

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 5th April, 1978

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

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### *Postponement*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Thompson): I desire to announce that because the Government Printer was unable to print a notice paper for today, it will not be possible for questions on notice to be taken. I am prepared to allow a few questions without notice.

## SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS

### *Shenton Park: Petition*

**MR MENSAROS** (Floreat—Minister for Industrial Development) [4.33 p.m.]: As the member for Floreat, I present a petition from 2 118 residents of the metropolitan area concerning the stench emanating from the sewage treatment works at Shenton Park.

The petition conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly, and I have certified accordingly.

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

(*See petition No. 7.*)

## ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

### *Contributory Extension Scheme: Petition*

**MR McPHARLIN** (Mt. Marshall) [4.34 p.m.]: I have a petition from residents of the Dalwallinu Shire area bearing the signatures of 79 petitioners who request the Government to review the new policy relating to the contributory extension scheme of the State Energy Commission.

The petition conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly, and I have certified accordingly.

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

(*See petition No. 8.*)

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Questions without notice were taken at this stage.

## BILLS (3):

### INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. **Suitors' Fund Act Amendment Bill.**  
Bill introduced, on motion by Sir Charles Court (Premier), and read a first time.
2. **Aerial Spraying Control Act Amendment Bill.**  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Old (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.
3. **Murdoch University Act Amendment Bill.**  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr P. V. Jones (Minister for Education), and read a first time.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SEVENTH DAY

### *Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 4th April, on the following motion by Mr MacKinnon—

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

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

**MR CARR** (Geraldton) [4.50 p.m.]: At the outset of my remarks this afternoon I should like to refer to a Government decision which has not been well received in my electorate of Geraldton. I refer to the decision by the Government to shorten the rock lobster fishing season by six weeks. I have a number of criticisms of this decision and of the way the decision was made which I should like to bring to the attention of the House.

I should like to make the point that I agree with the need for a reduction of fishing effort in the rock lobster industry and that is appreciated throughout all sections of the industry. There has been expert advice which suggests that something like an 18 per cent reduction in the fishing effort is required. If there is to be a reduction of effort there are a number of options as to how the effort should be reduced.

Mr P. V. Jones: Who provided the figure of 18 per cent?

Mr CARR: I believe it was a Canadian expert who was out here a year or two ago.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is right; Professor Capes, and he came up with the figure of 18 per cent?

Mr CARR: That is my understanding. In bringing about the reduction of the fishing effort a number of alternatives were open to the Government. Firstly, it could have introduced a boat buy-back scheme, a scheme by which boats and pots belonging to fishermen wishing to leave the industry could be bought out of the industry by a fund. The fund could be established by levying the catch within the industry, perhaps with Government assistance. When a fisherman wanted to leave the industry his pots could be bought out of the industry, thus reducing the effort. The second possibility would have been for the Government to delicense some of the pots. For example, if a boat has a 100-pot licence, and we need an 18 per cent reduction, we could have reduced the number of pots for which that boat is licensed by 18 per cent.

Mr Shalders: That would have caused serious problems for the fishermen with a low number of pots who are only viable at this time.

Mr CARR: That would have been one of the problems with that particular scheme. I am not trying to argue too strongly for one option against another. It seems to me that the Government has opted for one scheme far too quickly without sufficient consultation.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is not right.

Mr CARR: That is right; and I will come to that in a moment because I have details of the consultations.

Mr P. V. Jones: You are suggesting that one of the possibilities could have been a buy-back scheme, but such a scheme was considered and is still being considered by the Government.

Mr CARR: I am suggesting that the Government's decision was made without much consultation. The third possibility would have been to enlarge the legal size so that some rock lobsters which are currently of size would then be thrown back as being too small.

If the Government intended to opt for the shortening of the season there were options available other than the particular six weeks that were chosen. There is certainly a fair amount of feeling in the Geraldton region that the six weeks shortening of the season should have been the six weeks prior to the 15th March opening of the Abrolhos Islands season. It seems to me that this decision was made with very little consultation.

I asked a question in this House and was given an answer that the Rock Lobster Advisory Committee met once with the rock lobster

fishermen at the Abrolhos Islands last year. The answer went on to say that it was fairly informal and only about 100 fishermen were in attendance. The reports I have received indicate that this meeting was very informal and very brief and very few fishermen were able to attend.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is not right at all.

Mr CARR: That is the answer the Minister gave in this House on behalf of the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife. That is all I can go on.

Mr P. V. Jones: The answer referred to the number of meetings at the Abrolhos Islands.

Mr CARR: No, it did not. It referred to the fishermen within the Geraldton region.

Mr P. V. Jones: The answer I gave was that one meeting was held at the Abrolhos Islands; but it was not the only meeting because in another answer to another question I indicated there was a meeting at Geraldton.

Mr CARR: That is right; there was a seminar. The answer given was that one meeting was held and then it goes on to mention the seminar which was a research seminar. The main topics of discussion at this seminar were the life cycle of the rock lobster and predators such as octopus, not a reduced fishing effort.

Mr P. V. Jones: Do you not think that affects the industry?

Mr CARR: I have checked the original question and it did relate to rock lobster fishermen in the Geraldton region, not just the Abrolhos Islands. I am left with the distinct impression that insufficient consultation took place.

Mr P. V. Jones: It is an impression, not a fact.

Mr CARR: I would be delighted for the Minister to prove the facts to be wrong; but they are certainly based on the answers he gave. The Minister does not seem to be very interested in consultation, because recently he went to the Abrolhos Islands for three days out of season. He was prepared to go there, but not at a time when the rock lobster fishermen were going to be there to consult with him. His time in Geraldton was so brief that there was no opportunity for the fishermen to speak with him. The Minister did not attend a public meeting which took place and which a large number of fishermen attended. He sent the Director of Fisheries to represent him. It seems that there should be a great deal more consultation and more concern shown by the Government.

I should like to look quickly at the effects of the short season. The first effect is unemployment. I mentioned this last night and I will not go into it

in great detail now, but there are deckhands and factory workers who would normally have been out of a job for three months, who will now be out of a job for 4½ months. Not only will people in Geraldton be badly affected by this decision, but there are people living in coastal settlements who will be affected also. There are settlements situated on the coast where the owners of small shops, hotels, and small businesses rely heavily on the fishing trade and the amount of time that fishing trade will be available to them has been reduced by 1½ months, hence harming the economy of a number of those little towns.

The very short notice that was given has had another effect on these fishermen. Those who had bought new boats on the basis of certain expectations, in some cases have found themselves in trouble meeting their commitments. The reduced effort has not really occurred anyway, because a number of the fishermen increased their fishing effort during the last couple of months. Normally a number of the islands fishermen who fish on the coast in November, December, and into January have a lay off for a couple of months, or at least a month, to prepare for the Abrolhos Islands season. This year they worked the coast much longer to make up for the six weeks' closure.

Mr P. V. Jones: You are making it sound as though the industry was not aware of the discussion and interest in reducing the fishing effort.

Mr CARR: But the decision was made just like that. The decision was made very quickly.

Mr P. V. Jones: You mentioned the buy-back scheme, but if you were close to the industry you would know the industry was participating in the discussions.

Mr CARR: I am much closer to the industry than is the Minister who has just spoken and in fact I am much closer to the industry than is the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife, except when he has little holiday trips over to the islands. I want to make it clear I support a buy-back scheme.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is what Professor Capes has been looking at.

Mr CARR: I believe it is the most viable scheme.

Mr P. V. Jones: On the basis of his report—a buy-back scheme.

Mr CARR: If the Government intends to opt for a buy-back scheme, why has it gone for a shorter season? I do not think the Government knows which way it is going as far as this matter

is concerned. I am quite sure the Government does not know in which direction it is heading. It has taken this measure apparently with the idea of reducing the fishing effort by 18 per cent.

Mr P. V. Jones: You had better check that figure.

Mr CARR: I understand that there will be only a 6 per cent reduction in fishing effort as a result of this measure. It looks as if further reductions in fishing effort will be needed and maybe the Government will come up with a buy-back scheme. I certainly hope the Government will spend a great deal more time consulting with the industry next time.

I want to turn my attention to two Federal Government election promises which have shown themselves to be empty. The first one I refer to is the so-called fuel equalisation scheme which, of course, is not an equalisation scheme and is not going to equalise prices. It is a scheme designed to provide a small subsidy to some places throughout Australia and a document is available listing about 10 000 localities throughout Australia which will benefit from this subsidy. In Western Australia it is a matter of concern to us. Perth and the surrounding areas, including Pinjarra and Mandurah, will receive no subsidy at all.

Ports throughout Western Australia and places near ports again receive no subsidy. Areas situated near railheads will receive very little subsidy. The effect of this measure will be that most people in Western Australia will receive no benefit at all, or will receive less than 1c per litre by way of subsidy. I should like to read out a number of areas throughout this State which will receive no benefit whatsoever from the so-called fuel equalisation scheme. These places are: Albany, Bunbury, Busselton, Collie, Harvey, Denmark, Geraldton, Carnarvon, Esperance, Mt. Barker, Port Hedland, Broome, Derby, and Wyndham.

There will be no benefit in any of those places. I think there is a suggestion that fuel prices in those towns are already at the same level as they are in the metropolitan area. I can assure members that in my electorate there is a difference of 5c or 6c a litre, and we are gaining no benefit. Many other places are even worse off. I will give a few examples of the situation throughout the agricultural areas. At Jarrahwood and Boddington the subsidy will be 0.1c per litre; at Margaret River, Salmon Gums, Northam, and Guilderton it will be 0.3c, while at Augusta and Merredin the amount will be 0.5c.

So the list goes on. Places a long way from Perth have large differences in the fuel prices and

are gaining next to no benefit from the scheme. We have some rather illogical subsidies. For example, the subsidy at Mt. Magnet is 2.3c. A little further on, at Cue, it is 2.7c, while even further away and in a more remote area—Meekatharra—it is 1.9c. Why Meekatharra has a smaller subsidy when the petrol must go through the other places to get to Meekatharra is beyond my understanding.

It is an extraordinary scheme and was submitted by the Federal Government during the election but it has done nothing to achieve what was promised. It seems to me the electorate was sold a pup during the December election campaign.

Sir Charles Court: Will you oppose the legislation when we introduce it?

Mr CARR: I think the answer would be a much more comprehensive piece of legislation which really did go some way towards equalising fuel prices instead of the Government mouthing promises at election times, promises which provide very little benefit when put into effect.

On the other hand, apart from the measure which is supposedly reducing the price of petrol by a small amount in some places, the Liberal Government has increased the price of petrol throughout Australia by virtue of its crude oil policy. Its Budget decision last year increased fuel by 11c a gallon to everyone throughout the country and a policy announced at the same time will mean a further 10c a gallon increase each year for the next four years.

In the light of all this it is apparent not very much benefit will be gained from the present scheme. It certainly will not remove the inefficiencies in petroleum marketing revealed by the Collins Royal Commission. Only last week the Australian Automobile Association made representations to the Prices Justification Tribunal pointing out that it considered these inefficiencies to be costing the industry \$160 million a year. To put it another way, the inefficiency is costing the Australian motorist more than 1c a litre.

The next item to which I wish to refer is the Federal Government election promise to provide 2 per cent of the income tax to local authorities. Subsequently the Government deferred that promise, and this is a matter of very grave concern to local authorities throughout Australia and, of course, Western Australia. It appeared to me that local government in recent years had been doing very well financially from grants from Federal and State Governments. Local government experienced a new era during the

Whitlam regime when vaster sums than ever before were granted to local authorities.

Mr Rushton: Don't get on to that again!

Mr CARR: The Minister cannot deny that! I will be fair enough to say that subsequent to the Whitlam Government's action, the Fraser Government appeared as if it would continue the policy of granting an increasing amount of money to local authorities. If I can be fair enough to say that Whitlam started giving the money and Fraser continued giving it, then why cannot the Minister admit that Whitlam did give more than was ever previously given?

Mr Tonkin: Because he is too small!

Mr CARR: I am prepared to say I was quite happily looking forward to the fulfilment of the promise that local government would receive 2 per cent. It is true that this was to be done over three years from the present amount of 1.52 per cent. Now that promise has been deferred; for how long, we do not know.

Mr Rushton: You forget—

Mr CARR: The election promise was that it would be done during three years. There would be three steps—one, two, three. That has been deferred.

Sir Charles Court: Do not distort the situation. The Prime Minister has confirmed that the election undertaking will be honoured.

Mr CARR: I do not know what newspaper the Premier reads, or the broadcasts to which he listens, but the only communication I have had is through the ABC which reported that Senator Carrick said in Adelaide that the promise had been deferred.

Sir Charles Court: The commitment was made for the life of the Parliament.

Mr CARR: That was not—

Sir Charles Court: That was what it was. Look for yourself.

Mr CARR: I ask the Premier whether that assurance was made subsequent to Senator Carrick's announcement that the promise had been deferred.

Sir Charles Court: Senator Carrick's statement was factual and in accordance with the undertaking given by the Prime Minister.

Mr CARR: The Premier's interpretation is beyond me.

Sir Charles Court: You read the undertaking.

Mr CARR: I want this Government to take some sort of action—to be protesting. On opening night the Minister said that he would not protest.

Mr Rushton: Because I had no need to do so.

Mr CARR: He said the Government would fulfil the promise when it was appropriate. I want to know why it is not appropriate in this year's Budget. It was appropriate to make the promise in November and December that steps would be taken in three Budgets. Why is it not now appropriate to put the promise into effect and provide an increase in this year's Budget? I ask the Minister that question.

It is good enough for other Ministers to protest to the Federal Government when something goes wrong. The Minister for Transport is not backward in asking for money, so why does not the Minister for Local Government show more interest in his portfolio and stand up more strongly on the matter? He claims to be concerned about local government, but I am convinced this is not so. The Minister for Local Government will accept anything on the altar of this disastrous so-called new federalism.

Sir Charles Court: This Minister for Local Government is the best this State has ever had!

Mr CARR: I protest strongly and call on the Government to do so. I also call on the Local Government Association and the Country Shire Councils' Association to protest about the deferral.

Sir Charles Court: All you do is protest. Why not do something positive?

Mr CARR: Local government has a responsibility to upgrade its secretariat in Canberra.

Mr Rushton: You want to centralise the whole of local government.

Mr CARR: Here we go again with the Minister's favourite record. I am not saying that all local government should be centralised in Canberra.

Sir Charles Court: Not much!

Mr CARR: I am saying that the organisation in Canberra, which was established there by local government to represent local government, should be expanded so that more adequately and fully it can represent local government. It might have surprised the Minister to hear of this deferral, but it did not surprise everyone else. I will quote a lecture given in July last year by Dr John Power who was then the Director of the Australian Centre for Local Government Studies at the Canberra College of Advanced Education. He is one of the Australian authorities on local government and at the seminar he warned that there were many people in the Canberra bureaucracy who were anti-local government.

Mr Rushton: We have that in the Labor Party.

Mr CARR: Oh change the record! He warned there were strong forces in the bureaucracy in Canberra who believed local government was rating at levels lower than were appropriate. I know the Minister disagrees with that as do I and Dr John Power. However, Dr Power warned that there were those elements in the community and he suggested then that the local government associations should combine to upgrade their secretariat and establish a strong lobby in Canberra. He made the point that the Secretariat of the Australian Council of Local Government Associations has a miniscule budget based on Canberra standards.

I say that with several hundred local authorities throughout Australia it would not need a large contribution from each to establish a strong lobby to demand the money which belongs to it.

Mr Rushton: Explain why it should be demanding in the Federal scene.

Mr CARR: The State Government is not making strong representations to gain more from the Federal Government. I quote the cattlemen's union—representing a relatively small number of people—which, by establishing a strong lobby, has made considerable gains from Canberra.

Instead of waffling on here about centralism and so on, the Minister should be advocating that local government upgrade itself so that it can better be represented in Canberra.

In the remaining minutes available to me I wish to touch briefly on the question of dress in this Chamber.

A member: Or lack of it!

Mr CARR: It is pure coincidence that I am raising this matter on the day after you have acquired a new wig, Mr Speaker.

In the Chamber I have always tried to dress in the clothes I find comfortable and appropriate. This applies to functions I attend outside the Chamber as well. I dress in clothes which I hope are respectful to other people with whom I am associated and I think that generally I wear clothes which are in accordance with the values of the community at large.

Therefore I was very disappointed on the 16th March to receive a letter from you, Mr Speaker, advising me that the clothes I was wearing that day in the Chamber were not of an acceptable standard. That was the second occasion on which I had worn a safari suit in the Chamber. I was wearing the suit as I believe safari suits are meant to be worn, and certainly in the manner in which

they are usually worn; namely, with an open-necked shirt over the collar of the suit.

The first occasion I wore a safari suit was on the opening night of Parliament and no mention was made then by you about the fact, and I presumed the dress was acceptable. I might say—

The SPEAKER: Order! May I put you right on that point? In order not to embarrass the honourable member and others in the same position in front of our invited guests, I did not take the honourable member to task. The fact that I said nothing at the time did not mean that the dress was acceptable. That is something which is the responsibility of members of the Chamber, and all I am doing is interpreting their wishes when I answer questions or lay down the rules as I understand them. If you or any other member wishes to change the rules, let him give notice of a substantive motion, have it debated and carried by the House, and then members may come in in their singlets if that be the majority decision.

Mr Skidmore: Can we have little designs on the singlets?

Mr CARR: I can assure you, Mr Speaker, I would not have been embarrassed if you had raised the matter on opening night. Possibly it would have been yourself you would have been frightened of embarrassing. On that very warm night I received a number of compliments regarding the clothes I was wearing. I was told they appeared to be sensible and comfortable in the prevailing conditions. I wonder how many people approached you, Mr Speaker, on that warm opening night and suggested that your clothes were cool and appropriate for that weather!

Anyway, I was disappointed with the answer to my question when you advised the House on the 21st March that I would not be allowed to wear a safari suit in the manner usually acceptable; namely, with an open-necked shirt over the collar of the suit.

It seems to me personally that our rules are stupid and out of date; and that they are not practical in the hot weather we encounter in this place at this time of the year.

It seems to me, Mr Speaker, that while you have said that the rules are completely within the hands of the members, your answer to my question nevertheless implied that the Speaker's guidance had been sought on a number of occasions and that when the Speaker has given a direction in a matter it must be taken to be the attitude of the House unless the House otherwise decides. The answer gives the impression that the Speaker does have a considerable amount of say

in the matter, and if the Speaker said that it is appropriate for members to wear open-necked shirts with safari suits, it would be acceptable to the House. The power of initiative is with the Speaker in this matter should he decide to exercise it.

One of the silliest aspects about dress in this Parliament is that we have three sets of stupid rules.

Mr Sodeman: That is your opinion.

Mr CARR: Yes, I am giving my opinion.

Mr Tonkin: What else do we do in this place? That was a fatuous remark.

Mr CARR: In this Chamber members are required to wear a shirt and tie. In fact, I noticed from your answer, Mr Speaker, we are expected to wear long-sleeved shirts, and a coat is optional. However, I understand, it is permissible to wear a roll-necked jumper underneath a coat. One wonders why a tie and shirt or a roll-necked jumper under a coat is permissible and an open-necked shirt is not. Perhaps it is thought that members of the House might become excited at the sight of a few hairs exposed at the neck.

In the Legislative Council we have another set of rules. In that Chamber a coat is a must; the President insists on it. A member does not have to wear a shirt or tie in another place, but he must wear a coat. That seems to me to be quite strange.

In the dining room we have another set of rules, although they are substantially the same as the rules applying in the Legislative Council. One is required to wear a coat in the dining room, but I have seen people wearing shorts. I know many of our guests are embarrassed by the rules applying in the dining room. A person who is not wearing a coat can usually obtain one from the House Controller, and on occasions we have seen some peculiar sights, such as a small slight person wearing shorts topped by a coat supplied by our Deputy Controller, and which is about five sizes too big. I feel this situation causes much more embarrassment than would be caused by people not wearing coats.

Members of the Legislative Council come here to listen to debates, and vice versa. Surely one set of rules should apply throughout Parliament House. The other point I wish to raise is that of equality. Would the Minister for Lands be permitted to take her place in the Chamber dressed in a bikini, or is she trusted to wear what she considers is appropriate and sensible? Obviously she is trusted to do this, so why are not other members trusted in this way?

Sir Charles Court: The people who have had their farms burnt out will be very impressed with your speech tonight.

Mr Tonkin: Take your coat off!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CARR: I want to conclude by referring to a famous remark made by Martin Luther King. In view of the comments made by the member for Greenough last night, it is appropriate to quote the original. Martin Luther King said—

I have a dream that one day my four little children will grow up to live in a world where they will be judged not by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.

I would like to paraphrase that quote, and I certainly mean no disrespect to Martin Luther King because I realise our subject of dress is much less important than his subject of racism. My comment is—

I have a hope that one day this Parliament will grow up to become a place where members will be judged not by their mode of dress but by the integrity of their contributions.

I ask you, Mr Speaker, to give consideration to the matter of dress in the Chamber, and perhaps to give a different ruling.

The SPEAKER: I advise the member to follow the suggestion I made earlier. If he wants to amend the standard of dress in this Chamber, he may move a motion to that effect.

DR DADOUR (Subiaco) [5.18 p.m.]: Recently throughout Australia we have heard a great deal of criticism, and I think very unfair criticism, of the medical profession in general. I take exception to this criticism for the simple reason that the majority of the members of the medical profession are ethical people. There are always a few who go overboard, a few who overcharge, but this happens in every walk of life.

Let us look at the overall picture. I have been telling this Parliament now for the last seven years that the cost of health has been rising at far too great a pace and that certain steps should be taken to prevent this. My comments were made in the best interests of the people of Australia, and in particular of the people of Western Australia.

Western Australia must always be the best. We must have more hospital beds than everybody else and our hospitals must be the most luxurious and the most costly in the country. So we have the most luxurious, the most costly, and the most utilised beds in Australia. We have more than is necessary and this is the real tragedy.

The politicians who are probably to blame for the situation have tried to put the blame onto the medical profession. This is entirely unfair. The blame should be put where it belongs. Health costs have been spiralling without abatement. In Western Australia health costs have increased over 100 per cent every three years since 1965, and that is without having regard for inflation. This means that from 1965 until the present time, the cost of health in this State has been rising by 100 per cent in any three consecutive years. What a terrible admission! What a shocking admission that health costs have risen so much.

Probably I have failed in my attempts to get this message across. I have tried to point out that we were and still are expanding at far too great a pace; at a pace far greater than is necessary. My pleas seem to have fallen on deaf ears.

During my first three years in Parliament—from 1971 to 1974—my pleas fell on the deaf ears of the Tonkin Government, and now they are falling on the deaf ears of the Court Government during its second term. It gives me no pleasure to say, "I told you so; you should have heeded what I told you." In all fairness, some attention should have been paid to my comments, and shortly I will tell the House about the amount of attention they received, and this was precious little.

We must attack the problem where it commences. I take exception to the fact that so many people—politicians on the Federal scene and on the State scene—are prepared to bash the doctors. Taken as a percentage of the population, I would say that members of the medical profession are more humane than are the members of any other profession. There are stinkers amongst the medical profession and there are those who charge too much; those who abuse the system and welch on the rest of us. However, the majority of its members are beyond reproach, and we could not say that about the members of many professions. I am proud to be a member of the medical profession, and it does not give me any pleasure to hear the profession knocked.

I have spoken on this same subject many times over the last seven years and I have tried to suggest ways to attack it from different angles. However, I made no progress. In fact, I wonder whether the forum of Parliament is of any use whatever. I do not mean to denigrate Parliament but I wonder what I have achieved by standing up here year after year trying to suggest ways to solve this problem. Only token notice has been taken of my remarks. We hear that such-and-such will be done, but nothing ever happens. This happened firstly while the Tonkin Government

was in power and the present Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Health. He was a failure in that position, and I will say no more than that about him.

Mr Pearce: Nonsense!

Dr DADOUR: No nonsense about it.

Mr Pearce: Tell us about it now.

Dr DADOUR: I am sad to say that I can tell the member what went on, and it does not make me happy to see what is going on.

Mr Barnett: What do you think of the present one?

Dr DADOUR: I was prepared to leave the present one alone, but he is going on in the same merry way. He had many difficulties last year, and so I left him alone. He has this year to make up for last year. I am trying to be fair.

Mr Tonkin: He breathes a sigh of relief!

Mr B. T. Burke: Royal Perth Hospital has never grown so much as it has under this Government.

Dr DADOUR: Let us look at the running costs of health. I have here the figures for 1976-77. Federally \$5 400 million was spent on health, and that represents 10.6 per cent of the gross national expenditure. This means that the running costs of health are 10.6 per cent of our gross national expenditure. The figures are even worse on the State scene.

Mr Barnett: Under this Minister?

Dr DADOUR: Under the Government. Since I have been here, in excess of 25 per cent of our total State expenditure has been on health.

Mr Harman: Those figures don't mean anything unless they are compared with the figures for other places. What are the comparisons?

Dr DADOUR: I can tell the honourable member that we spend more on health than do the Governments in the Eastern States, although I do not know the exact amounts. I will come to that matter soon, but I am trying to get over a point here.

We hear a lot from the Federal Minister for Health (Mr Hunt) who is really being led by the Federal Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition is the man who introduced Medibank and he is quite paranoid about it. What a terrible admission to have been responsible for Medibank! He has been led up the garden path. What do the doctors get out of it?

Mr Bateman: The ones over East don't get a bad little cut out of it.

Dr DADOUR: Yes, I said that there are always some rotten eggs.

Mr Harman: And do they smell.

Dr DADOUR: There are not very many of them—about five only.

Mr Harman: One thousand were involved.

Dr DADOUR: But how many lay people compared with the number of doctors involved?

Mr Harman: Specialists, too.

Dr DADOUR: That is even worse; some of them are the worst grabbers of the lot, as well as the hospital administrators.

Let us move on. Mr Hunt has been abusing the doctors. The doctors have received 18 per cent of that \$5 400 million. Has anyone ever taken time out to see what has happened to the other 82 per cent? What is happening to the \$250 million spent by the State Government? That is one-quarter of our gross expenditure.

Mr Bertram: It is largely wasted.

Dr DADOUR: That money goes mostly to the teaching hospitals, and that is the root of the whole problem. The politicians have been trying to throw the blame onto the doctors, and now it is squarely back into their own court; it is their own total incompetence and dishonesty because that is where the majority of the money is going. I have continually warned this Parliament about the problem and the fact that it has been building up. Nobody can deny that; in fact, it could be said I have been paranoid about it. However, no-one can deny that I have been consistent. I have been extremely consistent, and now the truth is coming out. What has happened is the result of bureaucratic Government.

Mr Bertram: Hear, hear!

Dr DADOUR: I have no doubt at all in my mind that the Public Health Department and the Medical Department in this State are mismanaging our health services.

Mr Ridge: That is an expression of opinion. As a member, you have a right to express your views here, but it has been a pretty rare occasion for you to come to me or the department to give us the benefit of your so-called expert advice.

Dr DADOUR: I ask the Minister not to interfere any more.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Will the member resume his seat. There is far too much audible conversation and too many interjections. The member is a fair way from the *Hansard* reporters and from the Chair—

Mr B. T. Burke: That is no accident!



The SPEAKER: —and I am sure that the *Hansard* reporters, like me, are having difficulty hearing the member over the extraneous interjections and noise.

Mr Tonkin: Why do they not make you come to the table?

Dr DADOUR: All I ask is that members opposite let me get on with my speech. They are trying to make me have a go at the Minister.

Mr Tonkin: Why do they not make you Minister for Health?

Dr DADOUR: I do not want to be Minister for Health.

Mr Tonkin: You have declined the offer, have you?

Dr DADOUR: That really makes me laugh! I think I had better get in the dog house. The growth of these teaching hospitals has been permitted to escalate without any real inhibitions. It is a completely amoral situation. The State is bleeding the people of their income by means of unfair taxation.

Let us look at how much money is spent building these unnecessarily luxurious teaching hospitals. Where does the money come from? A little comes from the Federal Government and the balance from the State Government. Where does the State Government find the money? The majority, of course, comes from Internal Revenue. That means all the service charges are in excess of what they are purported to be. The people are being heavily taxed to build these teaching hospitals.

Let us look at the amount of money which has been spent on building hospitals over the last few years in Western Australia. In 1974-75, the Commonwealth contributed \$4.3 million and the State \$26.1 million, making a total spent on hospitals of \$30.42 million. In 1975-76 the Commonwealth contributed \$11.9 million and the State \$23.51 million, making a total of \$35.41 million spent on hospitals. During the year 1976-77, the Commonwealth contributed \$12 million, while the State's contribution was \$28.9 million, resulting in a total of some \$41 million spent on hospitals last year in this State. This year, the Commonwealth contribution is to be only some \$6 million, so probably the total spent will be down a little on previous years.

From where does this money come? It is the State's money. We are spending money on luxurious items which are not necessary. The sheer luxury of some of these teaching hospitals simply is not necessary. Western Australia is far ahead of the other States in the cost per bed, yet

we have more teaching hospital beds than we actually need.

This is a tragedy. It costs over \$200 per bed per day in Western Australian teaching hospitals. That is over \$100 000 per bed per annum, so for every eight or nine beds in a teaching hospital, we are talking about a cost of some \$1 million per year.

Mr Tonkin: What is the cost in nonteaching hospitals?

Dr DADOUR: The cost is much lower in such hospitals.

Mr B. T. Burke: How does the Western Australian situation compare with other States?

Dr DADOUR: Our costs are much greater.

Mr B. T. Burke: Why?

Dr DADOUR: It is because of the sheer unnecessary luxury of these establishments.

Mr Ridge: That is not correct!

Dr DADOUR: It is correct.

Mr Ridge: It depends on how these costs are assessed and what charges are included.

Dr DADOUR: What I say is correct; the Minister can have his say later.

Mr Ridge: Stick to the facts.

Dr DADOUR: I am sticking to the figures I have been able to obtain from the Eastern States.

Mr Harman: You are getting their blood up!

Dr DADOUR: That is all right; let them be. The running costs of these hospitals is the most important single influence on our health expenditure. Health must be treated as simply another item of expenditure; we should leave emotions out of it. But do not ever blame doctors for what has been spent on health, because it is not the doctors' fault. I agree that some doctors have taken advantage of the situation, but so have many lay staff; in addition, departments have been overspending large amounts of money. It must be patently obvious to even the stupidest person that overexpenditure has occurred and is still occurring. It seems the Government has very little control over this matter.

I warned my Government both in the party room and in Parliament that this situation was developing and I provided solutions to the problem. However, not one of those solutions or my advice has ever been heeded. The Minister asked why I did not approach the department. I have no access to the medical records in the department. What access do I have? They become immediately suspicious if I go near the place! The Minister knows as well as I do that it is

an impractical suggestion. What can I possibly gain by going to the department?

Mr Skidmore: You could have a ride in the lift.

Dr DADOUR: That is about all, and I would be lucky if I did not get stuck in the lift. Do not let us muck around with this matter. I am led to believe we have many more teaching hospital beds than are necessary, yet more beds are in the process of being provided at the moment. This is a terrible, horrible admission from a member on the Government side.

Mr Barnett: Do you have any idea of how many teaching hospital beds we should have?

Dr DADOUR: I do not wish to go into the precise number because I am not in a position to provide the member for Rockingham with accurate figures. However, I do know there are quite a number of teaching hospital beds over and above the requirement.

Mr Barnett: Would you say it would be 20 per cent in excess?

Dr DADOUR: It could be as high as 20 per cent or 30 per cent, but I cannot be sure. I understand that between 1972 and 1977, one of the teaching hospitals improved its staff to in-patient ratio from five to seven. I am also led to believe that the doctor to in-patient ratio at one of our teaching hospitals is one doctor to every 1.3 in-patients. That means for every 10 doctors there are 13 in-patients, or roughly one doctor to each patient. The lowest paid doctor in the establishment receives \$15 000 per annum plus overtime, which can run into an additional \$2 000. Therefore, it can readily be seen the teaching hospitals are involving the State in a great deal of expenditure. It leads one to wonder whether this should be the case.

I wish to refer now to the Llewellyn-Davies-Kintail report which was produced in 1976 and which, I am led to believe, is still secret. I have been able to obtain a copy of the document and I was very surprised and upset to note that the projection of population for three areas was distinctly incorrect. This data was supplied by working parties established by the teaching hospitals. I wonder just how accurate all these statements are. I wish to make only one quote from this report. It is as follows—

Numbers of hospital admissions are in excess of 200 per annum per thousand population, which is one of the highest admission rates in the world.

That represents an annual admission rate of 200 000 people for our population of around one million. Why is this? Are we a sick nation?

Mr Barnett: Are not the doctors responsible for that?

Dr DADOUR: The beds are available, so the beds are filled; that is why we have such a high admission rate. I repeat: There are more beds than are needed. I am led to believe it is even as high as 9.1. Why do we have such a high admission rate? It means that for every five members present, one will end up in hospital this year.

Mr Barnett: There are a lot of pressures brought to bear because of unemployment and the workers' compensation situation which could have something to do with it.

Dr DADOUR: I am referring to the year 1976, so do not come that bull with me. The member for Rockingham is a little out of date; he should not come that one.

Has the reason for this statement been investigated? I say that it could not have been because if the statement had been analysed there would have been an immediate halt to the hospital building programme. That is a horrible admission because we in this State pride ourselves on being healthy people. I keep asking myself what we are doing to curtail this spending. We are not doing anything to stop the building but we are also doing nothing to stop spending to keep these beds.

Certain people will react in a token and hurt way to what I have said. They will try to say my figures are incorrect. But one thing which they cannot say is incorrect—and which is my whole purpose in speaking—is that the blame rests fairly and squarely on the heads of the politicians.

Mr Ridge: Yourself included.

Dr DADOUR: My word, myself included, because I have failed to get the dumb, dumb message over.

Mr Ridge: That is perhaps because you have not done it very well.

Dr DADOUR: I take the blame for it; there is no need for the Minister to get hurt. He was just trying to incite me more. The blame rests fairly and squarely on the three Ministers who have held the position since I have been a member of this place—the present Leader of the Opposition, Mr Baxter, and the present Minister. The blame can go on the lot of them. They have shown inertia and a failure to get moving on the subject.

Mr Ridge: It will take more than what you are saying to hurt me.

Dr DADOUR: I am saying what I know to be true. After I have finished speaking there will be a token reaction. Somewhere in my speech I have probably said something that is not quite accurate

and that will be pulled to pieces; and so nothing will be done again. But I do not think so. I really believe the people will not accept this any longer. When they find that their hospital benefit contributions are rising, not because of the doctor part of it but because of the hospitalisation being so expensive, they will stop mucking about and listen to what I am saying.

Mr Speaker, we are spending all this money and it will go up by 30 per cent or 40 per cent this year. The \$5 400 million on the Federal scene and the \$250 million on the State scene will rise by about 30 per cent. The latest figures I have are for the year 1976-77. For the year 1977-78 the figures will be in excess of those figures by at least 30 per cent. What does all this money we are spending avail us? We are all going to die younger and we are not going to live any longer because the money has been spent incorrectly. It has been spent on treating disease rather than on the prevention of disease which is where we should be spending the money. I keep saying this to this Parliament but I do not seem to get anywhere.

Mr Ridge: You are not reading the statistics very well because more money is being spent on preventive medicine than ever before.

Dr DADOUR: I want to hear about it. I want to hear that some of the money has been set aside for preventive medicine. I want to see value for our money. Nothing will be done to improve the situation because for seven years now I have seen nothing done to overcome the problem; and I do not know why people are frightened to tackle it.

The way we are going at the moment our parliamentary system must fail and in 20 years' time the member for Fremantle may be our next Czar because we do not seem to be getting anywhere here. The answer to the problem is to come back to basic priorities for what is needed in regard to health and to leave emotion out of it as much as possible. This will mean the crushing of the bureaucracy. There is no "may be" about this. The bureaucracy has taken over completely in this area; we seem to be floundering and getting nowhere.

The problem should be taken out of the political and departmental arenas. We should have a hospitals commission independent of politics and of the department and answerable only to the Minister and it should be similar to the Hospitals and Charities Commission in Victoria. That will be the answer to the problem but at the beginning of the operations of this commission we must be extremely careful that we get the right people. I envisage a commission

consisting of three to five people—no more—and they must be beyond the political arena. We must not get the abortion of a commission which the Minister for Health in the Tonkin Government produced in the form of the Teaching Hospitals Commission, which was a shocker.

I go even so far as to say that we should not have teaching hospitals as we know them at present. I would divide the larger hospitals such as Royal Perth Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, and now Fremantle Hospital into 300-bed hospitals with two or three on the same site under different administrations. Members may say that the administration will increase but it will not. There are so many administrators in the existing hierarchy that the situation is just stupid. I would use these 300-bed hospitals as teaching hospitals and all new hospitals would not have more than 300 beds—preferably fewer than 300—so that every person who works in an establishment can know every other person who is working there.

Three hundred beds is the optimum size for a hospital. Above that size things start to get topheavy and Parkinson's Law operates. If we keep hospitals to 300 beds patient care will come first; and it must come first. In some of our teaching hospitals patient care is not coming first—teaching comes first and patient care comes second. This is a terrible admission and it is inherently wrong.

My answers to the problem are, firstly, the crushing of the bureaucracy and, secondly, the formation of a health commission and the breaking up of existing establishments which have more than 300 beds into 300-bed hospitals although the hospitals may physically be in the same area. I would run them as different hospitals and use them as teaching hospitals. I would have brain surgery in one hospital, heart surgery in another, and so on, until we have one hospital for each speciality with their higher expertise throughout the metropolitan area, with a free interchange of patients.

The numbers of people supposedly working in the teaching hospitals have been built up for the following reasons: Extra residents' jobs have been created for the extra residents coming out of our university for the first year of preregistration practice. Then more residents' jobs have been created for doctors coming from other States and from overseas. Doctors are still definitely coming from overseas. Late last year in the *British Medical Journal* there was an advertisement for doctors to come to Perth and it was exactly the same advertisement as that which appeared in magazines the previous year when we kicked up a

fuss about it in this Parliament. Nothing was done and we have more of these jobs advertised.

The third matter of concern is that all honorary doctors in our hospitals now are forced to be paid. They are no longer honorary but must receive payment. I think there are a couple of exceptions where doctors have refused to take payment and refuse to lose their honorary status but the majority have been forced to accept payment.

Let us look at the nursing situation. We have student nurses spending more time in the classrooms. I do not say there is anything wrong with that as they have more to learn now than in days gone by. However, more people are now being employed to cover the wards so we have a build-up of student nurses in the establishment.

We also have a build-up in nursing administration and nursing ward administration. We have a greater number of people employed in this area than in years past. Our establishment was once described to me by a nursing sister as the best in the world. I corrected her and said it was the worst.

The third area I wish to mention is the paramedical field. This is an area where the State Government seems to have no liaison, or very little jurisdiction, over the tertiary institutions and this is so very, very wrong. Here we have demand equalling supply instead of supply equalling demand. We have too many paramedical people turned out by universities and technical colleges. We get too many physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social workers, and pharmacists, including ward pharmacists. We therefore have to make demand equal supply instead of vice versa and so we have a limited market. If we had controlled numbers being turned out in this area we would not have to employ these people where they are not needed, as presently we do.

All these people I have mentioned are required to have secretarial and clerical assistants plus domestics to look after them. So it can be seen how the numbers have built up.

I think the greatest need for concern of all is in the three levels of administration; that is, the medical, nursing, and lay administration. These are the areas where we find the empire builders. These people say, "If there is money available why should we not grab it and be in the sweep too?" So we find everyone taking as much as he can get. This is the tragedy of the situation and, as I said, it is in this area where we find the schemers and empire builders we do not want.

Recently we have heard members of the Mental Health Department indicating they want a cut of the chop too. They are putting in a bid for

improved facilities. They may need these facilities but all I can say is, "beware" and remember *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Their staff has increased by 233 this year and I wonder why.

Another area of concern is the Public Health Laboratories and the main problem here is duplication. The laboratories duplicate much of the private sector work. The laboratories' are spreading like a cancer under the pretence of being decentralised. The Public Health Laboratories employ an extra 219 people this year. In 1974 I attended a committee at the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre where the Director of the Public Health Laboratories and the university's Professor of Pathology were interviewed. These two men are located in the same building and I made a recommendation at the committee meeting that their two departments should be joined, firstly for economic reasons and secondly because we would still have the people at the top together which means we have that extra bit of expertise available.

I submitted this recommendation to the Premier and he chose to ignore it. At that time in 1974 my proposition would have saved \$2 to \$4 million a year. I wonder how much it would save today.

These are some of the things I have been trying to achieve over the last seven years. I have been trying to improve Government management in the health field and to reduce its spending of moneys. It is obvious that the people in charge have not done very much at all otherwise they would not have permitted the hospitals to continue in the manner they have and will continue to do so. The situation will be worse if something is not done now.

Let us consider what has been done. A staff ceiling has been put on some of the teaching hospitals which means they cannot employ certain staff in certain areas without approval.

Mr Ridge: All of it.

Dr DADOUR: Did you say "balls"?

Mr Ridge: I said "All of it." I do not use the type of language you seem to be accustomed to using in this House.

Dr DADOUR: I am led to believe that no money can be spent without ministerial approval on the north wing of the Royal Perth Hospital in the member for Balcatta's electorate. In 1974-75, \$104 million was spent on it, in 1975-76 the figure was \$1.16 million, and I do not know how much was spent in 1976-77 or how much will be spent in 1977-78.

Mr B. T. Burke: I am worried they will be knocking down part of my house next.

Dr DADOUR: That will not be long. It is apparent that something is going to be done. It appears to me that the Minister for Health is all set to go, so let me put him in his place. I have five minutes left to me.

An Opposition member: Hear, hear!

Dr DADOUR: The fault lies with the Tonkin Government and then at the feet of the present Government. Very little has been done and I do not know why, although perhaps the Government considers it is better not to rock the boat.

I have had many people come to me saying, "Do not tell me this money being spent on the hospital system is still going on." Many people complain to me about the lavishness of Government spending.

Mr Bertram: Parliamentary colleagues?

Dr DADOUR: I was prepared to leave the present Minister alone because, as everyone knows, he had a lot of pressure on him last year. However, it is obvious the Minister does not intend to leave me alone. He intends to have a go. In the last session of Parliament members will recall that two Bills were introduced. One related to welfare and the other contained four amendments to the Health Act. Neither of these Bills was proceeded with.

Mr Ridge: Because the session of Parliament expired before the Bills got to the stage of being discussed at the second reading stage.

Dr DADOUR: I am sure the Leader of the Opposition, in his capacity as shadow Minister for Health, did answer at the second reading stage of one of those Bills; therefore, I must correct the Minister for Health and Community Welfare.

Mr Ridge: I do not believe he did.

Dr DADOUR: The Leader of the Opposition did do so.

Mr Davies: On the hospital one; but not on the community welfare Bill.

Dr DADOUR: The Bill relating to community welfare did not get to the second reading stage because there were too many problems.

Mr Ridge: Stay around for a few days.

Dr DADOUR: I will oppose it if I have to oppose it.

Mr Ridge: It is in precisely the same form.

Dr DADOUR: If the nuns and all the voluntary people are happy with the Bill, I will agree with it.

Mr Ridge: They are happy with it.

Dr DADOUR: I shall wait until it comes before the House. I shall take it to those people myself. The Minister introduced some amendments to the Health Act. I asked him a specific question at that time, which was, "Have the doctors been consulted concerning these amendments?" The Minister said, "Yes, I believe so." That was the most inaccurate statement I have ever heard.

Mr Ridge: Why was it inaccurate? I believed it to be so.

Dr DADOUR: The Minister can go to town shortly; but have no fear, it will be a running battle. I took 20 Bills, plus 20 second reading speeches to the AMA to be distributed amongst the doctors for peer control. We hear a great deal about peer control. It was reported to me that the doctors did not know about a number of the proposed amendments. They had not been consulted. As a result, I was presented with three amendments.

Mr Davies: The General Practitioners Society was asked, I think.

Dr DADOUR: I do not care about them. They are not my kettle of fish.

Mr Davies: I think they are gaining power.

Dr DADOUR: I do not know about that. Because of the situation I have just mentioned, my job was not made any easier when I was in the party room, and the Bill was put aside until this session when some common ground could be found to enable it to be reintroduced. I do not know the situation in regard to that at the present time.

Mr Ridge: What is your kettle of fish, if I may ask? You told us "it" was not your kettle of fish. Is the AMA your kettle of fish?

Dr DADOUR: That is correct.

Mr Ridge: Well, it has been discussed with them.

Dr DADOUR: I believe I am performing my job as best I know how. I do not go near the Minister, nor do I go near—

Mr Ridge: And I think it is a great pity that you do not.

Dr DADOUR: The Minister has never invited me, so I am not going to go running after him.

Mr Ridge: Why do I have to extend an invitation? If you have a problem, you have a right to approach me.

Dr DADOUR: The present Minister for Health and Community Welfare will be just as inept as his predecessors. This is what I am afraid of. I believe that nothing will be done in this area, because I do not think the Government knows

what to do. We are bleeding the State of its money. We are spending money on luxurious hospitals—hospitals on which money should not be spent.

Mr Skidmore: It would be better spent on building homes for Aborigines.

Dr DADOUR: I do not want to talk about that subject. I should like to see the money put into housing where it is needed.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Dr DADOUR: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

MR GRILL (Yilgarn-Dundas) [6.04 p.m.]: Last week the Premier returned from Japan after having conducted negotiations on behalf of the Western Australian iron ore producers with Japanese steel mill owners. I do not want to comment on the success or otherwise of that particular trip. I shall leave that to other people who are in a better position to comment.

I sincerely applaud the action taken by the Premier. I applaud the steps he took when he went to Japan, not only because he spoke to the Japanese about iron ore, but also, and more importantly, because it seems to me to represent a new turn, and a refreshing turn, in the approach the Government is taking to the mining industry. I have always believed and my party has always long believed, that the mining industry of this State, and in fact of the whole nation, requires not only Government involvement in planning, not only Government co-ordination during the setting up of the mining operations, but also Government intervention at the time of negotiations.

Some years ago this action would have been refuted by many people on the opposite side of the House; but it is good to see the change in the attitude of the men on the Government benches and it is good to see that they are now involving themselves to some extent at least—not to the extent I should like, but at least to some extent—in the planning and co-ordination of the mining industry in this State. They have a very long way to go, but at least the unfettered, free market principle is being thrown out the door and I think it is not before time.

The free market approach, with its unfettered nature, where every man was out for himself was wasteful and would have to be wasteful in terms of this country's scarce resources and in terms of scarce manpower. We, on this side of the House, believe that the Government must become involved in monitoring the mining industry. It must become concerned with rationalising the industry. It must be totally involved in the

planning of the industry and it must make a commitment with respect to guiding the industry.

Unless we do that, our mining industry like so many of our other industries will simply be steamrollered by the centralised and highly planned economies of other countries. I speak here of the State-owned mining industry of Brazil; I speak here of the centrally planned and co-ordinated industries of the communist bloc countries; and I speak also of the centrally planned and co-ordinated industries of Japan. Unless we adopt an approach along the lines I have mentioned, we will soon be easy prey for these particularly centrally controlled and highly developed industries. For those reasons, I applaud the new turn that seems to have been taken by the Government and, as I said before, I do not wish to dwell on the success or otherwise of the mission.

I do feel further that such missions to other countries should not be undertaken in an atmosphere of panic or at the last moment. They should be part and parcel of an ongoing process which should start at the beginning of the mining operation and not when the mining operation is finished.

We need long-term planning, rational deployment of resources, and research and planning in respect of production and marketing. In the past, to a large degree, such planning has been almost non-existent and, in some cases, has been completely absent.

I would like to deal with some of the examples of the lack of co-ordination and planning in the eastern goldfields. The short-sightedness of Governments has led to very severe economic situations over a period of years which have been very hard for the goldfields people to weather.

Firstly, let us consider the nickel mining industry which, in my view, got off on a very bad footing. There was a scramble to get into exploration; there were all sorts of entrepreneurs rushing around flogging off land which was obviously of no value; there were giant rip-offs on the stock market; there was a helter-skelter rush to get into production and an almost total lack of rationalisation in the industry in the early stages; and later the companies were gambling on the spot market.

What has all this led to? It has led to a situation where small operators have had to close following the downturn in prices. Almost the whole of the Windarra operation is closed and many people in Laverton have had to move out. Half the industry at Norseman is on the verge of closure and 1 200 people in the nickel industry have lost their jobs. People have been uprooted.

It seems to me that with some sort of planning many of the present problems could have been avoided. We have a ridiculous situation. The Windarra operation is closing down. It has involved a lot of money in exploration and development on the ore body itself. We have an open cut where the whole overburden has been taken off and the ore body has been laid open for mining. The mining operation from now on should be relatively cheap. In other words, we have a nickel mine fully developed and the costs of development have been amortised to a large extent. The plant there is not being used and the whole mining town is closing down so that all the infrastructure, including most of the houses, will be of no use. Men must leave the area and businesses are closing down.

The ridiculous aspect is that only 100 or so kilometres away we have another mine going into production. It seems so silly and such a waste. The Agnew operation is going into production. What a waste of manpower, infrastructure, and money have been involved! A great deal of it could have been avoided by some sort of rational planning within the industry. A great deal could have been avoided also had companies been prevented from gambling, and instead of short-term contracts, long-term contracts should have been arranged.

I realise that a few years ago the spot market was attractive. The prices were high; but surely the situation called for a stable basis for the industry, and long-term contracts should have been arranged.

Mr Coyne: Does not the member realise that two mining giants are competing with each other?

Mr GRILL: The honourable member is right. That is part of it; but a great deal of the problem could have been ameliorated in this area had long-term contracts been written. As members are aware, Agnew is a prime example of this. It has long-term contracts. But now it is being involved in costs which the mining company, not so far away, and in the electorate of the honourable member, has already incurred. Yet that mine is closing down. That is not rational and indicates a lack of planning in the early days.

Mr Laurance: Perhaps long-term contracts were not available then. It is easy to have hindsight.

Mr GRILL: It is, and I certainly take the point. However, had the Government been monitoring the situation it would have realised the position.

I would like to dwell on another aspect of the industry; that is, prospecting. As members appreciate, prospecting is the basis of any mining

industry and unless we have ongoing exploration, we will not have any mines in the future. All members appreciate that exploration by prospectors in Western Australia has been the basis of the industry. However, in this regard two vital factors are involved. Firstly, we must have prospectors; and, secondly, we must have land upon which they can prospect.

In this State the situation has developed where we do not have as many prospectors as we should have and, more importantly, we do not have enough land available to them. The day before I came to Parliament this week, an old prospector visited me at my office. He had been prospecting successfully some years ago and was a good prospector. He had made a lot of money and had moved to Perth where he had gone into business. However, because he became sick of the business he got out of it and decided to return to prospecting.

First of all he went to the Murchison and around Meekatharra, but he could not find any ground not already pegged. He told me that most of the ground he was investigating was pegged, but was not being worked.

He then moved to Mt. Magnet and found tremendous tracts of land there tied up by one company. It was impossible to obtain any kind of exploration permit regarding that land, because the processes within the Mines Department were such that the land could not be dealt with.

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

Mr GRILL: Prior to the tea suspension I was talking about a prospector who returned to the goldfields in an endeavour to find land on which he could prospect. He first went to Meekatharra and found none. He then moved further down the Murchison and went to Mt. Magnet, where he found the land had been pegged and to a large extent taken up by one mining company under what appears to be a TR, so bureaucratic red tape prevents his prospecting on that land. He moved from there to Payne's Find, without any luck.

He went back to Perth and decided to try the eastern goldfields where, being the scene of his past successes, he thought he would probably do well. He went to Coolgardie and found no land he could take up that was not already pegged. Everywhere he went he found land which was pegged but which was not being used and upon which the normal working conditions were not being applied.

He then moved to Kalgoorlie and found all the Golden Mile was pegged, notwithstanding the fact that only a very small portion of it was being worked. He consulted the maps in the Mines

Department and found the land was taken up. Nevertheless, he prospected around and found what he thought was an interesting proposition at the apex of a corner where three land tenures under the Mining Act coincided. One was owned by one of the large mining companies in Kalgoorlie and the other two were owned by prospectors.

He found the large mining company—and one would not need to be a magician to guess which company it was—had had the land tied up for 18 years and had not done any work on it for the whole of that period. He found one of the prospectors had had his land tied up for nearly 17 months without any work whatsoever being done on it, and the third piece of land was tied up by another prospector who had not done any work on it for three years.

It might be asked why he did not take the matter up under the forfeiture conditions in the Mining Act, but we must take into account that there is a natural reluctance on the part of prospectors and people in the eastern goldfields to be seen as persons who jump claims; and that is what they are called if they apply for forfeiture of someone else's claim. They do not like doing it and they resist it. It leads to ill-feeling in the industry. On the other hand, the wardens who sit in the area do not like ordering forfeiture of mineral claims under the forfeiture conditions, and they do so only with great reluctance. Generally speaking, they do not do it at all.

Only a few years ago it was my lot to take a forfeiture application against the leases which belonged to a grand old company on the Golden Mile; namely the Great Boulder leases. The Great Boulder company had closed down its mines about 1969-70. It had made numerous announcements in the Press to the effect that it saw no future in going on with gold production, but it kept its leases and remained there.

Some years later a miner came to me and asked me to make out an application for forfeiture. I asked him, "Have you complied with the Act?" He said, "Yes, I have." I asked, "Has the mining company complied with the Act?" He said, "No, it has not." It was a matter of record that the company had not complied with the Act for something like two or three years.

The application went before the warden, who had to concede to a large extent the merit of the claim, but he rejected it on the flimsiest of technical grounds; not because the application should not have been granted in accordance with the conditions of the Mining Act but merely because of the precedent it would have set to

take leases of this nature away from a company which had held them for 50 years.

What it amounts to is that a large amount of land in the goldfields has been tied up by companies and prospectors, large and small, who are not working their land and who are sitting on it by reason of a gentlemen's agreement that one does not go around jumping other people's claims. I submit that practice is not in the best interests of Western Australia. If prospectors are not able to move onto the land and prospect it, we will not have any growth to speak of in the mining industry. In the past, it has mainly been prospectors who have found the major ore bodies.

I say those people who want to work the land should be given the opportunity to do so, and it is obvious the Government must take a hand in the matter. In my view, the Mining Act should be amended to provide that those companies, prospectors, and leaseholders who do not work their claims within a reasonable period automatically forfeit them unless they apply for an exemption. Otherwise, I can see a situation where the land will be eternally tied up by people who do not have any interest in working it but who have some general vague idea that a big mining company might come into the area and find a bonanza, and they will be able to flog the claims off to the company. I say again: let the people who want to work the land have a fair go.

I would like to turn to the goldmining industry, and it might be fair for me to outline generally the situation in the eastern goldfields at the present time.

I would like to make a few comments about the basic types of ore found in the goldfields. There are two types of ore, and those who know something about goldmining might forgive me for being a bit pedantic. There is refractory ore which needs roasting, and free milling ore which does not need roasting and is merely pulverised and put across a strake or cyanided.

Most of the ores of the Golden Mile are refractory-type ores which need to be roasted. For treating the ore in the goldfields at the present time we have the State Battery. The advantage of the State Battery is that it is cheap; however, it has several disadvantages. Firstly, it treats only small tonnages; secondly, it is not particularly efficient; and, thirdly, it does not treat any refractory-type ores. Also in the goldfields we have some private plants. The North Kalgurli treatment plant was converted to a nickel treatment plant some years ago and it is still a treatment plant for nickel from Redross and Selcast. There is the Oroya plant belonging to



Kalgoorlie Mining Associates and that treats free-milling ores of the type, as members know, not predominating on the Golden Mile.

The other plant which did treat refractory ore—in other words, the bulk of the ore from the Golden Mile—was the Chaffers plant. That was sold off some years ago when Lake View and Star was in amalgamation with Goldmines of Kalgoorlie. The name of this company was changed on several occasions. However, that Chaffers plant was sold off a few years ago when the Fimiston operation closed down and it leaves the goldfields in the situation that it has no plant to mill the great bulk of the ores coming from the Golden Mile; absolutely no plant whatsoever.

Apart from the ore from the Golden Mile, within the radius of Kalgoorlie there are a number of other small and medium-sized goldmining operations which mine refractory ore. These operations also are unable to treat their ore because there is no plant.

Mr Coyne: There are no roasters, in other words.

Mr GRILL: There are no roasters, and there is no plant set up in that configuration. That in itself is a problem; the fact that there is no plant to treat refractory ore.

The second problem is that really there is no efficient plant for treating ore in the eastern goldfields apart from the Oroya plant which treats the free-milling ore from the Mt. Charlotte mine. This plant is utilised completely so anyone else who has a large ore body or has an ore body which has refractory-type ore in it cannot have it treated on the goldfields, and that is a tremendous impost to bear. It means simply that the bulk of the ores from the eastern goldfields cannot presently be treated.

On past occasions I have been critical of the Government for allowing the Chaffers plant to be sold off, and I will not go through that again. However, certain solutions must be looked at in respect of goldmining. The first solution would be to reconstitute the Chaffers plant, and that is fairly impossible at the present time as most of it has been sold off. The second possibility is to build a custom mill. Such a mill would treat ore from various producers. It would not treat ore exclusively from one producer but rather it would treat ore from various producers and charge a fee for doing so. It would pay out on the basis of the analysis and sampling of the ore as it went through the treatment plant. This idea has obvious attractions and some obvious disadvantages. It would mean that the small and medium producers in the area could get into

production. It would mean that those companies which have refractory-type ore could also get into production. It would provide an efficient treatment plant for any other ores in the area. It may well allow some big mines to get off the ground. All those things could lead to a real opening up of the Golden Mile and the areas surrounding it.

There is support for such a mill in Kalgoorlie. Most of the prospectors support it, most of the small mineowners support it, and the public generally are very much in favour of it. It is not a new idea on the goldfields; it has been bandied around for some time.

From time to time the Mines Department has considered the proposition, but it has never gone ahead with it. If we accept the proposition that such a mill should be built, we have to think about who may build it. It seems to me that it would not be the prospectors who would build it because they would not have the money to do so; it would not be the big companies that would build it because they would build their own plants; and it would not be the speculators because they never build anything—they would rather speculate on the rise and fall of overseas currencies than put their money into goldmining. So the situation arises that there is only one logical body that could put up such a plant, and that is the Government.

The idea has been around for some time and, as I mentioned, the Mines Department has looked at it. The Government's reaction to the challenge has been rather tardy; it has been unenthusiastic and lethargic, but not altogether antagonistic. Finally, after some months and years of prompting, the Government, through the regional administrator, requested that the Eastern Goldfields-Esperance Regional Development Committee look at the feasibility of setting up such a plant. That was some months ago and nothing has happened since then.

It seems to me that the whole approach taken by the Government was wrong. The approach was far too amateurish; it was not a professional approach. The matter was placed in the hands of the regional administrator. Admittedly this gentleman has some engineering ability, but he has no mining background whatever and I do not know what funds he was given to go ahead with the feasibility study. In any event nothing has eventuated from it.

It seems to me, and I think it would seem to most logical people, that a study of this sort which has such important ramifications to the people of the eastern goldfields should have been

approached in a professional way. The resources of the Mines Department and of the Department of Industrial Development should have been thrown into the study and it should have been carried out thoroughly and properly. I have said before that I believe the Government's whole approach was wrong and I begin to doubt whether the Government can act decisively on a question of this nature.

I would now like to turn to the present situation in respect of the goldmining industry in Kalgoorlie which I mentioned earlier. There is only one major mine operating at present; that is, the Mt. Charlotte mine. According to its owners, that mine was saved by the Fraser Government's devaluation of 17½ per cent some time ago. Since that time the mine has gone ahead and \$2.8 million has been spent doing up the old plant and installing new plant. The mine has 10 years of reserves, and its present prospects are good. Currently it is running at a good profit, and with the recent upsurge in the price of gold it will run at a much greater profit than it was doing earlier in the year.

The other and more interesting aspect of the situation in Kalgoorlie is that on the Fimiston leases—namely, the Golden Mile situation—no mines are operating in spite of the fact that there are good reserves there. According to the owners of the leases there are reserves of seven years, the grade is reasonable, and they have hopes of getting back into production. However, as I mentioned before, they cannot get back into production because there is no way to treat the ore. Presently the feasibility of reopening the Golden Mile is being considered and Kalgoorlie Mining Associates put forward two prospects to be looked at. The first is to reopen the whole of the Golden Mile; a very ambitious project requiring \$30 to \$35 million-worth of capital expenditure, comprising \$7.5 million for a new electricity power plant, \$7.5 million for new development underground, and \$15 million or so for new general plant, plus another few million dollars over that, totalling about \$35 million.

It is a very ambitious project. The company hopes to treat 56 000 tonnes of ore in a four-week period, and in my view the project is somewhat grandiose at this stage.

Mr Coyne: It will cost \$11 million to reopen the Hill 50 mine.

Mr GRILL: The other possibility they are looking at is something much more practical to my mind, and is something we have urged the company to look at for some time; that is, to reopen on a limited scale. The company is now

looking at this project and has indicated to us that it is looking at an operation of 10 000 tonnes a month, using the Associated Leases and the Perseverance shaft. The company would be able to get into such production without the gigantic cost necessary to open the whole of the Golden Mile, and it intends to use some of the old roasters that have remained at that plant for some time.

The company has given the member for Kalgoorlie and myself an undertaking that it will make a definite decision in respect of reopening this section of the Golden Mile by the 30th June. I personally believe the company is keen and enthusiastic to get on with the job, and I wish it well.

The only other major mining company in the area is North Kalgurli which operates on leases on the edge of the Golden Mile. It has no treatment plant and has been out of production for some time. The shaft and plant of the company are in good order but, as already mentioned, there is no treatment plant. The company is presently undertaking a feasibility study in respect of its operation. It put forward a plan to the Government only a few weeks ago whereby it will reconvert its nickel treatment plant into a gold treatment plant. Basically that proposition was put forward to the Government to enable the company to keep 105 workers in employment.

I think the prospect has merit, and the Government should be urged to accede to the request of the company. That does not mean necessarily that North Kalgurli will go into production, because the feasibility study in respect of the operation still has not been completed, and the conversion of the plant to a gold cyanide extraction plant to treat refractory ore could still present problems. Certainly we support the notion that the company reconvert the nickel treatment plant to a gold treatment plant, and I suggest the Government should provide some assistance for that to be done.

The situation in the goldfields, as I mentioned on another occasion, is serious, and I cannot stress too greatly to members how serious it is. Towns are closing down, men are leaving the area, businesses are folding up, 1 200 jobs have been lost, and all the great mines of the Golden Mile are now closed.

In my view the situation calls for urgent and dramatic action, and it seems to me that such action has been almost entirely lacking. The Government perhaps has not been entirely derelict in its duties, because on Tuesday, the

28th March, the Premier made the following statement—

The State Government is maintaining close contact with two Kalgoorlie goldmining companies which are studying the possibility of resuming production from their leases at Fimiston.

The Premier, Sir Charles Court, said yesterday that he was pleased that the companies had been carrying out the studies since the gold price started to rise dramatically last year.

But he said that it would be some time before KMA and North Kalgurli would be in a position to decide the economic practicability of mining at Fimiston.

Although the price of gold had increased considerably in the past six months, there was no long-term guarantee that the current prices could be maintained.

Both companies needed to exercise careful judgment to ensure that a heavy investment of capital would not lead to financial difficulties if the gold price slumped again.

Sir Charles said that if the companies submitted realistic proposals, the Government would give urgent consideration to measures it could take to assist.

He said that he had also been approached by the WA Trades and Labor Council to convene a meeting of all groups involved in goldmining, so that all points of view could be considered.

This might be more appropriate when the mining companies had evaluated their position and there was some positive plan to consider.

Such a meeting would be convened if the circumstances warranted it.

Perhaps the Government has not been derelict in its duties, but certainly it has not been jumping out of its skin to assist. I believe the urgent situation we have on the goldfields at the present time warrants some dynamic action by the Government.

Mr Coyne: Is there any way that the profits from the Mt. Charlotte operation could be channelled into other ore bodies that are known to exist and would be profitable?

Mr GRILL: I presume Kalgoorlie Mining Associates would probably use part of its profits from the operation at Mt. Charlotte to keep the Fimiston operation going.

Mr T. D. Evans: The member should know the

answer would be "What about the shareholders?" They haven't been paid a dividend for years.

Mr GRILL: I do not know about that. However, the company also has overseas partners, as the honourable member would be aware. It seems to me the Government really has not done what it should have done in this area.

In my view the Government should have done two things. Firstly, it should have been up there with the companies examining the situation. It is just not good enough to sit on the sidelines and leave everything to the company. Secondly, the Government should have been offering some sort of incentives for the goldmining companies to get back into operation. The Government was prepared to take such action in respect of the Redross nickel mine when it was about to close down. On that occasion the Government said it was prepared to forgo royalties to the extent of something like \$330 000. I think there is an urgent case for concessions of that nature to be given to the goldmining industry; however, so far the industry has not been offered any such concession.

In my view the Government should be up in the area and actively looking at ways and means of reactivating these mines. As I said before, it is not good enough for the Government to be passively sitting on the sidelines saying it is keeping in contact with the goldmining companies. That is just not good enough, and it is really quite sad.

At this stage the Federal Government has not been informed of the situation in respect of the feasibility studies being carried out; and I can say that without qualification because the companies themselves have told me. It would seem to me that if the State Government is aware of these feasibility studies, as it says it is, it should at least have made the Federal Government aware of the situation so that if the latter Government could provide any help it could be provided promptly. However, that has not been done.

In all of these spheres it is my view that although the Government has taken some hesitant steps along the lines of actually getting involved in the goldmining industry, it has a long way to go.

The Minister for National Resources (Mr Anthony) said on the 15th January, 1977—

Australia's mining industries were poised for a great new surge of development, . . .

Then he gave some nebulous reasons why that should be the case. He then pulled out that old chestnut about the Whitlam Government having stifled industry for three years and said now that he was at the helm everything would be all right. Of course, we have seen what happened. Not only

have we seen what happened, but we have seen that this man was not in touch with the industry. The top man in the country had no notion at all of what was going on in the mining industry and in the overseas markets. It seems to me that situation is absolutely ludicrous. How could any proper planning be carried out when we have some fool like this saying the mining industry is poised for a surge when in fact it is poised to go down the shaft? It is pathetic.

It is obvious he feels that, having taken the helm, all he has to do is sit back and allow the invisible hand to right everything. With that sort of philosophy, the industry has no absolute hope at all.

**MR WILLIAMS (Clontarf)** [8.00 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, so ably moved by my colleague, the member for Murdoch.

I feel it would be inappropriate, bearing in mind the difficult year we have experienced, if some mention were not made of water and the water supplies within our State. Members will realise we have now suffered the three driest seasons ever recorded. This has necessitated much tightening of the belt to achieve a significant reduction in water consumption figures for the current year. Under the water saving policy it has been necessary for the first time since 1959-60 to disallow the use of mechanical sprinklers.

Bearing in mind there are some 252 000 services and a fairly substantial increase annually, it is pleasing to see that the targets set by the board in an effort to reduce our consumption considerably has been achieved. It is also pleasing to note that when pressure for conserving water was at its peak and the co-operation of the public was sought, the consumption of water was reduced by 40 per cent. This reduction could not have been achieved without the generous co-operation of the public in making a conscious effort to conserve water in response to the Metropolitan Water Board's appeal for the care and use of water. I believe merit and, certainly, commendation should be forthcoming to the public and the media for the wonderful co-operation they have given.

The average water consumption in Perth is 650 kilolitres per unit per annum. This is one of the highest figures in the world today. It must be realised that if this State is to develop, it is essential for the public to be made aware that they are using too much water. Therefore, in order to achieve this aim, its use must be restricted and, certainly, wastage must be reduced to an absolute minimum from now on.

**Mr Pearce:** If the Government had acted 12 months ago we would not be in the position we are in now.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Absolute rubbish! This year it has been necessary to supplement our water supply with the use of underground water supplies; in fact, 45 per cent of all water used is now underground water. While there has been some controversy about the use of underground water, I believe that in certain circumstances, such as we are experiencing at the moment, it is justified. This should be permitted; such water should be used to supplement our normal water supplies from the storage dams throughout the various parts of our State to meet the requirements of metropolitan and country areas.

However, I believe the underground water usage should be monitored carefully and regularly and I request the Metropolitan Water Board to take very positive steps to ensure that this supervision is faithfully and accurately carried out.

**Mr Pearce:** Does that include private bores?

**Mr WILLIAMS:** No, it does not. Two other vital points which must claim priority are, firstly, to make sure the environment is not adversely affected and, secondly, to ensure that the level of salinity does not creep up to any great extent. But above all, I feel that what has been achieved this year has been gratifying and certainly is a fine example to the Government that, with the proper education, the attitude of the public can be maintained.

**Mr Bryce:** Is this speech going to be distributed to the electorate?

**Mr WILLIAMS:** It could well be. When the consumer is kept well informed and is perfectly aware of the seriousness of the situation, the Government's task is made that much easier when implementing a programme to assist in the conservation of water.

Further, I wish to make brief mention of the recently issued Binnie Report. I sincerely hope some sections of this report become operative.

One of its recommendations is to implement a pay-as-you-use system. While this may be desirable in many ways, there are a number of aspects connected with this type of system that can cause tremendous problems for the average householder.

**Mr Jamieson:** You can say that again three times!

**Mr O'Connor:** You are not wrong.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** For example, if a total pay-as-you-use system came into operation it would

mean a substantial increase to the average householder in the amount he would pay annually for his water. Conversely, it would mean a reduction in cost to the major shopping centres and also the city block.

Therefore, because of the obvious implications in such a system we must move carefully. It must be realised that to turn on the tap and provide water for a household involves the Metropolitan Water Board in considerable costs. From information received from the board, the cost of providing these head works to the 252 000 householders in the metropolitan area is approximately \$9.2 million per annum. Therefore, I believe it is necessary for everyone to contribute annually towards the cost of providing the head works for the privilege of enjoying being able to turn on a tap and have water supplied to the home.

Perhaps water could then be charged on a pay-as-you-use system on the basis of the following rates, depending on the usage: For example, it could be suggested the rate should commence at 8c per 1 000 kilolitres for the first 50 000 kilolitres, 10c per 1 000 kilolitres for the next 50 000 kilolitres, 12c per 1 000 kilolitres for usage between 100 000 and 150 000 kilolitres, and 14c per 1 000 kilolitres up to 200 000 kilolitres. Once an individual uses over 300 000 kilolitres per annum, the water should be paid for at 18c or more per 1 000 kilolitres. However, the eventual recommendation of the Metropolitan Water Board will be a difficult one.

I believe, however, that we should move into a part pay-as-you-use system in an endeavour to encourage consumers to conserve water. In the past, water has been freely used in Western Australia. One sure way of assisting to conserve it for the time when it is required—such as the present—is to charge people on a higher rate per kilolitre when they are using tremendous amounts of excess water.

Mr Bryce: The member for Clontarf advocates high rates for water.

Mr WILLIAMS: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should listen to what I said.

Mr Pearce: Green lawns for Nedlands and dead lawns for the rest of us.

Mr O'Connor: No, he said, "Pay-as-you-use".

Mr Pearce: Pay as you do not use!

Mr WILLIAMS: I now change to another subject. For years, Governments, through the Main Roads Department, have spent millions of dollars on improving road systems, creating highways, freeways, and secondary arterial roads

with the common object in view of improving the traffic flow, reducing the accident rate and making it more efficient to travel by road.

In spite of the excellent design and engineering of most road systems problems still exist in the maximum utilisation of these capital investments to achieve the objective I have just outlined. I believe there are two major inhibitors to traffic flow, the first being certain methods of entry and exit from major roads and the second, problems with driver behaviour. Traffic flow on major highways, particularly at peak hours, is slowed greatly by having too many minor roads providing exit and entry.

Cars making frequent left turns onto and off the highway considerably slow the movement of traffic in the left hand lane. Cars making right turns onto and particularly off the highway in heavy traffic cause considerable congestion. A car turning right from the right hand lane of a dual carriageway might have to wait a considerable period for a suitable break in the two lanes of oncoming traffic to complete his exit. During this wait he may hold up 20 or 30 cars behind him in the right hand lane. This method of exit can greatly slow the movement of traffic in the right hand lane, supposedly the fast lane on a major highway during peak hours. If anyone doubts this statement he should drive in peak hour traffic along Great Eastern Highway from the Causeway to Belgravia Street, or from Canning Bridge to the Causeway.

To overcome this problem I have the following suggestions: Firstly, right hand entry and exit on major highways should be restricted essentially to traffic-light-controlled intersections with the provision of a separate right turning lane. In order to accomplish this it is also necessary to construct a median strip to separate the opposing traffic flows.

Secondly, at least 50 per cent of the minor roads joining a highway should be converted to culs-de-sac. This leaves some minor roads to provide adequate left hand entry and exit from the highway which should be sufficient to service local residents and to keep interruptions to the traffic flow to a minimum.

Mr Pearce: Every right hand turn is a left hand turn if you are coming the other way. You cannot differentiate.

Mr WILLIAMS: One of the most frustrating problems on the road today—

Mr Sodeman: You eliminate all of them if you keep going straight!

Mr Pearce: That means all his constituents coming home from work will end up in my electorate.

Mr WILLIAMS: One of the most frustrating problems on the road today, apart from the member for Gosnells, is the driver whose conscience allows him when travelling, for example, at 50 kilometres an hour in an 80-kilometres-an-hour zone on both highways and freeways, to travel in the right hand lane, thus hampering the free flow of traffic. This type of driver impedes the traffic flow to such a degree that drivers in the vehicles following become frustrated, irritable, and, frankly, annoyed; and they take unnecessary risks to pass him. Therefore, it is essential that drivers who are not prepared to travel at the speed limit must be educated to keep to the left hand lane and allow the right hand lane to be utilised for the purpose for which it was devised; that is, to improve the traffic flow.

How often do we find, when approaching stationary vehicles at traffic lights, that both lanes are occupied by slow moving and heavy vehicles such as trucks and buses?

Mr Barnett: Quite often.

Mr WILLIAMS: The member is right; too often. Because of their weight load these vehicles accelerate slowly thereby restricting the movement of all the following vehicles even to the extent of some vehicles being unable to clear the way before a further light change. It is essential that heavy vehicles occupy only the left hand lane.

Another important factor which adds to congestion is the presence of tractors, low loaders, and cranes on the road early in the morning and late in the evening. They should be barred from the highways between seven o'clock and half past eight in the morning and between four o'clock and half past five in the afternoon to help increase the traffic flow.

Further, how often do we see, when the lights change to green, that the driver in the lead vehicle then decides to change gear and moves off? Another example is the driver who is absorbed in looking anywhere but at the lights. This again impedes the traffic flow and action should be taken accordingly.

Another glaring example of how our road systems could be improved is Leach Highway which has three lanes in each direction and a maximum permitted speed of 70 kilometres an hour. This is an excellent highway but it has too many secondary road intersections. To turn some of them into culs-de-sac would obviously improve the flow, and with three lanes in each direction surely the speed limit could be increased even to

the extent of marking lanes with different speed limits, as has successfully been in operation in Europe and America. Leach Highway at the moment is not being utilised to its capacity.

In making these various points it has been my intention to illustrate that I am not in favour of slowing down traffic on highways and freeways in the metropolitan area; quite the contrary. By improving the flow of traffic there will be fewer frustrations and fewer accidents. Free flowing traffic on highways is rarely involved in accidents. It is only when traffic is congested that drivers become frustrated and accidents occur.

My third point is Midland's importance as a major centre in the metropolitan region as exemplified by its two main functions as a service centre for the rural hinterland and as a town centre servicing a large sector of the metropolitan region. Central Midland is taken up by an area of 119 hectares bounded by Morrison Road to the west and north, the railway to the south, and Lloyd Street to the east. It has been stated in the Midland regional centre study and Perth's eastern corridor report that Midland is to become the largest subregional centre in the Perth metropolitan region within a decade.

From a practical point of view this fact was a foregone conclusion long before the planning consultants undertook any study because of Midland's physical and geographical location and the evident multiplying pressure for redevelopment, rezonings, developments, and subdivisions. It is of fundamental importance that a programme be commenced immediately to upgrade Midland's existing roads if it is to progress towards becoming the city's largest subregional centre.

Apart from upgrading the Midland railway terminal, Midland has been a neglected centre for the past three decades. The railway terminal was a pilot scheme undertaken by the Government and it has proved successful in assisting in the identification of Midland as a centre of significance. With such an efficient transportation link people have found it easier to relate to Midland.

Mr Pearce interjected.

Mr WILLIAMS: I am trying to assist the member for Swan, if the member for Gosnells will only realise it. This has also assisted in decentralisation from Perth and will ultimately promote larger-scale developments in the Midland area. If Midland is to be secured as a subregional centre and perform all the necessary functions of such a centre it must not be neglected. Within the commercial centre of Midland many major

projects have been continually deferred. Any further delays in rectifying the road system will inadvertently result in the abandonment of these projects. The growth of Midland as a centre of significance will depend almost entirely on the results of Government stimulating development and redevelopment by encouraging public and private interests in a positive and co-ordinated manner.

The neglect of Midland has created six critical points which not only affect businesses there but also those residents in the eastern sector of the metropolitan region who depend on the services that Midland provides. These problems include acute parking and pedestrian and vehicle complexes. Through traffic affects business functions and other necessary services and present traffic conditions cause a loss of custom to more easily accessible areas such as retail shopping facilities which include large discount departments.

Expansion of the eastern corridor is inevitable, and if action is not taken immediately to solve the traffic access and circulation problems, Midland will be strangled by this perpetuation.

The stimulation and co-ordination of the Midland centre can be achieved only by implementing the following roading options immediately: Traffic lights should be installed at the intersection of Morrison Road and Great Eastern Highway, after Tom's Tyres has been resumed in part or whole for this purpose. This is terribly important. Traffic lights should be installed at the intersection of Morrison Road and Great Northern Highway. Lloyd Street should be extended to Morrison Road along the old railway reserve on land which is owned by the WAGR, with traffic lights at the intersection of Lloyd Street and Great Eastern Highway. This will require the upgrading of Morrison Road and the extension and upgrading of Lloyd Street. Nevertheless, this provides an immediate and economical solution that will deviate most of the heavy truck traffic from the central core in an expedient and efficient manner, and will create a bypass-type system minimising vehicle-pedestrian conflict in making the Midland centre more attractive to developers and those people who are serviced by the centre.

To date, there is no direct major east-west road link to Midland from the north-west of the metropolitan region, in particular the rapidly expanding Beechboro and surrounds located no further than 10 kilometres from the Midland centre. The construction of at least one carriageway of the proposed northern perimeter controlled-access highway from the proposed

extension of Alexander Drive to at least Great Northern Highway, and the extension of Morley Drive to Morrison Road will not only provide a more direct link to the Midland centre, but will also assist in the expansion and rapid development of the proposed Malaga industrial area. This area occupies approximately 500 hectares.

Mr Barnett: How much would all this cost?

Mr WILLIAMS: The area is approximately the size of Kewdale and the proposed existing residential areas of Lockridge, Beechboro, and Malaga.

The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority has stated that subregional centres should be unrestricted in terms of growth and gross leasable floor space in at least the foreseeable future.

#### *Point of Order*

Mr BRYCE: On a point of order, I can well imagine that the member for Clontarf might want to produce a speech for distribution in his electorate, but members in this House are fully aware that only Ministers of the Crown are permitted to read their speeches to the Parliament. There have been numerous occasions previously where members have been brought to order for this reason.

The SPEAKER: I take it that the honourable member suggests that the member for Clontarf is reading his speech?

Mr Bryce: Most certainly.

The SPEAKER: I would imagine that the member for Clontarf would be aware that he is not permitted to read a speech and I assume, if he is looking down, it is to collect his thoughts and perhaps refresh himself from what may be copious notes.

#### *Debate Resumed*

Mr Pearce: Extremely copious!

Mr Bryce: Perhaps I ought to remind the member that he speaks very well and does not need to read his speech. I am not being facetious.

Mr WILLIAMS: Midland's potential growth has been stunted for many years and now that the planners have completed their studies immediate action must be taken to implement the suggestions I have made this evening. The encouragement of Midland to perform a wider range of functions consistent with those of a subregional centre, particularly the provision of department discount stores, specialty retail shops, business administration and the community and its entertainment services, will require solutions to the physical problems that make Midland an

inconvenient place in which to do business at the moment.

Whilst at the same time Midland is maintaining this growth, if it is to become the largest subregional centre within the short time of a decade, then the priorities I have stated this evening must be implemented forthwith.

Mr Pearce: Have you made a submission to the Minister for Transport?

Mr WILLIAMS: We must prove that we believe in our planning strategy which necessitates subregional centres. After all, if Midland is to become the largest subregional centre, it can no longer be neglected for it is in the best interests of the metropolitan region as a whole that we get on with the job immediately.

MR BERTRAM (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.26 p.m.]: This being the Address-in-Reply debate one can speak on any subject of one's choice. It is my intention to speak on several matters of considerable public importance, but not necessarily in the order of importance. Firstly, I would question how and by what conscience the Government can find itself able to ask people to subscribe to cancer appeals when it is in a position to do something very significant in respect of the amelioration of the scourge of cancer itself, yet refuses to do so.

I shall quote from a publication produced by the Australian Cancer Society, subheaded, "For Health Professionals in the Field of Cancer". On page 445 it asks this question—

How much longer are State Governments going to stand by and watch the people expire? While the rest of the world tackles this problem are our politicians going to sit on their hands?

It then goes on to say—

Members of Parliament must not be frightened of tackling smoking. All our surveys have shown that the majority of the people, including a majority of the smokers, want action, and want it now.

I could correct that by saying the people want action; they have wanted it for years and they did get it. The Whitlam Government introduced measures to see to it that no longer would it be possible for those people who push cigarettes—that is to say, the so-called tobacco companies and their minions, the advertisers—to force them on people; in particular, onto those who are more susceptible, who are of course the younger people.

Over a period of time this requirement of banning advertising was phased in and I think

ultimately by 1976 it was no longer lawful for people to push this drug nicotine through the sale of cigarettes by use of radio and television advertising.

We are being told by the State Government that we do not need legislation, but we should leave it to the advertisers and to the tobacco companies to use their good judgment to abide by the desires of the public and the Parliament of their own volition—of their own free will. I am utterly opposed to that proposition, because the tobacco companies have shown themselves to be institutions which do not care two hoots about the grave injury they are causing to the health of people who smoke cigarettes.

The will of the people was expressed through the Federal Parliament in the manner which I have indicated. That then placed the ball fairly and squarely in the court of the State Parliament of Western Australia which has done nothing at all about the situation. It has gone through a few exercises—the old exercises with which we are all very familiar. The Government has gone off to a health committee and to Health Ministers' Conferences, and so on. All of us who know the game are aware that is the best way of burying the matter and dodging issues.

This Government should accept some of the blame for the fact that people are dying of cancer contracted as a result of smoking cigarettes. In 30 to 40 years' time the Government will be blameworthy for the deaths of people as a result of cancer contracted from cigarette smoke. The Government will have to accept the blame for the horrible deaths these people will suffer.

How can one trust tobacco companies and advertisers when, with the full knowledge of the wishes of the people as expressed through the Commonwealth Parliament which brought in laws to ensure that these companies would no longer be pushing their drugs by means of the media—radio and television—they have been at pains to find ways and means of frustrating the will of the people during the years which have passed since 1976?

It is another instance, of course, of the fact that if a company has sufficient money it can beat nearly every law that this or any other Parliament can produce. We had evidence of this last year when somebody thought by a shrewd manoeuvre he could, on a million dollar transaction, save a large sum of money, and he did that. But the ordinary person down the street could not dodge around, skirt around, and manipulate the law. However, a millionaire could do that and did do that. As a result, the Parliament of this State had



to do something about revising the law to put a stop to that type of racket.

As you know, Mr Speaker, and as all members know, these tobacco companies, at considerable expense, have found ways and means of utterly frustrating the will of the people as expressed by the Parliament of the Commonwealth. Having shown that form, we are now being told, as people and as members of Parliament, that these companies are responsible and respectable and we should allow them to set up their own code of ethics. I will not have a bar of that proposition.

Mr Pearce: Hear, hear!

Mr BERTRAM: The Federal Government acted properly and it placed the onus on State Governments of which this State Government is certainly one, to ensure that appropriate legislation was brought in, in order that the Federal legislation did not appear to be absurd. What has this State Government done? It has done nothing. The tobacco companies at huge expense from day to day produce types of advertisements which are nonsensical and completely absurd. They are aimed at people, younger people in particular, and they are designed to cause people to start smoking in order that once they have started they will not stop. In all probability, according to scientific evidence which is available at the present time, these people will ultimately die of cancer or from some other disease. However, I am concerned mainly with cancer. I should like to mention that according to the statistics contained in the publication which I mentioned previously—it is a fairly reputable and responsible publication and I have heard nobody suggest to the contrary—in 1950 the Australian cigarette consumption per person, as I read the figures, was 1 280 and in 1973, thanks to the pushers, it reached 3 080; almost three times the figure for 1950.

I shall quote one or two paragraphs from this publication. I shall not quote all of it by any means. It is headed, "Politicians and Lung Cancer". It is directly aimed at us, just as the pushers aim their publicity at our children, mine included. The article reads in part—

Lung Cancer is a medical problem which has political, economic, and social solutions. However, in Australia the politicians who have the power to achieve a fall in the death rate from this disease have chosen instead to dump the problem on the doctors who can at the present time save only five out of every 100 lung cancer patients. Evidence is beginning to appear in Norway and elsewhere that firm action by Government

can reduce the tobacco consumption rate; not by repressive, draconian measures, but simply by removing the enticements to smoke.

Further on the publication continues as follows—

The lesson that can be learned from Norway is that smoking rates can be brought down if a concerted effort is made at all levels but most especially by Parliaments.

So far no such attempt has been made by this Parliament. On numerous occasions over the past 10 years that I have been a member, I have brought this matter to the attention of Parliament. It is not something of which members have no notice. However, they have opted, with full knowledge of the situation, to do nothing about it.

Members, particularly those on the other side of the House, tell people outside the House that they put people before dollars. The reason, in my submission, that the Government is doing nothing about this particular question is that the tobacco companies are making quite sure that they are placing sizeable funds in the political coffers of the conservative parties in this country and in this State.

Sir Charles Court: You have no ground at all for making that allegation.

Mr BERTRAM: That is an expression of my opinion.

Sir Charles Court: Well, it is completely wrong.

Mr BERTRAM: I am prepared to bet on that and I am not a gambling man.

Sir Charles Court: What are you asking us to do?

Mr BERTRAM: I propose now to pass on to another question and that is in regard to the parking of motor vehicles for secondary school students. The fact of the matter is people in Western Australia over the age of 17 years who pass the tests required by law are permitted to drive motor vehicles. They are permitted to drive motor vehicles to football matches, shopping centres, and to universities and schools. This is happening. It is something which is not unexpected and it must be faced up to. The Government is aware of this particular problem. It involves inconvenience to students but, of equal importance, it involves inconvenience to the public. It involves also a very real problem in regard to the safety of students and of the public generally.

The Government is aware of the situation and it is aware that it is a problem which is here for keeps, or at least until petrol runs out. However,

the Government has done nothing about the situation. As I understand it, the Government has neither attempted to formulate, nor put forward any policy to improve the situation.

I realise there are other very pressing aspects of education which have to be faced up to. I am aware also that some people would argue that a number of these other matters, including the extraordinary number of unemployed school teachers on the one hand and the high number of students per teacher on the other hand, are urgent matters. However, this is a problem which has been with us for some time. It will be with us indefinitely. This Government, which seeks to encourage people to get excited about its exploits, has done nothing about the situation. There is no policy in regard to it.

We do not know when parking facilities will be provided for these secondary school students. We do not know who will take the initiative to provide parking or who will decide where the parking facilities should be situated. We do not know who will pay for these facilities. However, the problem has been here for a long time. There are literally hundreds, probably more correctly thousands, of secondary school students who are of the age when they can lawfully, and I might add efficiently, drive motor vehicles.

Mr Bryce: Hear, hear!

Mr BERTRAM: Within the law they may drive motor vehicles wherever they like. However, secondary school students have either no facilities or inadequate facilities for parking when they arrive at their destination.

In addition, when a high school is a specialised school, students come from near and far and the obvious, sensible thing for them to do is to travel by car if they are in the fortunate position to be able to do so. It is also fairly good logic—not that I hold myself to be an expert on motor vehicles—to assume that this sort of travel, very often across country but not over long distances per day, is probably a good way for a 17-year-old-driver to get his hand in.

This is a matter which needs some action by the Government. It is no good the Government doing the same as it has done on the question of cancer, and so on. In other words it is no good brushing the problem aside, ignoring it, or submitting it to a committee.

Sir Charles Court: Are you advocating more high school students should travel to school by motorcar? I would be amazed if your party supported you.

Mr BERTRAM: I do not think the Premier knows what makes our party tick at all.

Sir Charles Court: Should these students not be using public transport when it is provided at such a concessional rate? Do you want us to spend money on huge parking facilities to encourage people to bring cars to high schools?

Mr BERTRAM: It will not be money of a huge amount. We are not asking for a great deal of money to be spent at all. That is an old technique: when everything else fails, throw in a red herring.

Sir Charles Court: I am waiting for that day too.

Mr BERTRAM: The point is that it is not suggested that vehicles should have gold-plated parking areas. It is suggested that if a person lawfully takes a car along to a football match provision is made for a 17-year-old, a 70-year-old, or anyone in between to park that vehicle.

I am led to believe that in nearly every case, or in many cases—too many cases for one to be satisfied—students lawfully driving their vehicles to school have no or inadequate parking facilities, causing inconvenience to themselves and to the public, and also creating a distinct possibility of danger. If a person parks a vehicle in substantially soft sand or, in certain weathers, in mud, or in a mixture of both conditions, the vehicle becomes bogged and all sorts of difficulties are experienced, particularly when there is congestion in that type of situation.

The problem must be tackled. It is no good the Premier trying to hide behind the nonexistent Government policy on this matter. We are used to that; it does not impress us at all. It might be all right when the Premier is talking to people outside, but not when he is here. He should use his techniques in the appropriate forums. That is where he goes wrong. He can tell people outside what he likes, and he does so and gets away with it often; but here he should use appropriate arguments or better still, if he has none, he should just keep quiet.

There are literally hundreds of students involved, as well as the public. The solution could be a partnership between the Governments—State and/or Federal—and local government. Others could also be a party to the solution. However, the fact of the matter is that it is a problem which must be tackled and not ignored or pushed under the carpet.

If Cabinet can spend hours deciding whether it will compel people to use number plates with the words, "State of Excitement" on them, it could do a lot better addressing its attention to something worthwhile and constructive rather than propaganda or its equivalent in nonsense.

I have received letters from constituents who take an extremely dim view of being forced to buy the yellow number plates upon which are the words, "WA—State of Excitement". I understand the proper words are, "WA—Relax in the State of Excitement". Ordinarily I would not raise that matter in this House, because it is not worth our time and attention to do so.

Mr Jamieson: It indicates a sex connotation to me.

Mr BERTRAM: It seems to be consistent because the Government is far more interested in bamboozling with words and rhetoric rather than action—and particularly with words which are very often not all that accurate, substantial, or worthwhile.

People have complained about the compulsion aspect of having to place these number plates on their cars. As I have indicated it transpires that the Cabinet made this monumental decision about the yellow number plates. I am told—I do not know with what accuracy, but someone can interject if I am wrong—that if a person has a country number plate this compulsion does not apply. This is discrimination. Also if a person attaches so much significance to this monumental subject of number plates he can obtain a blue number plate to give him status or whatever and in that way he is also exempt. In other words if a person places sufficient significance on number plates and his pocket is big enough he does not have to push the State.

The best part of 50 per cent of Western Australians, a lot of whom are not treated equally because we do not have an equal vote—I get one-fourteenth of the vote of others—

Mr Jamieson: I would say the decision of Cabinet was seven to six on this, too.

Mr BERTRAM: Yes. The best part of 50 per cent of Western Australians do not believe in the State of excitement and they take great exception to being compelled to carry around that propaganda.

I read an article on the private man, and the author complained about the bludgeoning the public gets from advertisements. The article was written a few years ago when the number plate monstrosity had not been perpetrated. I wonder what the author would have said about the fact that people are not only bludgeoned by advertisements, but are forced by law themselves to push advertisements especially when the advertisement is meaningless, humbug, and nonsensical, as is this one.

One writer complained bitterly to me. She said that in her opinion it was a slogan with political overtones, and that that was a very unhealthy

state of affairs. I did not put those words in the writer's mouth. My belief is the same, but she simply put it into words. I happen to subscribe to her belief.

I cannot understand why if a person has so much money and wants blue number plates, or happens to live a few miles out of town, he should be exempt from the compulsion involving the yellow number plates. We have no choice but to cart around these number plates on which are the words, "WA—State of Excitement", when, as I have said, the best part of 50 per cent of Western Australians—and probably many more—do not subscribe to that slogan, no matter what construction is placed upon it. As I have indicated previously, it is a legacy of a Government which prefers to govern by slogan, gimmickry, and words rather than by actions.

A few years ago if my memory is correct, The Superannuation Act of the State was amended for the purpose of ensuring that those benefiting under the scheme—the superannuants—would keep abreast or appear to be keeping abreast of inflation. Some sort of indexation mechanism is built into the scheme under the Act of this State. I am told that the effect of the indexation is not in many cases to help the superannuant to maintain the status quo, but to put him at a disadvantage on the one hand, and the Fraser Treasury at an advantage on the other hand, both of which results are repugnant to most people, and certainly to those on this side of the House, even if it does not concern those opposite.

I am told that with the inflation of the superannuation, superannuants are finding themselves caught in a position in respect of which they have no alternative and no room at all to manoeuvre, unless they have half a dozen QCs to manoeuvre them out of it. They find their pension diminishes and/or they lose their fringe benefits many of which come from the Commonwealth—or I should say, more correctly, the Australian Government. Instead of keeping up, they are falling behind, and that is a clear frustration of the indexing procedure in respect of which this Parliament did some work and went to some effort to defeat.

If I am anywhere near accurate in what I have said, the time is well overdue for some corrective procedure and for some mechanism to be worked out, by legislation or otherwise, whereby the superannuants are not put behind scratch but have their position maintained.

The Government is no doubt under pressure from the "Hancock National Party"—and in using that expression I am referring to what is

officially called the National Country Party, but I will regard the two names as being interchangeable, except where the context makes it quite obvious I am referring to something else. I understand Mr Lang Hancock is paying something like \$250 000 a month—

Mr Jamieson: A month?

Mr BERTRAM: It is a fairly substantial sum. If I might digress here, it causes one to wonder how the Cabinet will operate, because I am told by members on this side and there is some evidence apart from that to cause one to think Mr Hancock does not love the Premier very much, and perhaps that feeling does not go unrequited as far as the Premier is concerned.

Mr McPharlin: Can you prove it?

Mr BERTRAM: I reserve judgment.

Mr McPharlin: You cannot prove it.

Mr BERTRAM: One cannot prove many facts, as the Premier well knows. We have the odd position where the "Hancock National Party" is sitting around the same table as the so-called Liberal Party. That seems to be an extraordinary coalition. I have never thought much of the coalition at the best of times, but this is extraordinary funding by Mr Hancock. I do not complain. Let him fund it; that is his right; good on him. But ordinarily if one is contributing \$250 000 a month, or whatever the figure is, one would also be expecting the party to conform significantly to one's views and not some other views. As Mr Hancock's views on fundamental questions seem to be utterly opposed to those of the Premier, one wonders how long the coalition will continue in this situation, if it continues at all.

Just taking that evidence and the situation as I have briefly outlined it, it seems probable that one or two of the "Hancock National Party" Ministers may well find, shortly before the next election or in the relatively near future, that they are no longer in that party but are in some other party. They need not have any grave misgivings because I can assure them the Premier will welcome one or both of them.

We remember that the Premier created another four electorates and increased the costs of this Parliament by something like a quarter of a million dollars per annum. That is his all-transcending desire, to govern without a coalition, so there should be no worries on that score. If those Ministers want to make the break, they can remain Ministers and they will not have many problems.

That slight digression calls for some comment

from the Government as to where the coalition now stands, since the National Country Party has become a party of a very different complexion. It seems to be a party whose emphasis has very much to do with mining and very little, if it ever had anything much, to do with matters in the country or concerning farmers.

In one of his daily announcements the Premier recently stated there will be an inquiry into the Electoral Act which will be presided over by a judge or a magistrate. The terms of reference seem to be very unsatisfactory, and I understand the editor of *The West Australian* newspaper regards them as being neurotic, weak, and insufficient.

Members on this side of the House want to make it abundantly clear that they believe, as matters to do with voting are of fundamental importance and as the best part of 50 per cent, and probably more, of Western Australians believe our electoral laws are antiquated and unfair, this inquiry, if it is to be any good at all, should be presided over by a judge, because matters to do with disputed elections are dealt with by judges, not magistrates. This is a job for a judge, and the Opposition believes, without any reservations, that a judge should preside over the inquiry.

In regard to the terms of reference, the editorial in *The West Australian* said—

The way has now been opened for the Act to undergo a full process of reform.

Not just a little bit here, a little bit there, and a little bit somewhere else.

In Western Australia we have exactly the same position as exists in Rhodesia and South Africa, which is repugnant to the western world. The only distinguishing feature is degree. We do not have and never have had one-vote-one-value in this State. While that was okay until 20 or 30 years ago, and it was par for the course to draw up boundaries and gerrymander and malapportion in order to secure the position of the coalition parties in Parliament, it is no longer acceptable today. That is the burning issue. The other issues to do with postal votes and illiterate voters are merely subsidiary. They are important but subsidiary to the question of one-vote-one-value.

There is world concern about Rhodesia. The same abhorrence has been expressed by President Carter about South Africa. Here we have the same situation; it is only a difference of degree.

It is staggering that we could have a situation last year when legislation came before this House designed to save the seat in Parliament of a member of the Government; to wit, the member

for Kimberley. Leaders of the community protested vehemently through protest marches, writing to the Press, and all sorts of things, because by that legislation certain people in this State who might have fifteen-fifteenths of a vote were about to be deprived of their fifteen-fifteenths of one whole vote.

These leaders and others—and I refer mainly to the alleged leaders of the community and leaders in the community—took an extremely dim view of that theft of their vote. The very same people are absolutely silent and mute, and say not a word, when for years literally thousands of people in Western Australia have had stolen from them, and are still having stolen from them, 14/15ths of their vote—not 15/15ths, as in the case of certain people. If one is any more abhorrent than any other, then the difference is extremely marginal.

As I have said, in regard to this Electoral Act inquiry the Australian Labor Party wants it to be dinkum, not like the Royal Commission into prostitution where a judge was paid a large sum of money and counsel made a fortune out of it on terms of reference which were completely hopeless. We were left in the position where not much of a job was done, and even the results of that are forgotten. The problems of prostitution in this State are probably just as bad as they ever have been. We do not want that sort of nonsense. We want a judge appointed and we want him to have an opportunity to show his mettle and so forth.

Additional things he should inquire into are as follows—

(a) Election Expenses

- (i) disclosure of the source of funds for all political parties

That clause could be put in to gladden the heart of the "Hancock National Party". To continue—

- (ii) public funding of Party election campaigns on the basis of their percentage of votes obtained at the previous elections

- (iii) limiting campaign spending to a realistic level

(b) The Amalgamation of State and Federal Electoral Rolls.

Even Queensland has had that provision for a decade or more and we are still messing around with it in Western Australia, because of our prevarication and humbug on this question. People of Western Australia are losing millions of dollars simply because we are loath to establish one electoral roll instead of two. I suggest that

those reading these remarks in *Hansard* should look at the answer to question 264 of the 4th April, 1978, to see how much money has been wasted unnecessarily because of duplication. To continue—

- (c) Optional Preferential Voting.
- (d) The Party Affiliation of Candidates to be placed on Ballot Papers.
- (e) The establishment of an Electoral Education Section within the Electoral Department to acquaint electors, particularly Aborigines and non-English speaking Australians with the electoral laws.
- (f) The need for positive assistance to illiterate voters.
- (g) The need for the expansion of the staff of the Electoral Department to assist in enrolment and postal voting.

Above all, the principal and fundamental concept is the question of one-vote-one-value. That is the issue; the other matters are subsidiary. Important albeit clearly subsidiary.

In the North Metropolitan Province it appears from the latest count that the vote of the people there is now discounted by 14½. In other words, each constituent's vote is worth 1/14½th of the votes of other Western Australians. Since I happen to live in that province and the people I represent live in that province—as do the people represented by the member for Scarborough and the member for Karrinyup—it is important that this matter should be taken up. Unfortunately neither the member for Scarborough nor the member for Karrinyup is in the Chamber at the moment, but it staggers me that although they have this knowledge they have done nothing in this Parliament to correct the position.

One needs to be quite good humoured in this place, and quite often one's fancy is tickled in regard to the Premier's credibility. Very quickly I would like to refer to a comment he made in this House last year just shortly before Mr Justice Smith announced the result of the case he tried in the Court of Disputed Returns.

At that time it was well known to most people, and very well known to those people close to the matter, what the judge's decision would be. It is well known also that as a general rule the loser pays the costs of these excursions into litigation. That is not a bad rule, I suppose, while we have to go to court to fight out things that are wrong between us. So one fine day in this Chamber the Premier announced that he, in his policy of "evenhandedness", would see to it that the principal parties in that trial would be helped with

their costs to the tune of \$50 000 each. The Premier worked for a while in a law office, and he prides himself on being a rather full bottle on matters of law, so he would know that usually the loser does the paying. Also, he would have a very fair idea who the loser would be, and he believed that would be Mr Ridge in that contest.

Mr Pearce: And it was!

Mr Ridge: You are guessing, aren't you?

Mr BERTRAM: I do not want to go into that quarrel at this time; I will come to it later if time permits. At the moment I am discussing the question of the Premier's credibility. He intended to give \$50 000 to each party in the dispute. That did not sound bad to people around the streets, putting aside the fact that anybody was to receive anything at all. Nobody pays for my costs when I embark on litigation. Usually people pay their own costs, and that is a good principle.

Let us look at what I think occurred. The judge's order was that Mr Ridge would pay Mr Bridge's costs—that is a paraphrase of his actual order. So the Premier's action was not evenhanded at all. It was \$50 000 paid to Mr Ridge to pay his own costs, and \$50 000 saved by Mr Ridge which he would otherwise have had to pay to Mr Bridge. So for practical purposes it was thoroughly uneven in that one person received \$100 000 and the other did not receive a cent. That is the Premier's exemplification and manifestation of his peculiar brand of accuracy, sometimes referred to as his credibility.

I then have another little item I would like to conclude on. I was stirred to read an advertisement which appeared in *The West Australian* of Friday, the 9th December, 1977, on page 5. We see there the Premier's outstanding countenance and the advertisement is headed, "A Message from Sir Charles Court to all West Australians." I do not know who inserted this advertisement, but no doubt a question would elicit this information for us.

We often hear the Premier arguing that it is absolutely important to have a strong Opposition, although he does not define what is meant by a strong Opposition. My idea of a strong Opposition is one that has sufficiently satisfied the people that it is a worth-while and credible alternative Government so that it can go to the people with a reasonable chance, a fair chance, of becoming the Government. Is this what the Premier believes to be a strong Opposition? I do not believe that is what he believes because it is now 146 years after the first Parliament sat in this State in 1832, and the nonconservative parties in this State have never controlled the upper House.

Of course, no Labor Government has ever controlled the upper House and therefore they have had no power; they have merely been in office. The Premier understands that perfectly well as the advertisement in my hand indicates, because in the most blatant of print he says, "Vote carefully. The Government you elect must have a majority in the Senate to govern effectively." That was referring to the Federal election. However, the Premier well knows that, short of an earthquake, a typhoon, or something dramatic of that nature, the Labor Party has absolutely no hope with the way things currently stand of ever getting a majority in the upper House.

Mr Bryce: The storm did not blow away the Legislative Council.

Mr BERTRAM: I would like to speak about many other things, including "Piggy Malone and the special bureau", but I shall refer to them at another time because the gong has gone and I have less than a minute remaining.

I have with me some very interesting photos which I also wanted to touch on, along with other matters. However, time does not permit me to do so on this occasion.

MR NANOVIK (Whitford) [9.11 p.m.]: I, too, rise to support the motion so ably moved by the member for Murdoch.

Mr Bryce: You don't have to start that way.

Mr NANOVIK: Just let me get going. The contributions to the Address-in-Reply so far have been based mainly on the economic situation not only in Western Australia and Australia, but in the entire world. In this respect I would like to read a few of the comments made by the Governor in his Speech. He said—

The national economy shows signs of recovery.

Difficulties persist, but lessening inflation and lower interest rates clearly indicate improvement.

Western Australia is well placed to influence the rate and extent of the nation's return to better times.

A little further on, he went on to say—

We are creating new jobs faster than any other State, although the unemployment level remains unacceptable.

Then he said—

The Government presented a balanced Consolidated Revenue Fund Budget to Parliament in which some \$17 million was

allocated to activities specifically designed to stimulate employment.

Those are the signs of encouragement the Governor told us about in his Speech, although he went on to say—

The two-year drought still bears heavily on certain of our rural areas.

He went on to refer to 32 shires that have been declared totally or partly drought affected.

I believe the economic situation at present is very worrying. I do not know whether one could say the situation has possibly gone too far and is beyond repair; but I do not think that is the case. I am sure people will realise the danger in which the economy is placed at the moment, and I believe the public not only of Western Australia but of Australia and throughout the world will rally.

Over the past few weeks I have been listening to the comments of members of the Opposition, particularly in respect of their criticism of the Government over its handling of the economy, and I have not yet on any occasion heard them offer an alternative. Admittedly, the duty of the Opposition is to criticise the Government, but I believe its criticism has not been effective.

The previous speaker, the member for Mt. Hawthorn, spoke about strong Opposition. I concur with the comment he read from a document wherein the Premier stated that he likes to see a strong Opposition. On Wednesday, the 15th March, the Leader of the Opposition moved an amendment to the Address-in-Reply, and in *The West Australian* on Thursday morning there appeared a heading on the second page—and I do not mean to be rude by referring to the member's name—which said, "Davies leads attack on economy".

Mr Bryce: It was page 3, not page 2.

Mr NANOVIH: I am sorry, I thought it was page 2. I appreciate it was his maiden speech as Leader of the Opposition, and the media took the opportunity to give him a fair go. However, the answers by the Minister for Labour and Industry and the Premier to the argument presented by the Leader of the Opposition appeared at page 43 of the same newspaper.

Mr Pearce: Unfair treatment by *The West Australian*!

Mr NANOVIH: It is ridiculous when one sees criticisms levelled at the Government featured prominently in a newspaper and one has to turn to page 43 to find the answers given by the Government to that criticism.

I feel the economy is showing signs of

improvement, and I cannot in any way see that a socialist policy will cure the situation. Socialism will work only with a gun: "Take it, do it, or else."

Mr Pearce: Rubbish.

Mr Bryce: I think we had better vote to send you on an overseas trip to Scandinavia or other parts of western Europe.

Mr NANOVIH: Therefore, I fail to see how the policies of the Opposition could pull the State out of the crisis upon which members opposite place so much emphasis. The only way the economy will be strengthened is by pursuing the policies of the present Government. Governments do not have to hand out money for unproductive spending.

Mr Pearce: They give out dole money but will not encourage employment.

Mr NANOVIH: Unproductive spending does nothing to encourage the economy.

Mr Pearce: Why don't you spend more money to promote jobs, as I said the week before last in Parliament?

Mr NANOVIH: Has the member finished?

I feel Governments are elected to create opportunities and to provide encouragement, and it is up to the people to accept the opportunities offered to them. This is the message we must drive home to the people, because at the moment Governments make far too many monetary handouts.

The unemployment pay-out per annum—I do not think anybody knows the exact amount because it fluctuates—is in the vicinity of \$700 million to \$800 million. In his speech on Wednesday, the 15th March, the Leader of the Opposition said—

Bring me one such person; I have yet to see one. When people have suggested to me that unemployed persons do not want to work I have issued the same invitation, and no-one has yet been able to say, "This fellow is on the dole and will not work because he is a surfer." There may be some like that, but to put every member of the unemployed in that category does little credit to any member of this Parliament. As I said, if we are educating our young people to adopt that attitude, it is a sad reflection on our education system.

Mr Pearce: That is very good; that is the best thing you have said so far.

Mr NANOVIH: At no time has this Government or members of this Government accused every unemployed person of being a dole

bludger. This Government is concerned at the growth in unemployment; of course we are not happy about that situation and we would like to see it improved. However, I believe the problem does not stem only locally but is a national one. Currently, decisions are not being made; there is too much hesitating. Once this occurs, people suffer from a loss of confidence and problems grow.

Mr Pearce: Your Premier said he could cure it on a State by State basis. He was the only Premier to say that.

Mr NANOVIICH: Had there been a realistic and sensible Government in Canberra at the time, the situation would be better now. The Opposition quickly forgets that in three short years, the Whitlam Government took us from a \$300 million deficit to a \$4 000 million deficit. Do members opposite believe this staggering deficit gave this country the opportunity to recover and get back onto its feet within a few years? After a disaster such as that created by the lavish spending of the Whitlam Government, it will take at least 10 years for the country to get back onto an even keel.

Mr Bryce: Do you know how big that deficit is now?

Mr NANOVIICH: How big is it?

Mr Bryce: It is very, very big. It is in excess of \$2 000 million.

Mr NANOVIICH: It is declining.

Mr Bryce: Not by much.

Mr NANOVIICH: I do not know where the Deputy Leader of the Opposition gets his information from, but it is declining.

Mr Pearce: That deficit money was going to pay people to work; your Government pays people not to work.

Mr NANOVIICH: What a lot of rubbish that is!

Mr Pearce: It is not rubbish; unemployment payments are up now.

Mr O'Connor: You have had your go; why do you not let him get on with his speech?

Mr Pearce: I would be quite happy to, but if he keeps sprouting on about economic matters, it is only fair that I tell him something about the economy.

Mr NANOVIICH: I probably know more about the economy than the member for Gosnells, never mind about sprouting off. I think we had better bring in a lock and key and button up his lip.

The situation has become so bad that Governments cannot afford to give sufficient

funds, for example, to disabled persons and pensioner groups within our community due to the large amount flowing out in unemployment benefits. Unemployment benefits are depriving the needy people of our State.

It has been estimated that, probably, something in the order of 20 to 25 per cent of unemployment benefits is being abused. Therefore, we are looking at an annual figure of some \$150 to \$200 million which is being abused and wasted and could be saved and put to other better uses.

I do not believe that if we cut out the dole completely it would immediately solve the problem, but it would go a long way towards helping the State and country to get back on their feet.

Mr Barnett: How do you think unemployed workers should be cared for?

Mr NANOVIICH: I do not think unemployment benefits should be cut out directly, but I think there are better means of channelling moneys to these people. They should not simply be allowed to say, "I have been down to the industry you sent me to and I did not get the job, so I am back on the dole." Members can tell by the jobs which have been advertised recently that some people just do not want to work. One of my constituents who owns an industrial concern has advertised time and time again for employees and he cannot get them. He has had to revert to the prison release scheme to obtain employees.

Mr Pearce: Because it is cheaper.

Mr NANOVIICH: Yes, it is cheaper. As a matter of fact, one of the prisoners turned out to be his best employee to date. It is a pathetic situation that he is forced to go to the prison release scheme.

Mr Pearce: Any member on this side can fill out that chap's requirements. I do it myself with industries in my area. They come in with the same story and I can provide them with people who want to work, within 24 hours.

Mr NANOVIICH: My constituent who operates the business knows what he is talking about and he is very concerned at the attitude of people who answer his advertisements or who are sent to him by the Commonwealth Employment Service.

It will take a great deal of effort by the people of Australia before the economy gets back on its feet again. This Government is doing everything possible to stimulate the economy. Perhaps we could consider tariff cuts to further stimulate matters. However, I believe that if the people grasped the opportunities which are made



available by the Government, the situation would improve rapidly.

My recent visit to the Pilbara clearly indicated how some people are not prepared to work. Iron-ore carriers were sitting out in the bay, not being loaded; millions of dollars worth of machinery was lying idle, simply because of one man.

Mr Bryce: Whose fault was it?

Mr NANOVICH: This man was told that he would have to go to another part of the industry for a matter of a week or so, but he defied the order by his superior and said he would not do it. He was required under the terms of his employment to move from area to area if necessary, but he would not adhere to the agreement. He was requested on three or four occasions to shift to another section in the industry but he declined to accept the order and was fired. This resulted in a general strike, all because of one man.

Mr Bryce: Are you blaming the workers in the Pilbara for all strikes?

Mr NANOVICH: In this case I do, because the situation was brought about by one man.

Mr Bryce: Is that a generalisation?

Mr NANOVICH: The entire mining industry came to a halt because of this one man.

Mr Bryce: Are you prepared to lay the blame for the industrial unrest in the Pilbara at the feet of the unions?

Mr NANOVICH: I believe very sincerely and strongly that a person should have the right to hire and fire. Does that answer the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's question? With that situation occurring in the Pilbara and with similar difficulties arising throughout the rest of Australia and other parts of the world, we really have a problem.

I realise that a number of school teachers are not able to obtain a posting at the moment. However, there are probably architects, lawyers, and electricians who are also faced with the same situation; it does not apply only to teachers. What a funny world this would be if everybody wanted to be a school teacher, an architect, a solicitor, a motor mechanic, an electrician, a plumber, a bricklayer, a carpenter, or even a politician. There would not be enough room to accommodate them all.

However, we are confronted today with a situation where unemployed people with certain qualifications are not prepared to accept a position where they must work at unskilled labour. That does not help the situation. I believe everybody should say, "Okay, we have a crisis in

the country today. We will do whatever work we can find to get the country back onto its feet." These people should accept whatever job offers come their way, despite the fact that they may be outside their particular professional field. Even if it does not suit them entirely, they should still accept the work. By so doing, they would enable businesses and the nation generally to recover and get back onto an even keel and, eventually, they would find themselves back in their chosen field of employment. But no, they are not doing that. That is why the situation is not getting any better.

I should now like to refer briefly to my electorate. Before doing so I wish to compliment the Minister for Water Supplies. Recently I asked him a question about the percentage of home users in the metropolitan area who have their own water resources and the Minister replied that a recent reliable estimate was that on the 1st December, 1976, the percentage was 7.8. I think it is now more than that and I shall be asking the Minister more questions in that regard because it is an important subject and I know that there has been a real increase in the number of bores which have been installed at homes throughout the metropolitan area. I claim that within the next decade anything up to 30 per cent or 40 per cent of home users will be drawing water from their own bores.

Recently I watched the Minister on the television programme "State File". He answered a question about piping water from the north and, although I do not know the exact cost per thousand litres, the Minister made the proposition appear rather ridiculous because the cost would make such a project uneconomical. I can see there will be an increase in bores in the next decade because in certain parts of the metropolitan area it is a simple matter to get quick access to shallow water.

I believe we ought to be conserving water even more than we are doing at present. The Metropolitan Water Board is to be congratulated for the programme which has been initiated. I get many shots fired at me by people asking me when the Government is going to lift the ban and allow sprinklers to operate again. But the system is not so restrictive because there is nothing to prevent a person from watering his garden with a hose all day. The problem arises because of the time which is consumed in doing so and when both a husband and wife work it is very difficult to ensure that gardens and lawns are watered.

However, the campaign has been successful and I hope the dams are filled rapidly because of the heavy rains which I believe we will get towards the middle of winter. This will help to ease the

situation, but we ought to take great care and preserve our water resources. If we do so we will be comfortably accommodated for many years to come.

I should like also to comment on the State Housing Commission. It could build homes in a local authority area and make them available at the discretion of the shire. I do not mean they should be for housing shire employees. In a shire which has welfare workers—and the Wanneroo Shire has a welfare worker who dedicates 95 per cent of her time to elderly people, pensioners, and disabled people—these homes could be allocated by the shire for occupation by unfortunate people who are asked to leave their homes because of difficult circumstances. These people have nowhere to go and the shire could accommodate them. They would do valuable work within the community and the provision of these homes would lessen the burden on the State Housing Commission. Of course, the shires would not allow these people to occupy the homes for a lengthy period, probably a maximum of six weeks until they are able to find other accommodation, and then the homes would be available for somebody else in difficult circumstances. I do not know at this stage whether this could take place under the provisions of the present Act or whether there would have to be an amendment to the Act to allow the commission to do this, but I should appreciate it if the Minister would take up this matter and perhaps at a later date advise me whether it could be done or whether the commission would be prepared to review the proposition favourably.

I should also like to commend the Minister for Police and Traffic. The people of my electorate and also other parts of Wanneroo welcome the fact that tenders have been called for the new police station complex in Warwick. The two-storey building, which will be situated on Erindale Road, will consist of an administration office, a district office, CIB quarters, RTA accommodation, and holding cells. This building will enable the police to operate far more effectively than they can from their current premises which are only of a temporary nature.

In an earlier speech in this House I mentioned the urgent need for the extension of the Mitchell Freeway. Of course, this will take an enormous amount of money and progress is very slow. This year it is anticipated that it will reach Hutton Street and in the next few years it will reach Karrinyup Road. But there is an urgent need for it to be extended further north and I urge the Federal Government to ensure that funds continue to flow for this important road because

the Joondalup subregional centre is ready to commence development. Only a few formalities are holding up its commencement. However, the plans will be finalised in a very short period and we will have the Joondalup centre in its initial developmental stages. If the road were constructed through to Hepburn Avenue within five years it would be a most welcome move.

I would like to make a point regarding the extension of Marmion Avenue to the northern portion of the Wanneroo Shire. Marmion Avenue is going to be a prime road and the recent breakup of land previously held by the Mindary Pastoral Company, an area consisting of 6 000 acres, has meant that the area has been subdivided into 16 portions held by separate owners. These people will be wanting to commence development of their land in a fairly short space of time. This will necessitate the extension of Marmion Avenue and now is the time to do this.

If the developers were to discuss the possibility of the early completion of the road with the Main Roads Department and other relevant Government departments and managed to convince the authorities to complete the road now, it would be much cheaper than waiting another seven or so years.

This Government was criticised very heavily by the Opposition on the subject of pre-schools. I believe however that the Opposition claimed the programme was an excellent one, but as I said earlier in my speech, it is their right to criticise the Government and attempt to bring it down. The Opposition tried to turn the debate on pre-schools into an emotional issue and did little to help the situation.

I intend to quote some figures indicating the number of four and five-year-olds waiting to join the pre-school system, and although these figures are as correct as I could possibly establish I hope no-one will criticise me too harshly if they are not in fact 100 per cent correct.

In the Padbury area there are 148 four-year-olds and 51 five-year-olds; in Sorrento, 112 four-year-olds and 20 five-year-olds; in Yagan, 136 four-year-olds and 30 five-year-olds; in Warwick, 160 four-year-olds and 64 five-year-olds; in Carine, 127 four-year-olds and 15 five-year-olds; in Hillarys, 92 four-year-olds and 29 five-year-olds; in Craigie, 141 four-year-olds and 15 five-year-olds; in Duncraig, 148 four-year-olds, and 62 five-year-olds; in Greenwood, 221 four-year-olds and 174 five-year-olds; in Kallaroo, 126 four-year-olds and 20 five-year-olds; and in Mullaloo, 49 four-year-olds and eight five-year-olds. The

rest of the children are in the Girrawheen area or in the areas to the north of Wanneroo. I have merely quoted the figures for areas in my electorate.

The Wanneroo Shire Council is very interested in accommodating children of this age group. The council is contemplating the development of all-purpose buildings and I believe a committee has been formed which has met with members of the Pre-School Board. Certainly I shall be pursuing the Minister to ensure that some assistance can be given to the shire. If the shire is prepared to construct these all-purpose buildings surely the Government should be sufficiently responsible to give some assistance. If the Government can do this it will be a major breakthrough. I hope the Government takes up the shire's initiative and assists the shire by providing funds for this purpose.

I wanted to make a few remarks for the benefit of the member for Cockburn. However I would rather wait until another time as the member is not present and it is not my habit to criticise any member who is not in the House. I have enough information here to prove that the member did not do his homework. I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Jamieson.

*House adjourned at 9.45 p.m.*

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### DISASTER RELIEF

#### *Financial Assistance*

#### 1. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

I preface my question with the remark that the Opposition extends every sympathy to the people who suffered as a result of the most disastrous storm which hit the southern part of the State last night.

- (1) Will disaster relief be made available to people who sustained loss from wind and fire during last night's storm in the south-west?
- (2) If so, for what purpose?
- (3) What will be the eligibility criteria for such relief?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) to (3) In accordance with normal custom in matters of this kind where a natural or other form of disaster is involved which qualifies people for relief, the Government stands ready to deal with the situation, first of all in matters of urgent personal relief where there is personal hardship. In such cases

special provisions have to be made and put into effect quickly. So far as the actual rehabilitation of properties and the like is concerned, the normal procedures will prevail in which the Treasury stands ready to work with other Government agencies to make available the necessary facilities for applications. It would be impracticable for me to be precise regarding the exact forms of relief and the methods of assessing them, because no two disasters are quite alike. In this case we are dealing with a combination of things: in some cases flood from the inroads of the sea, and in other cases the straightout question of fire damage.

However, I can say that as a result of discussions with the Commonwealth Government the Prime Minister has already sent me formal advice that the normal natural disaster relief finances will prevail so far as the Commonwealth is concerned, in accordance with the formula that exists. Under that formula some things qualify for assistance by the Commonwealth subject to the State having met its quota for the present financial year, which in fact we have.

In other matters we are on our own, but this will be determined when we can see more precisely the nature of the damage.

In the meantime, we are more concerned about taking every possible step for the protection of life and limb and with that, of course, personal property. It usually takes a day or two before we can assess the full extent of the damage and then start to make an appraisal of how best to provide personal relief beyond that which is available locally and has already been given, and what relief should be provided in respect of the rehabilitation of assets.

Mr Davies: Is it likely that a committee will be set up as in the case of previous disasters?

Sir CHARLES COURT: We will consider this overnight and make up our minds regarding how best to administer it. For instance, in Port Hedland we set up a local committee which met very quickly and effectively. In the one room we had representatives of insurance companies and the committee that had been set up,

comprising the local manager of the Rural and Industries Bank and a representative of the local authority, as well as a Treasury man. In that case people could have their problems dealt with on the spot. However, that was easier because we were dealing with something involving substantially one location.

On this occasion we have the problem that typically arises in the south-west in which we have a widespread disaster area with many centres, and so we will be working out ways and means of dealing with this quickly and effectively on the spot so that people will not have to do a lot of travelling.

Mr Davies: Is there likely to be a public appeal?

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is premature to conjecture on whether or not that will be necessary. One of the things one learns from being involved in many such occasions as this one, is that it is important to let the first 24 hours pass to enable a certain amount of clearing up to be done so that a proper appraisal can be made, and then it is possible to see more clearly exactly how much assistance is necessary beyond that normally provided by the Government.

Mr Speaker, the response from throughout Australia has been quite spontaneous and impressive as well as very encouraging because, without any prompting from us, there have been many inquiries from people in other parts of Australia as to how they can help. For the moment we have said that we appreciate their interest and will note their offers and let them know as quickly as we can how they can help.

## DISASTER RELIEF

### *Boundary Fences*

2. Mr SHALDERS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

In view of the many kilometres of boundary fencing which have been destroyed on rural properties by last night's storm and the resulting hazards to motorists of straying stock on roads, would the Minister indicate whether—

- (a) assistance in the form of materials required to repair such fences could be supplied by the Government to relevant local government authorities; and
- (b) urgent liaison between State and Federal Government departments could be undertaken to facilitate the employment of currently unemployed persons under the supervision of local government or other suitable supervisory authorities for the utilisation of such materials in the repair of all roadside boundary fencing in the shortest possible time?

Mr OLD replied:

- (a) and (b) I thank the member for Murray for some notice of this question. The whole matter of storm and fire damage is being investigated as quickly and thoroughly as possible by my department, and recommendations arising from this investigation will be placed before the Government as soon as possible.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

### *TLC Delegation*

3. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

With reference to his meeting with the Trades and Labor Council delegation this morning, did the Minister make a firm commitment to refer the issue of cuts in the rate of workers' compensation to a committee of inquiry?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Certainly not. The Trades and Labor Council submitted views in respect of the proposed amendments, and I simply undertook to convey those views to Cabinet.

## PARLIAMENT HOUSE

### *Emergency Lighting*

4. Mr HODGE, to the Premier:

My question is related to last night's storm, although it is of a less serious nature than previous ones which the Premier has answered. Last night at

approximately 7.15 p.m. the power went off in Parliament House and I, along with a number of other members, was left to try to find my way out of the building in pitch blackness. I stumbled along for quite a while and almost fell down the rear stairs. The staff did the best they could and I was supplied with what is apparently the normal emergency lighting for Parliament House, until it blew out. Will the Premier look at the question of providing some sort of suitable emergency lighting for Parliament House or else ensure that members are covered by workers' compensation?

The SPEAKER: This question ought to have been directed to the Speaker and, under the requirements of the Standing Orders, I ask that the member place it on the notice paper and I shall provide him with an answer.

## ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

### *Return to Normal Supply*

5. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Can the Minister indicate to the House when it is anticipated that the supply of electricity will be completely back to normal; and will industry be able to function fully as from tomorrow?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

I am informed that present indications are that the full load can be supplied by the latest tomorrow. Only a few parts of the metropolitan area are presently not connected. The reason is not the fault in the generating plants, which presently are all in working order, but the heavy deposits of salt and dust which have to be washed away from the various parts of the transmission lines.

## BAUXITE MINING

### *Parliamentary NCP Policy*

6. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Agriculture:  
What is the policy of the parliamentary National Country Party towards the proposed expansion of bauxite mining in the Darling scarp?

The SPEAKER: On the face of it it appears to me that the subject of this question is outside the ministerial responsibility of the Minister for Agriculture. As I have serious doubts about its eligibility, I suggest that the member give notice of the question and I shall make up my mind as to whether it is suitable for admission.

## STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

### *Storm Damage Repairs*

7. Mr SHALDERS, to the Minister for Housing:

In view of the fact that hundreds of State Housing Commission homes have been damaged in the last 24 hours, can the Minister advise what action is being taken for those affected?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I conferred very early this morning with the Manager of the State Housing Commission (Mr McKenna) and it appears that throughout the State in excess of 1000 State Housing Commission homes have been affected, most of them fortunately in a minor way. There are about 300 in the Bunbury area and perhaps the worst affected area is the Lockyer estate in Albany where a number of roofs have been blown off and there is more extensive damage than in most other places.

We have given authority for the people in charge of various districts to act immediately to arrange for all the necessary repairs to be done without reference to the commission in Perth. We have also already arranged for a number of people whose homes have been rendered uninhabitable to be transferred to other homes. I know that some people at Coolbellup and other areas have been transferred, and the commission is doing everything possible to make sure that people are not inconvenienced more than can be helped.