

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 8 October 1980

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

*Decorum of the Chamber:
Statement by President*

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths): Honourable members, before we commence the business of the day I wish to draw your attention to chapter X of our Standing Orders. A few members are becoming lax in the observance of some of the provisions of those Standing Orders.

I should like to remind members that the reading of newspapers has always been and still is considered to be unparliamentary in this Chamber.

Another area of concern is the practice that is developing of members carrying on conversations at the back of the Chamber in such a manner that it is difficult for the Chair to hear the member who is properly addressing the House.

Finally, may I request that during divisions members should, where space allows it, be seated or at least stand in such a manner that the tellers are able clearly to see everyone on that side?

The Hon. R. T. Leeson: Why don't we hang up our photos and all stay away?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

BILLS (4): ASSENT

Message from the Administrator received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Stock (Brands and Movement) Amendment Bill.
2. Taxi-cars (Co-ordination and Control) Amendment Bill.
3. Slaughter of Calves Restriction Act Repeal Bill.
4. Stallions Act Repeal Bill.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

FISHERIES AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by the Hon. G. E. Masters (Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife), and read a first time.

BILLS (3): THIRD READING

1. Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Amendment Bill.
2. Public Service Amendment Bill.

Bills read a third time, on motions by the Hon. G. E. Masters (Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife), and passed.

3. Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited Agreements (Variation) Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Leader of the House), and passed.

RAILWAYS DISCONTINUANCE BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 2 October.

THE HON. N. F. MOORE (Lower North) [4.44 p.m.]: I must confess to a degree of disappointment that the situation has arisen in which this Bill had to come to the Parliament; but as members will be aware, if they recall the previous debates in this House on this subject, this was an inevitable decision for a variety of reasons. The Government had no alternative but to close the Meekatharra-Pindar railway.

The reasons it had to be closed are quite well known to members. First of all, the line itself was completely worn out. It was constructed of very lightweight rail—45-lb rail, as I understand it—on a surface which, in many places, was not suitable for the laying of a railway line. That is the main reason; and in regard to replacing the line, on the various studies that have been made and referred to by the Hon. Fred McKenzie, figures of something like \$10 million for a second hand railway line up to about \$30 million-plus were mentioned. However, the Westrail report suggested a cost of about \$23 million to build a new railway line to replace the Meekatharra-Pindar line.

One reason the line was not rebuilt was a consideration of the potential tonnages or potential freight in the foreseeable future. It was felt it would not be sufficient to make the construction of a new railway line economical. During previous debates on this subject, I raised the figure of something like 550 000 tonnes per annum as the amount of tonnage required to make rail the most economical way of carting the goods from the Murchison to the ports. When we look at the potential future tonnages, we find that

unfortunately they do not come anywhere near that figure although, as the Hon. Fred McKenzie pointed out, the Murchison area is undergoing an economic revival and the tonnages will certainly increase. However, they will not increase to the extent that a new railway line costing something like \$23 million would be able to be supported.

The rail line was closed some time ago, and no trains have used the line for about two years. When the line was first closed—in other words, when trains ceased using the rail line—we had a new situation in the Murchison in which an all-road system of transport was adopted. Bellways was given the franchise to cart goods to and from the Murchison towns. To the best of my knowledge, and from all the information I have received throughout the Murchison, the service being provided by Bellways is first class.

The service has several advantages over the old rail system in the sense that, firstly, it is quicker. Secondly, the goods are transported directly to the doors of the people who are having the goods transported. There is no double handling involved at the railway stations at either end. The services are more frequent.

One of the great benefits of the closure of the line is that the Government has adopted an attitude of upgrading the roads in the district. The roads in question are the Mullewa-Mt. Magnet road, which should be completed in the next year or so to a sealed stage; and the Great Northern Highway between Wubin and Meekatharra. The highway is being upgraded progressively, passing lanes are being constructed, and double lanes are being constructed on the curves and crests in order to facilitate safer passing.

When we look at the future of the Murchison, we have to consider future road development rather than the future rail developments in the short term. Members will be aware of previous debates relating to Yeelirrie. They will be aware that the companies involved in the Yeelirrie project have two options available to them for the transport of their goods once the project is under way. The first option is to go through Esperance, and to use Esperance as the in-coming and outgoing port. The second option is to use Geraldton. Assuming Esperance is used, we can expect that the road being built from Leonora to Leinster at the present time would be completed to Yeelirrie, and then possibly to Meekatharra, to create a Kalgoorlie-Pilbara road link.

On the one hand, as far as I am concerned, that is a good thing. Should the company decide to use Geraldton, a road would be built from Mt.

Magnet to Yeelirrie which, on the other hand, is also a good thing.

So the future for roads in the Murchison area looks rather rosy from the point of view of people living up there at the present time.

There is a clause in the Bill before the House which retains the existing rail reserve—that is, the Pindar to Meekatharra rail reserve—for a possible future railway line. I compliment the Government on keeping that option open by reserving land for that purpose.

For a long time there has been a great deal of talk about a railway line from the south-west to the Pilbara. Quite a number of options are available should the freight between those two parts of the State ever be sufficient to warrant the construction of a railway line. It is important when people think about where railway lines should go, that they should put railway lines where there are people rather than in other areas. We have people along the existing Meekatharra line and, bearing in mind the disadvantages of that particular route, it should be considered as one of the possible options for a future railway line for the Pilbara.

As Mr McKenzie has pointed out, Governments of whatever political colour, can be blamed for the deterioration which took place in the Murchison line; but as has been pointed out also, the uncertainty and the recession which took place in the Murchison area for many years meant that the line probably did not warrant a great deal of maintenance. So we came to the stage where the line was worn out and had to be closed.

However, with the improved economic circumstances in the Murchison, together with the huge development taking place in the Pilbara, it should not be too long before the question of a south-west to Pilbara line is considered. I shall certainly be putting forward my two bob's worth for such a line to go through the Murchison region in order to assist its economic development and to take advantage of its great potential.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [4.53 p.m.]: I thank members for their support of this legislation. Perhaps that means it is not necessary for me to make a lengthy statement.

The discussion on this Bill has brought back memories to me, because I was the Minister for Transport responsible for the closure of the Meekatharra line.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You will be ever remembered for it, too!

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: The Leader of the Opposition is probably correct.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You have not made your mark anywhere else, so they will remember you for it! I am being facetious.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: If I am remembered for this, I will be very happy, because it was an exceedingly successful move. On reflection one wonders what all the fuss was about at the time.

I recall when the Premier and Ministers went to Meekatharra and attended meetings they were embarrassed, because they had to dodge questions as to whether or not it was proposed to close the railway line. No-one was game enough to give an answer one way or the other. I was the first Minister to go to the town and tell the people the railway line was to be closed. I expected all sorts of attacks. The fiery shire president was in the chair when I made that disclosure and he said, "Now you have got that off your chest, let us get down to it."

We had to negotiate an agreement in regard to the closure of the line, so that the local people in the area would not be disadvantaged as far as their transport needs were concerned.

The matter was referred to in a report to Parliament by the Director General of Transport. In relation to the closure of the Meekatharra line there was a provision that the Government should work out with local authorities a basis on which the average overall cost of freight by road under the new system was equivalent to that by rail.

That request appeared to be satisfactory when it was written down; but, of course, we did not do that. In fact, the freight was considerably less than expected and it would have been very embarrassing to carry out such a policy.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: In some areas.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Overall the freight was considerably less. I will not say the price of every single item of freight carried by road did not exceed that carried by rail in any areas; but overall it was considerably less. Refrigerated traffic was an exception and there were a few other instances which did not conform with the overall pattern.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Do not forget the case of apples!

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: There was a case of apples from Bridgetown and also a dog which was consigned as a parcel and there were a few cases in which exceptions occurred.

Mr Moore summed up the overall situation and supported his electorate. He would be most

embarrassed if we decided tomorrow to reinstate the railway line, because he would then have to return to his electors and tell them there would be a freight increase, because the railway line was being reinstated. Perhaps he will beg us to set the road freight prices at the rail freight prices!

It is clear that small quantities only are carted up to that area and road transport is the best method by which to provide a regular service for small quantities of material. The exercise has proved that.

Mr McKenzie asked some questions with regard to two reports which were quoted; from, but not sighted. One of the reports was "Transport in the Murchison" which was an evaluation of the alternatives by which the Murchison area could be served. The other report was "Transport in the Murchison" and related to the effect on local communities.

Those two reports were prepared for Westrail and contained forecasts of the traffic which would be provided by the various mineral leases in the area. They contained propositions of expectations from Golden Grove and other mineral deposits. They were not in a suitable form to release to the public, because of the possible effect they could have on shareholders.

Those two reports were incorporated in one report which was released under the heading "Transport in the Murchison—an Assessment of the Alternative Means of Meeting the Transport Requirements". That report was made available to the public. It was much the same as the other two reports, but the confidential material had been removed.

Mr McKenzie raised also the matter of transferring capital charges. He said that was a very good part of the Bill. This is one of the reasons we close railway lines. Mr Moore alluded to the same matter and said it was unfortunate the Bill had to come to the House. In fact, it is very fortunate the Bill had to come to the House and everyone who uses rail transport would be happy to see it come here for the simple reason that, if it did not, the rest of the railway system would have to carry the money tied up in that line. In other words, if the Murchison line owes the railway system \$2 million, that sum is written off and Treasury accepts the loss on that particular line. Therefore, the debts incurred by the Murchison line would not be met by the rest of the railway system. In theory, the rest of the users of rail transport would not have to pay the interest and depreciation incurred by the Murchison line.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: What about the accumulated losses over a long period?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I am only speaking off the cuff on this matter, but there would probably be no accumulated losses because they are written off every year through Consolidated Revenue.

The debt is written off through Consolidated Revenue every year and it does not have to be paid back.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: But you still have an interest charge on the deposit.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I believe I am right in saying that is not the case, but I am speaking off the cuff.

I shall be visiting Meekatharra on Friday. I return there regularly and in fact I feel I have almost become a "friend of the town". Having successfully achieved the closure of the railway line I am still accepted in the town and it appears all the fears which were felt genuinely at the time have now been put to rest.

I thank members for their support of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands), and passed.

METROPOLITAN (PERTH) PASSENGER TRANSPORT TRUST AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 1 October.

THE HON. F. E. MCKENZIE (East Metropolitan) [5.03]: We are opposed to this particular measure, the main purpose of which is to provide the format for the issuing of infringement notices and on-the-spot fines.

We oppose the Bill mainly on the grounds that it will introduce validating machines which proposal, in our opinion, is not justified in terms of cost and in terms of the provision of additional staff necessary to police infringements which will occur as a result of the change in the system of issuing tickets.

People currently employed at the ticket barriers in Perth and Midland will be replaced because there will be no further need to check tickets at the entrances to the stations. In the main, people employed in that category have suffered injuries in the course of their work with Westrail. Ticket collecting is one area in which they can be employed if they are unable to return to their former occupations.

Members would be aware that people employed by the railways are in an accident-prone industry. The railways are part of our transport industry, and people employed in the railways are susceptible to injury from shunting operations. Quite often when an employee sustains an injury in that area he is unable to return to his former occupation. Railway employees can be seen working at the ticket barriers at various stations, and many of them have limbs missing. They have been victims of railway shunting accidents.

Whilst I do not suggest that the railways should be a social security area by providing jobs for anybody, I believe that the ticket-collecting barriers are an area which provides employment opportunities for people genuinely injured in the course of their work.

Although it has been said that those people presently employed will be relocated in areas suitable to them, there will be no provision for this type of work in the future. Whenever these types of jobs disappear it becomes increasingly difficult to re-employ people injured as a result of accidents. These types of jobs are drying up. The number of jobs available some 20 years ago for people injured in accidents was extensive, but today that avenue has been narrowed down to half a dozen categories. The number of opportunities has already shrunk. Employment opportunities for people injured during their employment in the railways will be limited severely as a result of the introduction of ticket-validating machines.

I have spoken to the Secretary of the Australian Railways Union and the former Secretary of the Metropolitan Transport Trust union, and they both agree there is no justification for the introduction of validating machines into the transport industry. The amount of money which will be saved does not justify the introduction of the machines.

The Bill will also provide that tickets will be sold by agencies. This previously has been the exclusive province of the Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust. It has always sold the commodity it has been marketing. However, the

selling of tickets will be handled by agents who will receive a commission.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You are referring to the sale of tickets?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I assume that is what is intended. In addition to replacing people in the transport industry, there will be the added cost of having to pay agents for selling tickets. Of course, the authority will also retain the right to sell tickets.

The Minister did not mention the number of inspectorial staff which will be engaged, but in the main they are higher-paid employees than those who will be replaced by the machines.

The introduction of the machines has not been justified to the Opposition. For that reason we oppose the Bill. As I have said, the measure will provide for the issuing of infringement notices and on-the-spot fines. With that provision goes the necessity to employ inspectorial staff in order to police the provisions of the Bill. On those grounds, we oppose the measure.

THE HON. P. H. WELLS (North Metropolitan) [5.11 p.m.]: I support the Bill. The ticket machines we presently have in existence are inadequate. I first observed the present machines, which dial out a ticket, when I came to this State and at that time I thought they were backward. I have spoken to the General Manager of the MTT and I have ascertained that the machines which it is proposed will be used have already been used on the Continent and in Great Britain for the last 20 years, and they have proved quite successful.

I can agree with the remarks of the previous speaker regarding jobs for people injured in their employment. I am reminded of a report I read on the cause of unemployment, in which there was reference to those people who used to operate our lifts. Lifts were always operated by people who had lost a leg or an arm. The system was introduced in America, and found its way into Australia. However, someone raised the matter of equal pay for equal work. The unions took up the case, so the stores installed automatic lifts because they were cheaper to operate, and the people who previously operated the lifts lost their jobs and also lost some dignity.

I have often suggested that the unions and the Government should give thought to the dignity of those people who want to earn their own living, even though they are incapacitated. Of course, that is no reason that the MTT should not progress.

I understand that none of those people presently employed in the processing of tickets will lose their jobs. Certainly, the ticket operation

will be improved. I understand the new ticket-issuing machines are very portable. At present, while one person pays his fare those in the queue wait behind him, and it takes seven to eight seconds per person to issue tickets.

Because our buses are the same as those used on the Continent, two people will be able to move onto the bus at the same time. While one person is paying a cash fare, another person who has bought a book of tickets will have his ticket cancelled by the machine at the same time. The ticket-cancelling machines will be situated just behind the bus driver.

This new approach will improve the turnaround of the buses. It will be possible for the MTT to provide a better service within its structure. Any improvement that leads towards the provision of a better service should be supported. Under the present system it takes seven to eight seconds to process each passenger, and I am told that under the new system it will take 1.2 seconds per passenger. That may sound to be a small period of time, but when multiplied by the number of people who travel on our buses it is quite sizeable. It is desirable to see that type of improvement.

It was mentioned that the present periodical ticket will be phased out eventually. The new proposal means that the ticket now to be issued will have a fairly long valid period—in fact, it will be valid right up to a date which is just after a new fare rise. So people will not lose their entitlement to travel with these tickets as they do with the 28-day periodical ticket if they do not travel during the required time.

The proposal under this measure is that a person will be able to buy a book of 10 or 12 tickets at a discounted price. I understand that the discount will amount to one or two free trips. In other words, if there is a 12-month period between fare rises, the book of tickets will be good for 12 months plus a short period. As I understand it, the electronic machine will recognise the tickets for a short period after a fare rise. It may be six months or even two years before there is a fare rise.

Certainly the new system will benefit the bus drivers who must at present see every person coming into the bus. I was reminded of a particular dispute in this State where the drivers were pushing, through the union, for more ticket collectors to relieve drivers of some of their collection duties. So I believe the drivers will welcome this new approach, and I believe the unions directly affected have indicated to the management that they are in favour of the machines.

It has been said that more employees will be necessary to supervise the machines. Some employees will be transferred from other sections, but some of the present inspectors will undertake this task as well. I am sure other members have noticed inspectors on the side of the road, and frequently they double up on the work as inspectors on the buses. So we will simply increase the number of inspectors already operating.

If the information I have is correct, the rail section is already undermanned as far as inspectors are concerned. Part of the upgrading of this section is brought about in this new approach and this improved system. I must compliment the management on moving forward.

Recently I have spoken to people involved in transport in the other States of Australia, excluding the Northern Territory and Tasmania. To some degree these people are jealous of our advancement in this area. In fact, some of the other States are seeking to incorporate similar methods.

Our fare system lends itself to the use of these machines. Other improvements are perhaps still at the idea stage at the moment, but I gather that eventually to take the fares we will have a security box similar to that used in Europe. I just cannot remember the name of this box.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: It is called a coin vault box.

The Hon. P. H. WELLS: Hopefully travellers will be taught to tender the correct fare. I believe that this coin vault box has glass around it so that the person tendering the fare and the inspector on the bus can see that the correct amount has been tendered. The driver then pulls a lever, and the money drops into the security box. These boxes will protect the bus drivers. With the advent of drive-in chemists and banks, we have seen an increase in the crime rate. Even fast food outlets have been attacked for ready cash. The drive-in chemists are particularly vulnerable. As the security of these places is improved, it could well happen that the bus drivers will be next on the list. So it would be a good idea to consider the implementation of these security boxes within the next few years. Certainly the board is moving in the direction of providing more protection to the bus drivers.

Our fare system lends itself to the tendering of the correct fare. Although the board does not intend to install the security boxes overnight, certainly the idea is being considered. Perhaps there will be a transitional period and the setting up of some system where the bus travellers can obtain change.

The residents of Perth have learned to take along the correct amount of money when they wish to park their cars in parking lots or in the streets of Perth. In the same way they can be taught to tender the right amount for a bus fare. By comparison with most of the mainland States, our fare system would adapt easily to this change. Our cheapest fare is 30c, and the fare for the longest distance in the metropolitan area is \$1.40. It would be fair to say that 80 per cent of the people using the bus pay a fare of between 30c and 55c. Our fare structure provides also for concessions for pensioners. The 35c fare for all-day travel by pensioners was very well received. A pensioner pays 20c for a one-section journey, but for 35c he can travel all day on the buses. Perhaps many pensioners are not aware of the reciprocal agreement we have with other States. The pensioners' TCI card entitles them to concessional travel in all the other States except for the Brisbane City Council buses in the State of Queensland. I gather that we will have to work on the Brisbane City Council to bring that city into line with our own system.

One point raised about this machine is the growing tendency to vandalism. There is less chance of vandalism on the buses because of the greater supervision. I would like to refer to vandalism on the buses generally rather than vandalism to the machines.

Approximately a month or six weeks ago I travelled home to Balga by bus via the Mirrabooka centre. I broke my journey at Mirrabooka and then took another bus to Balga. On arrival at the Mirrabooka bus station the bus driver ordered five young lads off the bus for misbehaving. These boys were about 12 to 14 years of age. I heard the inspector at Mirrabooka say to the driver that he had better look out for the rocks. I queried his statement with him, and he said that he had in the office a .22 shell and some pellets that had been extracted from buses. Sure enough, we had just turned the corner from the bus station and I heard a hefty clunk on the side of the bus—obviously the young people who had been put off the bus had thrown a rock at it. From time to time the drivers have to deal with these unruly elements.

Drivers should not have to deal with such problems. Now that the buses are equipped with radios, the bus drivers should be able to call the police for assistance. I cannot understand why the police are not called in more often. Certainly if my children were misbehaving in this way, I would want to know about it so I could take the appropriate action.

When buses are hired out to schools, again there is a possibility of vandalism. From time to time we have seen reports in the Press of instances of vandalism when buses are hired to schools. I am told that the cancelling machines are fairly small, and so I hope they can be removed when the buses are hired out.

Members will be aware that recently the MTT has increased the price of bus hiring. I carried out a survey of the cost of hiring buses in other States, and we must take into account the fact that since the last increase the MTT has faced a rise in the price of fuel of around 146 per cent, plus extremely high increases in the cost of labour. So members will see the increase to schools was a very modest one. The Education Department subsidises bus hire by 13c a kilometre. The total cost is 53c a kilometre, so the cost to the schools is 40c a kilometre. The minimum charge for a bus is \$25 to \$45, depending on whether it is hired out on a week day, at weekends, or on a public holiday. The MTT provides a door-to-door service to the schools, and this provides the school with added security. In other States the schools must pay the going rate charged to the rest of the public. So I believe the MTT is providing a worth-while service. However, the machines should be portable so they can be removed when not needed.

I understand cancelling machines will be installed at the Perth bus station. I can never understand why the toilets at this bus station are closed after 6.00 p.m. This is a disgrace. The people of Perth who find themselves in need of a toilet after 6.00 p.m. have to race behind a tree. If members do not believe that happens, they should make an inspection of these trees. It is disgraceful that these toilets are closed just because of the risk of vandalism. Surely some supervision could be provided.

It was a backward step to close these toilets. Certainly such services should be provided in the interests of the people. If necessary the inspectors should get rid of any people who are causing a nuisance around this area. It is no excuse to say that people who need to use the toilets can ask for a key. This is no help to the mother of a child who suddenly screams that she wants to go to the toilet. The mother has no time to go and get a key. Certainly it is not right that women should have to race to the nearest hotel—indeed, it is not up to the hotels to provide toilet facilities in the metropolitan area. When I last visited Melbourne, I noticed the provision of more toilet facilities. However, in Perth we are closing down more and more toilets.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Maybe that is something the Government should provide.

The Hon. P. H. WELLS: I believe the MTT should look after its patrons; after all, we are talking about a bus station. In other city areas generally the Perth City Council has accepted the responsibility for toilets, but the only other toilets in this general area are situated near the railway station. Very few conveniences are provided in the city. Other toilets are right across town, in the Supreme Court gardens. This is one area in which the MTT, the Perth City Council, and the Government have a responsibility; they must ensure a city the size of Perth has reasonable public facilities.

I understand the union has come out in support of these machines because they will relieve the drivers of a great deal of ticket-issuing work and allow them greater time to ensure their vehicles are under control. I hope we will avoid those occasions when drivers take off suddenly, before old people are seated in the bus. I do not suggest this happens on many occasions, but it does happen. I am concerned that the introduction of the ticket-cancelling machine will lead to an increase in this sort of inconsiderate driving.

At present, a person getting onto a bus must physically stop while the person in front of him is paying his fare. Most drivers wait for a moment to ensure that people are seated. It is all right for people like myself. However, there are those who are not so steady on their feet and, very often, it seems that they are the people who principally use buses. There may well be a case for a public relations exercise to be carried out in this area.

Finally, I refer to the possible introduction of mini-buses. The argument put forward by people in the administration of the MTT seems to be that anything a mini-bus can do, a large bus can do better. However, I believe a need exists for such a service in between and across routes. Very often, if a person wants to travel from one suburb to another, he must first travel to Perth, and then to his destination. Very often, a relatively short trip can take two hours. More particularly on weekends and shopping days, there exists an opportunity to create services which will enable people to travel from suburb to suburb or from shopping centre to shopping centre without the need first to travel to Perth.

I hope the MTT will examine this suggestion and does not simply seek to service the direct routes in and out of the city. Mini-buses could be used most effectively in the situations I have mentioned, and would greatly reduce the time taken to travel these relatively short distances.

In the main, it would seem to me the MTT has done a great deal of research into this proposal. It has looked at what is going on elsewhere. The MTT appears to be concerned about improving the conditions of the people it employs, because these machines will relieve bus drivers of a great deal of their present ticket-issuing functions, thus enabling them to concentrate on the job of driving. We are told it will provide a better turnaround of buses and, in the long run, will improve the system.

I support the Bill.

THE HON. W. M. PIESSE (Lower Central) [5.33 p.m.]: I support the Bill, but for only one reason; namely, that it is well known our public transport system has a great deal of difficulty in trying to make its income cover its expenditure, and if there are some people in our State who are too miserable to pay the very nominal charge to travel on our public transport system, they deserve to be fined, even to the maximum penalty of \$20.

Apart from that, I have very great reservations about the ability of this magnificent new invention to improve the existing service. The present system is working satisfactorily. The Minister pointed out in his second reading speech that very few people presently attempt to avoid paying their fares. But what are we going to do? We are going to introduce a system which will make it easier for people to avoid paying their fares and in fact will tempt them to do so. This is a retrograde step.

I appreciated the remarks of Mr Wells. Two years ago I, too, was in Great Britain. I did not see any validating machines being used on buses in that country. However, I did see them used on the trains on the underground, which is a very different matter from the use of such machines on buses. When people enter a railway station, they must pass through a turnstile, and it does not really matter whether their tickets are punched personally by a railway employee, or are validated or cancelled by a machine. Heaven forbid that we should resort to passing through turnstiles to get on buses. I have very real reservations as to whether these machines will be of benefit to the public.

Another matter which concerns me greatly is that we have been led to believe that the Perth public transport system is based principally on the use of buses in preference to trains because buses can change their routes as the population changes, and can be scheduled so as to pick up people closer to their departure points, and set them down nearer to their destinations.

That is all very well, but with each change of bus people could be required to pay another fare. Perhaps the Government proposes to provide for one fare for the entire metropolitan area. I noted the Minister's remarks during his second reading speech relating to zoning and the transfer of a current ticket from one vehicle to another within the same zone. It appears that every time a person transfers from one mode of transport to another, or from one vehicle to another, he will be required to pop his ticket into the machine to have it validated. I am a little wary that perhaps we are going to be hoodwinked into accepting something which is more expensive than the current system.

The effect of changing routes is that a great many people will not know what their fares are going to be, and they will not have purchased their tickets before boarding the bus. Therefore, undoubtedly the bus driver will not be relieved of all ticket-issuing operations.

I understand from the Minister's second reading speech that the only real saving in time will be in regard to the 28-day periodical ticket, which needs to be perused by the driver only to check the date, which takes only a few seconds. I do not see that the validating machines will result in a great deal of time saving when it comes to the 28-day ticket.

However, if the interim or single-journey tickets still must be purchased, or if single-journey tickets must be inserted into the validating machines, changes must be made because there is no way anyone will be able to push a flimsy ticket into a machine to have it validated. Perhaps the Minister could inform me whether the MTT intends to introduce a stiff, cardboard ticket—at extra cost—to overcome this problem.

It is also inevitable that extra staff will need to be employed to ensure that people are paying their fares. We are going to make it easier for people to avoid paying their fares, so we must employ more inspectors to cover this area.

I agree with Mr Wells' suggestion that we should examine the possibility of employing more staff to cope with vandalism in toilets at MTT bus stations and railway stations. Perhaps we should look at spending money there, rather than employing more staff to police fare-avoidance. All this will add to the cost of the present system.

In regard to carrying the right change, I noted in the United Kingdom there were machines which enabled people to change their money. If we are to be required to tender the exact change, we will find ourselves heavily weighted down with small coins in our purses or pockets, and it will

become an almighty nuisance. However, perhaps people will put up with it; that remains to be seen.

I support the Bill, because if people are too lousy to pay, they must be fined.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [5.40 p.m.]: I thank members for their support of the Bill and more particularly for their observations. We have had an interesting debate on this subject. I am sure the points made by the various speakers will be taken into consideration by the MTT when it is effecting this changeover.

This changeover has been negotiated over a long period. I must admit I was somewhat concerned that the MTT knew it had a requirement to change over to more modern equipment but that the changeover could not be implemented for a long time. I recall when I was Minister for Transport being told of the plans for the changeover. At last we have reached the stage where the machines can be introduced.

The Hon. P. H. Wells: It will take another 12 months from this point before they are introduced.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That is probably correct. Perhaps it is a fair thing that we in Australia do negotiate these matters with unions before we endeavour to implement them.

The MTT has been very concerned that the changeover be effected as smoothly as possible. One of George Shea's real specialties was that, despite the fact that about 600 people are employed by the MTT, he seemed to know them all personally. They held regular dinners which were attended even by the Minister and they all worked towards promoting a sense of pride amongst the drivers and staff of the MTT, which I do not believe exists in any other Government service.

Various matters have been raised by members. The future of the handicapped people working at the Perth Railway Station and at other stations was raised. I believe Mr Wells accounted for that problem, in that perhaps we could look towards providing some form of compensation, or seeking other avenues of employment for them.

However, it remains somewhat anomalous that these people, having suffered some sort of accident which has left them handicapped, and having experienced great difficulty in finding employment, are then paid double time for their work on Saturdays and Sundays. It seems to me to be rather odd that on the one hand, we find it difficult to get them a job while, on the other hand, we pay them very high award penalty rates.

The Hon. P. H. Wells: If they could not find a job, probably they would still be receiving workers' compensation.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That is probably true. However, it is rather ironical that these people who experience difficulty in finding employment then are paid double time for the work they do on weekends.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: What is wrong with that? All people who work on Saturday afternoons and Sundays are paid double time. Why should these people be penalised because they are handicapped?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I question whether we should pay them double time on weekends.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The late Judge Beeby, when first adjudicating on this matter, said that he did not know whether he should charge them for working on Sundays, or pay them threepence an hour. His belief was that people should not work on Sundays.

The Hon. P. H. Wells: Keep the Sabbath.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is right; that was the point he made.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: This matter has been raised only in connection with the railways; we have heard nothing in relation to the MTT, which highlights that this is a relatively minor matter which can be resolved.

It has been claimed that if tickets are sold through private agencies, money will be lost to the Government by way of discounts and commissions. I believe it is rather good to see an intermingling of Government and private enterprise.

The Hon. P. H. Wells: They will probably sell them cheaper.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That might be the case. At the moment, we have a cut-off point where only Government agencies deal with Government matters. The same argument has been put forward about newsagents selling stamps. At the moment, only post offices or their agencies are allowed to sell stamps. They cannot be purchased at a newsagent, which sells people the envelopes and the writing pads. I think we are getting away from that sort of situation, which is a good thing.

Mr Wells pointed out the savings in time and money and how this changeover has been costed. He did not mention, and nor did the Minister to any degree, the fact that it is the passengers' time that counts. They will pay for these machines by saving the time of the employees—the bus drivers

and the inspectors. The passengers will save 10 minutes on every trip, and their time is very valuable.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Where are we getting when we get there quicker?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I realise I should not be taken aside by interjections, but we did speed up the buses that came down the Mitchell Freeway by providing them with bus lanes and on-and-off ramps. The buses had to compete with private motorcars and the bus lanes, etc., resulted in people being able to catch buses and get to their destinations more quickly than when they used their motorcars. Perhaps it means that Mr Dans can spend an extra 10 minutes in bed each morning.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: But where are we getting with all this speed?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Times call for speed. People get jittery when the buses are not moving. I believe that by introducing these machines we will encourage people to use public transport, and I think that is an important consideration.

The point has been made that these machines make the handling of cash on buses a lot safer. Unfortunately, we are getting into very difficult times where anyone who has to handle cash, particularly after dark, is at risk.

I have seen these machines in operation in America. Their buses have these coin vaults. The operation becomes very quick, even when there is odd change involved such as an amount of 37c. The passenger drops the money into the machine and it falls in such a manner that the conductor can quickly count it and press whatever he has to to send it on its way to the coin vault. The operators become very efficient with the computations of coins involved. Members of the public get used to the arrangement and the machines are certainly successful in America where they have made life a lot safer for the driver who has to handle money after dark. I am sure the machines will be of great benefit to the employees of the MTT and the railways who have the responsibility of handling money.

The Hon. Win Piesse asked a question about the format of the ticket which has been validated and whether it will be an awkward piece of paper as at present. I am unable to give her a sample, but I feel sure the problem will be handled satisfactorily, as it works well on the railways in Europe and other places. It is interesting that we are putting together the best of two worlds and I am confident the organisations concerned will be able to amalgamate the two systems successfully.

They have done a lot of research on what is done overseas.

I will not go into the inconvenience caused by the locking of public toilets, but I will pass the matter on to the Minister for consideration. The subject has been debated before and I do have sympathy for those who are concerned.

The matter of mini-buses has been well and truly considered. Perhaps with the escalating cost of fuel their use could be further examined; but they have been considered very closely in the past.

Strange as it may seem, the cost of fuel is not the most expensive item when running buses. The cost of labour is the largest component.

The Hon. P. H. Wells: It went up 146 per cent.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Fuel is a remarkably small item in the running of a bus. One could argue the matter with respect to conservation of fuel. Perhaps members do not realise—although the matter was publicised the other day—that over the years the MTT has been progressively buying buses which have provision for a changeover to gas. When we have the North-West Shelf gas available we will be able to convert the buses to the use of gas, although I am not saying we should be wasting energy. However, this matter has been taken into account.

I think the use of taxis would be far better than the use of mini-buses. That is a step we might consider taking during the off period and on weekends. Instead of mini-buses we could have taxis carrying four or five people. It is frightening to see the very few people who catch buses during the off times on Saturday and Sunday. The records show that many bus routes have only one or two passengers during this period.

The Hon. P. H. Wells: Perhaps we should have private mini-buses.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What about parlour cars? There were two sizes.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Other legislation which we will be discussing deals with car pooling. I am sure some arrangement will be arrived at for those bus routes which are catering for very few passengers. This entire matter would become subject to negotiation with the bus and railway unions. I do not think they would like taxis to carry out the services their members presently offer.

The Hon. W. M. Piesse: What happens about getting from one bus to another?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I do not believe there is any trouble in that regard. Previously there was a standard charge for all trips even for people who were going just a short

distance. When it was thought that this was too expensive for such trips the MTT allowed passengers to come back within a certain time using the same ticket in an endeavour to give people more benefit from that standard charge. I think with the use of these cards the MTT could vary the amount charged per trip far more easily.

The Hon. P. H. Wells: Surely there will be a date and time shown, so all people will have to do is to show their card.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I do not think it requires the Parliament to work out these very fine details.

Another matter raised was the bus routes which circumnavigate the city, and it is for this purpose that we have established various bus centres in our shopping complexes and elsewhere. They are changeover places where passengers can get off one bus and wait for another which travels in a circle around the city rather than go into the city. This system is proving to be quite successful.

I thank members for their support of this Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

MAIN ROADS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 1 October.

THE HON. F. E. McKENZIE (East Metropolitan) [5.56 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this Bill, the significant feature of which has been outlined by the Minister in his second reading speech and deals with a change to a five-year period rather than the old scheme which provided for a triennium. I need not make any great amount of comment on this matter.

Any remarks I would make would relate to the complaints that have been levelled against the Federal Government, a matter mentioned in the Minister's second reading speech. We have had five years of this Federal Government and at long last the State Government is starting to complain about federalism. Federalism is not giving this State that to which it is duly entitled.

In the Minister's second reading speech he refreshingly informed the House of that fact, and it is high time the Government started to bellyache about the deal this State is getting from Canberra. The situation has been absolutely

disgraceful and I am not referring only to road funds, but to many other areas. God help us if we are faced with another three years of this so-called federalism under the Fraser Government!

It gives me great delight to quote the following passage from the Minister's speech—

Members will be aware that Western Australia will receive an increase of 11.15 per cent in its Commonwealth road grants in 1980-81. The State Government is most unhappy at this increase which will barely offset the expected rate of inflation in road construction costs.

I do not want to labour the point and quote all that the Minister said, but I am delighted with this refreshing change in attitude. It is a great pity it has come so late and so close to the forthcoming elections.

The Hon. P. H. Wells: The Premier has always put the view of the State strongly.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: That is a matter of opinion and I do not believe that is the case. The Premier has certainly made a noise, but little has been done. The Opposition supports the Bill.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [6.00 p.m.]: I thank members of the Opposition for their support of the Bill. I know they would like me to make this matter of road funds a political issue, but I will not follow up the matter of the Federal Government policy.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: We would love to.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Once again the Minister has shown his honesty by placing the matter of Federal Government funding in his second reading speech. He has repeatedly gone on record as saying that Western Australia needs more money for roads, as I did as Minister before him. We will continue to pursue this matter.

Perhaps Western Australia is rather peculiar in that it wants a greater percentage of its tax funds returned for roads. Roads are very vital to this large State and we have been consistent in our beliefs by having this written into the second reading speech—regardless of the fact that it is a Federal election issue.

Sitting suspended from 6.01 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Before the tea suspension I was saying it had been my privilege to negotiate the previous Act with the Country Shire Councils' Association, the Town Councils' Association, and other organisations. At that time there was an amendment to the schedule and a change in the way in which the amount of money to be allocated to each shire

was determined. It worked out very well. Having reached agreement with the executives of the Country Shire Councils' Association and its counterparts, the various shires have stuck to the agreement, and it is a pleasure to see it coming before the Parliament in the same form in this legislation. The way members have accepted it is indicative of its acceptance by local government.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands), and passed.

AGRICULTURE AND RELATED RESOURCES PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [7.35 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I gave an assurance to the Opposition that I would answer a particular question in the third reading. The Hon. J. M. Brown asked about the gazetting of a rate.

Section 60(3) of the Act states that in respect of the financial years commencing 1 July 1976 and 1 July 1977 the rate would be 3c, and in respect of the financial year commencing 1 July 1978 and each financial year thereafter the rate would be 4.5c. The rate was gazetted at 3c on 23 May 1980 and the charges have been applied at that rate. The legislation follows that announcement.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

RURAL RECONSTRUCTION AND RURAL ADJUSTMENT SCHEMES AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 17 September.

THE HON. J. M. BROWN (South-East) [7.37 p.m.]: This is the fourth ratification of a separate agreement between the Commonwealth and the States under the Rural Adjustment

Scheme. In all, there are seven modifications to the Act to allow further flexibility. The Opposition realises that in the main this is a machinery Bill, and we will be offering it the support it deserves.

The first amendment relates to advance application for financial support by way of supplementary grants, and it is self-explanatory. The second amendment deals with portability of the allocation of funds which would permit transfer of unexpended funds from one State to another. It is unlikely to happen, but it could happen, and that flexibility is available. The third amendment allows the expenditure of an allocation ahead of time; in other words, if a State wants an advance of funds because of a particular problem, the Commonwealth can make a contribution to the State ahead of time, which would come from the next year's allocation.

In the fourth amendment eligibility has been modified so that it is necessary for a farmer to demonstrate his viability. In the fifth amendment household support has been increased from \$2 000 to \$5 000, and the period has been increased from two years to three years. In the sixth amendment the Apicultural Society becomes entitled to support. Beekeeping is a viable and valuable industry about which we do not hear a great deal, but it makes a significant contribution. In the seventh amendment the Northern Territory has been included for grants under the scheme.

On looking at the Bill, I am concerned about the division which is occurring between the farmers and the rest of the rural community. It is very noticeable. There has been a certain amount of provocation, particularly in the meat industry; and in rural reconstruction sheep numbers in excess of 30 million are of great value to the rural community, whether one be a pastoralist or a producer in the agricultural regions.

I am not endeavouring to draw any crabs, but I want to say that the Meat Industry Employees' Union has been singled out in the State for what could be considered to be irresponsible action. Following my investigations and consultations, I want to say something in defence of the union. I think its contribution to rural pursuits is very real, and it is probably making one of the greatest contributions towards decentralisation in Australia.

I spoke to the Secretary of the Meat Industry Employees' Union (Mr Ken Watson-Bates) concerning what takes place between the union and the public, and he was very pleased that I should take the trouble to talk to him. I told him I

would mention the matter during the second reading of this Bill.

Some 85 000 people are employed in the meat industry. Great concern was expressed within the community about the stoppages in recent weeks, and the general assistant secretary (Mr Jack O'Toole) said at a Press conference that the union was concerned about the effect on the industry of live sheep exports and the fact that after five, six, or seven months the workers become redundant. By way of example, in June this year 105 000 sheep and lambs were killed, whereas in October 1979, 705 000 were killed, and it is expected that 750 000 sheep will be killed this month.

Members are probably aware that there is a stoppage at Linley Valley at the present time. I understand the reason for it is that the tally of the slaughtermen has doubled, but the wages of labourers have stayed at the same level. There is a shortage of skilled slaughtermen at Linley Valley and a bounty is being offered to anyone who will work there for a month. Labourers in the industry want an increase for what they are expected to do.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I am trying to tie in what you say with rural reconstruction. Do you think rural reconstruction should apply to the unions as well as to the farmers?

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: Actually, the question posed by the Hon. H. W. Gayfer is valid. Mr O'Toole said at the conference that they did not deny the right of the Government to give assistance to the primary industries during times of hardship. This is the type of spirit that should prevail; that is, in times of hardship such as that which the Meat Industry Employees' Union has experienced, we should be looking for ways in which to help those workers.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: You think stopping live exports might help them?

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: The live export industry has expanded dramatically by 80 per cent in the last 12 months. I think the Hon. Sandy Lewis was concerned about the large increase in the export industry and about the type of animals being exported. There is no doubt that this is a very valuable industry to our country. On the other hand nor is there any doubt about the value of the Meat Industry Employees' Union.

Qantas was carting carcasses to Bahrain, but the position is most unsatisfactory. The Federal Minister for Primary Industry suggested that three flights a week could be made using narrow bodied aircraft, but the restrictions imposed on the market were so great that this has not been of the value it should have been. I understand wide bodied aircraft would be much more suitable, and

if they were used the market would have a great deal more to offer consumers in the Middle East, because those consumers could get chilled mutton within 24 to 48 hours of the animals being slaughtered.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: You do understand that the Hon. Tom Knight is working very closely with those people in respect of this, don't you?

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: I think Mr Lockyer ought to get up and make his own comments, because I am quite capable of making my own contribution.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: I am trying to make the point clear.

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: Just let me make my contribution; I am trying to put my case in an impartial manner. I am outlining in an impartial way what has happened to the sheep industry and the Rural Reconstruction Authority since 1972 or 1973, and I am saying that the confrontation that is occurring with the Meat Industry Employees' Union is not deserved.

I think it would well behove us to do something about this matter. The remarks of the Premier when he recently condemned the union for a strike did nothing to help. Everyone has condemned the union, but this is the first time in a decade it has held a strike, and it was for one day only.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: I do not think that is right. Are you sure of that?

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: Yes, this is the first time in 10 years that the Meat Industry Employees' Union has conducted a strike.

The Hon. P. G. Pendal: But they have applied bans in other areas, which is just as disruptive.

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: They have applied bans on the export of live sheep, yes.

The Hon. P. G. Pendal: That is the same as a strike.

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: But the union has not held a strike. I am trying to make my comments in a spirit of co-operation in an endeavour to point out that one section of the community which is 85 000 strong is being vilified and it does not deserve that treatment.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: The people in the agricultural industries would not necessarily agree with you.

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: The people in the agricultural industries with whom I am closely associated do agree with me. We can remember back to 1969 when we were selling our sheep for 29c a head; and we can remember the way the

meat industry rose to the occasion in respect of slaughtering. Since then we have lost the Midland Junction Abattoir, which is now probably costing \$1 million a year simply for upkeep.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Could you explain something to me? From listening to you it appears that you are making an argument for assistance to farmers so that meat workers can receive higher wages. Is that your message?

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: No, I am looking to assist the people in the State, and particularly country people. I am looking for a programme of development in which everyone can share, and one which will not be a hit-and-miss affair. When there is an increase of 80 per cent in the export of live sheep, that must take prosperity away from some other area. The major problem is in the breeding industry, and in respect of the type of sheep we are exporting. No-one has any complaints if we export large wethers. My endeavour is that we should not include stock which is very valuable to us because in times like this we are hard pressed to maintain a service to the community and we are hard pressed to find work for people who have such an uncertain future.

I have used this occasion to suggest on behalf of the Meat Industry Employees' Union that we should get away from confrontation and move towards co-operation. Just look at the *Western Farmer*, the *Farmers' Weekly*, and *The Countryman*, to a lesser extent, and we will see that they contain editorials condemning anything that happens in respect of the Meat Industry Employees' Union.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: I hope they report your speech tonight.

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: I do not think they will.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: I am sure the farmers would be delighted with your speech.

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: Of course they would, because not every farmer is against the people who happen to be in the working class. The point I am trying to make in respect of the Rural Reconstruction and Rural Adjustment Schemes Amendment Bill is that the Rural Adjustment Scheme has been of great value to the rural community. I realise only too well that increases in prices have occurred as a result of live sheep exports, and I realise only too well what that has meant to the producers.

At the moment we are experiencing a bad drought. Perhaps this might even parallel or be worse than the drought of 1969, when we received a mere pittance for our stock; although we will

not know about that until harvest time. As a matter of fact, in 1969 producers often had to pay to have their stock slaughtered because their returns were so low.

When we are considering rural adjustment, we are considering the adjustment of the farming community. However, that is not an isolated matter because there are so many other facets in respect of the production of stock. One is that the stock must be marketed in the best possible manner, and I am suggesting the way to do this is not by confrontation, but by co-operation. Whether or not the *Western Farmer*, the *Farmers' Weekly*, or *The Countryman* like to print my comments is of little concern to me because this is the place where we make the rules and regulations, and this is where I must make the point that we must consider all facets within the industry.

The Bill has the support of the Opposition.

THE HON. P. H. LOCKYER (Lower North) [7.49 p.m.]: I rise briefly to support the Bill. No doubt the Minister will swiftly deal with the comments of the Hon. James Brown. I would like to make the point that unless the rural industry has a chance to survive in the next few months or in the next year, the meat union may not be looking forward to killing any stock at all. I bring it to your notice, Sir, that in drought years there are few stock, if any, which are suitable for live export. I am surprised that the honourable member raised this in his speech in support of the Bill.

The Hon. J. M. Brown: They exported 50 000 from Albany.

The Hon. P. H. LOCKYER: I am talking about the drought areas to which this type of Bill pertains, as I am sure the honourable member will agree. He obviously does not understand the farmers in his area because the sheep that are exported in the main are sheep which are unsuitable for local consumption. At the present time there is no suitable way to get those sheep swiftly to the market place. So this talk about killing them here and sending them to the market place is good, as long as we could find a suitable way to do it. I would agree with the honourable member in that respect.

When he spoke in the Address-in-Reply debate, the Hon. Tom Knight told us of his efforts to streamline this matter by getting the carcasses to the countries concerned as quickly as possible—and not just the Middle East, but also France, Italy and new European markets. He told us of his talks with Tiger Air and other companies which, if they are successful, will assist in the

export of this product. I believe the Hon. Tom Knight is doing this in the hope of obtaining employment for people in the meat industry.

However, when supporting a Bill like this it is totally wrong to say that the meat industry employees should be killing these drought-stricken animals instead of their being sent overseas, because it is not possible to send them overseas at the moment for two reasons: firstly, people have few stock left; and, secondly, where there are stock they are certainly not suitable for the overseas market.

I support the Bill.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [7.57 p.m.]: I rise to say that the National Country Party supports this measure, and I will not stray from it as other speakers have done, but will stick to the subject matter of the Bill, which is an amendment to the previous agreement between the Commonwealth and the State in respect of rural adjustment.

The purpose of the Bill was explained by the Minister in his second reading speech. It enables the provision of supplementary moneys to a State other than on an annual basis. The Minister also explained that moneys unspent by one State may, with the consent of that State, be reallocated to another State. Of course, in a year such as the present one such reallocations probably would not be possible because nearly all States are experiencing bad seasons; however, in normal years if one set of farmers experiences a downturn, there is no reason that money should not be transferred from one State to another.

The Minister then said that approval may be given in a financial year to spend in that year a part of the next year's allocation; so that if the allocation for a particular year is insufficient and further money is made available for the allocation for the following year, it would be sensible to use some of the following year's funds to tide over those people who badly need assistance.

One of the major provisions of the measure is the removal of the eligibility requirement that an existing farm has been, but is not now, viable. This does happen from time to time; we might find that a farm which has been viable for some years might then become not viable for some reason. Under this Bill assistance can be provided to an applicant who is a bona fide farmer, who intends to remain on his property, and who, if given assistance, has fairly good prospects of long-term viability.

Other proposed changes include taking the apicultural industry into the scheme. Obviously persons in that industry can get into difficulties

over a period, and now they will be able to receive assistance. In addition, the Northern Territory is to be treated as a State within the meaning of the Act. I do not believe we should leave the Northern Territory out of this legislation, because there are people there who might well need assistance under this scheme.

We support the measure.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [8.00 p.m.]: I thank members for their support of this legislation. The Rural Reconstruction and Rural Adjustment Schemes have proved to be of great benefit to the primary industry since they were created at the time when wheat quotas were being imposed, and the price of wool was as low as 30 per cent.

For various reasons, a large number of farmers had to leave the industry. The legislation allowed those people to do so with a certain amount of grace and dignity. It allowed the farms they were forced off to be sold to adjacent farmers on reasonable terms, and it allowed for the writing off of buildings proved to be unnecessary because of duplication. It allowed for payments to the farmers who left the farms until such time as they were resettled in another community. The legislation proved very successful; but fortunately the need for it has diminished.

We are looking for other uses for the same legislation. We are looking to encompass other industries. As members realise, this Bill includes the beekeeping industry. Earlier in the year, I represented the Minister for Agriculture at a conference of Ministers called to ratify the proposed scheme. At that conference, we discussed the opportunities to service the fishing industry from the fund in the future, as that industry has proved its need.

We have high hopes that these two schemes can be used to help the pastoral industry. As was pointed out, there has been a very serious drought in a high percentage of the pastoral areas. The Jennings report has shown that there is a need for reconstruction within the pastoral industry. A large number of small leases are not viable; and there is a desperate need to move the pastoralists from those properties and to return to them some of the money they have invested. This will allow neighbouring farmers to take up the vacated leases.

Of course, the neighboring pastoralists will not want the woolsheds, and that sort of thing. After the drought, with their low stock numbers generally, they will not have the money to buy out the neighbouring property. We will be able to

meet this need in the pastoral industry through the provisions of this Bill.

On Friday next I will be in Meekatharra, and I will be telling pastoralists there what we are able to do about restocking. Such action will encompass the provisions of these two schemes.

One of the problems we face is that there is not enough money. Regrettably, there was only something like \$2 million allocated to the State this year. The Bill allows the spending of money in advance. We have already spent \$900 000 of next year's fund, so it seems we will be spending the following year's money in advance.

The provisions of this Bill are already used in relation to the areas where clearing bans have been imposed. Some farmers have not been able to reach the full production potential on their properties, and we are reconstructing the cleared areas and purchasing from those farmers the uncleared land so that there will be viable units using the land which was cleared in the past. There will not be the necessity to clear further areas to make the units viable. That is another very important provision of this Bill.

I thank members for their support. I will not go into great detail, but I will comment on the very unfortunate strikes which are occurring in the meat industry. This is not within the ambit of the Bill; but one could say that some farmers have had to call for funds from the Rural Reconstruction Scheme because of the unfortunate events happening. The situation is that a third of the farmers in Western Australia have been declared drought affected. The situation is very grim.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: At least a third.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: The farmers are trying to be rid of their stock while there is still a little condition on them. There are two ships waiting in Fremantle Harbour for lamb for the Greek market. They cannot load the required quantity of lamb; yet the lamb has to be in Greece before Christmas to be saleable. After Christmas, it will fall in another financial year, and the producers will be affected by the quotas in the EEC.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It is getting close when a place like York is considering having part of its shire declared.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That is so. It is a matter of great concern. This is a time when everyone should be pulling together. Like other farmers, I think it is a darned disgrace that at this stage the meat industry union should start to find a feeble excuse to strike. As the Hon. Sandy Lewis said yesterday, they are turning

back the trucks. They are calling for a ridiculous provision by which they will be paid something like \$1 000 a week.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: At a cost of \$111 an hour.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Whatever it is, it is completely ridiculous. It should not be considered by the arbitration court. The union is not using common sense. I hope the threatened strikes will not take place. The union is using the export of live sheep as an excuse.

As members know, those sheep would not be suitable for the local market, as a previous speaker said. There is a completely different trade in the larger wethers. This has nothing to do with the stock that would be killed at an abattoir here. It is an entirely separate matter. If we can export more of our larger wethers, we will have more ewes on the farms, and there will be a greater likelihood of lamb going through the abattoir. The unions are cutting off their noses to spite their faces. I hope we will see some order and common sense.

I thank members for their support, and I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands), and passed.

CANCER COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 30 September.

THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON (East Metropolitan) [8.10 p.m.]: The Opposition is not opposed to this Bill. The fact that the Bill has been introduced says something about the developments in the treatment of cancer, and our attitude towards cancer. The Opposition will be interested to see if the new Cancer Council works better than the old. In saying that, I am not saying that the old council did not work well.

I was interested to note the provision in the Bill to make it possible for the chairmen of subcommittees to come from outside the council. This is something that I would not approve of

normally; but on this occasion it seems to be highly sensible. If we are to make the council a less specialist body, it is obvious its committees will need chairmen from outside. Therefore, this innovation is one that could be commended, on the face of it.

I do not want to take up the time of the House. The Opposition will be interested to see how the new Cancer Council works. We support the Bill.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central)
[8.12 p.m.]: I support this measure to reconstitute the Cancer Council of Western Australia. The parent Act was introduced in 1958, and amended in 1964. Since that time, there have been no amendments to the Act.

For the information of the House, I believe we should refer to the objects, functions, and duties of the present council. When the new council comes into being, which will not be immediately, according to the Bill, it will be faced with the same functions. Section 8 of the Act provides—

8. (1) (a) Subject to the Minister the Council shall carry out the administration of this Act.

That provision is in most Acts. It continues—

(b) The Minister may from time to time give directions to the Council with respect to the objects, functions, duties, and powers of the Council either generally or in respect to a particular matter and the Council shall give effect to the directions according to their tenor.

(2) Subject to subsection (1) of this section the objects, functions, duties, and powers of the Council are—

- (a) to co-ordinate and stimulate in Western Australia research into the causation, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment, of cancer and allied conditions;
- (b) to promote and subsidise research into the cause, diagnosis, prevention and treatment, of cancer and allied conditions;
- (c) to co-operate and enter into agreements, with such persons and organisations whether incorporate or unincorporate, as are within or without the State, for the purpose of achieving the objects of the Council;
- (d) to build, establish, maintain, equip, control and manage institutes;

- (e) to establish and maintain accommodation for patients undergoing treatment at an Institute;
- (f) to invite, raise, receive, hold, and invest, moneys, and gifts;
- (g) to publish information relating to the prevention, detection and treatment of cancer and allied conditions;
- (i) to assist in provision of teaching facilities in connection with cancer and allied conditions.

(3) Subject to subsection (1) of this section the Council may do all such acts and things as may be necessary

In the past the council has carried out these functions very successfully. It has applied the funds collected in a sensible and sound way.

For the purpose of investing the funds, the council had set up a trust fund; but the Act empowered the council to invest money in what were considered to be trustee investments under the direction of the Minister. During my term as Minister, I was approached on behalf of the council to agree with the proposition that the council could invest surplus moneys—in other words, moneys that were not required immediately—in trustee funds. Maybe one or two such requests could come up at a time; but it would not be necessary for the Minister to signify approval of an investment prior to the investments being made.

I agreed with the proposal and instead of the Council having to wait until it received ministerial approval to invest the money, I approved the investments after they were made. This expedited the matter and the money was able to accrue interest earlier. The situation has worked well since those days.

The Bill contains a further amendment to change the Cancer Council's financial year from July-June to January-December. The purpose of this amendment is that the council will be able to produce a more accurate annual statement if its financial year runs from January to December.

I support the legislation.

THE HON. W. M. PIESSE (Lower Central)
[8.17 p.m.]: I should like to draw the attention of the House to the amendment proposed in clause 4 of the Bill which reads as follows—

to provide and maintain services for patients undergoing treatment for cancer;

I should like to mention the plight of people in country areas who suddenly have to come to Perth

for treatment or investigation in relation to cancer. They are faced with a devastating situation.

On many occasions such people are the mothers of small children or are the breadwinners of families. They suddenly find they have to travel to the metropolitan area and are faced with the anxiety every person attaches to this complaint. It is a catastrophe.

Some years ago approaches were made to various sporting organisations and other people in country areas who were asked to raise finance to provide some sort of accommodation or sanctuary for people who had to travel suddenly from country areas to Perth to undergo investigation or treatment for cancer.

Unfortunately, as far as I can discover, so far nothing more has happened about that. I am hopeful that the newly constituted Cancer Council will give further consideration to the matter.

I am aware that some institutions in Perth, such as CWA House, make accommodation available at a very nominal figure, provided they have vacancies. However, on occasions such as the Royal Show, the accommodation provided by these institutions is fully booked and they are not able to offer this type of assistance.

Frequently people who come to Perth from country areas to undergo this type of treatment are not very well off financially. That statement was borne out by the debate on the previous Bill which drew attention to the drought situation and lack of finance in country areas. These people come to Perth for treatment and are faced with a number of problems. They do not know where they will stay, how they will cope, or how they will travel from their place of accommodation to their place of treatment.

Regardless of the financial situation of the person concerned, it would be of great assistance if, when he was told by his doctor that he had to undergo this type of treatment, he was told also, "If you telephone this place, you will be able to obtain accommodation tonight or tomorrow night." Immediately the weight would be removed from the shoulders of that person and his anxiety in some sort would be alleviated. I hope the reconstituted Cancer Council will give further consideration to this matter.

I support the Bill.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [8.20 p.m.]: I thank members for their support of the Bill and Mr Baxter—a previous Minister for Health—for giving us the benefit of his experience with the legislation.

I feel I need say no more other than to assure the Hon. Win Piesse I shall pass on to the Minister the points she raised with regard to the difficulties experienced by people in such matters as accommodation.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands), and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [8.22 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 14 October.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: ORDINARY

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [8.23 p.m.]: I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Australian Labor Party: Wealth Tax or Capital Gains Tax

THE HON. R. G. PIKE (North Metropolitan) [8.24 p.m.]: I rise on a matter of importance to the whole of the Australian community. I refer in particular to a country-wide ABC programme on 3 October last, when a question was put to Senator Walsh by Neil Inall. The question dealt with the attitude of the Labor Party to wealth tax and capital gains tax.

The response of Senator Walsh at that time, when replying to the question which, I repeat, dealt with the attitude of the Labor Party to a wealth tax or capital gains tax was as follows—

The Labor Party believes that Australia ought to have some form of capital taxation—

The Hon. R. T. Leeson: How long do we have to listen to this rubbish?

Several members interjected.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: The senator of whom I am speaking—Senator Walsh—has a problem regarding his credibility, veracity, and incredible competence for muckraking in this State. It is proper when we hear a statement by him, nevertheless, in his capacity as a member of the shadow Cabinet of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, that we take note of it, particularly when we have regard to the platform the ALP has set out at its recent thirty-third annual conference.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: The majority of Australians think it is pretty good!

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: No doubt the Hon. Peter Dowding would enthusiastically support the proposition put forward by Senator Walsh which is that we should have a capital gains tax or a wealth tax.

I ask the members of the NCP to take note of the point I am about to make. I expect the Hon. Mick Gayfer to wax eloquent on the matter of wealth tax and capital gains tax.

The Hon. R. T. Leeson: Just make your point and sit down!

Several members interjected.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: In order to facilitate *Hansard*, I will commence the quote made by Senator Walsh again. It reads as follows—

The Labor Party believes that Australia ought to have some form of capital taxation as every other country with which we can compare ourselves has—and many of them have two or three. I am not wriggling whether it will be a capital gains tax, a wealth tax, or a reintroduction of inheritance tax which they have in the United Kingdom and the United States of America is something which is yet to be determined.

For the benefit of the House, I shall quote briefly from page 39 of the policy document—

The Hon. Peter Dowding: Whatever it is, it would not affect 90 per cent of the population.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: —of the Labor Party as follows—

Secondly, as a democratic-socialist party concerned to achieve a more just and equitable society, Labor's economic policy aims to redistribute income and wealth on an egalitarian basis . . .

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: What are you up to?

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: That means blokes like you will get a few extra dollars.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: In order to come directly to the point, I quote from item 5 under the heading "Taxation" as follows—

a Labor Government will—

Enhance the equity of the tax system by taxing large accumulations of personal capital above a floor level that is reviewed regularly and takes into account the special circumstances of farmers, small businessmen and aged people, and excludes the normal holdings assembled over a lifetime by persons and family units.

The point I would like to make, and coming directly to it, is this: What we have had in this situation is a statement made in good faith, which is certainly unusual for Senator Walsh, regarding the platform of the Labor Party which we know is an instruction to the Parliamentary Labor Party. I say this not in a critical way, but in a factual way. It is an historic fact and a fact of the constitution of the Labor Party that it has a continuing half nelson on its parliamentary members.

The facts of this matter are that, in *The West Australian* of 3 March 1979, Mr Hayden said under the heading of "Gains-tax pledge by Hayden"—

The next Federal Labor government's commitment to the poor and disadvantaged would be financed by a capital-gains tax yielding an annual minimum of \$300 million, the Federal Opposition Leader, Mr Hayden, said in Perth last night.

In the *Daily News* of 23 January 1979, under the heading "Hayden calls for gains tax" the following comment was made—

The Leader of the Federal Opposition, Mr Hayden, has called for the imposition of a capital gains tax and a resources rental tax.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Come up to date! Read today's issue of the *Daily News*.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I am sure members opposite do not intend to say that—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: He is chopping and changing again, is he?

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Bring us up to date!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I am sure the members opposite representing the Labor Party are not in the business of denying the newspaper headlines "Hayden calls for gains tax" and "Gains-tax pledge by Hayden".

The Hon. Peter Dowding interjected.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: It is clear the honourable member interjecting at present—that is, the Hon. Peter Dowding—is indicating the want of capacity of members opposite to use their brains when they speak and is demonstrating his capacity in this House to think only with his mouth.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You just read from documents which you can't collate.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I go on to make the point that in tonight's issue of the *Daily News*—and this is the nub of the question which is urgent and, therefore, it is raised in the adjournment debate—we have a statement by Mr Hayden to the effect that a capital gains tax or wealth tax promise will not now be implemented until the termination of the next three-year term, if the Labor Party happens to be successful at the coming election.

The real issue is this: I have given to the House factual evidence of Senator Walsh and Mr Hayden calling for a gains tax. I have given to the House the evidence of the policy of the Labor Party which has a half nelson on its parliamentary members. I have pointed out to the House and the people of Australia also that, until Senator Walsh recently made the statement to which I have referred, it suddenly dawned upon Mr Hayden and his cohorts that here was a situation in which the Labor Party had proposed a wealth tax and a capital gains tax and there was an urgency to repudiate that proposition for short term electoral advantage.

Labor Party leaders in Australia, especially Federal Labor Party leaders, when they are put under pressure by the party structure and called to tune, have nearly always indicated they have the backbone of a banana when it comes to standing up to the oppression of the Labor Party and the way in which the Labor Party imposes its rules. I repeat: It is historical fact that they have the backbone of a banana.

I make the point which I made earlier: The implication of this particular Labor Party policy—a capital gains tax policy—is that for the first time Labor has introduced into its policy a commitment to a wealth tax. That is not a mere capital gains tax, but a proposal to tax the capital base itself. Qualifications to the proposal by a Labor Government hungry for revenue to fund its socialisation programme mean nothing, and can be ignored. All individual Australians who had acquired funds or land, or other property, could be subject to the tax and it would be levied regardless of the liquidity of the individual. In

many cases individuals would have to sell off assets to pay the tax. I make that point.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: What are you quoting from?

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I am quoting from a *Hansard* speech made by me.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. P. G. Pental: He said that before he started, you ignoramuses.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: If members opposite listen they might learn something good.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: There is a simple argument I want to put forward in conclusion.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: Do not conclude; Mr Dowding will have a go, too.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: The argument I put forward in conclusion in regard to the capital gains tax, and the capital structure of this country, is that there is hardly a single farmer of average to medium size within the whole system who will not be put under duress, given the fact that farms by nature are capital-intensive. They will be put under duress by this Labor socialist proposal to impose a capital gains tax or a wealth tax within the Commonwealth.

I have produced the evidence. I would like to compare the capital structure with a fruit tree, and call the fruit tree the capital structure. If that fruit tree is pruned—and let us call the pruning a capital gains tax or wealth tax—and if the tree is cut to the bole or the trunk, no further wealth will be produced. The tree will be unable to produce. What the Labor Party will do, notwithstanding Mr Hayden's scurrying to defend this matter after Senator Walsh brought it up in good faith because of his rather simple and naive nature and his mistake of telling the truth, is prune the tree back to the point where there is no income and no capital. In that situation the owners of capital are unable to exist.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: He judges the Labor Party by himself.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: The Labor Party is unable to exist except for the capitalist system providing funds for so-called socialist enterprises. It is a simple matter; it is a matter of fact.

I invite Mr Berinson and Mr Hetherington, who are well informed on what Mr Hayden says about taxes and the Labor Party platform, to repudiate any fact I have mentioned tonight.

Until Senator Walsh made this point it was a non-issue. He made the mistake—which he often does—of being naive and saying that Labor will

have a wealth tax or a capital gains tax. It then became an issue. Significantly, the item has not yet been published in the Press.

It is interesting that we have a repudiation by Mr Hayden that for the next three-year period we will not have a capital gains tax or a wealth tax. The issue raised by Senator Walsh, regarding the original proposition, has not appeared in the Press. That is how worried the Labor Party is. I say, without apology, that is a foot in the door. That is the type of action we can expect from the socialist Labor Government, and I invite members to repudiate any one of the facts I have stated.

THE HON. J. M. BERINSON (North-East Metropolitan) [8.36 p.m.]: I very much fear that if the Hon. Mr Pike had to live by his expertise at exposé he would starve. He has come to this Council tonight with the great result of his investigative efforts. He has discovered that Senator Walsh said we should have—and that the Labor Party says we should have—some form of capital tax. He said the possible form of that tax could be a capital gains tax, a wealth tax, or an inheritance tax. That is a great discovery!

The honourable member does not have to look far to discover Labor policy on that matter. It is in the Federal platform. It is public for anyone who is prepared to open the policy and read it.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: He does not learn.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: It was in the Budget speech by Mr Hayden on the occasion of his most recent Federal Budget. It was in the policy speech by Mr Hayden at the outset of this very election. There is no point in Mr Pike asking us to repudiate what he said or to run away from what he said.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: All I want is your acknowledgment of what I said.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Of course, we are not running away from the policy which exists in our platform, but I wish Mr Pike would not run away from other facts associated with it.

From the outset, Mr Hayden has made it clear that nothing in this field will be done in the first term of a Labor Government except to hold a preliminary inquiry.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Rubbish! From yesterday. That is garbage and you know it.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Mr Pike refuses to be convinced by the facts, and that is his problem. There is no question that the suggestion—the proposal—is a sudden inspiration brought on yesterday by a comment from Senator Walsh. The fact is that the proposal for an inquiry was in Mr Hayden's policy speech. In

fact, it was announced by him prior to the policy speech. There has been no sudden inspiration.

The purpose of the inquiry is, firstly, to consider the desirability of these various forms of taxes. If they are considered desirable by the committee, it would then have to be decided how best they might be implemented. Mr Pike was very fair; he did not quote half of what was said.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I thought you were capable of a better argument.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Mr Pike quoted all of what was said by Senator Walsh. The first part of what he said related to the desirability in principle of some form of capital tax. The second part of what Senator Walsh said included a comment to the effect that some form of capital tax existed, in fact, in every country with which we compare ourselves. Interestingly enough, Mr Pike did not bother to dispute that. Obviously, he could not; it is a fair statement of fact.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Those members who are interjecting are free to make their own contributions. May I ask Mr Pike: If some form of capital tax is, (a) so unfair or, (b) so disastrous to the economy—and analogous to the cutting into the core of the fruit tree considering that there is a capital gains tax in the United States of America, the very home of capitalism and still the great home of capitalism today—how is it that the American economy not only has survived, but also is thriving under the present capital gains tax system?

The Hon. P. G. Pental: They do not have your lot over there.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: They do not have our lot! Let us see what our lot would do. I have one small advantage—I confess, only a small advantage—over Mr Pike in discussing the last Labor Party Federal Conference because I was there and he was not. I know that would not mean a great deal to Mr Pike because it would only be to the detriment of his argument to have to depend on actual considerations which guide the Labor Party in this matter. Let me go on—not go beyond in the first instance—to a further fact which Mr Pike quoted.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable Mr Pike.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: The honourable Mr Pike!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: He is a very honourable man. The Hon. Mr Pike himself was good enough to quote the fact that in previous

public discussion on the thinking of the Labor Party related to this capital gains tax or wealth tax, the figure suggested from that source has been \$300 million. That figure relates to either the capital gains or wealth-based transactions of this nation.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It would have been raised mostly from the farmers of this country.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You have no idea; that is just stupid.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: If I might interject on the debate between the Hon. Mr Hetherington and the Hon. Mr Pike, let me repeat what I was attempting to put: That \$300 million is related to the amount of capital gains in the transactions of this nation in any one year, or \$300 million related to the wealth base of the nation. That gives the clearest possible indication of the modesty of the proposals. The determination of the Labor Party was to ensure that nothing should be done by the introduction of other forms of tax which would have the very effect mentioned by Mr Pike; namely, to cut to the core of the fruit tree. A figure of \$200 000 will be the base below which a wealth tax will not be imposed. I am saying there are very few farmers who will be affected seriously. The capital tax proposals envisaged by the Labor Party are modest.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It is a foot in the door.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Everything has a first time. The Liberal Government put a 3c per litre excise on petrol, and that was the foot in the door. That excise is now producing \$2.5 billion from petrol each year.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: We do not need any lectures on the consequences of our putting a foot in the door. If this were a serious proposition, we need do nothing more than follow the example of the Liberal Government, and perhaps Mr Pike would care to consider the effect on the very people about whom he is most concerned. The farmers of this nation happen to be bearing a disproportionate share of the petrol tax, an unfair proportion of it—a proportion which takes no account—

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It is a foot in the door.

The Hon. P. G. Pendal: Is Walsh right or is Walsh wrong—"Yes" or "No".

The PRESIDENT: Will the honourable member ignore the interjections and direct his remarks to the Chair?

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Much as I would like to ignore the interjections, Mr President, they are so provocative that they are very difficult to ignore. I am being put under cross-examination by Mr Pendal, and he is demanding that I answer whether Senator Walsh was correctly reported—"Yes" or "No". I am prepared to say he was correctly reported, "Yes" and "No". Yes, he was—

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I never thought that you had Irish in your blood.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: It is very distressing to me, Mr President, to have this sort of interjection. If he was in fact reported as saying both—that we should have a capital gains tax and that some form of capital gains tax was consistent with the practice of every country with which we compare ourselves—I would be quite happy to say that he was correctly reported. There is no reason that we should doubt that since what he would then have been saying was perfectly consistent with Labor policy as clearly expressed and expounded to the public over a great many years.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Let Australia beware!

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: That is the extent to which I am prepared to be diverted from matters which ought to be directed to the attention of the House.

I have demonstrated, I think as clearly as can be done, that one indication of the modesty of the proposals is the total amount sought to be raised. The only matter that emerged clearly from the discussion of these issues at the last Federal conference which has since been elaborated on is the level at which the wealth tax will commence. Mr Pike apparently concedes the reports that the limit of \$200 000 as the limit below which no wealth tax would be levelled has been expressed clearly as the policy of the Labor Party.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I made the further point that that is a foot in the door. Nothing could stop a future Labor Government, by Executive action, from lowering that base. As you know, it could do it by Executive action.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: I know nothing of the sort. I do not know how any tax proposal could be altered—

Several members interjected.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: I do not know how a wealth tax, as distinct from something like the petrol levy, can be implemented by Executive order. So far as I am aware, that requires a

decision of the Parliament in line with all other forms of tax and amendments of tax scales.

I was about to say that this \$200 000 figure has never been set as an inflexible minimum, nor one that would apply irrespective of the circumstances. Even as long ago as the Federal conference in Adelaide, where this policy went into the platform, it was made clear that the implementation would have to be proceeded with with the most careful consideration and with great flexibility in order to avoid the very sorts of problems that Mr Pike raises as potential problems for the farming community.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Let us deal with that—deal with my point. The \$200 000 limit is too low for farmers.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: That indeed, as I understand it, is the reason for the development of the Labor policy—no action should be taken on any of these alternative forms of tax without a prior inquiry.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: As of yesterday—as a consequence of Walsh's statement.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: I do wish Mr Pike would stop saying, "As of yesterday" when I have already stated that this was said long ago, including our policy speech. Repetition cannot make an inaccuracy any more correct, and it is about time he let go of that bone and tried something else if he cannot do better.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: We did what we set out to do.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: If the Labor Party was setting out to be dogmatic on this question, if indeed this \$200 000 was to be the limit in all circumstances, and to be applied inflexibly and without consideration—

The Hon. R. G. Pike: That is what it says.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: —for the particular problems of sections of industry, such as the farming industry, there would be no need for an inquiry. We could just have it cut and dried. We could look at comparable countries and say, "How many cents in the dollar do you take?" and we might add that the cents in the dollar would be very low on a wealth tax if only \$300 million is to be raised on the wealth of this country.

We have clearly explained this policy; we have never run away from this policy, but most of all, let me, in return for all the invitations being advanced so freely by members on the other side, render a return invitation; namely, could they please say what is inherently unfair about a capital gains tax?

The Hon. P. G. Pendal: That is not the point.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Why is it inherently unfair to have a capital gains tax and not an income tax? It may be that members opposite would like to proceed with an argument for the abolition of income tax, but that is their business.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Delighted to have your admission; it is contrary to our philosophy and in line with yours.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: If I understand Mr Pike's most recent interjection correctly, he is saying that it is in line with Liberal Party policy that it is inherently unfair to have a capital gains tax.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Or a wealth tax.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: But it is inherently fair to have an income tax. As we know from experience, it must certainly be in line with Liberal policy that it is fair to have a fuel tax. There is nothing more or less inherently fair or unfair about any form of tax except that if there is a weight of fairness, it would come down to a taxation of windfall profits such as most often relate to capital gains. Where do capital gains most frequently arise? The greatest example of capital gains over the last quarter century has been through the inflation in land prices. The inflation rate in land prices has been far beyond the inflation rate in the normal Consumer Price Index.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: And it is far beyond any gain represented by inflation in wages. Now from where does most of that increased capital in land arise? Most of it arises from fortuitous circumstances, with nothing at all to do with the efforts of the owners.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Rubbish! What about the wheat farmers and the great increase in the capital gains of their land, and they never intend to sell it?

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Why then is it so fair—and I think it is regarded as fair—that we have an income tax? Why is it fair that income received from work and personal exertion of members of the community should be taxed, but capital gains should not be taxed? I do not think there is a competition in fairness between these two forms of tax, or if there is, the weight of fairness would justify a capital gains tax rather than the reverse, but to a very real extent—

The Hon. R. G. Pike: In a reasonable way, could I put it to you please, if a farmer—

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You couldn't be reasonable.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the Hon. Robert Pike to cease his interjections. He has given us his views as to why the House ought to adjourn and we are now waiting on the views of the Hon. J. Berinson.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: I come in conclusion to a matter which Mr Pike acknowledged, but really insisted on skirting over too readily; that is, that while indeed it is Labor Party policy to have some form of capital tax, there is a commitment on record that this will not be implemented without the inquiry to which I referred. More than that we now have the clearest commitment from the Leader of the Labor Party that no such tax will be implemented without its first being put to the Australian people at the Federal election after this, that is assuming the election of a Labor Government this time. Now what could be fairer than that? What could better answer the hysterics of the argument presented by the Hon. Mr Pike than the fact that there is a clear commitment not to implement any such measure in spite of the beliefs of the Labor Party about it without first putting it to the people and allowing them to vote on it directly in the course of a Federal election?

The Hon. R. G. Pike: And in spite of the fact that Senator Walsh did not know about it.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: There is nothing inconsistent between Senator Walsh's comments and the proposition put by Mr Hayden, but even if there were—and let me make it quite clear this is not putting Senator Walsh down—and if there were any competition as to the timing of the proposals between Senator Walsh and Mr Hayden, without exception it would be Mr Hayden's view that would carry the day and which would be binding on the Labor Party—

A Government member: Bound by that half nelson!

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: —and which I say to this House is accepted by every sector of the Labor Party as binding on it. There will be no imposition of a capital tax before the Australian people are given the opportunity to vote on it.

THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON (East Metropolitan) [8.57 p.m.]: I do not intend to be very long—

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: Thank God for that!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: —but this is not the first time I have stood up after one of the Hon. Robert Pike's farragos of fact and fantasy.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I would be very pleased if the Hon. Philip Lockyer would stop his inane interjections. Next moment he will be saying "Dugite" behind my back, and saying, "He speaks with fork-ed tongue", or one of his other highly unintelligent interjections.

The simple point I want to make is that every time the Hon. Robert Pike gets up he quotes from his own remarks as though he is an authoritative source.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: That is not true, and you know it.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Stick to the facts.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: No-one else would quote him.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: He makes a statement and then backtracks to that well-thumbed and well-read document, the Australian Labor Party platform—Federal or State.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Deal with the argument—not the personality.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I will develop the argument, and if the honourable member would cease interjecting, I am likely to get to the end of it faster. However, I still intend, Mr President, as you well know, to deal with it in my own way.

I have read the Australian Labor Party platform, and what the honourable member says is in it, is in it. Nobody is denying that. To hear the Hon. Robert Pike speak, one would think everything in the Labor Party platform is something that has to be given legislative power by a Labor Government immediately. That, of course, is not the case. With any political platform—even the Liberal Party has a platform, vague and amorphous though it may be that does not seem to bind anybody—it cannot all be introduced at once. The Labor Party has a platform that is binding. Certainly we cannot depart from it, but certainly we are not bound by any alleged half nelson, to introduce anything at any time.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Not a single item in the platform imposes a time limit.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: That is right.

The Hon. P. G. Pental: But it was Senator Walsh who kicked it off.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Mr Pental has made his speech several times. I have heard him, and I will get around to his statement in due course. He need not repeat it.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: In your own way.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes, in my own way. One of the other things with any political party is that it has what is known as a fighting platform, a platform which it presents for an election. The fighting platform of the Australian Labor Party is quite clear. In our policy, we are committed to a capital gains or a wealth tax eventually being introduced.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Thank you very much. The electorate will be very interested to hear that.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Nobody is denying that. When we win the next Federal election, a Federal Labor Government will inquire into the way in which such a tax could be implemented. It seems to me that Mr Pike is worried by the fact that it looks as if there will be a Hayden Government to implement Labor policies, and he is making his little last-ditch stand—the Napoleon of the Legislative Council!

The Hon. P. G. Pental: Just to remind people what they are voting on.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am only too happy to remind people of the matters on which they are voting. In this particular instance, they are voting on a question of whether they are going to have a Government which will institute an inquiry as to the kind of wealth or capital gains tax which should be introduced, which proposal will then be put before the people in the Federal election which follows the election to be held on 18 October. It is as simple as that.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It is a vicious assault on private property.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: The other thing we hear, apart from the nonsense from the member on my left, is talk about the farmer. The Australian Labor Party is aware of the problems of the farmer, and has been aware of his problems for a long time. This is one of the reasons we need a very careful inquiry before implementing a capital gains or wealth tax. There are different kinds of capital gains and the matter must be examined carefully to ensure that such a tax does not fall harshly on people who do not deserve harsh treatment—as many farmers do not.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Members opposite should not squabble among themselves.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: They might not agree among themselves. All we have seen from Mr Pike tonight has been one of his cheap political tricks on the adjournment debate which we have seen before.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: From Mr Dowding.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: He was simply trying to make a little election capital to try to defend the Prime Minister, his leader who, as my leader (Mr Hayden) said, has pressed the panic button. It is always a red button, or a terrible, socialist button.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: That is absolute rot.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: We are a democratic socialist party and on this particular issue we will democratically evolve a practical policy out of our general policy, and put it before the people when the Hayden Government comes before the electorate in three years' time. There is nothing wrong with that; it is something of which we can be quite proud.

This is quite in line with what Senator Walsh has said. Nothing that the Labor Party has said has been contradictory. I am quite proud to be a member of a party which is—

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Going to make an assault on private property.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Your party will assault private property.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am proud to be a member of a party which is prepared to write down its policies for everybody to see, which works them out in public and then, in times like this, can say, "We will make a promise that we will inquire into the matter, obtain firm proposals, and put them before the electorate at the next election."

I believe this redounds with credit on the Labor Party and on the Leader of the Labor Party (Mr Hayden). Whether or not one agrees—obviously Mr Pike does not—this sort of policy redounds to our credit. Mr Hayden will make a very fine Prime Minister because he does not indulge in brouhaha, braggadocio, and bravado. In Mr Hayden, we will have a nice, decent family bloke who knows what other nice, decent family blokes need.

I will be very pleased if I do not again need to answer the half-baked illogicalities of the Hon. Robert Pike.

Fuel Tax

THE HON. PETER DOWDING (North) [9.05 p.m.]: I will not respond to the panic button Mr Pike has pressed tonight because quite clearly the public opinion polls indicate how the Labor Party will perform in this month's Federal election. Those on the other side are desperately wriggling around to try to get something going. As I said

the other day, no doubt Quantum Research has produced a report on a smear campaign and we will hear about that in the next few days.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: What a stupid thing to say.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: I wish to speak on a matter of importance which concerns my electorate. One other matter which desperately concerns my electorate is the way the Fraser Government is milking it by way of its fuel tax policy. I would have thought the Hon. Phil Lockyer would be only too happy to agree with me, and thus represent his electorate as he was sent here to do. The Fraser Government did not put the fuel tax to the people; it simply ripped it from the public. Talking about having one foot in the door, the Fraser Government has been ripping off the public ever since overseas fuel prices started increasing.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: I would think the honourable member would take this chance to follow the example set by the Hon. Bill Withers and apologise for the libellous statements he made during his last debate in this House. They were described as lies in the newspaper the next day.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: If Mr Pratt could possibly restrain himself for a moment—which, I am sure he cannot because his apoplexy is visible at all times—the fact of the matter is there is not one skerrick of evidence to suggest that the rip-off tax which hurts my electorate most, as I am sure the Hon. Phil Lockyer would agree, has never been put to the people. It has never been considered by Parliament, because it is a rip-off.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: You are talking absolute nonsense.

Electoral: Postal Votes

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: Another matter of far more compelling importance relates to some questions I asked of the Attorney General and the Minister for Police and Traffic. In March this year, certain charges were made against certain persons for alleged offences under the Electoral Act. I know that in March 1980 the Commissioner of Police (Mr Leitch) made it clear that a large number of charges were to be laid and, subsequently, they were laid between 8 March and 25 March. Obviously, it did not take the Commissioner of Police very long to get his act into gear and lay the charges.

What has happened to the charges? All the charges were based on the same question of law and, by agreement between the defence counsel and the Crown Law officers concerned, one of

those cases was taken to court in order to have that question of law determined.

On 10 June 1980 that question of law was determined, adversely to the proposition put by the Commissioner of Police, and the charges were dismissed.

There was a clear understanding in relation to this matter in June this year that all of the other charges would be adjourned to enable the law officers to give consideration to an appeal. All the charges were adjourned, because the same question of law occurs in all the charges, and it was fairly and squarely put in the instant case dealt with in June.

Notwithstanding the fact that the time for an appeal expired two months ago, and notwithstanding the fact that the law officers and the Commissioner of Police had two months after the dismissal of those charges in order to consider an appeal, nothing has been done. Clearly, this has led everyone to conclude that they have examined the matter and have advised the police there are no grounds of appeal. The ridiculous interpretation of the provision of the Electoral Act, as amended last year, adopted by the Commissioner of Police was wrong, and he was not game to appeal and have the matter tested.

What is so serious about this matter is that the defendants have been left waiting for an answer. It did not take the commissioner long to get his act into gear to lay the charges. In fact, it was within a month of the election that these alleged offences were brought into court not only upon summons, but also by arrest, an action which the Law Society of the day criticised the Commissioner of Police for permitting. The commissioner justified his actions on the basis that these were serious charges.

I ask: If they were such serious charges, why is it that the commissioner did not appeal? I believe he received advice from his law officers that he had absolutely no ground for appeal and that his interpretation of the law was fanciful and unsustainable.

Why is it that the Commissioner of Police has left the defendants waiting four months for an answer, when the cases were adjourned on the basis that he would give consideration to his answer?

It is a great pity the Commissioner of Police did not take legal advice before he laid charges in the first place, and before he burst into print in March this year as to the seriousness of these charges. The shameful thing is that the interpretation he put on the question of the postal votes, and the meaning of the words "induce or

persuade" was so fanciful that it was thrown out of court, and now the commissioner does not have the decency or the propriety to do something about the matter.

It is outrageous that the defendants should be kept waiting for over seven months to have the Commissioner of Police make up his mind as to what he is going to do with his charges.

In my submission, this has raised a most serious matter of principle; namely, the question of whether or not the police should be seen as political tools. I believe every good policeman in this State, from senior police officers and commissioned officers down through sergeants to the copper on the beat are horrified at the thought that they are being used as political tools.

It is quite clear that this is the sort of charge we can expect to be laid by this Commissioner of Police and the sort of action we can anticipate from him, yet the Attorney General is not prepared to take some responsibility in the matter, even though his law officers are involved; nor is the Minister for Police prepared to control the actions of his commissioner. I believe it is an affront to the ordinary police officer, who forms the vast majority of the Police Force.

There is a way in which this matter could be rectified. Electoral laws are some of the most sensitive laws in the entire country. They form the basis of democracy. Whilst the Liberal Party was prepared to ignore that fact and amend the Electoral Act in 1978, there is no doubt it is the most serious and important provision on the Statute books.

It is of fundamental importance that if this Parliament, by the sheer tyranny of numbers is going to put through legislation containing ridiculous laws using words like "induce or persuade" without any indication as to the weight or meaning of those words, there should be a requirement that no prosecution be issued without a fiat of the Attorney General. If that were required, we would know the Commissioner of Police was not being used in a political way. We would know the Solicitor General would be giving his opinion, and this would put a stop to the ridiculous actions we have seen from the Commissioner of Police in this case.

This would be fair to every decent policeman which, I repeat, represents the majority of the Police Force. Every decent police officer resents being used as a political tool. The fact of the matter is that if my suggestion is followed and a fiat is required from the Attorney General that he has received advice from the Solicitor General

that prosecution should proceed, we would avoid this smearing of the Police Force.

It would also prevent irresponsible actions by a Commissioner of Police who is prepared to burst into print on matters *sub judice* and try to influence the public in relation to particular offences.

The Hon. P. H. Lockyer: Say that outside the House.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: I will give it some thought. The commissioner is prepared to use powers of arrest in a way that even the Law Society—which is not known as a hotbed of left wing political activity—considered to be wrong and improper.

People should not be afraid to go about their lawful business. People should not be afraid to do as other members from both sides of this House have done; that is, to help people who wish to cast postal votes. No-one should be frightened as people now are in this State, with a Federal election pending, to go around and help people who cannot get to the polling booths and to give them assistance to make a postal vote.

That is the interpretation which the Commissioner of Police, the complainant in these cases, and the law officers of the Attorney General, who represents the police, put up as constituting the offence; that is, anyone who induces or persuades someone to cast a postal vote needs no dishonest intent. It is not in any sense dishonest to take a vote from someone who wants to cast a postal vote. It is an offence simply to suggest to a person that he has a right and an obligation to cast a postal vote and to facilitate that action. The Hon. Sandy Lewis, whose histrionics will not be recorded in *Hansard*, may think my interpretation is wrong and, if so, I challenge him to read the transcript of the magistrate's decision of 10 June where he said that it was a ludicrous and ridiculous position for that person to be put in.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: I hope Mr Lewis has some knowledge of the facts, because it is an incontrovertible decision. One of the persons charged—a Mr Wilson from Derby—said after that he would never do anything like that again. This man was acquitted of any wrongdoing; a man who, according to the magistrate, had not been guilty of an offence under the Act. So, to induce someone to cast a postal vote, to get someone to use his democratic right, is considered to be something unlawful

Police: Letter of Shaker Morton

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: It is my view that is in marked contrast to the behaviour of the Commissioner of Police and his inability to do anything about what appears to be a seditious letter written to a newspaper called the *Kimberley Echo* and published in that newspaper and which said, "It is time to start shooting and stop talking."

According to the Minister for Police and Traffic in reply to a question asked of him the other day, the reason the police have not done anything about this apparently seditious letter is that they cannot find its author. They must be like blind Freddy if they cannot take steps against sedition which is published in a newspaper readily available in Kununurra. It does not matter if they cannot find Shaker Morton, they can find the newspaper.

It is with some concern I note that the Attorney General has done nothing about this issue although it has been raised with him.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: You know very well why. Do not go on like that.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: The Attorney General has the responsibility for administering the Criminal Code and it does not matter whether or not he can find Shaker Morton; the offence of sedition is a serious one. It was May when the Hon. Ron Davies made a complaint, and the Attorney General has done nothing.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: Nor do we have facts.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: The Attorney General does because he has a copy of the *Kimberley Echo*. I am sure the Commissioner of Police has a copy in his custody.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams): Order!

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: I challenge the Attorney General to say—

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. If I call for order from this Chair I expect order. I ask the Hon. Peter Dowding to moderate his volume.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: The Attorney General shouted at me that he does not have the facts. Why does he not ask the Commissioner of Police whether or not he has a copy of the *Kimberley Echo* of the requisite date and a copy of the letter in it?

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: I will bring in a megaphone.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: Is the Attorney General prepared to tell this House whether or not it is a fact that the commissioner has a copy of the requisite edition of the *Kimberley Echo*?

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: I am not responsible for the Commissioner of Police. The member should know that.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: The Attorney General ought to be—

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: Cannot be.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: The Attorney General has a responsibility for the proper administration of the Criminal Code. It has taken over five months to deal with this serious charge of sedition, yet the Attorney General is not interested in talking about it.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: I deal with facts, not fantasy.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: It is interesting that the Attorney General is not prepared to answer this particular issue. The facts of the matter are that, firstly, that particular edition of the *Kimberley Echo* contained a letter which talked about shooting people.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: Have I made my point?

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: Certainly there is a clear section of the Criminal Code which makes provision for the serious offence of sedition, yet the Attorney General makes a joke of a complaint which was made over five months ago and acts as if nothing has happened. That is typical of the way this Government administers the law. When it suits it, it is in like Flynn. The Government had senior detectives in the Kimberley area in a matter of days investigating alleged malpractices of the Electoral Act, yet charges are dismissed because the complaints are fantasies. But with a serious matter like sedition the Government is not prepared to do anything.

That is typical of the political way this Government uses the Commissioner of Police and the way the commissioner is prepared to be used. The worst feature of this is that it casts a cloud over the honourable police officers in the force who hate the thought of their commissioner being manipulated.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: (The Hon. R. J. L. Williams): Before I call the Hon. Sandy Lewis I say again that, in the absence of the President, I will not tolerate any further outbursts or interjections. The Hon. Sandy Lewis.

Police: Criticism by Hon. Peter Dowding

THE HON. A. A. LEWIS (Lower Central) [9.22 p.m.]: There are several things I want to deal with which have been brought up during this adjournment debate and the first is the shocking tirade given by the previous member who spoke (the Hon. Peter Dowding). I think he should be ashamed of himself in coming into this House and talking about the Commissioner of Police the way he did. It was a shameful affair. He was challenged by interjection to say those things outside this place.

Too often we find members of the Australian Labor Party, when things are not going the way they would wish, making snide and unwarranted remarks in this place about the Commissioner of Police and about law in this State. On behalf of most other honourable members in this House I dissociate myself from those sort of tactics. I am sure I do so on behalf of all members except the Hon. Peter Dowding.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Hear, hear!

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: His own party will not give him any support in this place insofar as what he has said. The members of his party are embarrassed.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: His own party can speak for itself.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: He indicated the police were political tools and then he got onto the subject of sedition. He was yelling like a banshee and the Hon. Leader of the House could not make even the mildest of interjections. When he was able to make an interjection he did so by cupping his hand and shouting and asking for facts which the honourable member did not provide.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: He got them.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: As a learned and legal gentleman, Mr Dowding knows perfectly well that the sort of tirade he gave tonight would never be accepted in a court of law. He has been given a very loose rein in this place and I just hope that in the future he is prepared to stand up outside this Parliament and say the things he says in this place. Otherwise his total credibility will disappear out the door. Ever since he has been here we have heard this sort of thing.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: Deal with the facts. I gave facts.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order!

Australian Labor Party: Wealth Tax or Capital Gains Tax

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I move now to the speech given by the Hon. J. M. Berinson. I guess he did his best to defend the Australian Labor Party's policy. He admitted that the Labor Party believed in some form of capital tax.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: I did not admit it, I said it.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am sorry if I twisted the honourable member's words. He said that the Labor Party platform centres around some form of capital tax. He said that could be found in his party's platform, his party's Budget speech, and his party's policy speech.

He went on to do what his Federal leader does; he started to sidestep into subjects such as preliminary inquiries and said that now the ALP had a set policy it did not expect it to come into operation in the first three years.

We have all read what has happened to the share market during the last couple of days because of the possibility—there is none really—of the ALP coming to power. Share prices are dropping drastically. Mr Berinson asked us to show how a capital gains tax is unfair or disastrous and he went on to cite the situation in the US and other countries. I pointed out the minor amount of \$300 million—

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: That is one-eighth of the petrol tax.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is right. The petrol levy is there for a good reason, but no-one has yet told me of a good reason for a capital gains tax or a wealth tax.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Do you think an income tax is a good idea?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am dealing with things in the order in which the member dealt with them. If I may continue I will prove that, despite Mr Berinson's great experience in financial matters, the Australian Labor Party knows nothing about financial management. That is the crux of the whole thing. I do not go along with Mr Pike's \$200 000 fund, because that can be altered.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I agree, and that is the point I made.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is one of the fears Mr Pike expressed.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: He is very fearful.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: When Mr Hetherington is finished I might get on with my speech.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: What happens to companies when they have this wealth tax taken off the top? What happens when this resource tax is taken off the top? Who suffers in the end with this capital gains tax and wealth tax?

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Why not ask who gains in the end?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Who suffers in the end? Private enterprise has money taken away from it and it is given to the Government. The shareholder, the small shareholder of big business companies such as BHP, suffers. Those shareholders will suffer and if they do not suffer, the consumer will.

I happen to be one of those who represent consumers; not ideologies, but people. I think the Labor Party forgot about people when it started talking about a wealth tax and capital gains tax because the people are the ones who will be hurt finally. It is all right to talk about income tax and the effect of it. I do not like it either. The people who will be hurt again are the consumers at the end of the line, or the small investors. They are the people who will be hurt by the wealth tax and the capital gains tax.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: How does that operate differently from income tax?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will give an explanation.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: I am sure it will be a better one.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am not so sure that it will be. We have an income tax system which none of us likes; and no-one will ever like income tax. However, it is a graded income tax. Both the Whitlam Government and the Fraser Government told us that we would have an inquiry into income tax but neither did very much about it. I do not believe either Government is blameless in this regard.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: The Fraser Government did a lot. It increased it.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The Fraser Government increased tax but the levels increased also. When the Fraser Government came to power there was a rampant inflation rate and the Fraser Government has pulled that inflation rate back. Five years later that rate is not as violent as it was during the Whitlam Government. The Whitlam Government used the wonderful panacea that the world inflation rate was going up and so Australia's rate had to go up, too. The Fraser Government has proved that world inflation can increase but Australia's can stay down and

therefore has put Australia in a competitive position with the rest of the world.

I do not know whether or not Mr Pike is correct when he quotes the amount of \$200 000. I am not interested. I am interested in the great flexibility the Labor Party uses in its platform and I am interested in the statements of Mr Berinson tonight. With this great flexibility there is to be \$300 million ripped off in a wealth or capital gains tax. Where is the flexibility in seeing \$300 million being taken off? There is no flexibility in that whatsoever. That is the first thing which is completely inflexible about the Labor Party policy.

We have talked about windfall profits coming into business and I wonder if the windfall profits of a company like BHP—about which Mr Berinson spoke so eloquently—will be one of the first to be ripped off. It will be interesting to see the Labor Party's attitude on that matter.

Companies risk a lot of capital in developing work. They risk losing money.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: They get tax credits for that.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: What a great thing for the shareholders of BHP that the companies get credit for it. The whole financial thrust of capital gains is again hurting the little man. So, BHP has to decide to split its production into hematite, oil, iron ore, and steel and then go further and further down the drain getting tax credits and going broke. It is incredible indeed that the Labor Party looks at this matter in such a way.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: Now we know why Mr Berinson sold his BHP shares.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: We assume that there is something not quite right with Mr Berinson's speech; and that is that the Labor Party may be elected; but I begin to wonder when Mr Berinson says that Mr Hayden's voice would outweigh Senator Walsh's voice. That is very interesting to me because I thought that these decisions would be made in Caucus.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: The policy speech has never been drawn up by Caucus; it is the prerogative of the leader.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: There have been many parts of Labor Party policy speeches which have been wiped aside by Caucus in the past.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: When?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: In the Whitlam years.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Give me an example.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Does Mr Berinson really want examples? If an attendant would come over here I will give the examples to him to give to Mr Berinson so that he may read them for himself. I have never been so horrified in my life to hear this. It is obviously a very sore point whether Caucus or Mr Hayden makes the decisions. None of them can make a decision but it is not for me to be critical of the ALP. That party is doing its damndest to kill itself.

Now we will move on to that light of my life, Mr Hetherington, and his brilliant economic expose in his speech.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I have never used economics in my speeches.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The honourable member has never used anything. It was not bad for a nothing speech. It left me with no doubt that Mr Hetherington knew nothing about the ALP economic policy.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Nothing I say leaves you in any doubt because you have made up your mind before I speak.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I take exception to that comment because I was not drawn into this argument until Mr Berinson put forward the ALP's policy. I then followed on and took notes from Mr Hetherington's speech.

When the ALP does things there is no time limit. The Liberal Party policy says it does not mind, but the ALP does.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Do you deny it?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I do not deny it at all. I make the point that Mr Berinson spends his time going to Adelaide to set up a Federal platform and the platform has no time limit. In the terms of time, it could go on for a million years hence, instead of guiding and attempting to give an alternative for this country in its immediate future. This rubbish that the ALP goes on with in its election speech is almost unrepeatable.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: The voters do not think so.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If Mr Dowding will speak to us on 21 October we will see what has been said. I think I will still be standing here with a grin on my face on 21 October and it will not be a wry one at that. The ALP members' speeches on the wealth tax and capital gains tax was the ALP's last stand. That party has agreed that we need \$300 million but it still says that we need an inquiry into it. It feels that as a democratic socialist party there must be another inquiry.

That inquiry would go on for years and get nowhere.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: You would rather have it quickly?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I do not think that a wealth or capital gains tax will ever hit this country. The idea of using the United Kingdom and the United States as examples—

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Western Europe, Canada and New Zealand.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is why we have our immigration rate. People want to come to this country so that they do not have to pay that tax. The businesses of those countries come here to get away from that tax.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: Don't talk nonsense. They all stay in their own countries making money and paying capital gains tax.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: There sounds the voice of a lawyer who has proved with that one simple statement that he knows nothing about business. To continue with Mr Hetherington's speech, he said, "We are aware of the problems of the farmers." "The ALP has always been aware . . ." I remember a man who said they have never had it so good. He was a big fellow and he said he went into various places and the farmers told him they had never had it so good. Now, we have Mr Hetherington, drawing the longest bow, which must have taken all his strength, to say, "We are aware of the problems of the farmers." I almost burst out laughing.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: Do you deny that they are bearing an unfair part of the fuel tax? Do you deny that, or are you happy with it?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will deal with that matter shortly, and I will deal with Mr Dowding's comments on fuel tax.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: I think your electors would like to know.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: My electors know my stand; that is why they elected me with a vastly increased majority in places like Collie and Warren.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: Do you think the farmers are paying an unfair share of the fuel tax?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I said I would answer that before I finish my speech. How can I get that through to the member? Must I tell him through you, Mr President?

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member will resume his own speech.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Hetherington said that the ALP would work the matter out in public. We have seen the ALP work things out in public. The name Khemlani comes to mind. We know what the ALP worked out in public.

I am sorry to delay the House, but the attack by the ALP tonight deserves some answer. Mr Dowding talked about wriggling around. We saw him wriggling when the Leader of the House asked him for some facts, and he did not give them. I will now talk about something Mr Dowding wants to talk about: Fuel. I wonder who removed fuel equalisation?

The Hon. Peter Dowding: What good is it doing for the people in my electorate?

Fuel: Australian Labor Party Policy

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I guess Mr Dowding was still in knickerbockers when Whitlam removed fuel equalisation. Mr Dowding can remember things he wants to remember for a couple of days, but he cannot remember back to the history of the fuel business. I have heard people say he is just a tourist in his own electorate; that may be because fuel is a bit expensive up there.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: It is very expensive.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Let us have a look at the fuel situation and at what this country is going to do for fuel. Mr Dowding is screaming about a very small percentage. A gentleman called Keating announces some funny policies, but his petrol policy is virtually the same as the Government's.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: It is not.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Except for one thing, it is virtually the same as the Government's. Mr Dowding can shake his head and look embarrassed, but he knows perfectly well I am right. The only difference in the oil policies of the two major parties is related to old oil.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Considering that is 70 per cent of our consumption, that is not a small item.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Berinson is not right. He is doing what he tried to do with Mr Pike, but I do not haze so easily, and I do not get so upset.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: That is a matter of opinion. You are entitled to your own judgment.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: Are the farmers paying an unfair percentage or are they not?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: No. We have to keep this nation going and we have to keep oil exploration going which, as the honourable

member is too young to remember, practically disappeared off the map during the Whitlam Government because under that Government there was no incentive at all for anybody to explore. If the Hayden Government or "the troika" ever came to power we would be in the same position. Exploration would stop straightaway.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: But you just said the policies were the same on new oil.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will take time out in Committee to explain to the honourable member something about resources and oil—and perhaps farming—to give him a broad outline.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: I am sorry I asked.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The Federal Government is handling the oil situation in a way which will save this nation—and if we talk about oil, we are talking about the 15-month moratorium that the ALP would put on fuel prices.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: It is not 15 months.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Well, 12 months. It started off at 18, then came down to 15, and it may be down to 12. But it will be many a long year hence that the ALP gets into Government. The Australian farmer and motorist can have it one way or the other. They can have a step-by-step rise or have it as the ALP wants it, with a huge rise in one hit.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: When?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: As our present old oil runs out, the price will go straight up in the air, with the sort of inflation which the Labor Party is notorious for giving this country.

Police: Criticism by Hon. Peter Dowding

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Pike was quite right to bring this subject forward in debate tonight. We had a shameful exhibition by one member who insulted the Police Force and the Attorney General.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: I did not insult the Police Force. I was very careful to point out that there are many decent coppers.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: He said, "The police are political tools."

The Hon. Peter Dowding: I did not say that. I said it was shameful that they should be used as political tools.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: And that is not an insult? I think I should leave the matter on that note—that an honourable member of this House

thinks that calling the police "political tools" is not an insult to the Police Force.

Adjournment Debate: Comments of Hon. Peter Dowding

THE HON. I. G. PRATT (Lower West) [9.51 p.m.]: I am somewhat concerned at the turn which adjournment debates have taken recently. I do not really agree with it. But, as this is the situation with which we are faced, it would be remiss of me if I did not rise tonight to refer briefly to the reports in the newspaper the day after a previous day of sitting relating to comments made in this House by the Hon. Peter Dowding and made in another place by another member.

On that occasion I reminded the Hon. Peter Dowding of the abuse he had hurled across the floor of this House at the Hon. Bill Withers in relation to comments the honourable member had made in error in this House and for which he had apologised. I suggested the Hon. Peter Dowding should take up the challenge he had made to the Hon. Bill Withers and repeat in the open the statements he had made in this House, to afford the two gentlemen he had libelled the opportunity to take action—the action he had said the gentlemen in the previous incident should have been able to take.

In the Press the next day or the day after, the two gentlemen referred to in Mr Dowding's speech completely repudiated the allegations he had made, which one of the gentlemen called lies. He did not mince matters; he said they were lies, and he is reported in the Press as saying the allegations were lies.

Mr Dowding had claimed the two gentlemen were associates. They had said quite openly and in public that they were not associates and far from being associates it was over 12 months since they had any contact at all. I have watched the Press since to see Mr Dowding follow the Hon. Bill Withers' example by making an apology publicly and giving the two gentlemen the opportunity to take the action which he purports to uphold in this House. I have not seen any such apology. Either he has been given some protection from the Press—which I doubt—or he has not been game to face up to the challenge he gave to the Hon. Bill Withers. If that is the situation, I think it is disgusting.

I was very distressed at the way the Hon. Bill Withers—a very sincere and honourable member of this House—has been abused and berated over recent weeks, and I am concerned that the member who has done this does not stand up in

the House. If he is not prepared to do that, he should be prepared to follow the example set by the Hon. Bill Withers and make an apology in this House. It had been my intention to suggest that he take advantage of Standing Order No. 75, and that this House might give him the indulgence to make a personal explanation in which he could make an apology to those two gentlemen who have completely repudiated the claims he made. Unfortunately, at this time I do not have the opportunity to suggest that to him.

Australian Labor Party: Wealth Tax and Capital Gains Tax

THE HON. P. G. PENDAL (South-East Metropolitan) [9.55 p.m.]: I make a very brief contribution to the remarks made by the Hon. Bob Pike, which were defended by the Hon. Joe Berinson, regarding the Labor Party's proposal for a wealth or resources tax.

The kernel of what the Hon. Joe Berinson put to the House was that the Labor Party had made it clear, through Mr Hayden, in repudiation of Senator Walsh, that a resources or wealth tax would not be introduced during the first three years of a Labor Government should it be elected on 18 October.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Senator Walsh did not say it would be introduced in the first three years.

The Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I will accept that point. It is not germane to what I am getting at anyway. Mr Hayden has made it clear—so we are told through the public media—that a wealth tax would not be introduced by a Federal Labor Government during its first term of office if it were elected on 18 October. That assurance has been repeated in this place tonight by the Hon. Joe Berinson.

The point I make in support of Mr Pike is: How much faith can we have in that sort of a guarantee, given firstly by Mr Hayden and then repeated by Mr Berinson? Mr Berinson quite rightly pointed out that the Labor Party leader, as is customary and traditional, always has the right to determine the priority in timing for the implementation of Labor policy. I accept his point on that as well. However, I return to the point as to how much faith anyone can have in, or how much credence anyone can put on, the assurance given by Mr Hayden that there would be no resources tax in the first three years.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: He did not say there would be no resources tax; he said there would be no capital tax.

The Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I will accept that. We must bear in mind, that was the chief point on which the Hon. Joe Berinson based his argument in this House tonight.

I would like to refer to a recently published book called *Hawke—The Definitive Biography* by John Hurst. On page 141 of the book reference is made to a time early in the last decade when the Labor Party was preparing to go to a Federal election, and the author says—

In spite of considerable heat on the question of taxation, consensus was reached. Hawke argued that Labor should not commit itself against increasing direct taxes, because a government in office might find such a measure necessary at some future time. He was supported by Clyde Cameron. Whitlam and the shadow Treasurer, Frank Crean, took the opposite view. Crean saw no need to increase the rate of taxation because additional revenue would accrue to the government from economic growth.

I am coming to the point which effectively counters the Hon. Joe Berinson's argument. To continue—

Whitlam, backing Crean, said he was not prepared to go through a campaign in which his own policy speech could be quoted to show that he was proposing to increase the rates of taxation; to do so would be political folly.

That is a reasonable political judgment in itself. I quote again—

The meeting was informal—

The meeting was between Crean, Whitlam, Hawke, and Cameron.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: Is that the same Mr Crean who wanted to put a tax on gold?

The Hon. P. G. PENDAL: It is the same Mr Crean. I continue to quote—

The meeting was informal, and therefore no resolutions were put and no votes were taken but a consensus was eventually reached that no commitment would be made to fund the promised programmes with higher direct taxes. Since Hawke's argument was felt to have some merit, a loophole would be

introduced into the speech, which took the form of saying that there was no need for tax increases because of the rate of growth. "It was so open ended, we could have driven a horse and cart through it," one of Whitlam's former aides recalls, "We could have said a year later that unfortunately we've to raise taxes."

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: What is the relevance of that?

The Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I am surprised that a man of Mr Berinson's astuteness has missed the relevance.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: It has eluded me.

The Hon. P. G. PENDAL: The relevance of it is that the words of Mr Hayden which appeared in the newspaper tonight and which were mouthed by the Hon. Joe Berinson in this Chamber, that there would not—categorically—be that form of taxation introduced in the life of the first three-year term of a Hayden Labor Party Government, are similar to those made seven or eight years ago. An assurance has been given which the Hon. Joe Berinson surely will not repudiate, since he repeated that assurance only a few moments ago.

I make the point that the same sort of assurances were given only seven or eight years ago, but with the full knowledge that behind the scenes people were working out a way to create a loophole. That assurance was given publicly, like the assurance given today. Based on the record of the ALP, do we know that people like Hayden are not now sitting behind the scenes working out a loophole for the 1980 election in the same way as they were building the loophole for the 1974 or 1972 election?

Based on that, Mr Berinson's argument collapses. The only other point I would make is that all the debate has been largely an academic exercise in any case, because after 18 October Mr Hayden simply will not have the chance to introduce the sort of resources tax that has been talked about, or any other tax.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.03 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

RACING

Horse: Sprint

274. The Hon. J. M. Brown (for the Hon. TOM McNEIL), to the Minister representing the Premier:

- (1) As the Vice Chairman of the WA Turf Club, (Dr Neville Way) has given a completely different report on the discussion held with the Premier on 19 September 1980, will the Premier consider calling for his dismissal under section 34(G) of the WA Turf Club constitution, which reads—

34. The Committee may expel any member who . . .

(G) Has in the opinion of the Committee committed any act which the Committee may consider renders it undesirable that he should continue as a member, provided always that no member shall be expelled by the Committee until after he shall have been given an opportunity to show cause to the Committee why he should not be expelled?

- (2) If not, why not?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) and (2) The question is regarded by the Premier as being irrelevant and not a matter for Government consideration or comment.

SHIPPING

State Shipping Service: New Vessels

275. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When will the two new State Shipping Service vessels be delivered?
- (2) What are the terms of their lease or purchase?
- (3) In what trade are they going to be engaged, e.g. north-west-Darwin or Eastern States trade?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) The best estimate given by Burmeister & Wain on 3 October 1980 was delivery at the end of the 2nd quarter or beginning of the 3rd quarter 1981.
- (2) The terms of the charter parties are substantially the same as for MV *Kimberley*.

- (3) The ships will replace MV *Nyanda* and MV *Boogalla* in the north-west and Darwin trade.

ELECTORAL

Postal Votes: Prosecutions

276. The Hon. R. Hetherington (for the Hon. PETER DOWDING), to the Minister representing the Minister for Police and Traffic:

I refer to a series of charges launched against persons in connection with the 1980 election in the Kimberley and concerning postal votes—

- (1) Is the Minister aware—

- (a) that a decision in some of those cases was handed down on 10 June 1980;
- (b) the time for appeal against those decisions expired six weeks ago;
- (c) that a number of charges are outstanding in relation to the complaints issued in March 1980; and
- (d) a number of persons are, therefore, being unfairly dealt with in that charges instituted over nine months ago have not been proceeded with?

- (2) Will the Minister investigate the reasons why the outstanding complaints are not being proceeded with, and ensure that they are either proceeded with or withdrawn?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

The Minister for Police and Traffic advises as follows—

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) Yes.
- (d) No.
- (2) These matters will be dealt with in the appropriate courts. The parties are represented by eminent counsel.

RACING*Horse: Sprint*

277. The Hon. J. M. Brown (for the Hon. TOM McNEIL), to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) In view of the Chief Secretary's answer to question 265 of 2 October 1980, would the Minister now confirm that the following committee members of the WA Turf Club—Dr N. J. Way, J. C. Sheedy, E. I. H. Jarvis, K. F. Hampson, R. J. Peters, M. R. H. Holmes A Court, Dr. J. P. Carroll, J. S. Bull, J. E. Hayes and B. A. E. Saunders—attended the meeting held in the Premier's office, and in the presence of the Chief Secretary, on 19 September 1980?
- (2) As the Premier and the Vice Chairman of the WA Turf Club, (Dr. Neville Way) have given conflicting reports on what transpired at that meeting, will the Chief Secretary confirm that no ultimatum was given to the WA Turf Club Committee to introduce sprint horse racing?
- (3) Is the Chief Secretary prepared to call for the dismissal of Dr. Neville Way under section 34(G) of the WA Turf Club constitution which reads—

34. The Committee may expel any member who . . . (G) Has in the opinion of the Committee committed any act which the Committee may consider renders it undesirable that he should continue as a member, provided always that no member . . . shall be expelled by the Committee until after he shall have given an opportunity to show cause to the Committee why he should not be expelled?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

The Chief Secretary has advised me that the answers to the questions raised by the Hon. T. McNeil are as follows—

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It has been clearly stated both by the Premier and by the Chief Secretary that no ultimatum was given to the Western Australian Turf Club Committee at the meeting referred to.
- (3) Not applicable.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT*Car Parks*

278. The Hon. D. K. Dans, to the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

If a local authority provides a car park, at a beach resort, to accommodate 100 cars—e.g. within 30 metres of a built-up area—is the local authority obliged to provide a public toilet and water?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

No.

BUILDING INDUSTRY*Builders' Registration Board*

279. The Hon. I. G. PRATT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Did the Builders' Registration Board request an amendment to the Builders' Registration Act in 1975 which would have given them control over single occupancy dwellings of more than one storey?
- (2) If "Yes" to (1), what was the fate of that amendment?
- (3) Has any subsequent amendment to the Builders' Registration Act been agreed to by Parliament which either—
 - (a) had the intent; or
 - (b) has the effect;

of giving the Builders' Registration Board authority over owner-builders' building single occupancy residences of more than one storey?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) No. The board sought an amendment to clarify the existing terminology "on ground level".
- (2) Amendment did not proceed.
- (3) No.