

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 5th October, 1971

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

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Toms) [4.32 p.m.]: I am ready to swear-in the member for Cottesloe.

Mr. Hutchinson took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance, and signed the roll.

BILLS (7): ASSENT

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

1. Pay-roll Tax Assessment Bill.
2. Pay-roll Tax Bill.
3. Firearms and Guns Act Amendment Bill.
4. Land Tax Assessment Act Amendment Bill.
5. Vermin Act Amendment Bill.
6. Noxious Weeds Act Amendment Bill.
7. Offenders Probation and Parole Act Amendment Bill.

QUESTIONS (42): ON NOTICE

1. ALCOA ALUMINA REFINERIES *Wheat Starch*

Mr. McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Industrial Development and Decentralisation:

- (1) What will be the total of bushels of wheat required to produce the wheat starch needed for the Alcoa alumina refinery at Pinjarra when this industry reaches full production?
- (2) What is the amount of wheat used at present by the Alcoa refinery at Kwinana?
- (3) Will the Kwinana refinery require more than that being used at present?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) The rate of use of starch a ton of alumina can vary from one refinery to another, even using the same process. However, a reasonable usage is four tons of starch a thousand tons of alumina.

The Pinjarra refinery will have an initial capacity of 420,000 tons of alumina, requiring 1,680 tons of starch a year. This will require about 109,000 bushels of wheat annually.

- (2) About 325,000 bushels of wheat are required annually to produce the starch at present being used at the Kwinana refinery.

- (3) The Kwinana refinery is operating at maximum capacity and it is not expected that there will be any increase in its starch requirements.

2. EDUCATION

Kelmscott School: Grounds and Footpaths

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Kelmscott Parents and Citizens' Association—

- (a) applied for approval of their school ground development programme;

- (b) applied for the remaining surplus police land to be incorporated in school grounds, to obtain the best utilisation of plant and co-ordination of works with construction of the approach road and footpath to Orlando Street bridge?

- (2) Will he have (1)(a) and (b) approved now?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.

- (b) Yes.

- (2) In both instances approval has already been given.

3. INSECTICIDES

Limitation on Use

Mr. A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Health:

What limitations are placed upon the use of the following substances in Western Australia—

dieldrin,
aldrin,
heptachlor,
D.D.T.?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

Dieldrin, Aldrin and DDT.

Limitations on use of dieldrin, aldrin and DDT are placed by the food and drug regulations under the Health Act which provide—

- (a) Regulation A07.001.

No person shall keep, spread, or use, or suffer to be kept, spread, or used, any preparation containing a poisonous pesticide, so as to expose any food for sale, or any food wrapping, package, container or appliance, to risk of contamination therewith.

(b) Regulation A07,002.

No person shall apply any pesticide containing any substance mentioned in this sub-regulation to any fruit or vegetable within the period before harvesting for sale shown in relation thereto:—

aldrin, dieldrin, DDT—Period before harvesting four weeks.

Products containing dieldrin or aldrin are required to be labelled in compliance with the following principles:—

- (1) No recommendations shall be made for use on edible portions of crops or pastures, fruit, animals or stock feed.
- (2) Recommendations permitted are limited to—
 - (a) The control of termites, timber borers and carpet beetles.
 - (b) Soil and seed treatments in accordance with the recommendations of the Department of Agriculture.
 - (c) Control of argentine ants in accordance with the recommendations of the Department of Agriculture.

- (3) Labels shall bear, prominently and separately, the two statements:—

“Not To Be Used For Any Other Purpose”.

“Do Not Apply To Pastures and Edible Crops”.

Household indoor space sprays containing DDT or dieldrin are not accepted for registration.

Heptachlor.

The registered uses limited to heptachlor are as soil treatments for controlling—

lawn beetle and grubs,
mole crickets,
ants,
earwigs,
soil insects and turf pests,
wheat root grub,
black beetles,
pasture scarabs,
cutworms,
white fringed beetles,
curl grubs,
wireworms and similar soil insects,
beetle borer of bananas,

white fringed weevil,
termites,
cockchafer grubs.

Areas of use—

golf green and golf fairways,
bowling greens,
sports ovals and lawns.

Agricultural use; applied as a soil treatment.

4.

TOURISM

Kalbarri

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Is he aware large numbers of people wishing to holiday at Kalbarri have been turned away because of shortage of facilities?
- (2) What is the estimated number of people and caravans who have during the previous Christmas, May and August holidays been unable to stay at Kalbarri?
- (3) What action is he taking to assist alleviation of this grave and unsatisfactory situation?
- (4) Will the tourist authority assist towards the sealing of the entry road from Ajana?
- (5) If “Yes” to what extent?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Records are not maintained. Enquiries reveal the following estimates of numbers of people, etc., who have not been able to secure accommodation at Kalbarri over the past year—
 - (a) Christmas holidays: Very few as most people book accommodation for this period.
 - (b) May school holidays: Approximately 600 people and 150 caravans over the two weeks.
 - (c) August school holidays: Between 1,600 and 2,000 people and 400 to 500 caravans over the period. Approximately 200 inquiries by letter and telephone calls for accommodation were unable to be satisfied.
- (3) Excess demand is common to most popular resorts during school holidays and Kalbarri is no exception. It is understood that the Shire of Northampton is exploring means whereby the two caravan parks it controls at Kalbarri can be expanded to better cater for the business offering.

The Tourist Development Authority assists local government authorities by subsidising on a

\$2 for \$1 for the building of caravan parks, which are to be operated by the municipality when demand warrants. It is not economical, however, to provide facilities for short periods of demand. It is not unusual for the Press to report the difficulty of obtaining accommodation in certain areas and so warn people that advance bookings are essential. However, business people are often loathe to take such steps as it can turn custom away at other times also.

- (4) It is the policy of the Tourist Development Authority not to make funds available for the up-grading of roads. The Main Roads Department has allotted \$98,100 towards improvements to the entry road for 1971-72. An additional five miles of bitumen surfacing is included in these works.

(5) Answered by (4).

5. IRON ORE TEMPORARY RESERVES

Mt. Newman

Mr. GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What temporary reserves formed the basis on which the Mt. Newman project was founded?
- (2) Were any of these temporary reserves granted in 1961, and, if so, what are the identifying numbers of such reserves?
- (3) How much money was spent on each of the above temporary reserves prior to their conversion to mineral leases?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) 1979H, 1980H, 2105H, 2106H, 2118H, 2366H, 2368H, 2372H, 2373H, 2374H and 2375H.
- (2) Yes. 1979H and 1980H.
- (3) Rights of occupancy to the reserves mentioned in (1) above were transferred to the Mt. Newman Iron Ore Company Limited on the 9th July, 1964, and with the addition of further areas became temporary reserves numbered 3225H, 3226H and 3227H.

Between 9th July, 1964, and 7th April, 1967, the date from which the term of the mineral lease commenced, the company spent approximately \$4,364,000 on these reserves. Separate expenditure figures for each reserve are not available.

6.

PRISONS

Inmates: Placement

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Excluding Fremantle prison, what are the penal institutions maintained by the Department of Correction and what is the classification of each, i.e., maximum security, medium security, or minimum security?
- (2) For each establishment would he provide—
 - (a) the number of inmates;
 - (b) the number of inmates who are serving sentences for offences involving violence or for sex offences?
- (3) Who are the people responsible for the assessment of prisoners and their allocation to the various establishments?
- (4) Does he consider that the police should give an opinion on the assessment and placement of prisoners?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Broome regional prison—minimum.
Geraldton regional prison—minimum.
Kalgoorlie regional prison—minimum.
Bunbury rehabilitation centre—minimum.
Bartons mill prison—minimum.
Bandyup training centre (womens)—minimum.
Each of the above institutions has a small section which can be classified as a medium security.
Albany regional prison—medium.
Karnet rehabilitation centre—minimum.
Bruswick Junction prison—minimum.
Pardelup prison farm—minimum.
Wooroloo training centre—minimum.
Assessment centre—maximum.
Byford inebriates centre—minimum.

	(a) No. of Inmates	(b) No. of Inmates Serving Sentence
Broome regional prison	74	9
Geraldton regional prison	121	22
Kalgoorlie regional prison	60	6
Wooroloo training centre	112	11
Albany regional prison	68	14
Pardelup prison farm	50	8
Bunbury rehabilitation centre	47	10
Bruswick Junction prison	14	2
Karnet rehabilitation centre	62	10
Assessment centre	26	6
Bartons Mill prison	97	
Bandyup training centre	62	

- (3) All juveniles, all prisoners serving sentences with minimum terms and prisoners serving sentences of nine months or longer are subject to full assessment and classification procedures. The assessment is carried out by prison and professional staff of the assessment centre. The assessments are presented to the classification committee, which consists of Superintendent (establishments) Mr. I. J. Thorpe; Superintendent (treatment and training) Mr. W. Kidston; Superintendent (assessment centre) Mr. C. Larkin; Senior Clinical Psychologist Mr. P. Boyes; Deputy Chief Probation and Parole Officer Mr. J. George. This body makes recommendations of allocations to various establishments for the approval of the Comptroller General of Prisons. In the case of prisoners not falling into the above categories (i.e., short sentence prisoners) they are transferred to metropolitan institutions by the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent, Fremantle prison.

(4) No.

7. LIONEL ARTHUR BROCKMAN

Cost of Search: Police Department

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

What expenses, including wages, have been incurred by the Police Department in their efforts to recapture escapee Brockman?

Mr. MAY replied:

Approximately \$31,131.

8. LIONEL ARTHUR BROCKMAN

Cost of Search: Other Government Departments

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

What expenses, including wages, have been incurred by the Government (excluding the Police Department) in the efforts to recapture the escapee Brockman?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

\$15.00.

9. PRISONS

Escapees

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Will he list the points in Western Australia from which prisoners have escaped in the last two years?
- (2) Will he indicate the number of persons involved, and the number of escapees from each point?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

(1) and (2)—

Institution	Escapes in the last two years
Fremantle	25
Broome	12
Geraldton	23
Kalgoorlie	13
Wooroloo	14
Albany	13
Pardelup	15
Bunbury	9
Brunswick Junction	5
Karnet	26
Barton's Mill	29
Bandyup	8
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10. PRIVATE SWIMMING POOLS

Safety Measures

Mr. BATEMAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware of legislation in any other part of the world or Australia which deals with the protection of private swimming pools?
- (2) If "Yes" could he make details of such legislation available?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Australia
Victoria—uniform building regulations 3137.
South Australia—Local Government Act S. 346 (a).
New South Wales—Local Government Act S. 306 (1).
Queensland—Local Government Act S. 31.
United States of America
ordinance 89 of the City of Lansing, Michigan;
ordinance 841 of the City of Las Vegas.

11. CHILDREN: DROWNING

Instances

Mr. BATEMAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many deaths have occurred through drowning in private swimming pools by children under the age of six years in each year from 1968 to 1971?
- (2) How many deaths have occurred through drowning other than in private swimming pools by children under the age of six years in those years?
- (3) Can he give some indication of the circumstances involved in each instance?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

(1)	1968	2
	1969	3
	1970	1
	1971	4

—
10

(2)	1968	7
	1969	4
	1970	12
	1971	4

—
27

- (3) Eight of the ten children drowned in private pools were aged three years or less and apparently fell into the pools unnoticed.

Twenty-one of the twenty-seven children drowned other than in private pools were aged three years or less and the majority also appear to have fallen into the water unnoticed. The relevant locations were:

rivers, streams, creeks and other water channels	9
farm dams and tanks	7
clay pits, storm-water and other pools	6
bath	2
water drums	2
sea	1

12.

RAILWAYS

Passenger-freighter Road Services

Mr. STEPHENS, to the Minister for Railways:

- (1) How many railway passenger/freighter road services were operating at 30th June, 1971?
- (2) What were these routes?
- (3) What were the operating profits or losses on these routes for the years ended 30th June, 1968, 1969, 1970 and 1971?
- (4) Is it intended to discontinue any of these services, and, if so, which ones?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) Ten.

- (2) and (3) For the reason that financial results of particular services are not isolated but incorporated in route statistics, it is not possible to give precise information in all instances. As far as possible, the information requested is as follows:

- (1) Bunbury-Katanning—

\$
1968 loss 6,116
1969 loss 8,835
1970 loss 8,502
1971 loss 4,074

- (2) Albany-Denmark-Walpole—

\$
1968 loss 5,227
1969 loss 7,342
1970 loss 7,295
1971 loss 7,834

- (3) Geraldton-Mullewa—

\$
1968 loss 4,503
1969 loss 7,786
1970 loss 9,538
1971 loss 11,463

- (4) Perth-Hopetown (combined with Esperance)—

\$
1968 loss 2,073
1969 loss 11,815
1970 loss 10,423
1971 loss 18,213

- (5) Bunbury-Walpole (combined with Manjimup-Northcliffe)—

\$
1968 loss 9,555
1969 loss 18,405
1970 loss 19,150
1971 loss 12,043

- (6) Perth-Mukinbudin (combined with (7)).

- (7) Perth-Merredin via Wyalkatchem—

\$
1968 profit 233
1969 loss 8,825
1970 loss 14,223
1971 loss 19,087

- (8) Perth-Hyden (combined with Quairading-Naremburn-Corrigin)

\$
1968 loss 7,632
1969 loss 12,892
1970 loss 15,767
1971 loss 19,828

- (9) Perth-Kondinin via Narrogin (combined with Williams-Narrogin-Kulin)

\$
1968 loss 6,108
1969 loss 7,236
1970 loss 8,372
1971 loss 9,804

- (10) Perth-Rocky Gully (combined with Perth-Albany)

\$
1968 profit 9,744
1969 profit 2,730
1970 profit 2,679
1971 loss 18,477

- (4) All services are continually under review and alteration or cancellation effected as considered reasonable. All services are currently being examined and it is expected that changes will be implemented on certain routes in the near future.

13. **FRUIT FLY***Baiting Schemes*

Mr. NALDER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Further to questions of the 23rd September, 1971, on fruit fly baiting schemes—

- (1) Which country fruit fly baiting scheme committee has expressed a wish to discontinue, and what are the reasons?
- (2) Which metropolitan fruit fly baiting scheme committee has expressed a wish to discontinue, and what are the reasons?
- (3) Now that the Government has discontinued fruit tree licensing, what procedure is adopted to allow a poll of growers in any local authority area to request or discontinue a baiting scheme?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) The Mandurah scheme committee tendered its resignation as from 31st August, 1971 because of non-co-operation from the local municipal council and from absentee property owners. It has been asked to reconsider its position.
- (2) The Guildford scheme committee advised on the 21st September, 1971, that they intended to go into recess for an indefinite period. The main reason given was opposition to paying for a service while neighbouring districts had no such commitment.
- (3) It is proposed that the decision to introduce or to discontinue a baiting scheme rest with the local authority, with or without a poll or by using a normal roll of rate payers. Fruit fly baiting schemes introduced by a poll of registered orchardists would continue subject to appeal to the Minister for Local Government that the scheme is no longer desired.

14. **MASSEURS***Registration*

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the Government had an approach from the Western Australian association of masseurs regarding registration of masseurs?
- (2) If so, when did the Government receive—
 - (a) the request;
 - (b) the reply?
- (3) What does the Government intend to do regarding this matter?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) A deputation from the West Australian association of masseurs was received on 23rd April last concerning registration of masseurs.
- (b) There are implications associated with this request which have necessitated special inquiries and require careful consideration. No decision has yet been made.
- (3) The Government's intention will be announced when a decision is made.

15. **BACKYARD ORCHARDS***Registration: Income*

Mr. REID, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Would he please reconcile the answer to question (4) on 19th August, 1971, which stated that the total income from backyard orchards for 1970-71 was \$17,208, when the Financial Statement presented to Parliament on 16th September, 1971 states on page 52 that registration fees for fruit fly eradication amounted to \$28,769?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

The total income for orchard registration fees for fruit fly eradication for 1970-71 was \$28,769 as stated, of which \$17,208 was collected from backyard orchards and \$11,561 from commercial orchards.

16. **MIDLAND ABATTOIR BOARD***Amending Bill: Trading*

Mr. REID, to the Minister for Agriculture:

How soon after the passing of the Abattoirs Act Amendment Bill will the Midland abattoir board undertake trading?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

The Board will trade in offals immediately.

17. **ROADS***Roadmaking Materials: Private Properties*

Mr. I. W. MANNING, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Under what circumstances and conditions does the Main Roads Department pay compensation to private landholders for material taken for road making purposes?
- (2) How is compensation assessed?

- (3) In view of the strong objection of landholders to the removal of material from their land, will he agree that the department should pay a royalty for all road making material taken from private property?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) The Main Roads Department does not pay compensation for material taken for road purposes. The only private land which the department enters to remove road-making material is that classed by the Land Act as rural land. The Land Act provides that the Crown, of which the Main Roads Department is a representative, can remove roadmaking material from such land without payment of compensation. However, if improvements are damaged or destroyed as a result of the Department's operations then the owner is recompensed for the loss of such improvements.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) No. In the experience of the Main Roads Department land owners are usually co-operative in this matter.

18. ABATTOIR

Katanning: Government Assistance

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Has a decision been made on the amount and form of Government financial and other assistance to the Southern Meat Packers meat-works proposal for Katanning?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

A final decision on the amount and form of Government assistance has not yet been made.

19. BUILDING BLOCKS

Sales: Slump

Mr. BATEMAN, to the Premier:

- (1) In view of the statements made against the Government by an auctioneer at the South Kelmscott land auction (as reported in *The West Australian*, 27th September, 1971, page 15), where no bids were made for any blocks offered, does he agree with the auctioneer that there is a complete loss of confidence by the people in land sales in Western Australia?
- (2) If so, what reasons could he give to the public for this loss of confidence?
- (3) If not, could he give reasons to refute the statements made by the auctioneer?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) The public buying a site for home building now recognise the value of the progressive actions which have been taken by Governments to bring land prices down to a level within their capacity to afford and to increase the availability of fully serviced home sites throughout the metropolitan region.
- The public also appreciate that there is the attractive alternative of buying from a wide range of well designed houses and fully developed residential sites offered by project developers able to arrange finance for the purchaser.

20. STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Land: Kenwick-Wattle Grove Area

Mr. BATEMAN, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Does the State Housing Commission own property in the Kenwick-Wattle Grove area?
- (2) If so—
- (a) would he give the locations of the land so owned; and
- (b) does the State Housing Commission intend to develop a comprehensive housing and shopping complex in this area?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) 35 single residential lots in Stretton Way and Lalor Road, Kenwick, on which houses are now being constructed, and 5 acres 2 roods 13 perches being Lot 17, corner of Kenwick Road and Myola Streets, Kenwick.
- (b) Based on current land ownership as nominated in (2) (a) —No.

21. EDUCATION

Teacher Training Advisory Council

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the teacher training advisory council required to be set up under regulation 194 of the Education Act been set up?
- (2) If "Yes" does the Council meet regularly, and, if so, how regularly?
- (3) Has the council made any recommendation to the Minister as to the future of the secondary teachers college at Nedlands?
- (4) If "Yes" what was that advice?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) This council has not been convened for several years, as its functions have been largely taken over by the Tertiary Education Commission.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) No.
- (4) Answered by (3).

22. **TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGE**

Churchlands: Warden

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has Mrs. B. O'Brian been appointed to the new position of women's warden at the new Churchlands teachers college?
- (2) Is Mrs. O'Brian a formally trained teacher?
- (3) Was she a member of the teachers' union at the time of appointment?
- (4) Were any of the other applicants for the position members of the teachers' union at the time of application?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) and (4) The Education Department does not possess this information. Membership of the teachers' union was not a factor in making this appointment.

23. **NORTH-WEST PLANNING AND CO-ORDINATING AUTHORITY**

Establishment of Department

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Industrial Development and Decentralisation:

- (1) Further to question 5, 24th August, 1971, and the answer given, has a decision been made on the organisation for the role of Co-ordinator of Development and the North-West Planning and Co-ordinating Authority?
- (2) (a) If "Yes" what are the details of the organisation;
(b) If "No" when will a decision be made?
- (3) Who is to be the new Co-ordinator of Development and Chairman of the North-West Planning and Co-ordinating Authority?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) (a) See (1).
(b) Before the end of the year.
- (3) A decision has not been made. In the meantime the Director of Engineering, Public Works Department is acting.

24. **FITZGERALD RIVER RESERVE**

Warden's Court: Prospecting Areas 1237 to 1240

Mr. STEPHENS, to the Premier:

As the Government has proceeded with a Bill to establish an alumina refinery in the Upper Swan in advance of the establishment of the Department of Environmental Protection will the Government relist for hearing in the wardens court the application made in respect of prospecting areas 1237, 1238, 1239 and 1240 situated in the Fitzgerald River area?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

The question of relisting for hearing in the warden's court will be considered following an examination of this matter by the Director of the Department of Environmental Protection.

25. **BUILDING BLOCKS**

Kelmscott: Development Costs

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) In view of the results of the auction sale of the Government-sponsored (Kelmscott Improvement Plan No. 4) blocks at Kelmscott, and to assist the purchasing public to regain confidence, will the Government announce its firm intentions towards urban land development?
- (2) What has been the development cost per block for the 53 Kelmscott blocks offered for sale?
- (3) Does the Government intend to cover these development costs and increased rates until a sale is obtained?
- (4) If interest is to be charged against the development loans what is the rate?
- (5) Has a sale for any of the 53 blocks been obtained by negotiation since the auction?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) The circumstances of the auction sale referred to derive from the remnants of a scheme conceived by the previous Government in its endeavour to overcome the inflationary price spiral which resulted from its metropolitan land policy of restricting areas of development both in extent and geographically.
The policy of the present Government is to allow and encourage a more natural flow of development in quantity and direction as determined by *bona fide* developers and home seekers,

rather than by Government decree and the whims of speculators.

It is believed the public will regain confidence when it becomes apparent that the artificial spiralling land prices of previous years were not a natural consequence but the result of unsound land policies.

- (2) Final costs are not available but will be between \$1,580 and \$1,620 a lot.
- (3) Yes, but it is emphasised that the lots are the property of private owners.
- (4) 8%.
- (5) This information is not available because the sale of blocks is in the hands of the respective owners.

26. BUILDING BLOCKS

Unimproved Capital Value: Development Costs

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Does the State Taxation Department in valuing individual urban blocks allow deduction for all development costs in reaching the unimproved capital value?
- (2) If not, to prevent double taxing, will the Department now make full allowance for these legitimate development expenses in determining the value of the individual block?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) No, because the land has to be valued in accordance with the Land Tax Assessment Act, which defines "unimproved value".
- (2) No, because there is no provision in the act permitting deductions to be made from the unimproved value. The reference to double taxing is not understood.

27. HOUSING

Constructions: 1971-72

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Housing:

Of the 2,400 units of housing expected to be completed and the 1,723 expected to be partly constructed this financial year—

- (a) in what numbers will the various categories of the units of housing be constructed, i.e.,
 - (i) houses (number of bedrooms);
 - (ii) flats (number of bedrooms)?

(b) in which areas and in what numbers will the units of housing be built?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (a) and (b) Within the current programme activity, the following units have either been completed or are in course of construction:

	BSR	Number of Bedrooms					Total Units
		1	2	3	4	5	
Metropolitan Region							
Detached houses			925	92	17	1,034
Group housing	104	36	307	444		891
Country (outside of the metropolitan region and south of the 26th parallel)							
Detached houses			193			133
Group housing	12		54	40		106
North of the 26th parallel							
Detached houses			19	2		21
Group housing	2	7	30	16		55
							<hr/> 2,240

Programme details are not yet finalised for the balance which is proposed as:

	Units of Accommodation		Total
Metropolitan region			
Detached houses	501	
Group Housing....	946	1,447
Country (outside the metropolitan region and south of the 26th parallel)			
Detached houses	193	
Group housing	35	236
North of the 26th parallel			
Detached houses	160	
Group housing	40	200
			<hr/> 1,883

The detached houses in the country and the north-west are three-bedroom and the group housing which is at Bunbury and South Hedland, will be of the one, two and three bedroom categories; all of the balance of the programme may be subject to adjustment following the normal December review of vacancy rates, applicant demand and wastage.

28. EDUCATION

Expenditure: 1969 to 1972

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

What was the itemised expenditure on education for the years 1969, 1970, 1971 and estimated for 1972 from both the revenue and loan budgets and sectionalised into the various divisions of education?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

The information requested is contained in a statement which, with permission, I hereby table.

The statement was tabled.

29.

**GOVERNMENT
EXPENDITURE**

Curtailment

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Was the curtailment of Government spending of \$3,507,000 between 20th February and 30th June this year to counter inflation?
- (2) From what items of the 1970-71 budget was this sum saved?
- (3) What was the estimated saving from cancelling or reducing overtime from 20th February to 30th June, 1971 for employees of—
 - (a) State Electricity Commission;
 - (b) Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Main items were—
 - railways;
 - public works engineering;
 - schools;
 - hospitals and medical buildings;
 - other public buildings;
 - agriculture;
 - West Australian Meat Export Works;
 - Western Australian Institute of Technology;
 - Rural and Industries Bank—delegated agencies.
- (3) (a) \$110,000.
- (b) \$6,500.

30.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Strikes: Financial Loss

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Labour:

How much loss of income is estimated to have been incurred by—

- (a) the State Electricity Commission;
 - (b) industry;
 - (c) employees,
- through State Electricity Commission stoppages in the last six months?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (a) \$241,000.
- (b) and (c) This information is not available.

31.

**STATE ELECTRICITY
COMMISSION**

*Municipal Officers' Association:
Recognition*

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Referring to his answer to question 18 on 15th September, 1971 in which he said—
 - “(b) (i) The Municipal Officers' Association has no industrial coverage of

State Electricity Commission workers generally;

- (ii) The Municipal Officers' Association as such took no part in the recent discussion but was associated with some State Electricity Commission workers at the time of the power stoppage in April, 1971”;

If this is correct will he explain why the Municipal Officers' Association is still frequently referred to as a party to discussions and negotiations—including with Ministers—for wage and other employment condition changes within the S.E.C.?

- (2) Does the S.E.C. and/or the Government acknowledge the Municipal Officers' Association as having an official and legal position in the negotiations?
- (3) Has not the Municipal Officers' Association threatened further stoppages if its demands on S.E.C. are not met?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) The answers to previous questions are correct. The State Electricity Commission has not entered into industrial negotiations with the Municipal Officers' Association.
- (2) Neither the State Electricity Commission nor the Government recognise the Municipal Officers' Association as an industrial organisation in Western Australia.
- (3) The State Electricity Commission has not been advised by the Municipal Officers' Association of any further threatened stoppages.

32.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Strike: Approach to Industrial Commission

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Was any approach made by the State Electricity Commission to the industrial arbitration commission prior to the recent strike?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) What action did he take before and during the strike?
- (4) Did he give any directions to the State Electricity Commission about matters associated with the strike before, during and/or after the strike?
- (5) (a) What will be the cost to the S.E.C. in a full year of all the wage and salary rises following the special committee's

report after the earlier strike and the recent strike settlement terms;

- (b) are other S.E.C. wage increases imminent?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) The parties to the dispute which culminated in strike action were in conference with Commissioner Kelly on the 6th, 7th, 8th, 13th and 17th September.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) An offer made by the State Electricity Commission was referred by Commissioner Kelly to the unions involved. One union accepted the offer. The remainder rejected the offer at a meeting and called the strike for the following morning. The commissioner summoned all parties after the strike commenced, and required an undertaking to accept his "recommendation". The State Electricity Commission gave the undertaking and conferences followed. Commissioner Kelly delivered his "recommendation" at 10 a.m. on Monday 25th September.
- (4) No.
- (5) (a) Earlier strike \$78,000.
Recent strike (based on Commissioner Kelly's recommendation) \$1,366,500.
(b) Not known.

33. AIR TRANSPORT

Darwin-Perth: T.A.A. Application

Mr. COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) With reference to the application by T.A.A. to operate a service between Darwin and Perth parallel with the service operated by M.M.A., would he give an assurance that before a license or permit is issued by the State Government for such operations, the conditions will be such that the frequency, standard and widespread services currently being given in Western Australia by M.M.A. will not be impaired or reduced to any of the towns and parts of Western Australia at present served by M.M.A.?
- (2) In particular, will he ensure that if a second major operator is permitted to come into the State on an intrastate basis, this will not be at the expense of the standard of service currently given and in prospect in the overall Western Australian routes as distinct from the more profitable and more easily operated services between Darwin, Port Hedland and Perth?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) Until the Commonwealth Government makes a decision to grant permission to T.A.A. to operate a service between Darwin and Perth the questions asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition do not arise.

34. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Strike: Pay Increase, and Settlement

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) As there appears to be confusion in the public mind about the wage increase proposals to which the State Electricity Commission was prepared to agree at the time some of the S.E.C. unions went on strike recently, will he clarify what was available to the S.E.C. employees before the strike in addition to the much-publicised \$4.00/\$6.00 a week increase?
- (2) If increases higher than the \$4.00/\$6.00 a week were available, why were they not published by the S.E.C., T.L.C., Industrial Arbitration Commission or the Government until near or after the decision to return to work?
- (3) Will he table a copy of Industrial Arbitration Commissioner Kelly's recommendations which formed the basis of the conditions on which the return to work decision was made?
- (4) (a) What were the final strike settlement terms and conditions;
(b) how do these compare with what the Australian Society of Engineers accepted without going on strike;
(c) if additional benefits are involved, will these flow automatically to A.S.E. members?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) The basis for discussion is the wage payable to the tradesman and other grades are related to this level.
Prior to the strike \$71.85 per week after six years' service.
S.E.C. offer \$81.85 per week increasing to \$83.35 in six months' time.
- (2) Wage negotiations take place between the parties concerned, and it is not usual to publicise until final agreement has been reached.
- (3) Copy of Commissioner Kelly's recommendation is, with permission, hereby tabled.

- (4) (a) Still being determined.
- (b) Answered by (a).
- (c) A decision has not been made yet.

Commissioner Kelly's recommendation was tabled.

35. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Strike: Municipal Officers' Association

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) What was the basis of selecting the committee comprising Messrs. J. W. Coleman (Secretary of the Trades and Labor Council) E. Boylan (Department of Labour) and A. C. Slee (S.E.C. officer) to undertake certain studies and make recommendations following the earlier strike in which the Municipal Officers' Association was involved?
- (2) Was this committee within the existing State or Federal industrial arbitration legislation?
- (3) By whom were the members of the committee appointed and by whom were they nominated?
- (4) (a) Was the opinion of the M.O.A. sought as to its acceptance of the members of the committee or any of them;
- (b) if so, which ones?
- (5) (a) Was S.E.C. concurrence and agreement to the establishing of the committee and its personnel sought and obtained;
- (b) which members of the committee did the commission specifically nominate?
- (6) (a) Were the views of the Industrial Arbitration Commission sought before the committee was established;
- (b) if so, with what result;
- (c) if not, is this to be the pattern for future handling of industrial disputes by the Government?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) With a view to having a balanced committee comprised of members having specific knowledge of the various facets of the dispute. Mr. J. W. Coleman was selected because of his association with trade union activities; Mr. E. Boylan, the chief industrial advocate of the Department of Labour, because of his knowledge of that department's point of view; and Mr. A. C. Slee, an associate member of the school of mining, a member of the institution of engineering of Australia and an assistant power production engineer employed by the State

Electricity Commission, because of his intimate knowledge of responsibilities of power house personnel.

- (2) No.
- (3) Cabinet appointed the committee on the recommendation of a Cabinet sub-committee.
- (4) (a) No.
- (b) Answered by (4) (a).
- (5) Commission representatives were present at the initial conference with the Cabinet sub-committee when it was decided to set up the committee, but the commission was not associated with the selection of personnel who comprised the committee.
- (6) (a) No.
- (b) Answered by (6) (a).
- (c) No. This was to meet an emergency which arose from a situation which had its genesis prior to the present Government taking office.

36.

DAYLIGHT SAVING

Effect on Air Pollution

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Has he sought information or a report from the air pollution control committee regarding the effect on air pollution in connection with the introduction of daylight saving?
- (2) If so, what was the result of the information?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) The scientific advisory committee did, at the time the Minister invited comment on daylight saving, indicate that the extra hour could, because morning conditions in Perth are less favourable to air dispersion than in the afternoon, aggravate air pollution. However, since that time the Commonwealth Bureau of Meteorology has from the 1st October commenced a system of air dispersion forecasts allowing a warning to be given to all persons in Perth on weather conditions controlling air dispersion and thus air pollution.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

37.

FEMALE NURSES

Pay Increase: Government Opposition

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Were the cases referred to in his reply to my question 10 on 16th September, 1971 the ones which were reported in *The West Australian* newspaper on 15th September, 1971 under the heading "Pay Rises Sought for Nurses"?

- (2) If not, would he kindly reply to my aforesaid question relating to this reported case?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) and (2) The application referred to in my reply to the Member's question 10 of 16th September, 1971, was that referred to in the "West Australian" of 15th September, 1971.

38. TEACHERS

Recruitment From Canada

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

Having regard for the fact that about half the students who graduated from universities in May last in Canada have been unable to find suitable employment and that tertiary education in that country is becoming termed "great training robbery" would he consider trying to recruit necessary teachers for Western Australia in Canada, which action should not necessitate the involvement of highest ranking departmental officers?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Only a small proportion of the students who graduated from Canadian universities in May would be trained teachers and therefore eligible to teach in Western Australia.

However, it is understood that Canada has overcome the serious teacher shortage which existed in the 1960's and there is now a surplus of trained teachers in some parts of the country. A small number of Canadian teachers have joined the Western Australian Education Department during the past year.

Several years ago, when large numbers of Australian teachers were migrating to Canada, it was agreed that to help stem the flow no recruiting campaigns would be conducted by either country. Under this agreement, which was made at the request of the Australian States, Western Australia is precluded from actively recruiting teachers in Canada.

39. TEACHERS

Promotions: Preference

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

Does his reply to question 24 on 21st September, 1971 mean that a union member applicant with adequate qualifications and ability which make him eligible for

an appointment to a particular position, will receive preference of appointment against a non-union member applicant who has much higher qualifications and ability, notwithstanding that all things in this case are not equal in regard to the appointment to the said particular position?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Yes.

40. PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Grounds: Improvements, and Maintenance Costs

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) What was the final cost of the improvements in front of Parliament House, including road works, landscaping, concrete structure and installing the fountains?
- (2) How much is the running cost of the fountains and illumination each quarter?
- (3) How much maintenance cost is anticipated to be spent on the improvements each year?
- (4) How much will the additional gardening cost each year for the newly landscaped areas?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Estimated final cost \$423,000; final figures not yet available.
- (2) \$2,800 a quarter—estimated.
- (3) \$2,375 a year—estimated.
- (4) \$2,770 a year—estimated.

41. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Generating and Distributing Equipment: Deferred Payments

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Have any payments been deferred by the State Electricity Commission for the purchase of generating and distributing equipment?
- (2) If so, what are the total deferrals and the period involved?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).

42. MUTTON

Prices

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he able to supply the price of mutton per lb. for the weeks ending—
 - (a) 31st July, 1971;
 - (b) 18th September, 1971.

in Brisbane; Homebush, N.S.W.; Newmarket, Victoria; Adelaide; and Midland, W.A.?

- (2) If the price at Midland is less than the Eastern States, is the main contributing factor the lack of killing facilities or are there other important reasons?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) (a) The price of mutton a lb. for the week ending 31st July, 1971 was as follows:

	Cents a lb.			
	Wethers		Ewes	
	Light	Heavy	Light	Heavy
Sydney	7½-11½	7½-10½	6½-10½	6-9
Melbourne	9-10	8-9	8½-9½	7½-8
Brisbane	9-10½	8-9	7½-8½	
Adelaide	6-8	6-7	6-7	5-6
Midland	3½-5	4-4½	3-4½	3-4

- (b) The price of mutton per lb. for the week ending 18th September, 1971 was as follows:

Midland	3½-5	3½-4½	3-4	2-3½
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The Australian Meat Board has provided average prices for the centres as follows:

	Cents a lb.	
	Wethers (average)	Ewes (average)
Sydney	10½	9½
Melbourne	8	7½
Brisbane	9½	8½
Adelaide	6½	6½

- (2) The main contributing factors in these price variations are believed to be the restricted local market in Western Australia compared with the Eastern States, the absence of interstate buyer competition and the limitation on killing facilities.

Financial support by Government to Midland Abattoir in 1969-70 was \$1,415,953 and for 1971-72 is \$2,802,000 in order to upgrade these works and increase their capacity.

I add that the total deals with only one killing institution.

QUESTIONS (5): WITHOUT NOTICE

1.

TIMBER

Methods of Transport

Mr. MAY (Minister for Mines): On the 22nd September, the member for Vasse asked a question of the Minister for Transport and he was advised that the information would be obtained at a later date. I believe this had been handed to the honourable member person-

ally, but for record purposes the answer is as follows:—

		Tons (40 cubic feet)
(1) (a)	1967	16,526
	1968	13,557
	1969	10,995
	1970	7,799
	1971	5,494

		Tons (Dead-weight)
(b)	1967	40,523
	1968	51,633
	1969	40,477
	1970	46,240
	1971	30,489

The rail figures include sleepers purchased by Commonwealth Railways and taken over by them at Park-eston. Some of these sleepers could, of course, be laid in the Commonwealth tracks within the W.A. border.

- (c) No precise records are kept of timber carted interstate by road transport but using the total interstate exports of timber as recorded by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics and the known quantities carted by ship and rail the calculated figure is:—

		Tons (Dead-weight)
	1967	22,926
	1968	4,902
	1969	20,775
	1970	17,315
	1971	23,858

- (2) (a) Fremantle—

		Tons (40 cubic feet)
	1967	10,268
	1968	6,915
	1969	7,598
	1970	7,799
	1971	5,494
	Bunbury—	NIL
	Busselton—	

	1967	6,258
	1968	6,642
	1969	3,397
	1970	—
	1971	—
	Albany—	NIL

Tons
(40
cubic
feet)

(b) Fremantle—

1967	..	....	7,797
1968	..	....	6,103
1969	..	....	5,460
1970	..	....	4,443
1971	..	....	6,797

Bunbury—

1967	..	....	54,031
1968	..	....	18,539
1969	..	....	20,972
1970	..	....	31,300
1971	..	....	22,290

Busselton—

1967	..	....	2,379
1968	..	....	1,097
1969	..	....	1,584
1970	..	....	1,940
1971	..	....	213

Albany—

NIL

2.

PILBARA REGION

Future Development Motion

Mr. COURT, to the Speaker:

With reference to the notice of motion regarding the Pilbara region in my name on the notice paper, could you please advise whether it is competent for me to move this motion tomorrow or is it still *sub judice* in view of the legal action taken by Hancock and Wright in the last few days? I raise this question because there has been a considerable amount of publicity from the parties in London and America as well as here. I believe this has been done by professional public relations people dealing with matters I assumed you had regarded as *sub judice* in this House.

The SPEAKER replied:

I want to thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for giving me some warning in that he did approach me this morning. I have taken the opportunity to have the matter checked again, and whilst the statements he made in regard to the publicity given from the other side are correct, the position is the same as it was when he first moved the motion; the matter is *sub judice*. It is regrettable we were not sitting last week as we may have been able to discuss it then. However, the matter is now in the hands of the court, and I so rule.

3. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Mr. C. J. Feast: Discriminatory Treatment

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Is he aware S.E.C. employees have broken into Mr. C. J. Feast's property on Fifty Road, Baldvils, and that these commission employees were accompanied by police?
- (2) Will he advise of the right of entry by the S.E.C. employees against the owner's wish and without a warrant?
- (3) What right of appeal has Mr. Feast available to him against discriminatory treatment he considers he has received from the commission?
- (4) What was the basis of the S.E.C. contributory scheme with Mr. Feast?
- (5) Has the power been extended to additional consumers from Mr. Feast's original contributory scheme line? If so—
 - (a) to how many consumers?
 - (b) (i) how many of these consumers have been required to contribute to the scheme?
 - (ii) and how many have been connected free of cost?
- (6) Will he take immediate action to have Mr. Feast's commitment under the contributory scheme equitably adjusted to remove the cause of friction which has now shown itself in the form of forced entry?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Formal notification under the provisions of the State Electricity Commission Act was served on Mr. Feast advising him of the intention to enter his property.
- (3) Mr. Feast has already had his case reviewed at ministerial level and no evidence of discriminatory treatment was found.
- (4) Mr. Feast agreed to pay a quarterly charge to cover interest and associated charges on the otherwise uneconomic portion of the extension.
- (5) Yes.
 - (a) 5.
 - (b) (i) NIL.
 - (ii) 5.
- (6) The scheme under which Mr. Feast was connected will continue to be reviewed annually in accordance with the original agreement and any justifiable reduction will be made after each review.

4. **ABATTOIRS: UPGRADING***Exports to Eastern States*

Mr. NORTON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it necessary for those exporters of boneless mutton to the eastern states to have their abattoirs upgraded to export standards?
- (2) If the answer is "Yes," how many abattoirs will be affected?
- (3) What States have imposed these restrictions?
- (4) What economic effect would these restrictions have on the sheep industry and the exporters?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) No. However, New South Wales has a specific Act governing the importation of meat from other States.
- (2) Only abattoirs which have sought New South Wales' approval and been refused would be affected.
- (3) New South Wales.
- (4) The economic effect would not be serious since almost all boneless mutton is produced at export abattoirs.

5. **HOME OF PEACE, SUBIACO***Outbreak of Scabies*

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Can he say whether or not there has been an outbreak of scabies at the Home of Peace in Subiaco?
- (2) If there has been such an outbreak, what steps have been taken by—
 - (a) The hospital;
 - (b) The Public Health Department?
- (3) Is the matter now under control?
- (4) If "No" to (3), when will the matter be brought under control?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) to (4) There are one or two cases in the hospital showing some resemblance to scabies and they are being examined by a dermatologist.

CEMENT WORKS (COCKBURN CEMENT LIMITED) AGREEMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Graham (Minister for Industrial Development and Decentralisation), and read a first time.

ALUMINA REFINERY (UPPER SWAN) AGREEMENT BILL

Third Reading

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta—Minister for Industrial Development and Decentralisation) [5.15 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.16 p.m.]: I wish to make some comments of a fairly brief nature but which I regard as important so far as the third reading is concerned. During the second reading debate on this Bill, as you will recall, Mr. Speaker, the Opposition took action to endeavour to amend the motion that the Bill be now read a second time so that it would be read a second time after the environmental protection legislation had been considered, passed, and put into operation, and the project and the agreement had been subjected to a study by the environmental protection authority, or whatever the authority to be established under the legislation is to be called.

The Government rejected this and one of the main arguments advanced by the Minister in charge of the Bill was the fact that the Government felt adequate protection was provided in the draft agreement and that, in the interests of pressing on with the development and the negotiations for sales contracts, the Bill should be allowed to go through Parliament and Parliament should be prepared to rely on the terms of the agreement. The Opposition pointed out to the Government that in the course of the public debate which has been taking place in respect of this project a number of things have happened which have given this Bill a special significance.

First of all, whilst the present Opposition was in Government, it laid down some conditions regarding the location of the refinery and the approvals which had to be given, firstly, by the local authority and, secondly, so far as environmental protection was concerned.

The events which followed that, of course, are now history. There was an election during which environmental protection became a major issue so far as the then Opposition was concerned, and the Government, after its election—and as was indicated during the election—considered our environmental protection legislation to be inadequate. Therefore it would not proclaim the legislation and it said it intended to introduce new legislation.

In July a deputation waited on the Premier and, if one can rely on the Press report of the 13th July, the Premier gave an undertaking that the Parliament would not be expected to consider the Pacminex agreement—to give it its colloquial name

in this place—until the environmental protection legislation had been passed by the Parliament. Subsequent to that we found ourselves confronted with this agreement and at that time we did not have the environmental protection legislation. The Environmental Protection Bill was introduced by the Government last Thursday week and no doubt it will be debated in this Chamber during this week and in due course will go to another place.

We on this side of the House still believe that the understanding in the public mind, and in the minds of the people with the greatest interest in environmental protection as far as public statements are concerned, was that we would not have to consider this particular agreement until the environmental protection legislation had become law and was operative. So we have not changed our attitude in any way either during the time when we were in Government or subsequently. A number of statements were made by the Opposition and, of course, some representations were made. In fact, a direction was given to the Government by the State Executive of the Australian Labor Party that this Bill be not proceeded with until such time as the environmental protection legislation was passed and had become operative.

The main groups which have taken a very active public interest in this matter—quite apart from the rank and file of the public who have shown interest—are generally recognised as the Conservation Council of W.A. and another known as Environment 2000. From the public utterances those groups have made it is quite obvious that they feel the undertakings of the Government have not been honoured; namely, that the Parliament would not have to consider the Pacminex Bill until such time as environmental legislation had been passed.

I know the Government, through its Minister in charge of the Bill, has been very vocal in saying, "What more do you want? It is provided in the agreement that it will be subject to the laws of the land, including the environmental protection legislation." But that is not the point; in this case certain undertakings were given and we on this side believe they should be honoured.

A further development has occurred since this Chamber last met. I refer to the report in the *Daily News* of the 28th September, 1971, under the heading, "Premier's pledge on refinery." In fact, if I remember correctly, that heading also hit the billboards. The report states—

The Premier, Mr. Tonkin, has guaranteed that the Pacminex alumina refinery agreement will not be legalised until the new Environmental Protection Bill has been passed.

He gave this assurance to the state executive of the ALP.

It would be necessary to delay the signing of the agreement for the controversial refinery in the Swan Valley if it passed through Parliament before the environmental legislation.

The significant part of the report continues—

At the ALP state executive meeting last night, the Claremont-Nedlands branch of the ALP asked the executive to urge the government to withdraw the Pacminex agreement.

If it did not withdraw it, it was said, the government should be urged to adjourn debate on it indefinitely until the full facts were available to the public.

I think this must be the only time in history that the Claremont-Nedlands branch of the A.L.P. has been in tune with the local member.

Mr. Davies: Surely they were inspired by him?

Mr. COURT: This happens to be the very thing we have been talking about in this House and asking the Government to agree to.

Mr. Graham: Were you present at the meeting of the branch which carried that resolution?

Mr. COURT: I am merely saying that I am going on the report, which has not been contradicted to the best of my knowledge. I assume it is a reasonably accurate report of what the Premier undertook; if it is not he will quickly tell us. I do not propose to go into any of the details of the agreement attached to this Bill, although I want to say very definitely that the Minister did not answer many of the queries we raised. However, there was a fairly laborious debate during the second reading and also when the agreement was in Committee. I was hoping that we would get more information from the Minister without having to belabour the issue.

However, at the moment, rather than the actual details of the agreement, I think the main point on which we want to obtain some assurances from the Government is in respect of its attitude towards the environmental protection legislation. The point on which I, on behalf of the Opposition, want to get an assurance from the Government is as follows: Will the Government give an undertaking that this agreement will not be signed until the environmental protection legislation has been passed and is operative, and the agreement and the project have been submitted to the authority?

I had a feeling, which as it transpires was not a correct one, that the Government would postpone this item on the notice paper today to allow the environmental protection legislation at least to

make some progress; but obviously that is not its intention. So I ask for this assurance on behalf of the Opposition. We would like it to be a categorical assurance from the Government that the environmental protection legislation will be considered and passed by the Parliament and will become operative, and the agreement and the project will be submitted to the authority.

We have seen conflicting reports; we go back to the July report and to the report in the *Daily News* of the 28th September. One can read different meanings into these and a number of other statements which have been made. Therefore, at this point of time we want to have a categorical assurance from the Government in respect of this issue.

Of course, we would prefer the Government not to proceed with the third reading until the Bill to provide environmental protection has at least been passed through this House. However, if the Government is adamant that it wants to get this Bill through this House, we want an assurance. I want to say on behalf of the Opposition that if we cannot get an assurance from the Government we will have no alternative but to oppose the third reading as a matter of protest against the procedures being followed by the Government in pushing this Bill through in a manner which we consider to be a breach of an undertaking.

I wish to comment on one final point; that is, some of the people who have been in consultation with the Government over the last few months—such as the Conservation Council of W.A. and Environment 2000—appear to be of the opinion that they were given certain undertakings that the results of studies being undertaken would be made available to them so as to allay some of their fears.

Mr. Graham: What studies?

Mr. COURT: Studies of the refinery.

Mr. Graham: Asked of whom?

Mr. COURT: Of the Government. I understand that this has been the subject of discussion between some of those people and the Premier, who is also the Minister for Environmental Protection.

Mr. Hutchinson: Reports of site studies.

Mr. COURT: As my colleague has mentioned, the reports are in connection with studies of the refinery site and other aspects of the refinery, such as processes to be used and the like. I want to say quite clearly that I have no official information on this; I have no correspondence on the matter; but from discussions with these people, and from comments which have been made in the Press, it appears that they are still seeking information.

Mr. Hutchinson: It sounds like secrecy to me.

Mr. COURT: For instance, the reaction of Dr. Michael Dilworth to the reported statement of the Premier set out in the *Daily News* of the 28th September indicates that he is still seeking information on behalf of his group. Therefore, I ask the Government to give us an unqualified assurance that these conditions will be met.

I know there has been a certain amount of propaganda that if this Bill is not passed quickly we could have a loss of an industry to this State. Knowing as much as I do about world markets and the negotiations which are taking place, I do not agree with that statement. However, I can understand that the parties to the agreement would feel more confident if the agreement was ratified by Parliament, or at least the signing of it authorised by Parliament. That goes without saying. I have said it before in this place and I would agree with the Minister that it would facilitate their discussions. But I do not think Parliament can be asked to consider this matter virtually in an atmosphere of some pressure being applied to the Opposition.

Mr. Graham: Do you honestly think the companies can negotiate with the sort of atmosphere created in this Parliament and within the State?

Mr. Hutchinson: Whose fault is it?

Mr. Graham: Those who are making all the noise.

Mr. COURT: Let me make the position clear, and this is the point the Minister does not seem to want to accept: He has brought a lot of this on himself.

Mr. Graham: You have said that several times.

Mr. COURT: Just listen to me for one moment. We have had a hiatus in respect of environmental protection for no reason other than the Government's own action and decision.

Mr. Graham: What is the hiatus?

Mr. COURT: There was a hiatus because we did not have any legislation.

Mr. Graham: We have not had it for 100 years, and then you passed legislation which was not worth two bob. You did not proclaim your own legislation.

Mr. COURT: There has been a hiatus which was not necessary and due entirely to the Government's own decision. The Government said, "We do not think the previous Government's legislation has sufficient teeth, so we are going to put in some big teeth." That was the decision of the Government. In the meantime it was not prepared at least to give us the coverage we could have had from the existing legislation, because some of these studies could have been undertaken.

If this agreement had been considered by the Parliament in the light of the studies made by Dr. O'Brien under our legislation,

and using the machinery we had set up, the agreement Bill would have been through here a long time ago; but the Government made the decision that it wanted to deal with this matter in this way. It was not the decision of the Opposition.

Mr. Davies: Do you believe that Dr. O'Brien would have brought down a favourable recommendation?

Mr. COURT: We do not know.

Mr. Davies: You said that if it had been considered he would have made a favourable recommendation.

Mr. COURT: If he recommended against it the Bill would not be here at all.

Mr. Davies: You said it would have been through.

Mr. COURT: Even if the Minister's point is pertinent, and I do not agree it is, and if Dr. O'Brien—or I should say the environmental protection council under our legislation—had considered this question and decided the project should not go on, it would not have reached first base. Assuming the council had considered the matter and recommended the project, then those on this side of the House who believe that development should take place subject to certain conditions would have supported it, provided the conditions of the agreement were fair and reasonable.

Mr. Graham: Are they not?

Mr. COURT: The situation in which we find ourselves is entirely of the Government's making.

Mr. Graham: This Bill, if passed, will be subject 100 per cent. to the environmental protection legislation in whatever form it is passed. You know that.

Mr. COURT: We have heard this again and again, and so have other people who are concerned about this question.

Mr. Graham: I cannot help what they say. Some people say lots of stupid things.

Mr. COURT: Naturally they want to see the form of legislation as it leaves this Parliament. I have said to these people quite categorically—and there is nothing secret about this matter—"You cannot have it both ways. You cannot have environmental protection legislation which the Parliament has approved, which is operative, and is being honoured; and then seek to stop development, because by doing that you will get precisely nowhere." However, I can agree with them that there has been a breach of understanding in respect of this particular matter. They were entitled to assume that the environmental protection legislation would have been on the Statute book and would have been operative before this Bill was considered.

Mr. Graham: What difference would it make which came first and which came second?

Mr. COURT: A great deal of difference. Had the boot been on the other foot, and members now on the Government side were sitting on this side of the House, and had we as a Government introduced the Pacminex agreement legislation before the environmental protection legislation was on the Statute book, we would be here day after day debating the Bill, because members now sitting opposite would say, "Broken promises. Your words are not worth tuppence. We cannot accept the word of those on the other side of the House." I can still hear those words from members opposite when they were sitting on this side of the House.

I want to make it clear that from our point of view all we ask for is a simple assurance; and without that assurance we cannot support the third reading. Given that assurance my colleagues are of the opinion that the third reading should be agreed to so that the Bill can be considered in another place.

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [5.33 p.m.]: It is amusing to hear what has just been put up in connection with the Bill. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition asks for assurances. What were they worth to us, when assurances were given by the previous Government from this side of the House?

Sir David Brand: They meant everything.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: They were not worth anything at all.

Mr. Hutchinson: What sort of Premier is he who can say that sort of thing?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Does the Leader of the Opposition want dates?

Sir David Brand: Yes.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Leader of the Opposition will get them. We had an assurance on one occasion from members who were on this side of the House with regard to gaming machines, and regulations to be made which would not prevent them from operating. In due course regulations were made. This is one instance that comes readily to my mind.

Sir David Brand: Gracious me! A mighty powerful one!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: And there are dozens of others.

Sir David Brand: Give us the main ones.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: In due course, when we debate the motion which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has on the notice paper, I will provide evidence of other assurances and statements which, since we became the Government, I have been able to locate because of access to Government files, which access was denied me previously.

Mr. Court: This will be interesting!

Mr. Graham: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition can be assured of that.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The agreement embodied in the Bill, which has been brought before Parliament without being signed in the first instance, contains this provision—

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as exempting the Joint Venturers from compliance with any requirement in connection with protection of the environment arising out of or incidental to the operations of the Joint Venturers hereunder that may be made by the State or by any State agency or instrumentality or any local or other authority or statutory body of the State pursuant to any Act for the time being in force.

If there is anything more embracing than that provision I would like to hear about it. What people would be prepared to subscribe capital to any project at all before those concerned have had a clearance from the environmental protection authority? I am sure the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would not; I am sure he would not go abroad and appeal for capital unless he could give the answer that he had been given the all-clear by the environmental protection authority to go ahead. Nobody but a fool would put one brick upon another until the clearance was given by the authority responsible.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has talked about what would have happened if members opposite had been in Government. He said the environmental protection council would have been called upon to give a clearance. Would it have been? I remind the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that the environmental protection council set up under the honourable member's Government would not have had an opportunity to consider the proposition at all, unless the matter was referred to it by the Minister for Environmental Protection, who had the option of referring it and asking for a report; or referring it, not asking for a report, and pleasing himself whether or not he made any reference of the question to the Government. That was the effect of the Bill which was passed by this Parliament—a Bill which was introduced by the honourable member's Government. So it is idle to say that this question would certainly have been considered by the environmental protection council set up under the legislation of the previous Government.

Mr. Court: It is not idle to say that.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It is completely idle to say that.

Mr. Court: The company knew it was a condition.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: There was nothing in the legislation to indicate that. Does the Deputy Leader of the Opposition deny

that the matter rested with the Minister for Environmental Protection, as to whether or not any question was referred to the environmental protection council?

Mr. Court: That is the wording of the Act. It is clearly stated that in this particular case the agreement and the project were to be referred to the environmental protection council.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Where is that stated?

Mr. Court: Stated by the previous Government.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Stated by that Government, but where and to whom?

Mr. Court: The company knew the position, and we stated it in public.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It was not known to the public.

Mr. Court: It was.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It was not known to Parliament.

Mr. Rushton: It was stated publicly.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Dale knows as much about this question as he does about others!

Mr. Court: It is amazing to hear the Minister for Environmental Protection opposing that legislation.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: There was no guarantee at all under the previous Government's legislation that this proposal would have got before the environmental protection council, because it would only get before that council if it was referred to the council by the Minister.

Mr. Court: He would have referred it.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Then there was no certainty that a report in connection with the matter would have found its way to Parliament.

Mr. Court: You are grasping at straws.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It was only in cases where the Minister called for a report from the environmental protection council that the council would report the matter to Parliament. When the Minister for Environmental Protection was advised by some other Ministers of some project in contemplation, it was left to him as to whether he would notify Cabinet as to what was taking place.

Mr. Hutchinson: The point is: are you going to give an assurance to this House?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The point is if the honourable member will keep quiet he will hear the assurance in due course; what is more, he will be able to believe it more than I could when I was on the opposite side of the House. Furthermore, he would be able to rely on that assurance.

Mr. Hutchinson: We will hear more about your word!

Mr. Court: Are you going to confirm or deny the Press report of the 13th July, that Parliament would not have to consider this legislation before the environmental protection legislation was passed?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The honourable member should pass that report over.

Mr. Court: We have read it out many times.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The honourable member has read out many things which I do not accept.

Mr. Court: I do not have it here, but I will soon get it for you.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: What I say is what I have said a number of times previously: I have no intention of signing this agreement until the environmental protection legislation has been passed by Parliament and proclaimed; and when it is proclaimed it will be operative.

Mr. W. A. Manning: What value is there in passing this legislation in the meantime?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: There is much Government business to get through.

Mr. Hutchinson: That is all we want to know.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Had it been possible to have the environmental protection legislation prepared in advance of the Pacminex agreement legislation, the environmental protection legislation would have been introduced first. That Bill was brought to Parliament as early as possible; and with a view to having it prepared quickly I instructed Dr. O'Brien, the Director of Environmental Protection, that he was to devote his full attention to the matter and to forget other matters which ordinarily he would be inclined to attend to. I did this because it was essential to get this Bill before Parliament during this session. Why should we have to hold up Bills already prepared and ready for introduction? To do that would make it extremely difficult to complete the Government's legislative programme, knowing full well that it did not matter at all when the Pacminex agreement was passed—whether it was before or after the environmental protection legislation. The agreement would be subject to the environmental protection legislation irrespective of when it was passed.

I repeat that nobody but a fool would go abroad and try to raise capital for a project for which a clearance had not been given by the environmental protection authority, when the construction of the project was subject to the control of environmental protection.

Mr. O'Neill: Are you able to guarantee that the environmental protection legislation will be passed before the 18th October?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: This will be interesting! I will be watching very carefully the attitude of the Opposition as to whether or not its members will want to water that legislation down, and whether they will want to withdraw some of it teeth.

Mr. O'Neill: I am more concerned with the date, the 18th October, because certain things will occur on that day, and to a great extent the outcome relies on the passing of the legislation.

Mr. Graham: With the passing of the legislation, not necessarily the signing of it. They want the consent of Parliament.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I hope I can count on the co-operation of the Opposition to get the environmental protection legislation through quickly, because it is quite a possibility that if it gets through this House quickly and reaches the Legislative Council it can still be passed before the Pacminex Bill is passed. There is nothing to stop that. The fact that both Bills are before Parliament at the same time does not mean that they will be passed in the order in which they were introduced.

Mr. O'Neill: The Environmental Protection Bill is No. 27 on the notice paper which is well down.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That is one of those things which occur because there is a lot of business on the notice paper. It was intended that the Leader of the Opposition should be given the opportunity to deal with the Appropriation Bill (Consolidated Revenue Fund) today because he was unable to deal with it in the ordinary course of events through illness. It was necessary to bring that Bill up on the notice paper and in those circumstances I felt it was unreasonable to lift up the Environmental Protection Bill also. That is the explanation. However, the Environmental Protection Bill will be high on the notice paper on Thursday so we will have an opportunity to debate it then.

I repeat: I have no intention of signing the agreement for the Pacminex refinery—and I will not do so under any circumstances whatever—until the environmental protection legislation has passed through Parliament, been proclaimed, and become operative. Apart from that, I say the protection is there already. The protection is that the project will be subject to the environmental protection legislation. I cannot imagine that any hard-headed businessman would go out and attempt to raise capital for a project without being able to assure the people whom he approaches that the way is clear for the proposition to go ahead.

Just imagine: The first question asked by somebody reading the agreement would be, "What about the provisions you have to comply with under the environmental protection legislation?" The answer would have to be, "I do not know. This is

dicey; we may not get past the environmental protection authority." Just imagine going abroad under those circumstances!

I do not think we are justified in wasting any more time on this matter. The order in which the Bills pass through this House does not make the slightest difference. The Pacminex Bill will be subject to the environmental protection legislation in whatever form Parliament sees fit to pass it.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [5.50 p.m.]: I rise to support the comments and the proposition put forward by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Premier destroyed his argument when he asked what industrialist would submit to an agreement knowing that the environmental protection legislation was not clear concerning this proposition. Of course, that is another matter with which we will deal on Thursday. It is quite obvious there is nothing clear in that proposed legislation as far as legislative policy is concerned, so it is not worth a crumplet.

My interest is that the public is most apprehensive about the Government's action relating to this deal. The public is apprehensive because the conditions are not clear. The Government has been going one way, and then another way, and the people have every reason to be apprehensive.

The Deputy Premier has stated that he believes one industry only will be established on the site. However, most people who have given the matter some thought realise that a complex will be involved.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Would that not have been the position if your Government had gone ahead with the proposition?

Mr. RUSHTON: But this would be delayed until the environmental protection authority had been set up.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It still will be.

Mr. RUSHTON: We had an assurance from the member for Toodyay that the people in the area were supporting this measure but we have now received a report that the vignerons are apprehensive. That is different from what we were told previously.

I want to emphasise the situation which will prevail at Kwinana. I have asked questions relating to Kwinana and I would be very happy if the Deputy Premier could give me some assurance regarding this matter. The loading operations which applied to CSBP certainly raised some anxiety, but they were far more acceptable because they were related to an industrial complex. However, in answer to a further question it has been made clear that options are in the agreement for stockpiling next to the C.B.H. installation.

The Fremantle Port Authority has plans for a jetty next to the C.B.H. installation, and this area is much further south of the present installation and well down into the residential section of Rockingham. As the Premier would know, a north-west wind will carry the fine dust into the thickly populated area of Rockingham.

No doubt the Deputy Premier will speak on this matter and I ask him to indicate whether a plan has been prepared. The plans for the Kwinana area are not particularly well known because people are thinking more of the processing side of the agreement. The Premier has stated that the Environmental Protection Bill will cover this matter and we can rest assured on that point. I am concerned with the pollution from fine dust, and I am also concerned with the loading operations.

My study of the Environmental Protection Bill discloses that it leaves much to be desired. This is squarely on the shoulders of the Government because I believe it has been playing politics with this vital issue and it has been caught in an awkward situation. We ask for environmental protection legislation before we pass this measure, but the Premier says we can rest assured that everything will be all right. However, we do not know what the environmental protection authority will do.

We are being asked to pass this Bill about which the public is apprehensive, as are members in this House. Nobody desires to detract from the employment position, but it has been aggravated already because of the Government's unsound administration since it has been in office. The Government has dealt with the employment position in such a way that people who wish to invest in this State are very concerned.

We are most concerned with the manner in which the environmental protection authority will be set up. Investors would be worried about signing the agreement until the terms of the Environmental Protection Bill were known.

The argument has been raised that we must press on because of the amount of legislation which has to be dealt with. One could not raise a weaker argument. The fact is the other Bill is before the House so until we know where we stand in relation to that proposed legislation we should support the proposition put forward by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

We want some clear understanding, and we want to know when the environmental protection legislation will be operative. If the Premier's statement that he would sign one of these agreements without knowing what was contained in the environmental protection legislation is factual, he would be a fool. There is no hurry. It will take a long while to get a clear understanding

of the environmental protection legislation because it contains nothing concerning legislative decisions. There is no reference to the quantity of pollutant from processing which can be disposed of in the environment and still be acceptable.

The Bill contains just so many words, and it is all airy-fairy. With all the assurances which the Premier has given us since the 20th February, surely he could give us some categorical assurance that the environmental legislation will be operative before the Pacminex agreement is signed. He has not put forward a case against the postponement of this legislation until the other process takes place. Not one reason has been given. The Premier has given as a reason the huge amount of legislation on the notice paper, so if we do not deal with this matter we can deal with something which is just as urgent.

I make the point that the Premier has not shown clearly why he is deceiving the public by making statements on the one hand, and then coming into this House and doing something quite different.

MR. LEWIS (Moore) [5.57 p.m.]: I rise briefly to support the opposition to the third reading of the Bill at this stage. I do so because of the apparent lack of sincerity on the part of the Premier who gave me an assurance on the 12th July that nothing would be done with regard to this alumina Bill before the environmental protection authority was set up.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Where did I say that nothing would be done?

Mr. LEWIS: In a moment I will read an article which appeared in *The West Australian* on Tuesday, the 13th July, the day following the deputation.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Exactly, read it.

Mr. O'Neil: The Premier challenged the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to produce it.

Mr. LEWIS: I have the article with me and it is headed, "Tonkin pledge on refinery." It reads as follows:—

The Premier, Mr Tonkin, said yesterday that Parliament would not pass legislation to establish an alumina refinery near the Swan Valley before it had dealt with proposed legislation to protect the environment.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Did that say nothing would be done?

Mr. LEWIS: I am quoting the article.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, you are quoting the article.

Mr. LEWIS: Well, the article implied that nothing would be done.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Oh yes!

Mr. LEWIS: Never mind what is implied; the article states, and I repeat—
... that Parliament would not pass legislation—

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Has Parliament done it yet?

Mr. LEWIS: No, but it will if the Premier has his way. To continue the article—

—to establish an alumina refinery near the Swan Valley before it had dealt with proposed legislation to protect the environment.

Well, of course, the Premier might say that we have already dealt with legislation to protect the environment.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Of course he has.

Mr. LEWIS: The Premier has introduced a Bill and explained it, but it has not been passed. The people who read the article to which I have referred would accept what the Premier said in the way that John Citizen would be expected to accept it: that the environmental protection legislation would be passed and would be law before the legislation to set up an alumina refinery became law. The environmental protection authority could then look into the matter before Parliament passed anything relating to the alumina refinery.

It is all very well for the Premier to say that he has carried out his promise that nothing would be done before the environmental protection legislation was dealt with.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I did not say nothing would be done; I am denying that.

Mr. LEWIS: The public would assess the Premier's words in a far different light. I think the public would accept this as a confidence trick put forward by the Premier.

MR. MAY (Clontarf—Minister for Mines) [6.00 p.m.]: It is unfortunate that the Deputy Premier had to keep an appointment with a doctor. He has left a couple of matters for me to clarify.

During the second reading debate or in the Committee stage the Deputy Leader of the Opposition requested the Minister in charge of the legislation to provide an explanation of the definition of "associated company." The information has now been provided and I think it is right that it should be made known to the House. With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make this information available. During the negotiations Pacminex, on behalf of the joint venturers, claimed that it would be reasonable to revert to the definition of "associated company" that had been accepted in earlier agreements; that is, 20 per cent. instead of 25 per cent. as contained in the Alwest agreement.

The former Minister for Industrial Development will be aware that C.S.R., of which Pacminex is a wholly-owned subsidiary, is a joint venturer in the Mt. Newman project. It is also a partner in the Nabalco project and, in the light of this knowledge and our experience with that company as a partner in the Mt. Newman project, it was difficult to justify an alteration of the definition of "associated company." It can only be assumed that the 25 per cent. inserted in the Alwest agreement was considered to be reasonable because, at the time, Alwest was a wholly-owned subsidiary of a newspaper company that had no experience in mining, and it was obvious that there would be a need for other ownership if the project were to get off the ground.

In considering the different definitions of "associated company" in the Alwest agreement and the agreement we are now dealing with, we should not overlook the difference in paragraph (b) of the Alwest agreement, which states—

any company approved in writing by the Minister;

That part of the definition allows any company to be given the privileges of an associated company provided the Minister of the day is satisfied, which means that the percentage of Australian ownership may not even be considered. The relevant paragraph in the Pacminex agreement does not give such a blank cheque to the Minister. Therefore, whilst the Alwest agreement insisted on a higher percentage, it was less restrictive in regard to paragraph (b). It is clear that the State's position, overall, is not weakened by the definition of "associated company" in this agreement. It is trusted that this information will satisfy the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

There is another point in connection with the R. & I. Bank which I think should be made known to the House. The Premier inquired of the Deputy Premier, and the Chairman of the R. & I. Bank has replied as follows:—

By virtue of our shareholding in Westralian International the R. & I. Bank has a .226% interest in the joint venture Refinery project proposed for Upper Swan.

It is the Crown Solicitor's opinion that because the Bank is neither a Government Department nor a Government Instrumentality, the Government would have no pecuniary interest in the project because of our small holding.

Nevertheless he feels that the situation should be brought to the attention of Parliament.

Mr. Rushton: Could you tell me something about the intention at Kwinana before you finish?

Mr. MAY: I am unable to give the honourable member any information. I can read the letter written by the Premier to the Minister for Industrial Development. It says—

The Chairman of the R. & I. Bank has brought to my notice that, by virtue of the bank's shareholding in Westralian International, the R. & I. Bank has a .226% interest in the joint venture Refinery project proposed for Upper Swan.

It is considered that the bank's interest should be made known to Parliament when the third reading of the Bill is under discussion.

Those are the points the Deputy Premier has asked me to bring forward.

In reply to the member for Moore, I think the statement made in the article that appeared in the Press is quite definite, and the Premier has made this point. I shall read the statement, for the edification of the member for Moore. It says—

The Premier, Mr. Tonkin, said yesterday that Parliament would not pass legislation to establish an alumina refinery near the Swan Valley before it had dealt with proposed legislation to protect the environment.

I think the Premier has quite clearly made the point tonight.

Irrespective of what people might infer, it can be inferred from that article that the matter has been dealt with as far as Parliament is concerned. Both pieces of legislation are before the House at this time, and the House will have adequate opportunity to debate both Bills before the agreement is signed.

Mr. Court: In view of the fact that you are replying for the Government at the present time, I want to make sure, as far as the assurance the Premier has given us tonight is concerned, that he will not in fact sign the agreement—if it is passed by Parliament—until the environmental legislation has been passed and become operative. That is the key—that it is operative.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Did I not spell that out? How can the Minister give an assurance on my behalf? I gave it on my own behalf.

Mr. Court: You were not categorical about the last part.

Mr. MAY: My understanding is that the Premier did make a categorical statement.

Mr. Court: That the legislation will be operative to the point that it is proclaimed and the appointments are made?

Mr. MAY: I understand the Premier gave that assurance.

Mr. Jamieson: He told you that tonight. Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 16th September.

SIR DAVID BRAND (Greenough—Leader of the Opposition) [6.12 p.m.]: Firstly, I would like to express to the Premier my appreciation for the consideration given in delaying the debate on this Bill. I hope the House and the Government were not in any way inconvenienced by the delay.

This is the first time for 12 years that I have replied to the introduction of a Budget. It is not my intention to endeavour to break any records by speaking for two hours or, for that matter, one hour, because I believe that, in the form in which we now introduce the Budget, private members will be given an opportunity to deal with the subjects in which they are especially interested. I do not believe that covering a whole host of subjects at length assists in any way in giving information to the House. The point I make is that lengthy debate will ensue, during which information can be extracted from the Government more effectively than through a host of accusations and criticisms in one long speech. I might add that I am not one who speaks at great length, and I do not wish to do anything I am not accustomed to doing simply because I have become the Leader of the Opposition.

This is the first time I can recall that the Premier has not held the portfolio of Treasurer, which state of affairs I criticised when the portfolios were allotted; and I do so again. I hasten to say I do not wish to reflect in any way on the Treasurer. I am only suggesting—as I did in the first place—that it can prove to be a very difficult arrangement when the State Premier does not hold the reins of the Treasury—the State purse. If it is not difficult, it presents certain anomalies from time to time. It certainly presents the difficulty of liaison.

Mr. Jamieson: Does Mr. Chalk agree with those views?

SIR DAVID BRAND: As I said the last time I mentioned this matter, the position in Queensland has existed for many years purely because of a political arrangement between the Liberal Party and the Country Party in that State.

Mr. T. D. Evans: What is the position in the Federal arena?

SIR DAVID BRAND: I am simply speaking from my own experience and expressing the opinion of a number of Premiers throughout the Commonwealth. It will be recalled that at one time the Premier of South Australia was the Premier only, but as soon as Mr. Dunstan had the opportunity he took over the Treasury. This has been

the case elsewhere because, from experience, it has become fairly obvious that anyone who holds the important post of Premier should also hold the post of Treasurer.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Do you comment about the Federal arena? Since the time of Mr. Chifley there has been separation.

SIR DAVID BRAND: In the Federal sphere the Treasurer has a full-time job—and more than a full-time job, with some assistance. Indeed, the Prime Ministership itself is a mighty responsibility because the Prime Minister represents the nation, and the situation is slightly different. We, in the States, rely to a great extent upon Commonwealth grants which are made from time to time and upon special assistance under agreements with the Commonwealth. There are many ways in which the Premier, as Treasurer, can resolve problems around the table, rather than relying upon another person.

I am not being critical of the arrangements that have been made here. I am stating my belief that it is easier, better, and more effective to have one person holding the positions of Premier and Treasurer only. I accepted the responsibility for tourism. At the end of my period of office I began to discover that the extra portfolio was a little too much, and if the present Premier intends—as I presume he does—to continue with the great responsibility for four portfolios, I think he must be made of something a little different from me.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

SIR DAVID BRAND: At the tea suspension I was referring to the problems that face a Minister who has to bear the responsibility of a number of portfolios, and I expressed the opinion that at the present time I thought the Premier was carrying too great a load. I say that not only in his own interests but also in the interests of the portfolios he represents.

I would like to say now how pleasing it is to see that the member for Mt. Hawthorn—or the Attorney-General as I suppose he still is—has been able to return to this House of Parliament, though it is regrettable that for personal reasons and because of ill-health he has seen fit to resign from the Ministry. Members regard this with some concern, not from a political point of view but as members of this House, and we all confidently trust that he might overcome any problems which exist and that he will have a return to good health to carry on the work he must do here.

There now exists an opportunity for the Premier to make some adjustments to portfolios, and I hope he will take advantage of that opportunity to make what changes he might think fit, while at the same time distributing the portfolios more equitably than appears to be the case at present.

I understand the Premier is absent for a short while on personal business but I must, nevertheless, proceed with what I have to say in his absence; I feel sure he will understand this is necessary.

The Premier has accepted the responsibility that goes with the portfolio of Education. Having been a school teacher, I daresay he believes he will be able to handle this portfolio with greater knowledge and that he will achieve better results than did our own Minister, to whom I now pay tribute. I do so because during our regime the State Government was attacked on many occasions; there was a constant and consistent criticism from the Teachers' Union.

We can all recall the paper war that was carried on between the Teachers' Union and the Minister for Education at that time. It is rather strange—and I would draw the attention of the House to this fact—that we do not now hear very much criticism, if we hear any at all, of the handling of the position by the State Government.

The criticism is now directed almost entirely at the Federal Government. Whilst I believe the Commonwealth Government could do a great deal more for education, I do not think it can be denied that over the last few years the national Government has made a very real contribution financially to help solve the education problems of this State.

Indeed, not only has it contributed significantly to help the State's education programme from the point of view of State education, but it has also made a tremendous contribution to private schools.

I look upon our period of office as one in which great strides and improvements were made in the educational sphere. Over the 12 years during which we were in office there was an outright increase in the amount of money allocated to the educational system. We find, however, that in the Budget now before us there is a very slight increase—I think it was about 1 per cent.—provided for the Ministry of Education.

In our last Budget we can claim there was quite a substantial increase which amounted in the whole to 16.3 per cent. of the funds available. On this occasion the Treasurer has made available 17 point something which might amount to a 1 per cent. increase.

But having regard for the huge sum of money involved in the increase in the salaries of teachers, and the increase in wages associated with the period under review, it would seem to me that not a great deal of money would be available for the improvement of services.

I checked on the number of extra students which we were to put through the teachers' colleges at the present time and compared the figure with what the present regime has in mind. There is certainly

some improvement and I think this is absolutely necessary. Again I might point out that the number of students who attended the teachers' colleges were limited by the accommodation then available.

I would also point out that during our 12 years of office a very substantial increase in accommodation was made available and a short while ago the Mt. Lawley Teachers' College was established.

Accordingly, the present Government can take advantage of the situation and ensure that an increased number of students is able to attend the college. This, of course, is very good.

Might I say I am very pleased, in spite of the financial problems, that the Government continues to maintain an adequate sum of money to provide for the extra call which is made upon it in respect of teachers, accommodation, etc.

I would remind the House that the increase in population in Western Australia was an increase, I think, of some 20,000 people. It was during the last year that the population of the State reached 1,000,000. Accordingly, the Government can make no real claim to any great improvement if there is available to the college an extra number of students; because unless the students are trained and we have planned to meet the demand for the future a very real problem will exist as this State continues to grow.

I was pleased that the Treasurer continued to follow the example set in the past by giving a rough outline of the state of the economy before proceeding to introduce the Budget itself.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I hope it was not too rough.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It was just a broad outline. I might have found it rough had I time to study the document more closely.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Be fair.

Sir DAVID BRAND: In giving this information to the people at large I believe it makes them aware of the problems that confront us financially and as a result of this they may be able to understand, perhaps, why certain very difficult decisions have to be made.

As far as I can make out from the information made available to us by the Treasurer he looks towards the next year recognising some of the problems. However I do not think he does this confidently enough.

In the rural industry itself I can see there is a slight increase in confidence which is evident not only because the price of wool has been guaranteed but also because farmers themselves look confidently towards an increase in their wheat quota, which could eventuate if the sales of wheat from Australia continue at the present rate.

In the broad there is nothing more important for the wheat and wool areas than to have a slight increase in the quota of wheat which can be sold at the present time. I also think there is every reason to look very confidently in the future to the production of cattle because of the price they are bringing at the present time.

Most people recognise this fact and it is one of the segments of the rural industry which is contributing to the stable economy of the State.

I think we can also point to the whole-milk areas where, though conditions are not all the people might desire, they can at least look with confidence to the future. I am not that certain, however, about the fruitgrowing areas. I gather that some problems do exist not so much with regard to the production of the fruit but in connection with the price it is bringing on overseas markets—especially on those markets to which we have been accustomed to selling our fruit.

In considering the problem of wool sales I believe that as yet no-one has found a solution which might help create confidence for the producer. So far as I can make out from the producer himself to the people in the highest places—those who head the wool commission or the board—no-one has really hit upon any positive means to ensure the stability of wool in Western Australia and in Australia generally.

Mr. Davies: Did you notice that Sir Henry Bolte said that synthetic fabrics were also in trouble?

Sir DAVID BRAND: This is also significant. Surely this is the experience with all industries—they have their ups and downs.

Mr. Davies: Hemlines have their ups and downs!

Sir DAVID BRAND: The synthetic industry could quite easily face economic problems. This could be caused by the demand in a number of countries, by increases in wages, and improved conditions which I think could possibly hamper the industry. I believe the synthetic industry has been most competitive with the natural fibre of wool. On the other hand as a result of the research done into marketing procedures and techniques it could well be that this could result in wool becoming more competitive not as it relates to the policy of pound for pound for wool itself but with a view to bringing a satisfactory return to the farmer himself.

I can assure the House that if this can be brought about, combined with the regulated production of wheat—because we do not want over-production of wheat—we can look forward to the future with real confidence. I point out that in spite of the production of minerals and the growth of

other industrial development, the primary industry remains the backbone of our economy, and everything should be done to ensure that assistance is given to farmers who are able to survive the recession they are at present experiencing.

I was rather disappointed to see—as far as I could make out—that the Budget did not bring forth any great promise for the rural industry. I know the Commonwealth is shouldering the burden at present, but having studied some of the statements by the present Minister for Agriculture and those made by the present Premier it seemed to me I had expected too much from the current Budget.

Mr. Davies: Give them time!

Sir DAVID BRAND: I think perhaps that statement is correct. Given time, the farmers will wake up to the fact that the promises that were made are not being honoured in time. It is true that a few thousand dollars were made available to farmers who found themselves without any cash and who at least needed some money to walk off their properties. It is true that the Treasury provided this money. I do not think there is anything in the Budget produced by the Treasurer that would cause anyone to become very enthusiastic about the prospects for the future.

Mr. H. D. Evans: What about the subsidies to the Midland Junction Abattoir amounting to \$800,000?

Sir DAVID BRAND: Our Government met the position which involved \$2,000,000, and in answer to the question—

Mr. H. D. Evans: I am talking about the operating loss.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The Government has to face up to it.

Mr. H. D. Evans: This is a subsidy to the rural industry. Incidentally, are you proud of the decision that you made in regard to Midland?

Sir DAVID BRAND: It was the only one we could make at the time. Unless the Government had made the decision to spend this money, it would have been in substantial difficulties this year.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Should you not have started in 1969?

Sir DAVID BRAND: Of course it is always easy to be wise after the event. There is no doubt about that. As the Minister for Agriculture knows, the Government at the time had the matter under close observation. We had inquiries made by competent people from the Eastern States. A report was submitted and the then Minister for Agriculture—the Deputy Premier—had the matter in hand, but it was not until he reported to us that a situation was developing that would create difficulties during this year that the Government decided to spend this huge amount on abattoirs both at Midland and at Robb Jetty.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Did you blush at the remark made by the President of the Australian Meat Board at Midland last week?

Sir DAVID BRAND: No, I did not.

Mr. H. D. Evans: You should have.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I realise that, in some directions, we might have made earlier decisions, but they were not decisions that could be easily made. In fact, we found great difficulty in finding available land which was acceptable as an abattoir site both by the local authority and the community, quite apart from the fact that we did not believe it was the Government's responsibility to spend so much money. On the other hand we considered that we should encourage private enterprise—

Mr. H. D. Evans: There was no great amount of money spent until the American regulations came in.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It was not until the drought occurred that the great flow of meat—mutton in particular—created the problem that occurred at Midland. However, let me say that we were faced with a very real problem, and I believe we did not start early enough with the provision of extra accommodation.

Mr. H. D. Evans: And this was accentuated by the American regulations brought in by the Department of Primary Industry.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I agree that they did contribute to the problem.

Mr. H. D. Evans: It was after this that there was substantial movement, and substantial sums of money expended at Midland.

Sir DAVID BRAND: In fact, until these regulations were brought in, no standard was required. It was the decision of the Government and the abattoir board to provide the high standard which the primary industry demanded and, as the Minister has said, the high standard demanded by the Americans. To some extent this explains that the standard required was not up to what was expected.

Mr. H. D. Evans: I still think you should have blushed.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The amount of money the Government has made available to the abattoirs is not a great contribution because it has been made in only one direction.

Mr. H. D. Evans: What would you say would be a fair expenditure on abattoirs?

Sir DAVID BRAND: I have no idea. I certainly have not looked at the papers. People who have had experience in abattoirs and who are associated with the meat industry may be able to give us some idea of the expenditure, but I am simply suggesting that in an important industry such as this, the amount of money made

available by the Government—even though it may be as much as it can make available—is not very great.

There are other problems in the rural industry that require some attention and, having regard for the promises which the Minister and the Premier made—some of which I wonder how he could possibly have made having regard for the total amount of money involved—perhaps the Minister for Agriculture might well blush himself.

Mr. O'Connor: Unless he has no conscience.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Anyway, I have read with interest some criticism by the Minister in the past as to what our Government might well have done. However, that is a matter for the past. I am now dealing with the future and the claims made by the Minister himself of what could be done if there were a change of Government. So far there is very little change and the Minister has had the benefit of a reasonably good season. As a result of the rains which have fallen lately I believe we will enjoy a good season throughout the State. No drought subsidies will be called for; there will be no transport problems; no agistment of stock, and no feed difficulties.

Mr. H. D. Evans: I hope so.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I hope so, too. That is where a great deal of our money had to go in order to overcome some of the temporary problems which existed at that time.

I certainly got off the track a little there, but I still believe the farmer has a legitimate complaint about the promises made by the Premier during his tour of the country areas at election time. At the beginning of my speech I did say I would not traverse the whole area of economics.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Will the Leader of the Opposition indicate the promise or promises the Premier was alleged to have made?

Sir DAVID BRAND: I cannot quote them exactly, but the promises regarding the standard of living—

Mr. Nalder: And the electricity charges.

Mr. T. D. Evans: That interjection may embarrass the Leader of the Opposition; he made promises in regard to electricity charges, too.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The total amount of money that would have been involved had these promises been honoured would have sent the State broke. It was a stupid undertaking and one which the present Premier could not honour in view of the position at that time.

Mr. Davies: The one which the Leader of the Opposition made on electricity was a stupid one, too. It set them back.

Sir DAVID BRAND: As far as I was concerned the promises made by the Premier was one that would have caused an increase in taxation far beyond that which we are seeing at the present time, and let me add that the increases of power charges are surprising and unexpected.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You were going to subsidise not only the consumers within the grid system, but all other consumers also.

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is right. We made that undertaking and, as far as I was concerned, it was our intention to honour it. Before I get away from the matter of finance I would like to clear up, once more, some of the misunderstandings which existed regarding the state of the Treasury when the Labor Government took over.

It has been said time and time again by Labor Ministers that certain work could not be done and certain promises could not be honoured simply because they discovered that the Treasury was in a bad state. The Premier has continually stated—and I think perhaps the Treasurer, too, has stated—that he was led to believe the State Treasury was in a very good condition and, as a result, he made the promises he did, involving \$9,000,000 or \$10,000,000.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The Treasurer did not make any pre-election promise.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I said that the Treasurer referred to the fact that the Treasury was not in good order when his Government took over.

Mr. T. D. Evans: And it was not, either, and you knew it.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The reasons for it, of course, were quite clear.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Yes.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The Treasurer has been telling the public that it was because of bad administration.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I have not told the public it was the result of bad administration.

Sir DAVID BRAND: If the Treasurer has not, he has implied it.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Can you quote an instance?

Sir DAVID BRAND: I think I could quote one of the statements made by the Treasurer in which he said that because there was no money in the Treasury he could not undertake certain work.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I have never said that this was due to bad administration on anybody's part.

Mr. Court: The next time you are introducing the Budget we will give you a few interjections if you go on like this.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I do not mind the interjections. I wish merely to state that when the Government took over from us

the Western Australian Treasury was sound and stable, and the only reason there was a shortage of money was as a result of the Government's agreements, and, as was mentioned by the Treasurer in his own statement, the shortage was the result of increases in wages and salaries. The Treasurer used the following words in his statement:—

Undoubtedly the dominant facts on the State economic scene at the present time are the depressed state of the rural sector, . . .

Then further along in the statement the Treasurer said something about the dominant factor in respect of the state of the Treasury was the sharp increases in wages and salaries.

Mr. T. D. Evans: That is true, but I have never said that the state of the Treasury when we took over was as a result of your bad administration.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will have an opportunity to reply later.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I think the public have wondered whether the Premier—and no doubt the Treasurer must be involved because he was associated with him—should not have said, "We recognise what the position was when we came in." Instead the Premier stated, "I did not understand. I did not know. I would not have made the promises that I did had I known this; we cannot honour them because of the state of the Treasury."

As the Treasurer knows, it was a balanced Budget in September and, indeed, not only did we provide for the increased wages and salaries which had already been decided, but for those decisions which had not been made we set aside something like \$4,000,000 making, in all, \$10,000,000.

Mr. T. D. Evans: And it was inadequate.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Of course.

Mr. T. D. Evans: And that is not said in any criticism of you, but it was inadequate.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I am glad to hear the Treasurer say that now, but the Premier seems to have created a belief in the public mind that it was our Government which was to blame for the situation; and it was nothing of the sort. Right up to the time of the takeover we could point to the sharp increase in wages and salaries and the huge total it involved. On the 15th December I made it abundantly clear that the increases already arrived at by the local tribunal would involve us in \$12,000,000 extra for the remainder of the year and \$20,000,000 extra for a full year.

I want to disclaim the criticism in a very forthright way. As far as the Treasury was concerned we had balanced Budgets for years and the only reason a problem existed—and it was a very real problem—was the result of what appeared to

be very sharp increases in salaries and wages and the consequent increase in the cost of goods, etc., in Western Australia at the present time. This was, of course, followed by a 6 per cent. increase in the national wage and it is understandable that the Premier found himself in a predicament because of a shortage of cash.

I want to refer to the fact that as Premier and Treasurer I journeyed to Canberra to discuss our financial position with the then Prime Minister, and all I was able to obtain from him—in fact all that any Premier was able to obtain—was simply the suggestion that we go back and tighten our belts to meet our own deficit. He firmly believed, and I feel he was quite sincere about this, that the danger of inflation was such that it should be met by urgent and vigorous measures.

Mr. T. D. Evans: And this Government adopted those measures. No doubt you would have, too, but this Government had to.

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is right. I think the present Premier and the present Treasurer were rather fortunate in that a change in the Prime Ministership occurred and at the April conference they found a much more liberal and generous Prime Minister than hitherto, with the result they received a rather large grant. Certainly it was not to be used for purposes other than to reduce the deficit, but it still had the same effect of leaving the Treasurer with a lower amount to fund. Therefore he has benefited right through the whole of the year, especially with the loan moneys available to him.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Yes, and both the Premier and the Treasurer have acknowledged this. I acknowledged it in my Budget speech.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I think the Treasurer has been reasonably generous as far as we are concerned. I am reminded of his statement on education in, I think, the Town Hall when he warned that his Government could not provide as much money as we had provided for education. I think that was a fair and reasonable statement and the Opposition acknowledged it anyway.

A number of warnings were issued about the deficit which appeared to be on the horizon at the time. I think it went up as high as \$30,000,000. I cannot believe this. I consider it was just said for public consumption to soften them for some sort of blow and to prepare them for the sharp increases in taxation.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Are you sure you have examined the financial statement? You will see evidence of the \$30,000,000.

Sir DAVID BRAND: However, as a result of the generosity of the Prime Minister at the April session and later at the Premiers' Conference, the State Government has

been able to manage a deficit of only \$3,400,000. Having regard for all our problems, that was an excellent result, but it was an excellent result only because the state of the Treasury and economy in Western Australia was as sound as that in any other State, and in fact, more sound than that of any Government in Australia.

Mr. T. D. Evans: But no-one has denied that.

Sir DAVID BRAND: If that has not been denied, I want to make it quite clear because it has been suggested that certain promises would not be honoured and certain work could not be done because of the state of the Treasury. It was also indicated that this was not altogether to the credit of the previous Government.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I do not want to waste your time, but I am sure you will realise that we had to put aside some \$4,500,000 in 1970-71 to meet the contingency of increased salaries for teachers, which were to be retrospective.

Sir DAVID BRAND: That was your decision, of course.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Having regard for the additional moneys granted at the Premiers' Conference in April, the Budget result would have been about \$1,500,000 credit at the 30th June.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes. Of course, this is part of the financing of the State and the meeting of its problems.

Mr. T. D. Evans: But there was the need to meet that contingency of \$4,500,000.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Of course a decision was made to increase the teachers' salaries and make the increase retrospective for many months. That surely must involve millions of dollars. The decision to make the pay retrospective was the Government's decision.

Mr. T. D. Evans: It was not our decision; it was the decision of the tribunal and you know it.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Okay. It is during the present Government's regime that the retrospectivity has been granted.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You would have been—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer will have an opportunity to reply later.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The amount involved was very heavy to absorb into the general economy at the time. In spite of the rural downturn and the problems associated with it, the downturn in railway freight returns as a result of less super being carted, and provision having been made for the deficiency, the income to the State Treasury was not as much as was anticipated. I am rather pleased I have been able to extract at last from the Treasurer a better understanding of the

state of the Treasury when he took over and the fact that the budgetary position was no fault of our Government.

Mr. T. D. Evans: No-one on this side has ever alleged that it was.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Some of my colleagues might well remember that criticism seemed to be directed at the Brand Government for the state in which it left the finances.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I would like you to quote instances.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir DAVID BRAND: Everyone knows—

Mr. H. D. Evans: You don't.

Sir DAVID BRAND: —that the Premier has made certain statements regarding the reasons he could not honour the undertakings he made, and this cannot be denied. I know that the Treasurer is aware some of those statements were not true.

Mr. Graham: I think you are wrong about the promises. No-one said they will not be honoured. Some will be deferred a little longer, that is all.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The reason given for the deferment was that the Treasury was not found to be in the condition expected. The Premier simply said on one occasion that because we had a balanced Budget in September he surely was entitled to believe—

Mr. T. D. Evans: But it was not a balanced Budget. It was an estimate that the Budget at the end of June the following year would be balanced.

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is right. We plan a balanced Budget. Of course we do. He used this term, not me. He said that because we had a balanced Budget in September he was entitled to believe there was sufficient money to allow him to honour his promises.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You mentioned some monster promises so you must have expected it to turn out a balanced Budget.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I made promises involving \$2,000,000 and \$1,000,000 of that was—

Mr. T. D. Evans: For local government.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes. All we promised the people of Western Australia was an extra \$1,000,000.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Do you know how much your promise to provide electricity subsidies would have amounted to?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir DAVID BRAND: I had the advice of the Treasury—

The SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the Treasurer to refrain from interjecting so much. I know the time of the Leader of the Opposition is unlimited, but the Minister will have an opportunity to reply.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I have lost my license.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I did not make any promises around the countryside without the advice of the Treasury that they could be fulfilled, and we obtained that advice from the same people advising the present Treasurer—they are the same people who helped him prepare this Budget.

So I come to the details of the Budget which I am sure the people of Western Australia were amazed to read. Because of the warnings of tough Budgets and huge deficits the people might well have expected one or two of the increases which were published from time to time. The first major increase was that of hospital charges which went up by 50 per cent. I think perhaps the public was prepared to accept that, or at least let it go by. However, not very long after that a substantial increase was made in the water charges of this State and we could not help recalling the criticisms and accusations made by the now Premier regarding the profits of the Water Supply Department as it was then. He said that the department was being used as a taxing machine and that the profits should be ploughed back.

As we pointed out on many occasions, unless our departments are run as a business and follow the lines of traditional business people the Government will always be in a difficult financial situation and there will be no prospect of balancing the ledger.

As far as we are concerned, when the water board was established we undertook to allow it to make recommendations regarding increases, and as long as those increases were reasonable and it could be proved they would balance its budget and not create a large surplus, they would receive our approval. This was the situation right up to the time we left the Treasury office.

It cannot be denied that these increased charges have accumulated until we read in the headlines in the daily Press tonight that they have reached \$3 a week. I should mention that that figure includes the increases under the Federal Budget.

Mr. Graham: And I think also increases under local government.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes. I have not read the article thoroughly, and I am not trying to sidestep the issue. Let us say that the taxes which resulted from the Budgets of the Commonwealth, the State, and local government are amounting to a very worth-while sum of money—a sum difficult to meet. This is a sum that has to be considered by the ordinary working people, who are those on low incomes.

During the time I was Treasurer and had to bring forward some increased taxation measures, the present Premier was most critical. In fact, he was critical of the whole Budget, because he said we were

not considering members of the community on fixed incomes and that the people on low incomes could not afford any increases. He seemed to think the problems that we faced financially could be dismissed simply with a wave of the hand. Today it is a very different story. I have been reading some of his replies—

Mr. T. D. Evans: Do you agree they are different?

Sir DAVID BRAND: —to questions on the Budget speech and I am absolutely amazed at some of the statements he has made. I see the Premier is smiling. Let me put it this way: his criticism of the Budget proposals and the financial state during the time I was Treasurer was such that I can hardly believe the same man is responsible for the preparation of this Budget or has at least agreed to his Treasurer putting forward this Budget.

The main increase, of course, has been that of pay-roll tax which was handed over by the Commonwealth a short time ago. This means that from pay-roll tax some \$6,000,000-odd will be available for this part of the year and a total, I think, of \$8,300,000 in a full year from pay-roll tax, the rate now being 3½ per cent.

I agree it was not a very helpful move on the Commonwealth's part to hand over the tax simply because it would deduct from the Commonwealth grant the total arrived at had the tax been at the level of 2½ per cent. However it does mean the State Treasury will benefit by 1 per cent, on pay-roll tax.

Doubtless all of the States will, in future, take advantage of the fact that they are free to strike their own rate. Therefore, in time to come I think we may well see further increases in pay-roll tax. In fact I have no doubts on this. At the moment it is certainly extremely helpful to the State Treasury.

The increase of stamp duty on cheques from 5c to 6c may not seem great, but the decision will have a cumulative effect on businesses and, indeed, on the private individual. It amounts to an appreciable sum. The same decision has been made in other States, but this fact does not make it any more acceptable in Western Australia.

The Government has really gone to town on marketable securities, because the stamp duty to be paid on the transfer of shares, for example, is to be increased from the present rate of 20c per \$100, payable both by the buyer and seller, to a new rate of 30c, to be paid by the buyer and seller.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Your legislation provided for payment by both the buyer and seller.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Of course. I was not referring to that, but I am simply reading the Treasurer's statement. This decision may not bring in such a substantial amount right now in consequence of

the state of the stock market, but it will have the end effect of bringing in a large sum of money to the Treasury.

Mr. T. D. Evans: We should have had it during the days of the Poseidon boom.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Perhaps that is right. The surcharge on third party insurance premiums is to be increased substantially. We have a measure before the House which simply provides for an increase of \$3. The surcharge will be increased to \$5 from \$2. There is no doubt this is a straightout taxing measure. In fact, there is no other reason for it, although the Treasurer said that it has been introduced to provide revenue to compensate in part for the heavy burden of State expenditure on hospitals, ambulance services, and police traffic control which is directly attributable to the motorist.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I think I may have taken that from the speech the Leader of the Opposition made when, as Treasurer, he introduced the surcharge for the first time.

Sir DAVID BRAND: If the Treasurer did, he must have thought it worth while or could not think of anything else to say. If I read the comments aright, the motorist today will look upon this in the light that the Government is once more milking the motorist and taxing him beyond a reasonable measure. I have often said in this House that most people own a motorcar and any increase in taxes in this direction is simply a tax on the taxpayer. If we have two motorcars we pay a little more. I consider the increase of \$3 is quite substantial and could well have been spread over a longer period.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Did you look at what Mr. Askin did in this regard in New South Wales?

Sir DAVID BRAND: I am not interested in what Mr. Askin did. I am interested in what we are doing in Western Australia.

Mr. Graham: It is less than a cent a day.

Sir DAVID BRAND: We can work it out on all those systems, but the fact remains it was \$2 and is to be \$5.

Mr. Graham: What if we give you credit for being the initiator of this special tax?

Sir DAVID BRAND: Perhaps I was. I am talking about an increase which seems very substantial.

Mr. Graham: It is a pity you did not have patent rights and we could have increased it.

Sir DAVID BRAND: A new tax, or one that has been dug up from the bottom of the sea, concerns conservancy dues. The Treasurer said—

Conservancy dues are levied on all ships calling at Western Australian ports. The general rate is 2-1/12c

per ton of gross registered tonnage, valid for all calls made during a period of three months.

Mr Williams: Father Neptune!

Sir DAVID BRAND: He further said—

At certain ports controlled by port authorities, the rate is reduced to 1-1/24c where the port authority concerned imposes tonnage dues at the same rate in aid of port revenue.

Conservancy dues have not been revised in this State for many years whereas most other States have increased their dues to 5c a ton or higher.

It is proposed that conservancy dues will be increased to a standard rate of 5c per ton . . .

I have no doubt once it was discovered Western Australia's conservancy dues were so low it would not be long before we were well up with the major States of Australia.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Does the Leader of the Opposition give credit where credit is due for discovering this means of increasing necessary revenue?

Sir DAVID BRAND: The Treasurer has discovered \$700,000, which is to be paid by the employer or ship-owner. That is not a bad contribution. An additional amount of \$700,000 will come to the Treasury when the rate is increased to 5c a ton.

There was some reasonable justification, in my view at least, for looking at the rents of mining tenements. However, in view of the situation of the mining industry throughout the world it may be that we will kill the goose that lays the golden egg.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You realise these increases are in accord with the committee's recommendations.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I realise rents have not been increased for a long time.

Mr. T. D. Evans: These are in accord with the committee's recommendations—the committee your Government set up.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Simply let us say that our Government set up a committee which has made certain recommendations. I cannot say whether we would have accepted those recommendations.

Mr. T. D. Evans: In this regard we did.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes, the Government made the decision, but I am making reference to the fact that unless we are a little careful we may well lessen the enthusiasm of people for mining and lessen investment in mining, because investors will not obtain a reasonable return for their money. If any State in Australia needs investment it is Western Australia, even if it means losing a few dollars in consequence of low rents. We cannot afford, because of the laws which prevail, to lose any opportunity to attract private enterprise to come to our State to develop and exploit our resources as far as it is possible.

The administrative cost of vehicle licensing under the heading of "Traffic Fees" is met by deducting \$1.50 from each annual vehicle license fee collected by the Commissioner of Police. I wonder whether the Treasurer had in mind the changes which have been promised in regard to the control of traffic and whether he had regard for the changes which will take place in the collection of these traffic fees.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Yes.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I see the Treasurer has allowed for the authority to deduct \$4 for each of the first 1,000 vehicles licensed and \$3 from each license in excess of 1,000. The balance of the license fee is to be paid to the Main Roads Trust Account. How it needs it! Now there is a downturn in income from road maintenance tax and the glorious uncertainty which surrounds this situation, I am certain the Main Roads Department needs every dollar it can get if it is to meet its plans for the future. It does not matter whether the plans are for development of highways in the metropolitan area or development of roads in the country. The Main Roads Department will find itself in a difficult and tight financial position. A decision has been made to abolish road maintenance tax, but it cannot be denied that there has been a delay in coming to a decision in respect of alternative means of raising money. At least until some legislation is brought down and the whole financial system for the Main Roads Department clarified we should have special sympathy for the Commissioner of Main Roads and those who work with him.

As members know, I have taken a very special interest in road maintenance tax and the impact it has on finances so far as roads in Western Australia are concerned. I still feel concerned indeed that we have not heard the Government's decision and no special reference is made in the Budget as to what will be done as an alternative, although the Premier has given some indication of the increased license fees through which he proposes to raise large sums of money to take the place of the income derived from the road maintenance tax.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The Budget deals with appropriations from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, not from the Main Roads Trust Account.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I realise that, but after all this is a most important part of the State's finances and it would not have been inappropriate to make some reference to it.

It is not so much this problem as the problem of the future when we must provide large sums of money to meet the demand for improved roads and an extension of the system in Western Australia. I say to the Premier there is no doubt that if he is facing difficulties now he

will face greater ones in future in connection with the huge sums of money which must be involved to develop and improve our roads and, indeed, to take them from the present stage of being rather narrow 12-foot roads in some cases to dual highways, or at least wider single roads.

Every day there is evidence that we will require more and more money. Despite the high level of the proposed license fees for commercial vehicles this will not be nearly enough. I am sure when the Premier asks the Federal Treasurer for more money for roads in Western Australia he will find he does not receive a very favourable reply—that is, of course, unless the Eastern States have decided to abolish road maintenance tax and use some other alternative which is satisfactory to all concerned.

I believe this is one of the most foolish decisions that have been made in this State. It is foolish because there was nothing clear—certainly no proposals which were adequate to cover the requirements of main roads in Western Australia.

Whilst we are talking about main roads, when we introduced the legislation here, members of the Labor Party were most critical because they said it was going to have a great impact on the cost of living in the north; it was going to affect the standard of living; it was going to put a lot of people out of work. However, as I look now at the heading of "State Shipping Service," and the increases that have been made on freight rates, I wonder whether the Labor Party has overlooked the concern it expressed at that time. I grant that the State Shipping Service is a headache for all Treasurers, and problems have always to be considered in regard to transport to the north and the cost involved. I agree, too, there is a need to consider the whole system and I regret very much that the decision has been made not to send our ships to Darwin. I am concerned about this because I believe we were building up trade in Darwin which, although not very large, might well have grown as time went on.

Mr. T. D. Evans: And so would the deficit.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Of course the Minister does not have to tell me that. Over the years we endeavoured to meet this deficit with the aid of the Grants Commission. This was done because of the cost of living in the north.

I am pleased to see that at least the freight is not going to be increased on wool and certainly not on cotton produced in the Ord River district.

In summing up the situation in regard to increases imposed by the Treasurer on the people of Western Australia, I would like to read this in case we have overlooked

anything. Pay-roll tax will bring in \$6,300,000. Stamp duty on cheques will bring in \$300,000—not a small amount—marketable securities will bring in \$400,000. I have referred to the third party insurance surcharge, \$900,000; conservancy dues, \$700,000; mining tenements, \$2,000,000—not an insignificant sum—traffic fees, \$600,000, and State Shipping Service, \$800,000.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Those traffic fees were only an adjustment. They do not impose lc on the motorist.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I understood this was an accounting adjustment.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Nevertheless you are quoting it with increases.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I bet you included it with increases! Of course you have.

Mr. T. D. Evans: That was explained; it was an accounting procedure.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The total collections by the State in pay-roll tax at the rate of 3½ per cent. from the 1st September, 1971, were expected to amount to \$27,340,000 in 1971-72. This is the main reason for the increase under the heading of "State Taxation."

We can go on referring to amounts, large amounts which the Government expects to receive from taxation measures, and the small taxation measures which are listed in this document.

The revenue from third party insurance surcharge should exceed this year's collections of \$953,000. This is not an insignificant sum which is being extracted from the motorist who is already paying heavily.

There was a reduction in probate, and this is understandable. However, that reduction was not very large. As I have already said, the Commonwealth has been very generous and the Premier and Treasurer are rather fortunate people, in view of the problems of other States, to be able to come up with such a reasonable Budget.

Mr. T. D. Evans: It is a reasonable Budget.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I would like to remind the public it is not only these individual taxing methods which cause some concern. I would like to read the increased collections under the heading "Territorial Revenue." These are expected to increase this year by \$8,200,000, to a total of \$40,380,000. Most of this additional revenue will come from mining royalties.

This reminds me that the Premier was going to renegotiate some of the royalties. However, as far as I know, nothing has happened simply because he has found that the level of royalties charged is reasonable in view of all the circumstances.

Mr. T. D. Evans: No, he has found he is hampered by the agreements. He said he was going to renegotiate the agreements. This takes two parties.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I do not know what the future will hold. The Treasurer would understand—

Mr. T. D. Evans: It takes all parties to agree to vary an agreement.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Why did the Premier say this if he was not prepared to negotiate? The Treasurer, as a lawyer, should know what the agreements meant.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir DAVID BRAND: The revenue from court fines and fees and from charges levied by various departments will, in the majority of cases, be higher this year. Everything is higher as far as revenue is concerned.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Due to natural growth.

Sir DAVID BRAND: This is because of expanded activities and in several instances because of a lift in fees. Registration fees for shops, factories, and warehouses were increased by 50 per cent. from the 1st August. Charges made by the Registrar-General's Office for certified copies, extracts, and searches of birth, marriage, and death records were raised by varying amounts from the 1st September. I do not think the public realised this.

Mr. T. D. Evans: We were candid.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Miscellaneous charges under the Traffic Act are to be raised to return an extra \$74,000 in 1971-72. In a full year I have no doubt it will be substantially more. The annual license fee for firearms is to be lifted from \$1 to \$2 and the dealer's fee from \$4 to \$10, to yield \$65,000 in this financial year. Of course, a very substantial increase in a full financial year. And so we go on.

Mr. T. D. Evans: This is a novel experience for the Leader of the Opposition.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It certainly is a very novel experience, having listened to the Premier and the people who sit on that side when they criticised what we were doing. So often we obtained a balanced Budget and in the last Budget we returned a lot of tax money which was derived from land tax. We reduced certain examination fees for school children and in a host of other ways reduced the impact on the ordinary people—returning some of the money derived as a result of the other development which had taken place during our Government's term.

Mr. Rushton: The electricity charges for many years too.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I would not claim credit for that in the light of circumstances.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Treasury revenue will increase substantially this year through the recovery of the sinking fund contributions from the Metropolitan Water

Board, State Electricity Commission, Fremantle Port Authority, Metropolitan Transport Trust, and the W.A. Coastal Shipping Commission. I presume this is because more money had to be loaned to them because of the inability to raise their own money. Perhaps they did not have the authority to do so.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You would appreciate the reason for this. This is a reversal of a procedure which was adopted by your Government in 1968 when the State left the control of the Grants Commission. These procedures were adopted to mop up what might be called excess liquidity in the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The procedure has been reversed.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I am just making a few facts clear. We were under the Grants Commission for so long it was to our advantage to work that way for the time being. Surely it was sensible to do so?

Mr. T. D. Evans: I am not criticising it.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I am just telling the Treasurer.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I am just telling you we are reversing the process now because of the need to do so.

Sir DAVID BRAND: And so, Mr. Speaker, even though the Budget in some ways looks an innocent document, I think I can sum up by simply referring to newspaper headings from time to time, such as "Higher charges for motorists in W.A. Budget," "Higher charges for hospitals," "Higher charges for this, that and the other." Now we read in this morning's paper of higher charges for electricity. I am sure when people got out of bed and read their paper this morning, even though they had been warned of the possibility of the increase, they would begin to wonder whether the document known as the Premier's policy speech was one which they had read correctly. I had a look at it again myself.

Mr. T. D. Evans: We have had a look at your promises, too, relating to electricity charges.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I do not mean that. I am looking at page 17—"The State Electricity Commission was established to give service at the lowest cost and not to make large profits."

Mr. T. D. Evans: This is so very true.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I recall for a number of years the Premier talking at great length during these debates on loan and revenue accounts and accusing the Government of making a profit from the State Electricity Commission and using it for capital works and administrative expenses, when in fact charges should be reduced and returns made to the people. This happened not only in one year but I should say in about four years and it makes very interesting reading.

Perhaps I should first of all read the statement which was made by the then Leader of the Opposition in his policy speech. It reads as follows:—

The present Government has allowed the Commission to operate as a taxing machine with the result that costs of connection and supply are higher than they need be, particularly on farmers and other country people.

Mr. Davies: We are helping the farmers.

Sir DAVID BRAND: God bless you! The speech goes on—

From its inception in 1945 up to 1966, a period of 21 years, the Commission made an accumulated profit on its metropolitan system of \$11-million, an average of a little more than \$1-million a year. Since then it has had an average yearly profit of \$4½-million with a profit of \$6,279,945 last year.

It is clear that uniform charges for electricity can be adopted throughout the Commission's supply system without having to raise charges in the metropolitan area and we propose to have uniform charges adopted.

I bet the electors in the country read that upside down!

The Minister for Electricity has said that we, during our term, reduced the price of electricity three times and all that he was doing in some simple way was putting it back to where it was before we reduced it three times.

Mr. Nalder: In 1956.

Mr. T. D. Evans: At the same time you were able to build up a huge sum of accumulated profits from which you were able to meet capital requirements.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Perhaps I should read out what the Premier has said in regard to electricity. He was referring to State instrumentalities making a profit, and he said—

Now we come to the State Electricity Commission, which is doing the same thing at a time when we ought to be trying to reduce the cost of current to make it attractive to industries which use large quantities of current and want to become established here.

Mr. Lewis: When did he say that?

Sir DAVID BRAND: On the 21st October, 1969. That is not very far back. He went on to say—

We ought to be doing something about providing a uniform rate for current throughout the whole of the State—

Yet the Premier has been referring to our promise to make a similar decision. He

agreed with us then because he was not worrying about what it was going to cost us.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Apparently nor were you.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I continue to quote—

—and extending to consumers in country districts the same benefits as the consumers in the metropolitan area receive, instead of insisting that people in Mandurah—as close to the city as that—pay a higher rate for electricity than the people in Perth and Fremantle.

I am sure the metropolitan electors will be pleased to hear this. To continue—

We should reverse the policy and not use the State Electricity Commission as an instrument for raising revenue which can be used for capital works.

Let us have a look at the situation. Last year, according to the Auditor-General's report—

He was an avid reader of the Auditor-General's report. The Premier continued—

—the State Electricity Commission made a profit of \$4,470,000, if we disregard entirely the amount of unread meterage which the Auditor-General estimates at another \$2,500,000. The reason the State Electricity Commission charges more for power and current in Mandurah than it charges in Fremantle is that the Government obliges it to make the maximum amount of profit in order to get money for capital works.

I do not know about obliging the S.E.C.; but that was the decision of the Government. When we read in the paper this morning of the decision that was made quite recently it is very difficult to understand the statements made not very long ago by a responsible person. As far as profits are concerned, on many occasions I tried to explain to him that we were running the S.E.C. on a business basis. We were making a profit which we were ploughing back to buy the generating units which we had to have. However, not only is it stated in the loan Budget that \$19,000,000 of domestic funds will have to be used—and, I presume, all the profits—but also the Premier has decided to increase the price of electricity in order to raise another \$5,000,000 or \$7,000,000 for the same purpose. I would not know how the Government gets around this after criticising us for doing a very sensible thing, but I do know that the people of this State are very upset because this follows all the other increases in charges. One person said to me, "I am sick and tired of Tonkin and his Government." I do not know what his politics are.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: You could have a shrewd guess.

Sir DAVID BRAND: He said, "They never cease loading us up with more and more costs and taxation."

Mr. Nalder: He would be a member of Trades Hall!

Sir DAVID BRAND: I am sure! Therefore, as a result of the high proposed vehicle charges, and other proposals regarding taxation, I feel I must move an amendment to the motion for the second reading. I move the amendment for the following reasons:—

The Government has lost the confidence of this House because of—

(a) its failure to meet its election promises;

(b) its heavy increases in taxes and charges including—

(i) hospital charges;

(ii) water rates;

(iii) electricity charges;

and other heavy tax and charge increases proposed in the Budget and for commercial vehicle licenses.

Amendment to Motion

For these reasons I intend to move to delete the word "now" with a view to adding after the word "time" the words "on 31st December, 1971." I move an amendment—

That the word "now" be deleted.

MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—Treasurer) (8.52 p.m.): It became apparent when the Leader of the Opposition was speaking that it was indeed a novel experience for him to stand up and endeavour to attack the State Budget. Mr. Speaker, I will keep to the amendment before the Chair in a moment; I think as a preamble I should not fail to make the observation that the Leader of the Opposition commenced to speak at 6.00 p.m., and the tea suspension occurred at 6.15. He resumed speaking at 7.30, and it was not until 7.40 that he mentioned the Budget for the first time.

Sir David Brand: So what?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: So the Leader of the Opposition spoke for some 25 minutes without making mention of the word "Budget" or any reference to the Budget. He spoke about the administration of the Treasury Department.

Mr. Court: Don't you know the procedure of this debate?

Mr. O'Neill: You can talk on anything you like on the Budget.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. T. D. EVANS: We are now confronted with an amendment which reads—

The Government has lost the confidence of this House because of—

(a) its failure to meet its election promises;

(b) its heavy increases in taxes . . .

Mr. O'Neill: That is not the amendment.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: This is the copy I have been provided with.

Mr. O'Neill: The amendment is at the bottom.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Well, these are the reasons for the amendment and if these reasons were cogent and if this was the first opportunity the Opposition had to attack the Government for its Budget, I am sure the Leader of the Opposition would not have spent some 25 minutes as a preamble without mentioning the Budget at all. However, let us consider the reasons given for moving the amendment. The first one states that the Government has lost the confidence of this House because of its failure to meet its election promises. I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to indicate one election promise which we have failed to keep.

Mr. Williams: Your leader stated there would be no increases in taxes and charges.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I ask the Leader of the Opposition to indicate one promise we have failed to keep.

Mr. O'Neill: Tell us one you have kept.

Mr. Williams: What about uniform electricity charges?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Does the Opposition want me to expose it to a list of these *in seriatim*?

Mr. Williams: You could write it on the back of a postage stamp.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: One would run out of pencil or chalk.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. T. D. EVANS: However, with regard to these heavy increases in taxes and charges, let us have a look at the situation.

Mr. O'Connor: Start with the hospital situation.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: On the 19th February, the day before the election—

Mr. Rushton: Is not that tedious repetition?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: —the chief adviser to the Premier from the Treasury Department supplied the then Premier with a certain minute which indicated that the state of the Treasury on that particular occasion was indeed most serious. Therefore, it is obvious that if the present Opposition had been returned as the Government it would have—if it was to be responsible—taken steps to husband very scarce

revenue to meet a severe budgetary situation brought about, as has been claimed—and we have not denied it—by unexpected increases in wages and salaries. There is no doubt about that. No doubt the Leader of the Opposition would not deny that if he had been returned as the Leader of the Government he would have had to adopt measures similar to those which we have adopted on this occasion to remedy a most serious revenue shortage. Let the Leader of the Opposition deny that if he will.

Sir David Brand: We are concerned only with what you have done.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The Leader of the Opposition is alleging that the Government has lost the confidence of the House because of its heavy increases in taxes and charges. I am saying that if the Leader of the Opposition had been returned as Premier of this State he would no doubt have adopted measures similar to those we have adopted. He would have no other alternative course.

Mr. Williams: His promises were not so rash.

Mr. Blaikie: You are forgetting that the Leader of the Opposition did not make irrational promises.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I challenge the Leader of the Opposition. He has asked for this; he has hinted at unrealistic promises. I challenge him to indicate to us an estimate of what his promise to provide equality in charges for all consumers of electricity throughout Western Australia would have amounted to. I would be pleased if he would tell us his estimate.

Sir David Brand: I read out what the then Leader of the Opposition said we should do. The advice as to the cost of guaranteeing this promise came from the same Treasury officials who advised you.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: What was that advice?

Sir David Brand: That we could meet and honour our undertakings with \$2,000,000.

Mr. Rushton: That is a lot different from the \$22,000,000 that you people promised.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Let me refresh the memories of members with regard to the contents of this minute from the Under-Treasurer to which reference has already been made. This minute was addressed to me on the day on which I took over the office of Treasurer, and it refers to a minute addressed to the former Treasurer, the present Leader of the Opposition. It reads as follows:—

Attached is a minute which I addressed to the former Treasurer on 19 February. I am not aware of any action taken on that minute.

2. Other States are also in serious financial difficulties as a result of recent salary and wage increases and as you will note from the attached newspaper cuttings, various courses of action have or are to be taken by these States to improve their financial situations.

3. To date, there has been no action in this State to prune expenditure or to increase taxes and charges.

No-one would have expected the former Premier to take action, subsequent to the receipt of this minute dated the 19th February, which was before the election. However, let me refer to the minute itself—

The current budgetary situation gives rise to concern as the result of the 1970 national wage decision and more particularly because of the very generous increases granted by the W.A. Industrial Commission which flowed from its decisions on the State basic wage case.

2. When the Budget for this financial year was framed a careful forecast was made of the likely movement of wages during the year. As a result, the substantial sum of \$4,450,000 was provided in the Estimates to meet general wage increases. In addition, provisions were made in departmental votes where specific increases could be anticipated. In total the provision for wage increases was \$10,023,000.

3. However, the wage increases which have been awarded have added the staggering sum of \$17,401,000 to the Government's wages bill for the current year and there is a further \$2,800,000 expected from applications yet to be heard.

The date of this minute is the 19th February, 1971. So I claim the Opposition is less than honest, and something less than responsible, in trying to support the allegation that the Government has lost the confidence of this House, because (a) of its failure to meet its election promises, and (b) of heavy increases in taxes and charges, without my needing to specify these. I claim that the previous Government, which is the present Opposition, would have been placed in the same boat as we are in, had it been returned to office. There would be no alternative.

Mr. Williams: You are scratching for an argument.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I have ample evidence here. I have given credit previously to the Leader of the Opposition for some of the very convincing letters that he wrote in recent years to the Prime Ministers setting out clearly, and occasionally appealingly, the situation confronting the Government of the day and, as he could foresee, Governments of Western Australia for years to

come, because of our huge growth problems which exceed similar problems confronting other States of Australia. The Leader of the Opposition would know only too well that the situation is unique in Western Australia in terms of population growth, in terms of immigration within the last three years—and this is a segment of population growth—in terms of the number of new classrooms erected, and in terms of the number of private dwelling houses erected. In these areas Western Australia has far exceeded the growth rate of any other State. In one or two instances the growth rate of Western Australia has exceeded by a ratio of more than two to one the growth rate of any other State.

Mr. Rushton: You are now complimenting the present Opposition.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I am not. What I am saying is that if the present Opposition had been returned to the Treasury benches, and if it were a responsible Government, it would have to adopt a course similar to that adopted by us.

The Leader of the Opposition has referred to this Budget as innocent looking. He then paid us a compliment and said it was a reasonable Budget. I recall seeing him on television on the evening after the Budget was introduced. He said he could not see a great deal wrong with the Budget, until a Press reporter prompted him and asked whether it would be inflationary. He then said it would be inflationary, but I am sure he would be the first to concede that of necessity any State Budget must have elements of inflation in it, because of the lack of flexibility in our methods of raising revenue, as distinct from the sources of revenue available to the Commonwealth.

It is only natural that any State Budget must contain elements of inflation; but nonetheless we have made an earnest, an honest, and I believe an effective attempt to derive the necessary revenue, so that we can continue to provide the level of services and the quality of life to which the people of this State have become accustomed. At the same time we have placed the burden where the impact will be felt the least: on those who are most able to bear it. The Government repudiates the amendment.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (9.06 p.m.): I support the amendment moved by my leader to delete the word "now" with a view to inserting some other words. We have heard nothing more than a tirade from the Treasurer, when he had a chance to demonstrate, firstly, that he understood something about his Budget and, secondly, that he had good reason for the inclusion of certain increases in taxes and charges in the Budget, plus the other charge increases which have been made and are having a devastating impact on the people of the State.

We have to understand why the deletion of the word "now" is important, and particularly important on this occasion. Under the old procedure in dealing with the Budget it was very simple to move to reduce the Estimates by £1 in former years, or by \$2 in more recent years. Now, as we have a Bill before us it is necessary to undertake this process in a more laborious way; and this is the first time we have had to handle the matter on this particular basis.

My leader has given his reasons as to why this amendment should be made, and I believe it to be a matter of public urgency. In case there is any doubt as to what the amendment seeks, its whole significance is that if it is agreed to the Government will lose the confidence of the House; in other words, it will no longer be entitled to remain the Government. I believe the people of this State feel just that way; and they are thoroughly fed up with the promises that have been made and with all sorts of conflicting statements. There is a complete state of confusion and lack of public confidence.

If these charges are directed at "big business," which always seems to be on the tongues of members of the Labor Party, maybe there would be less feeling among the community and there would be fewer people complaining; but the effect of these increases is in the main directed at the average person, who has to bear the tremendous increase of some 25 per cent. in water rates.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The one who receives the service pays.

Mr. COURT: Every time the Treasurer makes an interjection he puts his foot in. Who are these consumers, in the main? I suggest they are the average wage earners. These people cannot just rush in and get compensation from the arbitration court or some other body to recoup them for these increases.

Then we can turn to the increases in electricity charges, and again they make a tremendous impact on the people. In this morning's newspaper it was announced that electricity charges, which affect almost every person in the metropolitan area and most people in the southern part of the State whether they be rich or poor, will be increased by 21 per cent. I remember leaders of the Labor Party, in particular Mr. Bob Hawke, screaming blue murder because BHP had increased its charges by some 6 per cent. He regarded it as a national crisis.

Mr. T. D. Evans: An increase of 6 per cent. on what?

Mr. COURT: That company did not recoup half of the impost that had been forced on it by people who are the leaders of the Labor Party and the A.C.T.U. in the Federal sphere. Let us see what the Government of this State has done: it has

increased water rates by 25 per cent., hospital charges by 50 per cent., electricity charges by 21 per cent., and if one goes through the Budget one finds that other charges have been increased by 20 per cent., 50 per cent., more than 100 per cent., and even 150 per cent.

If we take into account the increases as percentages, and do not dismiss them as so many cents per week, we will realise that the collective effect is tremendous.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Looking at things as a percentage can be quite unrealistic and quite confusing.

Mr. Williams: As the Opposition you used to forget that conveniently.

Mr. COURT: If the Government was considering this Budget in terms of reduced money or a very limited increase in money, the whole picture could be quite different, and one could have some sympathy for the Government; but in point of fact the Treasurer said on page 8 of his second reading speech that the expenditure proposals for 1971-72 would be explained in more detail later, but for the moment he would direct attention to the fact that the proposed rise in expenditure, amounting to \$56,300,000, was the largest increase in expenditure over one year in the State's history.

It is not as though the Government is manoeuvring within a reduced total figure; it is manoeuvring within the greatest expansion in the State's history. I realise that wages have gone up unprecedentedly; we tried to tell that to the present Government when it was in Opposition, but members opposite would not believe us until they were faced with the responsibility. Nevertheless I do not accept that there is no room in which to manoeuvre within this Budget which runs into a total of nearly \$400,000,000 in revenue; neither do I accept the fact that it is necessary to slug the public, particularly the householder, in the way this Government finds necessary.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Can you suggest other ways of raising the necessary revenue?

Mr. COURT: There are always alternative methods of doing things, but the Government has elected in its first year of office to grasp the nettle and slug everyone as hard as it can. It hopes things will sort themselves out and the public will forget before the 1974 election.

Mr. T. D. Evans: That might be the method which you as the Government followed in the previous 12 years.

Mr. COURT: It does not matter where one looks in this Budget; if one turns to the State Shipping Service freight increases one finds they have an immediate impact on the living costs in an area which has the highest living costs in Australia.

One of the Government supporters had the temerity to raise this matter in the grievance debate, but he received the biggest ticking-off by a Minister of a Government supporter that I have known in this House. In fact, I thought the Treasurer had his wires crossed, and he might have thought that he was dealing with a member for Kimberley on this side of the House. I think the member for Pilbara, as a Government supporter, took the rebuff very well. I would not have accepted the harangue which he got from the Minister, had I been a supporter of his Government. Indeed, the Treasurer might have had some say in the member for Pilbara being appointed a Minister, so that he would not be able to air such matters on grievance day! If that is the tactic, good luck to the new Minister, our cheerful friend from Pilbara. We will be watching with interest to see what portfolios he is allocated.

If one looks at the amendment that has been moved by my leader, and the facts surrounding it, one cannot help but go back to the Budget speech of the Treasurer to see the far-reaching effects of these imposts. Some of them might be small, but in the final analysis they have a tremendous impact on the little man, and particularly on some pensioners. No useful purpose is served by saying that pensioners can have their water rates deferred if they so desire, because some pensioners do not like to make use of the deferment of municipal and other rates. When the Government slugs them, it makes an impact on a section of the community that is least able to bear it. In fact, the impact can be much greater on the pensioners than on the rest of the community.

Pay-roll tax is up 40 per cent. The people keep talking about 1 per cent., but it is up 40 per cent.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You are using the figure of 40 per cent. to confuse the people. The increase was 1 per cent.

Mr. COURT: That is if you talk about the rate being up from 2½ per cent to 3½ per cent, but it is an increase of 40 per cent. Of course, when we talk about pay-roll tax we are talking about real money—a sum of \$6,000,000 in one year, and \$8,400,000 in another year. The next is marketable securities. This could be dismissed because it affects big business, but it is up 50 per cent. The third party insurance surcharge, which affects every car owner, is up 150 per cent.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Up 150 per cent. of what? \$2.

Mr. COURT: Up from \$2 to \$5. However, that is not the end of it.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Did you look at Askin's Budget?

Mr. COURT: We are dealing with our Budget.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should have a look at the Askin Budget.

Mr. O'Neil: But yours was introduced first.

Mr. COURT: Conservancy dues do not affect the small man because they are paid mostly by overseas people. They will not have a big impact on the individual but they are another burden that could be the last straw on the camel's back.

Mr. T. D. Evans: There has not been an increase for many years.

Mr. COURT: Mining tenement rents come next, but I will not argue about them. I am more concerned with the charges that affect householders, such as water rates, hospital charges, and power charges; charges which directly concern them and their motor vehicles. I will deal with mining companies at a later stage of the general debate. As I have said, at the moment I am more concerned with the things which have a direct effect on the populace. Great indecision has crept into the community and I believe the confidence of the people is being sapped because of the continual announcements of increases which have taken place over the last few months, many of which did not wait until the Budget.

Then we come to other matters which have prompted my leader to move his amendment. I refer to the way the public feels it has been misled over road maintenance tax which has been discussed by the hour in this House. Although this is not specifically a Budget consideration I think it must be taken into account.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Why do you think it must be taken into account during the Budget debate?

Mr. COURT: As the Premier knows, the general Estimates discussion is the time when the whole of the economy and the State's housekeeping can be laid bare.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You have not explained why it should be taken into consideration when discussing the Budget.

Mr. COURT: The Premier knows that when on the general Estimates we can discuss any item.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I am not saying you cannot talk about any subject you like.

Mr. COURT: The public is very concerned and alarmed at some of the statements made by the Government, and at some of the Government's duplicity. When the repeal of road maintenance tax was used as part of the campaign during the election many people felt it was to be repealed.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said we should take road maintenance tax into consideration when dealing with the budget. I want to know why.

Mr. COURT: We are dealing with the total housekeeping of the State when dealing with the general Estimates.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I know, but road maintenance tax does not come into the Budget at all.

Mr. COURT: The Premier will never be convinced. He knows that we deal with these things in the general Estimates.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Of course, you can talk about anything, even a man going to the moon. But what reference has it to the Budget?

Mr. COURT: Plenty. My leader has given as one of his reasons for moving the amendment election promises which have been broken. This is one of them.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Oh, is it? Has the road maintenance tax promise been broken? That is a new form of reasoning.

Mr. COURT: I am talking about duplicity. The Government brought in a Bill to repeal road maintenance tax, but at the same time it gave notice of a punitive tax in connection with commercial vehicles. The Premier said one was not a substitute for the other.

Mr. Hutchinson: Is that in the Budget?

Mr. COURT: No, that is dealing with road funds and is yet to come. The point I am making is that many people supported the Labor Party, and freely admit it, on the basis that road maintenance tax was to be repealed, and there was not to be a tax in its place. However, a frightening tax has been imposed and it will affect a lot of small people. In fact, it is strange coming from a Labor Government that the tax on commercial vehicles in the form of increased licenses will be more devastating as far as the small people are concerned. The large operators will make a profit out of the provisions of the change; that is, the change in taxation and licensing proposed by the Government.

The time has arrived when these things have to be exposed. It is time the Government explained why it must have these taxes and why there is no other way of imposing the taxes. I would be remiss if I did not come back to the point mentioned by my leader. He referred specifically to the Premier's attack when he was the Leader of the Opposition on the question of the State Electricity Commission being used as a taxing machine. The Premier then said that money was taken out of the S.E.C. in the form of profit and reinvested in S.E.C. capital works. He wanted charges reduced and he wanted uniformity within the system, not by raising the charges in the metropolitan area, but by reducing country charges to equal those which applied in the metropolitan area.

I do not think the Premier could deny this because it is in his policy speech. I have recollections of the time when we desired to rearrange the water supply, sewerage, and drainage charges in this State, and I well remember the phrase used by the then Opposition. It was the first time I remember the phrase being used but we were accused of using this service as a "taxing machine." I remember the phrase so well because it stuck in my mind. In point of fact, we were doing nothing of the sort. We were trying to get the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department on a basis so that at least it could endeavour to pay its way in the metropolitan region. We were accused of wanting to make it into a taxing machine.

We now find the present Government, without any justification, allowing the charges of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department to be increased not by a small percentage, but on an average of 25 per cent. So we see the whole pattern of these taxes. The main burden of each tax is falling on the average householder in this community by way of increased hospital charges, increased water rates, and increased charges for power.

I believe the Government is deserving of censure. It has not only lost the confidence of this House, but it has also lost the confidence of the people of this country. Therefore, the amendment moved by my leader—which is a censure of the Government—is entirely justified and I support it.

MR. NALDER (Katanning) [9.24 p.m.]: The situation as we see it from this side of the House is one which is quite amazing when we look at the speeches which were made by those who now hold seats on the Government benches. One cannot wonder at the concern expressed by the public when almost without exception, as night follows day, there is an announcement of increased charges in one direction or another as far as the public is concerned.

The situation has been outlined by the Leader of the Opposition and by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and indicates the position in which we find ourselves. I feel, without exaggerating the position one iota, that the Government should be condemned for the attitude it has adopted with the Budget. I refer to the increased charges levelled at the public at the present time.

The Premier, when he was the Leader of the Opposition, accused the Government of making the State Electricity Commission a taxing machine. On a number of occasions he said that the commission was set up to supply a service to the public, industry, and commerce, and that power should be made available at the cheapest possible rate. If that argument was valid two years ago or 12 months ago, I would say it was valid today.

Mr. T. D. Evans: It is valid.

Mr. NALDER: However, within nine months of taking over the Government is using the State Electricity Commission to raise further funds and to increase profits.

Mr. T. D. Evans: To meet capital requirements.

Mr. NALDER: The figures quoted by the then Leader of the Opposition were, firstly, for the period from 1946 to 1966 inclusive, making 21 years in all. The accumulated profit in 1966 was \$11,000,000, working out at a profit of \$500,000 a year. During the period from 1966 to 1970 the increase in the profit was \$4,500,000 a year average, and last year it was \$6,290,000.

The then Leader of the Opposition used the argument that the public—the domestic users, commerce, and industry—should have been given the advantage of that situation. Power should have been made available at a cheaper rate to industry because we were doing everything possible to bring industry to this State. Statements were made year after year in this House that we should be encouraging industry to come to Western Australia.

We have seen the situation which exists in the Eastern States. Thousands of people are employed in the Eastern States to manufacture goods which are being used in Western Australia. It was argued that industry should be invited to come to this State to manufacture goods used in this State. One of the greatest obstacles was the fact that power was too expensive for industry to come to this State to manufacture goods which could be used by people in this State.

Mr. T. D. Evans: There were other reasons too, one of which was our remoteness.

Mr. NALDER: Those were some of the reasons put forward and on that basis it is absolutely amazing to sit on this side of the House and note the changed attitude which has been adopted by those on the Government benches.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Would you not refer to the changed attitude as being an enlightened attitude?

Mr. NALDER: I think the situation could best be described by saying that the Government is now wearing a different set of clothes from those it wore while on this side of the House. From what has been said it would appear that we ought to know that the increased charges were inevitable because of increased costs brought about by increased wages. That has automatically brought about the situation where money has to be found from somewhere.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You know that is true.

Mr. NALDER: It is true, but remembering the comments from those now on the front bench when they were on the

other side of the House, there would appear to be no reason for the increase because at no time then was there an increase in charges.

The situation of the State Electricity Commission is a glaring example of what is happening today. Over a period of 12 years electricity charges were reduced, but within a few months of the Labor Party taking control of the Government benches the prices are pushed up. Members of the Government will have to talk loud and long to convince the electors of this State that the increase was necessary. I believe that many people will not be convinced.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Will the country people be aggrieved?

Mr. NALDER: Yes, some of the country people will be aggrieved, and they have every right to be aggrieved because of the increased charges to industry. We have a Government speaking loud and long about the importance of decentralisation but in the next breath it is increasing the charges to strangle those who are trying to survive.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Not to country consumers.

Mr. NALDER: The country people expected that the prices would be reduced in comparison with those in the metropolitan area, but that is not the case.

I support the Leader of the Opposition in his move to condemn the Government for the attitude it has adopted in regard to the charges that have been imposed upon the public in this State. The Government will have to account for increases in hospital charges and water rates, and we have heard of other increases which are likely to be imposed in the future.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley) [9.33 p.m.]: I also rise to support our leader in his amendment condemning the Government for its action. I think the Government's Budget was a Budget of panic, and that the panic was brought about for the reasons given by our leader; that is, the promises made by the Premier which it was very unlikely he would be able to keep.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Your leader also referred to it as "a reasonable Budget."

Mr. O'CONNOR: I call it a Budget of panic. The Budget itself has been soft-padded to a great degree because many of the items that have now become a great burden on the public were not included in it but have been introduced either before or since the Budget, or will be imposed upon the public in the near future. Quite frankly, the people are becoming sick of it, not only for personal reasons but also because of the effect on their pockets, and the further we go the worse treatment we are receiving from this Government.

When one reads the comments made by the Premier prior to the election, one wonders what he was up to. Back in December

he said he could comfortably meet his election promises without increases in taxation, but this State has had one of its worst years for taxation increases as far as the man in the street is concerned.

Mr. T. D. Evans: That would not be true.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I do not think the Treasurer would know because he is somewhat obsessed with the department at the moment and is not prepared to listen to realistic discussion.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I am waiting to hear some.

Mr. O'CONNOR: He has spoken about four times tonight. I did not know he had unlimited time on several occasions, but apparently that is the case.

In view of the fact that the Premier said he could comfortably meet his promises without increasing taxation, when one considers the burdens that are being imposed upon the public today one wonders where we are heading. Many of the charges that will hit the worker have not been mentioned in the Budget. An increase of 26c a week has been mentioned, but I wonder if that is the real figure. I also wonder how much this will amount to for the individual householder over a year. It is a considerable amount out of his pocket when it is added to other burdens that have been placed on him.

Water rates are up 25 per cent. No-one can avoid paying water rates when the water main runs past his house. It can therefore be said that almost every home in this State will be hit by that increase; certainly every home in the metropolitan area.

Local government rates have been increased. The Government is not responsible for this increase, but it is an additional burden on the people at a time when they cannot afford to pay it, particularly in view of the fact that there has been a rise in unemployment. Building rates are up 5 per cent., which adds to the cost of a house.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Is that the fault of the Government?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I think it has something to do with the Government. Hospital charges—

Mr. T. D. Evans: Is this the fault of the Government?

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Government is responsible for it. The Government created the position. If we had been in government we would have been castigated for it. Hospital charges are up 50 per cent., which is a heck of a jump and a great burden on the individual. The average person must pay something like 40c a week more in hospital benefit fees to cover this increase.

To my mind, the person who is worst hit is the private motorist. Third party insurance has gone up 150 per cent. The Treasurer asks, "One hundred and fifty per cent. of what?" Certainly it was only \$2 previously, but it is now \$5, which is a fair increase when it is considered in conjunction with the other charges that have been increased. License fees are up—another impost on the motorist.

Mr. Graham: Who said motor license fees had gone up?

Mr. O'CONNOR: License fees have gone up by \$1.50 and third party insurance has gone up by \$3.

Mr. T. D. Evans: License fees have not been increased by \$1.50.

Mr. O'CONNOR: We have before us a Bill for the abolition of road maintenance tax, and the Premier has indicated that in place of that tax he will impose a further burden on the people. He has made some strange statements about the amount of this impost. I heard him say to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition this evening, "How could this be an additional burden when there are more people paying less?" That is not the case, and he knows it.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It is the case. Less money will be collected and more people will pay it.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I would like the Premier to listen to a couple of questions he answered in this House.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Go ahead.

Mr. O'CONNOR: On page 89 of *Hansard* on Wednesday, the 21st July—

The SPEAKER: Are you going to tie this up with the amendment?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I certainly am. I asked a question of the Premier, who now denies that more money will be collected under the new system he proposes to introduce.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It will produce less money.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Premier has had another change of heart. My question was—

What amount of road maintenance tax was collected for the year ended the 30th June, 1971?

The reply was: \$3,990,144. I presume the Premier agrees with that figure, because he quoted it. On Wednesday, the 25th August, I asked the following question:—

What is the estimated sum to be received for additional license fee collections from commercial vehicles following abolition of the road maintenance charge?

The Premier replied: \$4,000,000. How can \$4,000,000 be less than \$3,990,000?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: For the simple reason—

Mr. O'CONNOR: I never cease to be amazed.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: If you do not want the explanation, do not wait for it.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am happy to listen.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You know that only about 70 per cent. of the impost was collected, so the figure of actual collections of road maintenance tax is lower than the sum imposed upon all the people who should have paid it, which proves the truth of my statement that it will produce less money from more people.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Premier says that 70 per cent. of the road maintenance tax was collected. That figure is a pie in the sky.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Is it?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes, it is, and the Premier knows it.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That is the figure supplied to me by departmental officers who were the same officers when you were in government.

Mr. O'CONNOR: When I was there they assured me that figure was not correct. They gave me indications which vary quite considerably from the Premier's views.

Mr. Graham: What percentage was collected?

Mr. O'CONNOR: The way the Government is going, the figure collected this year will be less than \$3,990,000 because the Government is not pushing certain individuals for payment.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Did you not release people from gaol?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: What are you talking about?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I did not give instructions to certain departments or organisations not to impose the charges upon certain people.

The SPEAKER: You are now drifting away from the point.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I have finished with that matter. To say that \$3,990,000 is more than \$4,000,000 is the sort of thing we expect from the Premier today and the sort of thing we are getting continually, which is the reason this motion is before the House.

MR. WILLIAMS (Bunbury) [9.42 p.m.]: I rise to support the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: We are beginning to have some needless repetition now.

Mr. WILLIAMS: We have heard of statements the Premier made during the election campaign about being able to keep his promises without having to increase taxes or charges. Over the last

couple of months that promise has been broken, and people in my area are beginning to ask, "What is the special for next week?"

Mr. May: Like every Thursday?

Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes, because things are forever increasing. There has recently been an increase which, although small, will affect many people, particularly those who have children starting school for the first time. When a child starts school, it is necessary to produce a birth certificate in order to verify the age of the child, and we all know that from time to time birth certificates are lost or mislaid. By asking a question in this House I found out that the charge for birth certificates has been increased. This increase was not mentioned to us beforehand. I think there was very brief mention of it by the Treasurer in the Budget. The charge for a certified copy of a birth certificate, a death certificate, or a marriage certificate has been increased from \$1 to \$2. The charge for extracts of those certificates has been increased from 30c to \$1. The Treasurer is not here at present, but I think I did him a kind deed by mentioning actual sums of money rather than percentages.

The public is becoming heartily sick of this sort of thing, and it is hoped that this trend will not continue for the rest of the Government's term. As someone said earlier, perhaps this is the one big bite of the apple and the Government might be able to lay off for the next two years. We sincerely hope so.

It is very interesting to note some of the events leading up to the election promises. During the election campaign, on the 13th February, when the present Premier—who was then the Leader of the Opposition—stated there would be no increase in State taxes or charges during this financial year, he concluded a statement made on the same day by saying, "I am confident that without any increase in taxes I shall comfortably meet all the promises I have made." How hollow that is!

Mr. Hutchinson: Comfortably?

Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes. The people are not very comfortable at the present time. I do not know that the Government would be comfortable if it tried out an election on us. In June a situation arose which I would normally say was funny, but it is not very funny when one is speaking of taxes.

A situation arose of the Premier making a statement on the 9th June that the State's deficit would be \$35,000,000. June seemed to be a good month for this sort of thing, because on the 17th June the Premier came out and told us, "It still means that we will have to increase taxation in every possible field in W.A." That is a vastly different statement from that

which we heard in February of this year, yet it was made by a Premier who, when he was Leader of the Opposition, said he would not increase taxes or charges.

A similar confusing situation arose after the Premiers' Conference in regard to what was to be the State's deficit. In one week the Premier announced a deficit of about \$35,000,000, and then he came out the following week and said it would be \$12,000,000. He eventually came down to \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000. During the interview on that occasion the Treasurer interjected that \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000 was, in fact, substantially less than \$12,000,000. That is an astounding statement for the Treasurer to make. Obviously he is right on top of his job and knows what figures mean!

Mr. T. D. Evans: If you look at the financial statement made to the House you will find that the deficit was likely to be \$13,000,000 without increases in revenue.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The present Government was told on the 15th December by the then Premier what the deficit was likely to be, having regard for the Australian national wage case and the basic wage case in Western Australia. Possibly the Treasurer has not been able to find a copy of the newspaper; but here it is—the newspaper of Tuesday, the 15th December, indicates that the then Premier and the now Leader of the Opposition stated quite clearly what the position was. He gave the present Premier plenty of warning about the situation. Remember that this was well and truly before the elections in February. I have no doubt that the present Premier had that information in his possession because I know his capacity for doing his homework.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The Premier, in the light of that—

Mr. WILLIAMS: I think the Treasurer has already made five or six speeches whilst sitting. He has not done too badly. Let me carry on with my speech, and if he wants to say something he can say it through other Ministers.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member should address the Chair.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The information was given to the public at large and no doubt the Government had knowledge of it well and truly before any election promises were made. Here we have a situation at the present time of practically every tax in the book being increased and of the public being hit to leg.

Then, on the 19th June, we find the following heading in *The West Australian*: "W.A. still faces a bleak budget." The article states—

Last week Mr. Tonkin forecast a deficit of about \$35 million for the coming year.

Then, on the 2nd July, under the heading of "Tonkin warns of tax rises," we find the following:—

The Premier, Mr. Tonkin, warned yesterday that there would be increases in State taxation soon.

We did not have to wait very long to find out what they were. Only last Tuesday when the Premier addressed the S.E.C. strikers he made a statement which I think we, when we were on the Government side, had been telling his party for many years; that is, how difficult it is to control costs in industry.

Mr. Court: He did not make a statement. He had a Dutch auction on the oval.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes, he had a Dutch auction, but that part of it is another story. I wish to quote from *The West Australian* of Tuesday, the 28th August in which, amongst other things, the Premier is reported to have said—

W.A. was a rapid-growth State, and rapid growth had to be paid for.

How true that is, because the workers are now finding out just how much they will have to pay; that is, they have been told how much they will have to pay, but they will not really know about it until it hits their pockets. Then, no doubt, we will have some very irate taxpayers and members of the public knocking on our doors and asking what it is all about. As a matter of fact, I would suggest to the Premier that if he is really serious about this he should hold an election as soon as he likes so that the public will be able to indicate their true feelings as to what they think of the new Government and the promises it made during the election campaign. The public will be able to indicate how well those promises have been kept, or how well they have not been kept. With those words, I support the amendment.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) [9.50 p.m.]: I wish briefly to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I know that the Treasurer immediately replied to the amendment and I should think he spoke for roughly five minutes.

Mr. T. D. Evans: That is all it warranted.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Is that so? I would like to say that we are challenging the statements made by the present Premier when he presented his policy speech. It seems to me to be entirely wrong that the Premier—although he is not the Treasurer—has made no effort whatever to answer the challenges made tonight. He is sitting there as though it does not matter a scrap. I think he is the one who has the responsibility of answering the challenge because it was he, and not the Treasurer, who made the policy speech. He should at least defend his own case and, surely, he should defend what he said prior to the elections.

A heading appeared in *The West Australian* of the 17th February in which the present Premier said, "We can pay for pledges." Who is "we"?

Mr. Williams: The public.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: It sounds as though the Premier meant the Government will be able to pay for its pledges; but the Government cannot, so everybody has to pay for them. The public are being forced to contribute so the Government can pay for its pledges. The Premier makes pledges with other people's money. What a marvellous set-up that is. Another article in *The West Australian* is headed, "Promise to fix prices, interest." The article states—

The leader of the Opposition, Mr. Tonkin, has pledged a Labor Government to selective price fixing and statutory control of building society interest rates, both for investors and borrowers.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, who should price fixing affect? What about a price-fixing body to control the present Government? Then we might be able to get some sense from the Government and it might be able to justify the increases it seeks to bring about in this community.

It is all right for the Premier to make an election promise that he will see that prices are fixed for everybody else but himself. Now that the situation arises he is increasing the cost of almost everything in the community. What a subtle way of meeting election promises. What I am about to quote may be quoted from several newspapers, but I quote from the *Farmers' Weekly* of the 11th February. The article states—

ELECTRICITY: The State electricity commission was established to give service at the lowest cost and not to make large profits.

Uniform charges for electricity can be adopted throughout the commission's supply system, without raising charges in the metropolitan area and we propose to have uniform charges adopted.

That is a twist of the truth, if ever anything was. We now have uniform charges all right, but not as a result of reducing charges in country areas; it was done by increasing the charges in the metropolitan area. Mr. Speaker, can you conceive anything more deceitful than the statement I have just quoted from the Press, in the light of today's announcement? I suggest this action is in line with what the present Government is doing. It made promises about third party insurance, but I notice the only thing it has done is to increase the Government take-off, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has said, by 150 per cent. It has increased the

charge from \$2 to \$5. Where is the Government going to stop? What will be in the paper tomorrow or next week?

Mr. Williams: Possibly a tax on push-bikes.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: There will probably be a tax on every spoke in the wheel. I think the Premier owes it to this House to make a reply to the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I challenge him to do so.

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [9.55 p.m.]: Lest the member for Narrogin should attempt to take some credit for my speaking, I want to inform him that it was always my intention to speak after I had heard all that the Opposition could produce in explanation of this amendment—and it does not amount to very much.

Mr. Graham: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Bunbury challenged us to go to an election. I pose this simple question: Suppose the Opposition succeeded with its amendment—and we would not hesitate to resign—and the Government was changed, would the Opposition then remove all these increases in taxation about which they are complaining? If the Opposition did so it would be facing a deficit of something of the order of \$25,000,000 to \$30,000,000 altogether.

Mr. Williams: We would be back where we started from in June.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Opposition would then have to fund that deficit from the loan moneys made available next year. That would reduce the amount available to it for capital expenditure and before very long very few schools or hospitals of any kind would be built. It is well known that the hospitals in this State require an annual appropriation of \$20,000,000. All we could find this year was some \$7,000,000.

The previous Government knew very well that it was not providing the moneys necessary for these services, but it did not do anything about it. It allowed the situation to develop and it has become a legacy for us. The then Premier, who is now the Leader of the Opposition, estimated that his election promises would cost \$2,000,000. He undertook to finance the P.R.T.S. plan which had been thoroughly examined by way of a feasibility study and accepted in principle by the Government.

Sir David Brand: That is right. There were certain recommendations as to how the finance was to be found, but there was no undertaking on our part in any way.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Were the recommendations to pluck money off trees in some way?

Sir David Brand: Not at all. It was simply to accept our recommendation. The financing of the amount was a recom-

mendation of its own which would have been put to some subcommittee or other. No doubt a start would have been made within the first three years.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Was somebody going to make a gift of the money to the Government?

Sir David Brand: Of course not.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The only way in which the honourable member's Government could have got the money would be to place an impost upon some people.

Mr. Hutchinson: A major portion of the money would have come from road funds.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Would it? That was not the plan I heard explained.

Mr. Hutchinson: A proportion of the money would have come from that source.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The honourable member has forgotten the plan that the then Government was to adopt. I will tell him that in his policy speech the then Premier said, "We will devise a scheme."

Sir David Brand: Yes, that is quite right.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: A scheme of taxation.

Sir David Brand: A scheme of nothing of the sort.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Applied to the people.

Sir David Brand: Not applied to the people.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The then Premier said, "We will devise a scheme to pluck money from the air."

Sir David Brand: We made no decision.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The then Premier said, "We will devise a scheme to find \$300,000,000." I know the Leader of the Opposition does not like this, but he must take it.

Mr. Hutchinson: This is not a one-year proposition.

Sir David Brand: We made no decision.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: However, when we got into the Treasury we could not find the scheme.

Sir David Brand: What did you say about the P.R.T.S. scheme?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I am still looking for it. It must be a wonderful scheme if it will raise \$300,000,000 without taxing anybody. It is certainly a marvellous scheme.

Sir David Brand: Of course! How ridiculous!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It is so wonderful it borders on wizardry. It is true that I said I would finance the promises I made without increasing taxation. I make no apology for that, because I believed it. I was entitled to believe it, because I sat in this House and I heard the then Premier

introduce a balanced Budget after providing for a reduction in taxation. When he did so he said this on the 24th September, 1970—

Having regard to all factors likely to influence the course of events during the remainder of this year,—

That is, this financial year of 1970-71. Continuing—

—and although expenditure requirements for 1970-71 are high, the Government has found it possible, by careful attention to priorities, to bring down a balanced Budget without having to increase State taxes and charges.

Sir David Brand: So we did, and so we could.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: He said, "Having regard to all factors likely to influence the course of events during 1970-71."

Sir David Brand: And providing \$10,000,000 for extra wages and salaries. Surely that was a large sum in anticipation?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It was in that context and in the knowledge that the then Government had reduced taxation that I was entitled to assume that what I proposed to do could be done. I ask the Leader of the Opposition: Who assessed the cost of the promise he made to subsidise electricity charges in places like Mt. Magnet?

Sir David Brand: I got my advice from the Treasury that this could be financed.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Leader of the Opposition did not, because the Treasury knew nothing about it, and I am telling the Leader of the Opposition that plain fact. We have searched and made inquiries and the matter was not researched at all. Further, the State Electricity Commission knew nothing about it. What is more, I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to give us a figure as to what it would be likely to cost to do that. Was that included in the \$2,000,000?

Sir David Brand: We were told by the Treasury.

Mr. Williams: A sum of \$575,000 was included in it, and you had \$500,000 included in it.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I did not make that promise; the honourable member does not know what he is talking about.

Mr. Williams: It was laid down in the paper.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It had nothing to do with uniform charges. It was an additional undertaking the Leader of the Opposition gave over and above any undertaking I gave; that is, he would, in those districts not served by the S.E.C., pay a subsidy to the consumers to bring down the cost of electricity to a certain minimum figure. I worked out what it would

cost in a place like Mt. Magnet and I say again that there is nobody on the Opposition side of the House who can at this moment say what that promise would have cost.

No-one in the Treasury knows anything about it. It was never researched at all; nor was it researched by the State Electricity Commission. It was on the basis of what the then Premier told this House, and his policy to reduce taxation—

Sir David Brand: So we would; we had a balanced Budget.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: —that the policy of the then Opposition was laid.

Sir David Brand: Misleading statements.

Mr. O'Connor: Anything goes!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Commonwealth was advised on the 18th January—well before the then Premier delivered his policy speech—what the deficit was likely to be in Western Australia. The then Premier attended a special meeting of Premiers when the Prime Minister at the time—Mr. John Gorton—told the Premiers they would get no assistance whatever from the Commonwealth to enable them to meet their Budget deficits.

Sir David Brand: That is right.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: So they were all in the same boat, and the then Premier was required, and he gave an undertaking which we honoured, to cut back immediately the State expenditure to contain the Budget within the estimated deficit figure. This was not made public to the Opposition or to anybody else at the time. We subsequently discovered this when we became the Government.

Sir David Brand: You did not. I came back and said we would be able to fulfil the programme we had, but we could not carry out anything from then on.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Leader of the Opposition—

Sir David Brand: That is what I said.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I do not care what the Leader of the Opposition said. What I am trying to indicate is that if the Leader of the Opposition said he could go ahead and do this, he was not telling the truth, because he was facing a \$12,000,000 deficit. He was asked to cut back immediately and he gave an undertaking to do so.

Sir David Brand: We did, and we took action.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: How on earth could the Leader of the Opposition find \$2,000,000 today? That is what he promised to do in those circumstances.

Sir David Brand: We were able to fulfil the building programme we had before us at that time.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Leader of the Opposition would not be able to do it at all. It is interesting to see what he did in regard to the Opposition during the period he was in Government.

Mr. Hutchinson: You make a better Leader of the Opposition than you do a Premier.

Mr. O'Connor: He does not make a good Leader of the Opposition or a good Premier.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Let us take a quick run through the record to see what was said; that they could carry on in the circumstances without increasing charges, on the basis, no doubt, that if by some mischance they became the Government they would wipe out all these increases.

Sir David Brand: You said that over here for 12 years.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: We go back to 1959-1960.

Mr. W. A. Manning: How far back are you going?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will give the Opposition all the figures. I know members opposite do not want to hear them. I do not blame them for that, but they are going to hear them whether they like them or not.

Sir David Brand: Go ahead; we will go out and have a cup of tea.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The stamp duty on hire-purchase agreements was increased to 1 per cent. in lieu of the previous rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. With regard to entertainment tax, legislation was varied by increasing the exemptions available under the Act and imposing tax on a lower admission price than had been charged previously.

Sir David Brand: We finally took it off.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Motor vehicle license fees increased by 25 per cent. in the case of cars and approximately 14 per cent. for motor wagons not exceeding 50 power weight. The driver's license fee increased from 10s. to £1.

Mr. Court: That is not a very good start; quoting one tax that has disappeared altogether; that is, the entertainment tax.

Sir David Brand: Turn over two pages.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Leader of the Opposition has had his say.

Sir David Brand: All right; I am sorry.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: To save time I will jump over to those years which show the biggest increases. So I come to 1962-63. In that year conveyancing rates increased from 5s. for each £25 to 12s.6d. for each £50. With regard to insurance policies—other than life, motor vehicle, and workers' compensation policies—a flat rate of 5 per cent. of gross premium was introduced in place of the previous sliding scale.

Receipts for amounts less than £5 were made exempt and the scale of duty was varied to 3d. for receipts of £5 up to £100

and thereafter 3d. for each £100 or part thereof. On hire-purchase agreements the duty increased to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in lieu of 1 per cent. which applied previously.

In 1963-64, in regard to stamp duty, an *ad valorem* rate of 10s. per cent. on the registration of new motor vehicles and the transfer of second-hand vehicles was introduced. The application fee for a driver's license was increased from 10s. to £2.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Shame!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Hospital charges were increased from the 1st November, 1963, and M.T.T. fares were increased from the same date. Suburban rail fares increased and country rail fares were revised as from the 1st November, 1963, also.

Mr. Graham: Supported by the Country Party.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: In 1965-66 the duty on cheques was increased from 3d. to 6d.

Mr. Davies: 100 per cent.!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Duty on conveyancing or transfer on sale of property increased from $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for consideration exceeding £5,000. The duty on transfer of script or shares increased from 3d. for each £5 or part of £5 to 1s. for every £12 10s. or part thereof. The duty on the purchase and transfer of motor vehicles increased from 10s. per cent. to 15s. per cent. Receipt duty increased from 3d. per £100 to 3c per \$200 for amounts in excess of \$10.

State Shipping Service freights and charges were increased from the 1st November, 1965. I heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition complaining it was dreadful to do this sort of thing to the people in the north, but his own Government was responsible for doing that sort of thing.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has two more minutes left.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: So it is a bit hollow to hear the Opposition complaining at a time when the economy throughout Australia was buoyant; complaining about us when, at the time I mentioned, it was imposing all these increases year after year. For what purpose? It was to ensure it did not create a deficit. It is understandable that in a situation where the Government has no option but to increase charges, the Opposition would endeavour to make capital out of it. I do not blame it for that at all.

Sir David Brand: You did!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Of course I did, and if I was in the Leader of the Opposition's position now I would do it again, but that does not say the argument is sound.

Sir David Brand: I would like you to tell me what you are doing with the profits of the S.E.C.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It is not making any profits. As a matter of fact, in due course I will have the opportunity to show the

Opposition where it fell down badly in this connection. While the productivity of the State Electricity Commission has been going in an upward direction, the manpower has been levelling off.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier's time has expired.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—21

Mr. Blaikie	Mr. O'Connor
Sir David Brand	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Court	Mr. Reid
Mr. Coyne	Mr. Ridge
Dr. Dadour	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Williams
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. R. L. Young
Mr. McPharlin	Mr. W. G. Young
Mr. Mensaros	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Nalder	(Teller)

Noes—21

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Jones
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Brady	Mr. May
Mr. Brown	Mr. Molier
Mr. Cook	Mr. Norton
Mr. Davies	Mr. Sewell
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Taylor
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. A. R. Tonkin
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. J. T. Tonkin
Mr. Graham	Mr. Harman
Mr. Hartrey	(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Thompson	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Bertram
Mr. Lewis	Mr. McIver
Mr. Stephens	Mr. Burke

The SPEAKER: The voting being equal, I give my vote to the Noes.

Mr. Graham: Very wisely, too.

Amendment thus negatived.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer has moved that the Bill be now read a second time. Is anyone else going to speak?

Mr. O'NEIL: I was waiting for you to complete the formalities. However—

The SPEAKER: Order! This situation has occurred right through this session. The Standing Orders indicate that a member shall rise in his place and address the Speaker. This did not occur, and I am warning members that if they do not follow the correct procedure the Bills will go through.

Points of Order

Mr. COURT: On a point of order, Sir, could you clarify this situation for us, because on one occasion you criticised me for rising before you got to your feet, and on this occasion you criticised us because we were not rising quickly enough. If we want to speak on a motion of this kind must we rise and address you?

The SPEAKER: A member must rise to be given the call. I did not put the question straightaway, but called for order and gave members time to rise. I will give a member the call if he is on his feet.

Mr. O'NEIL: Before proceeding with my remarks, I, too, would like clarification of the situation. As I heard you, Mr.

Speaker, you stated that the Treasurer had moved that the Bill be now read a second time; and then you stopped. As I understand the situation, the procedure should be that you state, "The question is that the Bill be now read a second time. Those in favour—" and so on.

The SPEAKER: I gave the honourable member time to rise.

Mr. O'NEIL: I would like clarification. The normal thing is for the Speaker to say, "The question is that the Bill be now read a second time. Those in favour—" and so on. You did not use those words and I waited for you to do so.

Mr. Davies: The Opposition does not deserve the leniency of the Speaker.

Mr. O'NEIL: I am addressing my remarks to you, Sir, and would like you to clarify the situation concerning what question you will put to the House.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: What new theory is this?

Mr. O'NEIL: I object to the interjections. I have asked you a question and that is all.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: On a point of order, is it the custom and has it ever been the custom when a debate is proceeding on the second reading of a Bill, for the Speaker to stand up after every speech to put the question?

Mr. Court: We are asking for clarification.

Mr. Graham: You are trying to waste time; that is all.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for East Melville has asked me a question. Several times during the session I could have put motions, but I did not want to stifle debate. I have given members an opportunity to rise and draw the attention of the Speaker to the fact that they want to speak. I did so on this occasion by not completing the motion outlined by the member for East Melville. However, I now give him the call.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville) [10.23 p.m.]: Thank you for your explanation, Sir.

It is traditional in the debate which ensues on this particular Bill for a person to traverse a very wide area. The Leader of the Opposition has adequately dealt with the subject matter of the Bill and an ample opportunity was afforded on the amendment for a discussion of some of the shortcomings of the present Government. The Treasurer made one remark which leads me to comment. He stated that had we remained in office we would have had no option but to introduce a Budget similar to the one introduced by him.

The **SPEAKER**: There is far too much audible talk in the Chamber.

Mr. O'NEIL: The Leader of the Opposition mentioned that certain difficulties are associated with separating the portfolios of Premier and Treasurer mainly because of a lack of liaison. Those on this side who for some time were members of Cabinet know the procedures adopted by Cabinet when a Budget is being prepared. By virtue of its policy the Government wants to undertake certain matters which have either been the subject of election promises or are in line with the policy of the political party for which that Government is endorsed.

When a Budget is prepared the Treasurer should inquire from the Under Treasurer—the senior officer in charge of the department—the situation in respect of the State's finances. The Government may wish to relieve taxation in certain areas or because of the economic situation it may have to apply certain taxes or it may determine that certain taxes will be reduced or abolished and others increased or introduced in order to put to the people a programme of development of the State in accordance with its policy.

Now this is where the problem of separating the Premiership from the Treasurership occurs. I do not know what the Treasurer presented to Cabinet in respect of his proposals for the Budget this year; but I do know that under normal circumstances he should call upon the Treasury to indicate the areas of taxation available to him, and to make recommendations concerning what will be required in each of those areas by way of reduction or increase of existing taxes, or the introduction of new taxes in order that he might introduce a Budget to meet the State's needs.

It is entirely the responsibility of Cabinet to reject, accept, or modify the recommendations of the Under Treasurer. If the position of Premier and leader of the State is separated from the position of Treasurer, how can the Premier be certain that all recommendations submitted by the Under Treasurer to his Treasurer are, in fact, before Cabinet for consideration? This is a matter of which I think the Premier should take a great deal of heed.

During the debate on the Supply Bill I suggested that the Premier would do well to reconsider some of the portfolio arrangements he has made—and I am not criticising him for this—because it is quite obvious a far better and more equitable arrangement of portfolios in the present Cabinet could be made. I mentioned that one member of the Cabinet is Minister for Prices Control and Minister for Consumer Protection, but he is not the Minister for Labour. In every other State of the Commonwealth matters relating to the

protection of the consumer fall within the province of the Minister for Labour and Industry, as he is called in most States.

The Department of Labour is equipped to handle this problem. Most of the legislation dealing with consumer protection is the responsibility of the Minister for Labour. During the previous debate to which I referred I enumerated these items and I will repeat them. They include textile labelling, weights and measures, factories and shops, trade description, and false advertising. With the exception of some laws which are under the jurisdiction of the Attorney-General, the laws relating to consumer protection have been the responsibility of the Minister for Labour.

The Department of Labour is already staffed to undertake this kind of operation. During the election, in common with the present Government, we promised to introduce a form of consumer protection. I suppose the form would have been slightly different, but the research in respect of what was occurring in all the other States, what they had done, and what they proposed to do, had already been carried out by officers of the Department of Labour.

Mr. Davies: We made use of it.

Mr. O'NEIL: I am very pleased to hear that. However, this does not alter the fact that consumer protection is part of the responsibility of the Minister for Labour.

Mr. Davies: In your opinion.

Mr. Taylor: The present Minister is doing a very good job.

Mr. O'NEIL: It is my opinion and it is also the opinion held in every other State.

Mr. Davies: We had to do some work with the Crown Law Department on it.

Mr. O'NEIL: The Crown Law Department is involved in all of it. I did mention that a considerable amount of work involved in consumer protection is the responsibility of the Attorney-General.

Mr. Davies: I am reminding you.

Mr. O'NEIL: I did mention it, but the Minister was asleep and did not hear me.

Mr. O'Connor: Have you health trouble?

Mr. O'NEIL: I, too, want to join with the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming back to the Chamber the previous Attorney-General. I very much regret that pressure of work has been responsible for his resignation from Cabinet.

All members on this side of the House recognise his ability, sincerity, and dedication to duty. In one way it is probably a pity this resignation had to occur at this time, because I am certain that had it occurred when the House was out of session the Premier would have had the opportunity to make the necessary adjustments in respect of the Cabinet which I believe should be made. The Premier has indicated he desires to make as little

change as possible, at least while the House is in session. This is understandable, but I hope once Parliament rises the Premier will take another look at the portfolios in the recess.

It is a difficult task, I imagine, to allocate portfolios so that all Ministers are equally burdened, because I have to admit that all are burdened. I would like to make a suggestion which may be helpful. I suggest that my successor, the Minister for Labour and Housing, should be given some relief. His is a difficult portfolio.

Mr. Taylor: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'NEIL: I am perhaps being somewhat facetious in saying that I notice in most other States Ministers for Labour and Industry are invariably given the Tourism portfolio as a consolation prize to enable them to have some relief every now and then.

I wish to talk briefly on a subject which is of concern to me, because I made an issue of it prior to the State elections. Once again, this relates to the promises made by the then Leader of the Opposition who is now the Premier.

Along with most of us, he was quite concerned at the heavy burden being placed on young people who wished to acquire a home. The present Premier indicated, of course, the interest rates were too high and that repayments were too high. He said that by a number of moves, one of which would include an amendment to the Building Societies Act or Housing Loan Guarantee Act I should think, he would reduce the interest rate being charged by building societies to borrowers. He mentioned a Government subsidy to assist people who were already borrowing, or would borrow in the future, and by various other means the Premier said that he would reduce the cost of home purchase by approximately \$5 per week.

Even before the election I pointed out the cost of this action. There were at that time some 28,000 home purchasers and the cost would be $28,000 \times \$5 \times 52$. On the last occasion I mentioned this I quickly estimated the cost to be \$15,000,000 a year. I had to correct that statement because the figure is somewhere around \$7,500,000 a year.

Prior to the election I tried to persuade the people this was a pie-in-the-sky proposition; in fact, it would cost the Government \$7,500,000 per year in some way or other; and even if the Government subsidised only half it would still cost \$3,750,000 per year. I said it was not practicable at all.

We have heard nothing more on this. By way of questions to the Premier I asked whether or not he would persuade the Rural and Industries Bank to reduce charges to borrowers in respect of home purchase by an amount which would help to meet the amount of \$5 per week. His answer was that the bank was running

according to normal business arrangements and quite satisfactorily. He did not propose to make any such suggestions.

The Premier was also critical of the fact that it was the custom of most lenders of housing finance to vary interest rates during the period of the loan. Prior to the election this action was bad and even shocking; namely, to suggest anyone should borrow money in year A at a certain rate of interest and in year A plus 22 be paying an increased interest rate.

I inquired of him whether he would persuade the Rural and Industries Bank—the State's own bank, the one that lives here, and the one which comes under his portfolio rather than under the Minister for Lands—to get away from the principle of adjusting interest rates during the currency of the loan. By way of answer to that question, the Premier indicated once again he did not intend to interfere with the operations of the bank.

We are left with a promise which cannot possibly be fulfilled in my view. We have heard nothing more of the promise that everyone buying a home will be saved an amount of \$5 every week from normal repayments. It was made quite public, at least by me—and admittedly it was my opinion, but based on advice I had received from those associated with housing loan finance—that this promise could not possibly be fulfilled. Yet, at the time the Premier said that it would be. I am certain he is now thoroughly convinced that it cannot be.

In respect of the operations of the State Housing Commission we heard, too, that the commission was being used as a taxing machine; that our Government was charging too much for rents, and using profits from rents in order to build houses. Answers given to me by way of questions indicate the commission lost \$600,000 in round figures on its rental account last year.

In fact, there was a case for increasing rents of State Housing Commission houses rather than reducing them. I recall that back in 1965 or 1966 when I became Minister for Housing we undertook a progressive programme of increasing rents. There was a time in the area of Kensington, which is very close to the city, where a three-bedroomed brick and tile house was being occupied by commission tenants who, in those days were paying 30s a week; in other words, \$3 a week was being paid in 1965. However, in the same street the average rent was running between \$7 and \$8. In fact other tenants in the same street were paying \$10 per week for Housing Commission accommodation.

It was patently necessary to endeavour to bring about some sense of reason in this exercise and, as a Government, we approved of an increase in commission rents in order to make the rents equal to what should be paid for accommodation of

that class. We qualified this by indicating that no rents would be increased by more than \$1 at intervals of six months in order to lessen the burden, because when the rents were reassessed it was found that the current charges were some \$3, \$5, \$6, and \$8 below what was being charged for rental of equivalent accommodation. It took some time for this matter to be resolved.

Due to the fact that there is no Commonwealth and State housing agreement it could well be that some reassessment, at least of charges being made by the commission, ought to be undertaken. I am certain such a reassessment will not produce a reduction in rent but, if anything, an increase. I cannot see that the Government in its present position can do anything other than that.

Mr. Taylor: You are guessing.

Mr. O'NEIL: I am guessing; that is all we can do on this side of the House. I am not sure whether the commission and the Minister are fully aware of the implications of the new financial arrangements with the Commonwealth. Quite frankly I am not certain whether the State is better or worse off. The decision of the Commonwealth not to proceed with a Commonwealth and State housing agreement left every Minister for Housing absolutely flabbergasted. The situation was that at a number of meetings of State Ministers and Commonwealth officers during the year preceding the termination of the previous agreement we discussed at length the bad aspects of the agreement which the States had entered into with the Commonwealth and we would have expected the Commonwealth to give some consideration to some of our requests. Among them was the request that service housing built by the earmarking of 5 per cent. of the State's money should become the total responsibility of the services. Under the new arrangement this is the case.

Mr. Taylor: That is so.

Mr. O'NEIL: We also would have liked to see a flat interest rate for the full period of the agreement in order that various adjustments in interest rates would not affect the financial operations of the commission or adversely affect the tenants.

There was to be a meeting of Ministers for Housing shortly after the change of Government, but this was cancelled, the reason being that the then Federal Minister for Housing (Dame Annabelle Rankin) had been appointed High Commissioner to New Zealand.

I understand there were problems and delays in respect of carrying on further conferences. This led me to suspect there was a nigger somewhere in the woodpile and I am absolutely certain in my own mind when the State Ministers met on the appointed occasion they were as

astounded as I was when the Commonwealth came down with this State housing finance method.

Mr. Taylor: They were certainly astounded.

Mr. O'NEIL: Meeting after meeting was attended by the Ministers and the officers and the officers on their own. However at no time was it mentioned that the Commonwealth proposed a new method. I suppose it must have been put forward at the instigation of the officers of the Commonwealth Treasury. I will be interested to see how the situation resolves itself as a result of this new arrangement.

I feel that the Budget as presented—I am referring to the Budget, not the other charges—was not as bad as people were led to believe. I often wonder whether the many tales of gloom and despair which were spread by the Premier and his Ministers regarding the very difficult situation and dire circumstances in which they found themselves and the necessity to increase revenue raising, was not all part of a great plot to soften the impact of this particular Budget.

Quite frankly, if one had listened and recorded all the things which were said, one would have expected a far harsher Budget. I was amused at these increases in respect of shipping charges. I have forgotten the name of the particular charge—conservancy dues. I thought to myself, "This must have come out of the bottom drawer." When the Treasurer moved his office this old taxing measure must have been found somewhere and somebody has said, "This is something we have not used for some time." Whether it has any impact on those who pay it I could not say—I have never heard of it before but no doubt it has been there for some time. Of course, it is the function of the Under Treasurer to place before his Treasurer all the areas in which there is a possibility of some further tax concession or tax raising.

A few moments ago the Premier read out a list of taxes which we had increased. The second one bowled me because he pointed out increases which had been made in entertainment tax; he had conveniently forgotten there had been no entertainment tax in this State for some considerable time.

The Premier also neglected to inquire in respect of land tax in the metropolitan area, and I am now speaking in round terms without any frills. This legislation means that only people who own land worth more than \$10,000 in capital value pay tax anyway. I carried out a survey in my own electorate when we were moving towards a reduction of land tax and I found there would have been about 95 per cent. of the people in East Melville who fell into the category of having their land tax removed completely.

It is of concern to everyone that other matters, as distinct from Budget measures, have increased the burden—and the increased S.E.C. charges are only one of them. I think it was during the Supply Bill debate the Minister for Electricity interjected and said, "We found a way to bring about a system of uniform charges." We were very interested, of course. He certainly brought about uniformity in charges—he increased the metropolitan figure to the country figure. They are uniform charges but they are all higher than they were before. Not only have they been made uniform, but there have been other increases as well.

At one stage the Premier made great play of the repeal of road maintenance tax and the introduction of another measure which, he says, is not related to that tax but which will increase the license fees of commercial vehicles. He was carrying out a promise that he would repeal road maintenance tax without increasing taxes. He made the point he would not raise as much money by the new license fees as that raised under road maintenance tax. Of course, this was breaking a promise that he would not increase taxes, but in his view it was all right because the money raised would be less. This is plainly misleading, to say the least.

The same sort of argument applied when the promise was made to supply free school books. I can recall a member of a service club in my area being approached by a widow who was concerned about the very high cost of school books for her children who were attending high school. She had asked this person whether the service club could offer her some financial assistance, even though she was loath to take it. However, when the elections were over and the new Government had been elected, she requested the member of the service club to refrain from approaching the club because the kind Mr. Tonkin had clearly indicated that school books would be free and her problems would be over. It was not until after this that we learnt there was a difference between pupils and students and that the then Opposition leader had promised free books for pupils and pupils were those attending primary schools. However, children attending high schools are students and there were no free books for students.

Mr. Hutchinson: Have the people been initiated into the difference?

Mr. O'NEIL: We have to learn new definitions. We had an abortive attempt to explain the difference between "substitution" and "replacement," when the Labor Party tried to carry out another election promise.

Mr. Graham: Nevertheless it was a very good start.

Mr. O'NEIL: If one had been honest and said, "We will start off with primary school students," the situation would not have arisen.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You know very well I said that.

Mr. O'NEIL: Before or after the elections?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Before the elections. I can show the honourable member the newspaper report.

Mr. O'NEIL: I will accept what the Premier says. The fact remains that a considerable number of ordinary people in the community were left with the impression that school books would be free or there would be subsidies for all school children. I am prepared to accept the Premier's statement that he said that publicly before the elections.

Mr. May: You said it was an abortive attempt of ours and the next minute you are accepting the Premier's statement.

Mr. O'NEIL: I am accepting the fact that the Premier has assured me he made the statement.

Mr. May: Yes, but that is very different from your first statement that we made an abortive attempt. You now say you accept the Premier's statement.

Mr. O'NEIL: I do not follow the logic of the Minister.

Mr. Graham: That is your lack of logic.

Mr. O'NEIL: That may be so. The fact remains the community was not absolutely aware of the situation which obtained following the election of the Government. The Treasurer, using some skill of his own, challenged us to name any election promise which the Government had failed to carry out. Of course, when I asked him to say those that had been carried out, it was a different question because in fact the Government can say, "We have still time to carry out our election promises." The Premier has indicated at certain times that the Government was not aware of the situation which existed when it took office. Therefore, he could not carry out his plans to the extent he would have liked. In any case he says, "No newly-elected Government has ever been expected to carry out all its election promises in the first year of its office." I suppose we will have to wait for some considerable time—that is, if the people are prepared to wait and to leave this Government in office—to find out whether or not the promises of the Government are likely to be carried out.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Mensaros.

House adjourned at 10.51 p.m.