated Husbands*

2132. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Is it a fact that separated husbands are being required to pay money for the maintenance of their wives and children to the Department for Community Welfare?

- (2) If "Yes" are these payments being required to be made before any court order for maintenance has been made against such husbands?

- (3) If "Yes", if the court order when made is at a rate less than that paid to the said department, are the surplus payments which have been made being refunded to the husbands?

- (4) If "No" why?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.

- (3) No.

- (4) Under Section 12 of the Welfare and Assistance Act (1961) the Minister may sue for and recover from the husband the amount of advances made to or on behalf of the wife of that husband.

Monetary assistance is paid according to the scale of rates laid down by the Minister. My department takes the view that the husband should fully maintain his family, and any moneys the husband does pay are deducted from payments to the wife. Therefore, my department has the power to recover all the money paid to the wife according to scale, up to and until the making of a court order. Whether or not the department does seek recovery of all this money depends on the circumstances of each case.

### COMMUNITY WELFARE

#### *Maintenance Orders: Payment by Stepfathers*

2133. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

Is it a fact that the Department for Community Welfare has been obtaining maintenance payments for children from the stepfathers of those children in circumstances in which the Family Law Court has ruled that such stepfather has no legal obligation to pay such maintenance?

Mr YOUNG replied:

No. It is the experience of my officers that no such ruling has been made by the Family Law Court as it would seem that the court acting under Commonwealth jurisdiction does not have the power to make such a ruling as in the cases of *Russell v Russell*; *Farrelly v Farrelly* (May 1976).

# WATER SUPPLIES

## *Country: Maintenance and Supply Personnel*

2134. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Public Works Department to replace its various maintenance and supply personnel servicing various country water supplies by contractors?
- (2) If so, which schemes are to be so serviced?
- (3) In each area concerned how many personnel will be affected?
- (4) Will alternate employment be offered within the Public Works Department?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) to (4) No.

# LEGISLATIVE REVIEW AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## *Report on Princess Margaret Hospital for Children*

2135. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Health:

What action is being taken by him in relation to the Legislative Review and Advisory Committee Report tabled in the Assembly on 19th September, 1978, concerning the Report on Princess Margaret Hospital for Children (Traffic and Grounds) By-law?

Mr YOUNG replied:

Action is being taken with a view to the by-laws being gazetted on Friday, 3rd November, 1978.

# EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

## *Epileptics*

2136. Mr HODGE, to the Premier:

- (1) What is the Government's policy in respect of the employment of persons suffering from epilepsy?
- (2) What measures are taken by the Government to ensure that persons suffering from epilepsy are not discriminated against in respect of obtaining employment?
- (3) Is the Government prepared to assist a person suffering from epilepsy who is unable to obtain employment because of prejudice amongst some employers and who has been refused the invalid pension on the grounds of insufficient incapacity?

Mr O'Neil (for Sir CHARLES COURT) replied:

- (1) It is the Government's policy to employ persons with various health or physical disabilities wherever practicable.

In keeping with this policy, the Public Service Board has employed a number of persons with such problems—including epileptics.

- (2) All applications received are treated on their merits and in line with normal recruitment policies.
- (3) Answered by (2).

However, if the member has a specific case in mind, it is suggested that the person concerned contact the senior personnel officer at the Public Service Board to discuss employment prospects.

# SECURITY INDUSTRY: ASSISTANCE AND SECURITY CORPORATION

## *Flour Millers' Dispute: Trucks*

2137. Dr TROY, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Is it a fact that there was no such corporation as Assistance and Security Corporation when the Government paid a cheque for \$1 815 for vehicles used in carting flour during the flour strike?
- (2) (a) Who were the principals of the registered business name Assistance and Security Corps?
- (b) When was this business name registered and when was the name withdrawn?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) The business name Assistance and Security Corps was registered on the 11th August, 1977. The payment by the Government was made on the 30th December, 1977.
- (2) (a) and (b) This information is readily accessible by search at the Corporate Affairs Office.

# HEALTH

## *Dental Therapy Centres: Embleton School*

2138. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that there is no dental clinic at the Embleton primary school?
- (2) Is it a fact that the children of the Embleton primary school are denied use of any dental clinic?

- (3) What are the Government's plans to remedy this situation?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Yes.  
 (2) The Embleton children will be included in the programme when additional clinic facilities are provided this year. No firm commencement date can be given at this time.  
 (3) See above.

### HOUSING

#### *Swan Location 6400*

2139. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Can he say whether the State Housing Commission is considering development proposals for Swan Location 6400?  
 (2) If "Yes" can he give details of any such proposed development and of the interested party involved?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) and (2) The State Housing Commission has had an approach for development of Swan Location 6400; however, as this land is included in a larger area to be replanned, no final decision has been taken.

### EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

#### *Youth: Lockridge*

2140. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Does a large degree of youth unemployment exist in Lockridge?  
 (2) Will he use his good offices to influence the appointment of a project officer to assist in contacting the unemployed youth of Lockridge so that they may be put in contact with the Swan Youth Support Scheme?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) Statistical data on employment levels within specific suburbs in the metropolitan area is not kept. Persons living in the Lockridge area who require assistance with locating employment would normally register with the Commonwealth Employment Service office in Morley.

Additionally, any unemployed young person who would like to do so, is welcome to use the Youth Job Centre, which is located in CAGA House, on the corner of Victoria Avenue and Adelaide Terrace, in Perth.

- (2) The Community Youth Support Scheme is a Commonwealth Government programme which has received considerable publicity. In addition managers of CES offices are encouraged to display notices on CYSS, and CES interviewing staff are requested to refer suitable and eligible young people to specific projects such as the Swan Youth Support Scheme.

I therefore believe that the CYSS programme is already well publicised.

### HEALTH

#### *Noise: Regulations*

2141. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Health:

Can he say at this stage when the proposed new regulations governing noise control measures described as imminent in answers given to previous questions will be introduced?

Mr YOUNG replied:

I regret to advise the member that Crown Law Department is preoccupied with legislation relating to the current session and is, for the moment, unable to attend to these regulations.