

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 4th October, 1977

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

BILLS (7): ASSENT

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

1. Acts Amendment (Pensioners Rates Rebates and Deferments) Bill.
2. Perth Medical Centre Act Amendment Bill.
3. Local Government Act Amendment Bill.
4. Construction Safety Act Amendment Bill.
5. Physiotherapists Act Amendment Bill.
6. Child Welfare Act Amendment Bill.
7. Fertilizers Bill.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

Tabling

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I have for tabling the report of the Auditor-General for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1977.

The report was tabled (see paper No. 270).

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Thursdays

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [5.02 p.m.]: I move—

That on Thursday, 6th October, and on each Thursday thereafter the House shall, unless otherwise ordered, meet for the despatch of business at 10.30 a.m.

Members will realise that at about this time, after the recess for the Royal Show, it is customary to examine the sitting hours and vary them according to the amount of business which is coming up, and the way the session is shaping. During this session, we have the problem that not only do we have the Address-in-Reply but also the general Estimates debate within the same sitting period—in other words, between the time we met at the end of July and when we rise before Christmas.

I should give notice now to members that, as was previously indicated, we will start a new session some time next year. Probably, it will be some time in March, although I cannot be precise

at the moment because of the date on which Easter falls. Once we return to that sequence of sittings, it means we can have the Address-in-Reply debate in the so-called autumn session in the first half of the year and the Budget debate in the spring session, or the second half of the year. However, for election years we have not yet found a better method than the one we have at present.

The sessional orders now provide for the House to meet at 2.15 p.m. on Thursdays, and my motion seeks to change that to 10.30 a.m. This will provide us with extra debating time, bearing in mind that in addition to legislation, we have the Budget debate, both for the general Estimates and the departmental Estimates, the latter arising after the general debate has been completed.

Members will also note the next motion deals with Wednesdays, or private members' day, but I do not intend to transgress Standing Orders by intruding into the subject matter of that motion.

Mr Speaker, if I recall correctly, when the House sits on Thursday mornings it is customary for you to leave the Chair at 12.45 p.m. and resume the Chair at 2.15 p.m., after the luncheon break.

MR O'NEIL: I formally second the motion.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool—Leader of the Opposition [5.05 p.m.]): As the Premier indicated, it is getting near the time when such action should be taken. While supporting the motion, I have some comments to make in regard to the point the Premier made about sittings during election years. I think we are fast approaching the stage where we could have an autumn session of Parliament during election years, provided there were no change of Government. As it was, all members were called to Parliament to be sworn in and due to the retirement at the end of the last Parliament of the presiding officers and the necessity to continue the various committees, we elected our presiding officers.

There seems to be no logical reason that some Bills cannot be introduced in addition to an Address-in-Reply, and disposed of at this stage. Everybody could air his pet hates and theories immediately after an election, and get them out of the road, and we could be clear for the forthcoming Budget session.

This may not be a practical proposition when the Government changes hands, although some small Bills of a departmental nature could be introduced in addition to the Address-in-Reply. When Governments change, the new Government must formulate its legislative programme. However, all Governments anticipate they will

still be in office after an election and undoubtedly would have some sort of legislative programme mapped out, and some Bills close to being introduced.

As to the motion, I see nothing wrong with commencing at that time of the day. As a matter of fact, we should be looking at the possibility of sitting only during the daytime. The present hours of sitting are a lot of nonsense. When everybody else is going home, we come here after our other jobs to start another day's work. This is not reasonable in this day and age. No other organisation has retained such an attitude; only the Parliament of this State. Many other Parliaments have found other sitting times to be much more suitable.

It was once said the later sitting times permitted the transaction of business by the various Ministers, and that it was inappropriate to sit during the day. However, transportation and conditions being as they are today, I can see no reason not to change the hours. If the Ministers must spend additional time, they could do so before or after the sittings of the Parliament.

Mr Davies: They could use CB radios.

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, they could be issued with CB radios. When the Tonkin Government was in office, I well remember when travelling along Murray Street seeing the lights on in the office of the Minister for Health, who at that time was my colleague, the member for Victoria Park. When I arrived home I rang his private number and said, "It is time to go home."

Mr O'Neil: You had been at work, too.

Mr JAMIESON: It is not in the interests of the taxpayers that we are forced to work such extended hours, and we must find a better way.

I have no objection to commencing the sitting at 10.30 a.m. on Thursdays. All members are in Perth, anyway. I know that, like the rest of us, country members look at the clock on Thursdays and consider the distance they must travel between here and their homes on Thursday nights; they are anxious to get away. It is more appropriate to commence at 10.30 a.m. on Thursdays and make sure we finish reasonably early to enable country members to return to their electorates for the weekends. I support the motion.

Question put and passed.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE AND PRECEDENCE OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Wednesdays

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [5.09 p.m.]: I move—

That on Wednesday, 12th October, and on each Wednesday thereafter, the House shall, unless otherwise ordered, meet for the despatch of business at 2.15 p.m., and that Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day on each such Wednesday from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

Members know that at present, Wednesday generally is referred to as private members' day, because of the way sessional orders are worded, and that we meet at 4.30 p.m. on Wednesdays, as we will tomorrow. Private members' business continues throughout that day.

It has been found—I believe the device was introduced during the time of the Tonkin Government—that by having private members' business between 2.15 and 6.15 p.m. on Wednesdays, a considerable amount of private members' business could be transacted, and it would then be up to the Opposition to regulate its own business to obtain the maximum impact from the time allowed. It was also found possible to carry on private members' day longer than was possible before.

In my earlier years in this Parliament, if I remember correctly, it was not very long after the Royal Show that private members' day was suspended altogether, and one was then at the mercy of the House as to whether the House got around to debating private members' business on the notice paper. I think I broke the record once, when in Opposition the then Premier told me in the "wee small hours of the morning", "If you want to make yourself unpopular with your friends, you can reply to your motion." Members can imagine—my motion having been on the notice paper for many weeks—for how long I replied, at that hour of the morning with the House quickly moving to end the Session!

We do not want to get to that situation. I believe the device used for a prescribed time on Wednesdays was a sensible one, and ask members to support my motion.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool—Leader of the Opposition) [5.11 p.m.]: It is a change to hear the Premier saying that something introduced by the Labor Party is sensible; however, we must accept the compliment, few and far between as they are.

Private members' day is a very important day

in this Parliament. Some Parliaments do not have a day set aside for private members, but I believe it is very desirable to maintain the principle of granting special privileges to members, particularly Opposition members in order that they may introduce private legislation and move motions; if we can continue to set aside a day for private members until the end of the session, so much the better.

Mr Speaker, I recall that it was only about the time you entered Parliament that we even commenced autumn sittings. Prior to those days, it was difficult for members to travel from the far flung corners of the State to attend parliamentary sittings, and then return to their electorates at the end of each week. However, today members are able to jet to most central parts of the State in a few hours, and regular autumn sessions are now possible.

In those days, we used to sit from the end of July or the beginning of August until some time in November. The Premier must remember that the idea of having two sessions was to make the consideration of business less tedious and drawn-out. However, from what I can gather from the Clerks and others, all that has happened is that we now have about twice as much legislation to consider, and sit twice as long. If this is for the good of the people, I suppose that is the important thing. But there is no way of avoiding some form of regimenting the hours to accommodate Government business.

It would appear the Premier might be able to give us an idea before very long of what the legislative programme is likely to be, and whether very much will be of a contentious nature. The notice paper already contains a few items of business which will cause some hot tempers, and probably more offers to settle differences in a particular way!

However, we will deal with that when we come to it. In the meantime we have to go along with the Premier because the Government needing to get through its programme, is looking for the maximum amount of time. As the Premier has said, the Opposition will have to order its business to fit in with this time schedule, and I am sure we will be able to do just that.

Question put and passed.

RURAL RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Old (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) (No. 2)

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from the 20th September.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool—Leader of the Opposition) [5.16 p.m.]: Before proceeding with this debate I must complain to you, Mr Speaker, that only today the Auditor-General presented his report, through you, to the House. It is most difficult for the Opposition to formulate its case or to have a good look at the Budget statements and papers without reference to the Auditor-General's report. The financial statements and other papers are drawn up at the behest of the Government, not the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General finds all the critical parts of the financial statements of the past year but they are not disclosed until the time of the debate. I have not had time even to open the cover of the report. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I ask you to make sure that in future the debate does not proceed until the Opposition of the day has had reasonable access to the Auditor-General's report.

This is not the first occasion on which it has been late, and it has not always been late only during the term of office of a Liberal Government. But members will be able to understand my point about the difficulty of making the maximum number of critical or complimentary comments, whichever they be, without reference to a major analysis of the Budget of last year compared with this year's Budget.

Mr Speaker, the Premier's Budget is not an apocalyptic Budget. Last year I suggested that the Budget covered more than it revealed, and that proved to be the case in the long run. On this occasion there is no difference; and as the various sections unwind I shall show the House that there were good grounds for our suspicion last year that we were not being told as much about the finances of the State as we should have been told.

Recently I heard the Premier of New South Wales refer to this attitude as the typical hollow log stuffing in which Liberal Governments indulge. Fortunately for him, he has been able to find some of these hollow logs stuffed full of Treasury bills and has been able to use them effectively. The only good thing about this situation is that when a change of Government occurs in a couple of years' time I hope we will be able to find these hollow logs and unstuff them.

I wish to make it clear at the outset that the Opposition will not be voting against the passage of this Bill. I stress this point because neither here nor in another place do we deem it appropriate to

oppose the granting of revenue to the Government of the day for the purpose of administering the Government.

Mr Tonkin: They never had principles like that.

Mr JAMIESON: We refuse to adopt the cynical outlook held on occasions by members opposite when they have said that to change a Federal or State Government it might be appropriate to defeat a Supply Bill. Accordingly, we have rejected this notion because we consider that an Opposition has more roles than to deny supply to a Government. I realise that during the term of the Tonkin Government an attempt to do such a thing was made, but fortunately so far the other Chamber has not succumbed to pressure to reject a Supply Bill although it has certainly interfered with a large amount of legislation associated with the Supply Bill at a later stage.

I refer to that matter because I well remember the opportunistic occasion when the present Prime Minister used such a means to bring down an elected Government. Of course, I could go through the events which led up to that but it would gain nothing except to repeat some history of which we all know very well. The only purpose of it was to force an election. If we were able to force an election now I think the numbers of members opposite would not be in accordance with the numbers returned at the last election.

Mr Sibson: They would certainly increase.

Mr JAMIESON: The member for Bunbury is always on the increase with something and it is generally the price of used cars when he is about. Because of what I have just said, we do not believe that the end justifies the means. We do not believe in gaining power at any price. We wish to convince the people that when we come to power it will be for a purpose and because they are satisfied that our policies justified our winning an election. However, we will take every possible opportunity during this debate to expose the weaknesses, the shallowness, and the drabness of the Government of the day. We will show that most of the State's problems are real problems which have not been dealt with by the Government and that in dealing with the few problems which it does recognise the Government has not gone as far as it should have gone.

We think this Budget is unimaginative and irrelevant in its effect on the public generally. It is notable for what was left out rather than for what was included. I indicated earlier that I think it hides a lot which should have been disclosed to the public. One notable feature about it is the most unusual amount of cover given to it by *The West Australian*. I am very critical of that

newspaper in this regard. I have never known so many of its pages to be covered with so much nonsense, with the exception of the 1930s when it used to cover Parliament as though its reporters were *Hansard* reporters and many pages each day were contained in the Press. That was before the days of radio and television, but one cannot imagine why in recent times it needed to overprint such an amount of verbiage which I am sure not one in a hundred of its readers would have fully consumed. I doubt whether very many in that hundred would have consumed anything after reading the first page and the headlines on the other pages.

The speech which the Premier delivered when bringing down the Budget was inclined to be tedious, contradictory, and misleading. I shall indicate in a moment why we believe this to be so. He spent a long time on administrative trivia. The Budget speech told us all about the various little things but was very short on economic strategy; and *The West Australian*, presumably for want of better copy that day, carried it almost in its entirety.

The speech was certainly in parts strong on powerful rhetoric but weak in logical reasoning, and because of that I feel it was not as effectual as it should have been. It seemed to be the product of a very self-satisfied Government. As I have said in several releases to the Press, this Government seems to have run out of ideas and excuses; it seems to have run out of steam and to have thrown in the towel in respect of many things in the community in which it should have an interest.

The Budget contains many faults but some of them are more glaring than others. The Treasurer made much of the proposed employment plan when he delivered his speech. It will do little to tackle the real unemployment problems in this State. The Budget was totally deficient in measures to cope with our serious and worsening unemployment problem.

The Treasurer's claim that the Budget did not increase taxes and charges was an idle one. I have dealt with that also in news releases. In the light of the increases this Government has already perpetrated this financial year on the overburdened populace, it is clear that this was an empty and misleading boast. Since the beginning of the financial year, only a few months ago, there have been 11 separate increases. Goodness knows what else is to come.

These 11 increases have brought in more than \$66 million for this Government over and above its previous income. Certainly it is imposing a

great strain on low-income families and is demoralising the business community which is not picking up as it should be.

The Budget speech virtually ignored the severity of the continuing high levels of inflation which are bedevilling the State and the nation. The misguided policies of the Federal and State Liberal Governments and their suggestions of a way back to economic recovery are not proving to be successful at all. The Treasurer's speech revealed that he is still committed to the discredited concept of an investment-led recovery. This is despite the fact that the notion's strongest supporters, including the Prime Minister, have long since given it away; they do not believe that this is the way successfully to establish an economic recovery.

In the Budget there is one token gesture of assistance to the ailing rural sector which is of some importance to that sector. One of the few attractive features of the Budget is assistance to sporting teams but, in my opinion, this is inadequately funded to be of any significant benefit.

The Budget is certainly poorly accounted and inaccurate as a measure of the way in which public funds are used. Unemployment remains the major and most pressing problem in this State. At the end of August, 26 595 Western Australians could not get work, which represents 4.94 per cent of the work force.

About 1972, during the term of the Tonkin Government, which is going back a little now, there was high unemployment, but by the end of our term of office we were able successfully to get it down to a reasonable figure. Since the present Government has been in office—and it is now in its fourth year—we have seen an increasing amount of unemployment; and no juggling of figures by the Minister for Labour and Industry will convince those people who are unemployed.

The unemployment figure in this State has been high for some months. We have urged the Court Government continually to do something to alleviate the problem, but the Government has continually refused. In collaboration with its Federal colleagues, the Government has callously and deliberately followed a policy to create a pool of unemployed, and this is a most inhuman weapon if ever there was one. As many people as possible should be gainfully employed.

With a Federal election in the air one could not expect anything else but that the present State Government should decide it is time to try to do something about the unemployment situation in this State. The Government is trying to get the

figures down in case there is an early Federal election.

For a long time the idea of creating jobs did not seem to appeal at all to the present Government. For months and months it has ridiculed the idea of doing something to provide work for the unemployed. The Government has said that such a scheme is useless and wasteful, but now suddenly it has embraced the idea that it should do something in an effort to put people to work. It is certainly about time the Government took that attitude.

Until recently there has been a lot of muck-throwing with regard to dole bludgers and all sorts of people who were out of work and who should have been working. It is typical of this Government not to understand the real needs of the community. The job creation scheme which the Government has come up with now is a classic example of too little too late. It is a scheme which will not do very much to provide work for those who are unemployed.

The efforts of the Government should be directed to the provision of work for the unemployed young people in our community. One sees constantly examples of the great number of young people who are unable to obtain suitable employment and, therefore, they are not being suitably trained in commerce and industry so that they can take their effective place in the community.

The funds which have been allocated so far to the scheme proposed by the Government are quite inadequate. The scheme will not apply to the areas which have the greatest number of unemployed. The scheme will not provide jobs for those who need them most. The Ministers in the Government do not even know how the scheme will work out, or what its effects will be. We had an instance of the lack of knowledge by Ministers on the day after the introduction of the Budget when we thought we would carry out a little experiment in an attempt to find out what the Ministers were up to. We sought to find out whether they had really got around the ministerial table and worked out the problems.

By the simple expedient of asking a few questions we were able to determine that the Ministers had not worked out the problems associated with the unemployed. Surely no ministerial team would go into a system of job creation without having something before it to indicate approximately how many jobs would be created and in what area approximately those jobs would be created. When we asked the question of the Minister for Works he said we

should put the question on the notice paper. The Premier tried to be a little more explicit, but he was not sure how much would be spent on materials, and how much would be available for labour. Generally, the replies to our questions clearly indicated that the proposed scheme had not been well thought out by the Ministry.

I can recall schemes we discussed at various times when I was the Minister for Works. Schemes associated with the unemployment problem were fully discussed around the Cabinet table, and even the most dense member—if there were any, and I do not agree there were—of the Cabinet had some knowledge of the aims of the Government. However, that was not the case on this occasion. The Ministers were taken by surprise and they had no idea of what was to occur. One must then assume that the scheme did not receive the discussion and planning it should have.

The scheme put forward appears to amount to an admission by the Court Government that its glamorous election promise of 100 000 new jobs was nothing more than a cynical election stunt. The Treasurer's Budget speech attempted to make the proposed scheme look very much better than it actually is. The Treasurer mentioned a sum of \$4 million for local designers and contractors to be spent on minor works and maintenance. He also mentioned an extra \$3 million for the Public Works Department maintenance programme.

Let us look at those figures more closely. The sum of \$3 million for the Public Works Department maintenance programme amounted to an increase of approximately 22 per cent on what normally would have been allocated for that work. After allowing for inflation, based on last year's figures, the expenditure amounts to an increase of approximately 10 per cent—a pitiful sum which will not have any immediate impact on unemployment.

With regard to the \$4 million for private contractors, it is our fear that these funds will merely maintain the jobs of the skilled workers employed by small contractors who already have Public Works Department contracts. Those contracts may be due to run out and, as a result, workers would have been put off, but this allocation of funds might prop up that section. However, it will not increase employment.

It is our fear the money which is to be allocated will not create a significant number of new jobs, but merely maintain the jobs of those employed in that category at the present time and who would otherwise have been retrenched. To that extent,

the people at present employed as a result of those contracts would be grateful for this assistance.

As I have said, it seems likely the funds allocated for this purpose will merely maintain existing jobs, but will not create any new job opportunities. I agree the Government should take that action, but it is misleading and cruel to pass it off as a scheme which will create a significant number of new jobs.

The Government seems to have no idea at all of the amount of money which actually will be available to pay the wages of the workers. That was obvious from the reply to one of the questions we asked. The Minister who was questioned did not seem to have any idea of what the scheme was all about. The Ministers could not tell us whether the cost of materials and design work would have to be met out of the \$7 million. They could not even give us an estimate of how many new jobs would be created by the scheme.

The Ministers did not know how the scheme was to work. It is a remarkable scheme; the Government throws it up into the air and hopes it will come down right. It is similar to the most recently announced new plan with regard to our highway system between Perth and Fremantle. It has been thrown up into the air and the Government hopes that somehow the people will understand it. This latest idea involves about 15 schemes all tied into one.

Even if we allow for the dubious assumption that the proposed scheme will create new jobs, who will be employed and where will the jobs be created? Again, the Government does not know. It seems that a small sum of money is to be spread thinly over the whole of the State, rather than being spent in areas of greatest need. We on this side of the House accept that the Government cannot afford to provide enough money to take up all the unemployed, but we do believe the Government could have done a lot better than it has.

It would be sensible to spend the money in areas of greatest need and where there is most unemployment, such as at Kwinana, Geraldton, and Lockridge—areas which have more than twice the number of unemployed when compared with the overall average figures for the State. They are the areas of greatest need. It seems this course of action would be far too rational for the present Government to undertake. Instead of regionalising the scheme, a pitifully small sum of money will be spread over the whole of the State and it will hardly be noticed.

The expenditure of \$7 million will have very little effect on the unemployment situation in this

State. It would be interesting to know who will be employed under the scheme. Since the scheme concentrates on maintenance and minor works, it is fair to assume that it will affect skilled tradesmen mainly. However, as far as I know there is no great problem with skilled tradesmen at present. Most of them are getting some form of employment. It is the semi-skilled and unskilled workers, and the clerical workers, who require the boost of new job opportunities. Those people do not seem to be in the category for which further employment opportunities will be available—even if the projects which are to be undertaken do call for additional workers. The category of skilled workers is not in any need of a boost, whereas the categories I have mentioned do require a boost. Those people who need employment the most will get the least number of opportunities.

The proposed scheme is pitifully founded and ill-conceived, and it will be irrelevant to the greatest unemployment needs of the State. There should be a more serious approach to the unemployment situation.

The key elements of a successful job creation scheme should be as follows: Firstly, such a scheme would need to be adequately funded. The South Australian Government—and that State has a population slightly larger than ours—is spending more than three times as much as is Western Australia on job funding. In spending that sum of money, the Dunstan Government has not run South Australia into a huge Government deficit. New South Wales and Tasmania have done considerably more, already, than is proposed in the Western Australian Budget.

The second key element of a successful job creation scheme should be that a proportion of the funds be set aside to be spent on a matching grants basis with local government in a manner similar to that employed in the regional development scheme organised by the Whitlam Government. That was a very effective scheme. You would have been aware of it, Mr Deputy Speaker, because it allowed many local authorities to get jobs done at virtually half the labour costs. That scheme became very attractive to the ratepayers in this State. It is better to keep idle hands out of mischief by being creative. Far too much destruction and vandalism is caused by idle hands, and as local authorities suffer most as a result of that sort of damage, they were very grateful for the introduction of the scheme. A larger sum of money made available under such a scheme would certainly help to boost job creation, and the burden would be shared by the State Government and local authorities. I am sure the ratepayers throughout this State, in areas where

there is unemployment, would accept the responsibility of meeting some of the cost if they saw they were getting a better standard of community service.

Thirdly, the scheme should be concentrated in areas of highest unemployment. That seems to be logical, but the scheme proposed by the Court Government has disregarded this aspect.

Fourthly, the work undertaken should be labour intensive and, where possible, be capable of being performed by those people in the categories of highest unemployment.

In regard to heavy labour-intensive type work, an investigation should be carried out in built-up metropolitan areas which do not have effective sewerage systems. An endeavour should be made to use the funds of the local authorities for this purpose. I am referring to the well-built-up areas where many local authorities have nothing further to spend their money on apart from building palaces. They have completely developed footpaths, roads, and parks in every street. If these local authorities have a loan capacity under the provisions of the Act, the money could be used for sewerage works. Surely our programmes would be much better serviced by such loans.

Fifthly, the Government ought to employ its full quota of apprentices. Not only would such a course give employment to young men and women in need of it, but also it would give these people training for a lifetime career. It is a great pity the Government does not more clearly recognise its responsibility in this sphere. If the situation were examined fully, probably the Government would find that 500 or 600 young people could start a career training scheme under Government supervision. Very often the training in Government employment is far better than with private contractors where the work may be less varied.

Sixthly, civil servants ought to be given the option of early retirement without loss of benefits.

Of course, we put forward propositions of this type before the election, but unfortunately, they fell on deaf ears. This was mainly because 95 per cent of the population were employed, and many of these people were not in permanent positions. Because they faced the possibility of losing their jobs, they looked to the Government for future employment in view of its promise of 100 000 jobs. I am sure that the people who were unemployed took a great deal of notice of what we said, but unfortunately the other 95 per cent were looking to the future and relied on the Government's promise about employment.

The seventh proposition to which the

Government should give consideration would be to waive, for a specific period, additional taxes and charges incurred by private employers who employ extra people. The new provisions in regard to pay-roll tax may give some assistance in this way. However, a number of other steps could have been taken. The Government could grant concessions for a specified period to employers who engage additional labour. We put these ideas forward in a practical way and we suggest that they be incorporated in a job creation scheme. It is time the Government gave job creation the priority it deserves; that is, top priority. Unemployment is not a problem to worry about after everything else has been attended to. The most important thing in our community is to have the maximum number of workers gainfully employed.

The most significant aspect of the employment scheme announced in the Budget is not the number of jobs that will be created, but just where these jobs will be. Not surprisingly the Treasurer failed to mention this in his Budget speech. The announcement of the job creation scheme is a passive admission by the Court Government that its election promise of 100 000 jobs was a sham and a fraud. The claim that all these jobs would be available was a cynical election stunt, and certainly a most effective one. This promise was designed to catch votes and it was not a truthful prediction of the future.

I mentioned earlier that a few days before the election the Minister for Labour and Industry, when addressing young people at the Carine High School, said the Government would see that 100 000 jobs would be available in Western Australia within 18 months. Of course he has now said that he qualified that statement, but he did not. Neither of us had time to qualify anything, because we had seven minutes each in which to speak. He made this statement very clearly in my hearing, and within the hearing of hundreds of young people who will be disillusioned and disappointed. More people are unemployed now than at the time this statement was made by the Minister at the Carine High School.

We would like to know where these 100 000 new jobs are coming from. The Government always tells us of these things in the pipeline. I can well remember different people who told me certain things were in the pipeline. It is a classic phrase used by advisers to the Government. We are led to believe that jobs will come tumbling down this pipeline like water in a flood year and there will be employment for everyone. When one examines this promise closely, one finds there is nothing very much in it at all.

Now the election is well and truly over, is the Government prepared to admit the truth that 100 000 jobs are not available and are not likely to be available in the foreseeable future? If these jobs did eventuate, we would have further problems in regard to development and housing, and we would find many people flocking here from other States to compete with our own unemployed.

If unemployment is to be alleviated in this State, the private sector needs to employ more people. However, the actions of the Court Government seem designed to prevent private employers engaging more labour. In the first three months of this year private industry—as well as nearly every householder in this State—has been hit with crippling increases in Government taxes and charges. These imposts are driving up the costs of industry and they are preventing industry from employing more people to expand outwards. Perhaps the most fatuous statement the Treasurer made in his speech was his announcement, as one of the Budget highlights, that there will be no increases in taxes and charges.

Mr Davies: Well done!

Mr JAMIESON: Nor should there be, Mr Speaker. Certainly employers in Western Australia cannot afford to pay any more after the increases that were imposed in the first three months of the financial year and the others imposed throughout the Court Government's term of office.

I mentioned earlier that no fewer than 11 categories of Government charges have been increased in the first three months of the financial year, yielding an additional \$66 million for the Government. How idle, how empty, how false, for the Treasurer to claim in his Budget speech there will be no increase in taxes and charges. This was certainly a hypocritical utterance if ever there was one! In the first three months of the financial year he levied the following additional imposts on Western Australia—

Excess water rates increased by an average of 15 per cent

Country water rates increased by an average of 30 per cent

Electricity charges increased by an average of 11 per cent

Gas charges increased by an average of 21 per cent.

I would certainly like to know a little more about the gas charges.

Mr Sibson: We should be charged for gas emanating from here.

Mr JAMIESON: The member for Bunbury ought to know all about that. For a time I was the Minister responsible for the State Electricity Commission. At that time negotiations were taking place with WANG for the supply of natural gas. The then General Manager of the SEC (Mr Gillies) told me that because of the low price at which gas was made available to the SEC, it would be able to carry the cost of conversion of all domestic appliances where conversion was necessary. He told me also that the SEC would carry this cost over a few years, and that then the cost of gas to the consumers would be decreased.

The contract price must have been known to Mr Gillies when he made his statement to me. However, when I asked recently whether the price of gas had been increased by WANG, and if so, to what degree, I received the stony answer that the price was a secret and it could not be disclosed. Until it is proved otherwise, one is entitled to assume that WANG has not increased the price of gas, and that therefore the Government has used this as a taxing measure. I think the SEC originally entered into a contract with WANG for 15 years, and I would be very surprised if that contract was not a firm one. Therefore, I am fairly sure that this 21 per cent increase in gas charges is really another tax.

It is all very well to seek increased revenue for the State and perhaps to assist the State Energy Commission, but actions of this type do not help the establishment of more industry that is likely to need this commodity.

In addition to the other increases I mentioned, the fixed quarterly electricity rate rose from \$2.04 to \$6 in the interconnected grid system and from \$5 to \$6 in the country system. The gas charges for industry and commerce rose by an average of 20 per cent. Westrail freight rates were increased by an average of 17.5 per cent.

In the middle of August the slaughtering fees at abattoirs were increased by between 9 and 25 per cent. From the 1st October motor vehicle licence fees were increased by 30 per cent, and at the same time drivers' licence fees were increased by 40 per cent.

State Housing Commission rents in the metropolitan area were increased by between 34 and 37 per cent. Let us look at this increase for a minute. Before the last election, the Labour Party sent the shadow Minister for Housing to the Eastern States to find out what was happening in regard to housing in those States. Because there

was a very clear indication the Government was about to increase Housing Commission rentals, during the last week of the election campaign we made it abundantly clear in our advertising that if the Government were returned to power there would be huge rent increases. Very quickly we heard the Government deny this, and in many districts, including Murdoch, special pamphlets were issued on the day before the election saying the Government would not do anything like that, and it was appalling for the Opposition to use such scare tactics. The electors were told that the Government would not attempt to increase rents to such an extent.

Mr Pearce: There was a full-page advertisement in *The West Australian*.

Mr JAMIESON: As my colleague says, there was a full-page advertisement in *The West Australian*. This is a scare tactic! When the election was over your honourable equivalent in the other Chamber, Mr Speaker, at the declaration of the poll, criticised the Labor Party for daring to use scare tactics and suggesting that the rents would be increased to a great degree.

Mr Young: I had a couple that your mob put out in Scarborough that you could frame.

Mr JAMIESON: Maybe; and if the honourable member does frame them good luck to him. I hope I can come out to the honourable member's office and see them one day. However, I am told that the refrigerator is broken so I do not think I will be coming out to fix it.

The position was that the Government said it would not increase rents. This was horrific imagining of the Opposition! It was a terrible thing for the Labor Party to say that the rents would be increased! The Government said there was no justification for it.

Of course, Mr Speaker, your honourable equivalent had a peculiar dream one night because he said the Opposition was suggesting that there was to be a bridge across the Swan River in Perth. I have some fanciful dreams on occasions; but I would like to see where he had been that night because it might be appropriate to go there for some relaxation. There may be opium dens in South Perth. There probably were in the old days of the Chinese gardeners; but probably they are there no longer.

The Government's reaction was that it would not increase the rents to such a high figure. Of course, the fact is rents have now been increased at a terrific rate. State Housing Commission country rents were increased from between 12 per cent and 14 per cent. That is not such a high figure. I have no objection to that. I think we have

to carry some of this burden because of the vastly increased costs. If one were looking at an economic rental in a country district, one would certainly be asking these people to pay a greater amount than their income would allow.

Mr O'Connor: One point you have not made is that a third of them were not increased at all.

Mr JAMIESON: Yes; but the people on a rental rebate come under a different scheme altogether.

Mr Davies: Their rents are increased. They are given notice of that; but they are told there is a rebate.

Mr O'Connor: No; they are not.

Mr Davies: Yes; they are told that their rents are increased. They are given a letter telling them the rents have gone up by so much; but there will be a rebate.

Mr JAMIESON: Technically he is right; do not spoil an argument for a piece of truth like that!

These increases are the result of the policies adopted by a Treasurer who boasts that there will be no increases in taxes and charges, in the same way as he boasted during the last few days of the election campaign that there would be no increases in State Housing Commission rentals. He said these increases would not be applied. What a costly farce. What an expensive joke for him to try to put over the public. The public would be laughing all the way to the bank to draw out more money to pay the rent and the electricity bill each week. The increases in the charges for water and electricity represent an increase in State taxation.

As a result of these measures, the State Treasury has a direct rake-off by its 3 per cent impost. If the Treasury is as buoyant as it appears to be, why does not the Government remove this impost. It is definitely an inflationary one which must cause additional problems.

The Metropolitan Water Board, the State Energy Commission, and the Fremantle Port Authority pay a 3 per cent levy on revenue. This is a simple and basic tax on every consumer of water and electricity and every user of the Port of Fremantle. This means that, in effect, it is a tax on nearly everyone in the State. Every time the Metropolitan Water Board, the State Energy Commission, and the Fremantle Port Authority increase charges the taxes rise. So much for the Treasurer's claim that taxes would not go up. More money pours into the Treasury every time charges are increased. Long ago one Premier was known as, "Gone a million Jack". He was

referred to in that manner when he was a million pounds down. The present Premier seems to be many million dollars up and in this case can be referred to as, "Many millions Charlie".

The Treasurer was guilty of the worst sort of hypocrisy and double standard when he said in his Budget speech—

We need to make every effort to reduce the burden of taxation, not increase it.

Then he introduced all these imposts. They are taxes; but the Treasurer said they were charges, not taxes. Of course, when there is a 3 per cent impost written into the price of these basic commodities, that impost is a tax. There is no way the Treasurer can prove differently.

Later on in the Treasurer's Budget speech he had this to say—

We accept that there is a need to reduce taxation in this country. I think everyone is concerned that the structure and level of taxation is having an effect on people's enterprise and incentive and leading to undesirable devices and practices of avoidance. It is not good for the community and it is not good for the economy to be subject to these types of pressures.

These are the words of a Premier and Treasurer who regularly advocates less taxation and who just as regularly increases taxation. We cannot take much notice of anything the Premier says in view of his actions.

The taxes on water and electricity are major factors in making Perth water among the most expensive in Australia and Perth electricity the most expensive. A few years ago Perth had about the cheapest water of any capital city in Australia. Now our water is about the most expensive in Australia. The electricity charges in Perth are the most expensive in Australia. This should not be so. It is difficult to understand this situation when we in this State have the indigenous fuel to fire our thermal plants, and yet the cost of producing electricity here is higher than in South Australia where the indigenous fuel is a long way from the power house and the steaming coal is not as good as that available here. In some cases oil is used in South Australia, as it is here, and the going rate must be paid. However, South Australia is able to produce and supply electricity to its people at a much cheaper rate.

The effect of these imposts is to boost inflation, drive up business costs, and prevent industry and commerce from expanding or establishing in Western Australia. Certainly if one intended starting a business which required a large amount

of electricity and water one would compare the prices of these commodities in the capital cities in Australia in order to ascertain which would be the most economical venue for the business. Certainly it would be very discouraging if one were to find that these essential commodities were more expensive in Perth than in any of the other capital cities.

Water and electricity are basic commodities without which we cannot survive. They are so basic that any increase in their cost flows through the whole economy, pushing up the prices of everything else, thereby having a direct and indirect inflationary effect. Not only are these basic commodities very costly for the individual; but also producers must impose an extra cost on the consumer in order to cover the high cost of water and electricity and ensure the economic production of their goods.

The constant increases the Court Government has imposed on charges, particularly for basic commodities such as water and electricity, have caused a decline in business confidence amounting to total disillusionment. At the same time as these increases are disillusioning business and boosting inflation, they are reducing household incomes, giving consumers less to spend and, therefore, less opportunity to contribute to economic recovery.

In introducing his Budget speech, the Treasurer said—

As I have consistently maintained, the essential first task of all Governments must be to control inflation. The task is not easy and the medicine is unpalatable but we cannot afford to waver from this aim.

Mr Speaker, by no stretch of the imagination can the Court Government be said to be playing its part in the fight against inflation, if it introduces these additional charges which result in surpluses at the end of the year. The Treasurer went on to say—

To the credit of the Federal Government, it has not wavered, despite criticism and its own concern at the slowness of economic recovery. That Government can rightly point to the slowing down of the inflation rate in the past year to a current annual rate of less than 10 per cent as an indication of its policies.

This is a gross and foul perversion of the truth. Anyone who regularly reads the economic indicators will not fall for it; anyone who regularly reads the newspapers will not fall for it; and anyone who regularly goes shopping will not fall for it. The only people who will fall for this outrageous claim that Australia's inflation rate is

now below 10 per cent are the Treasurer's blindest followers. These followers say, "What the Premier says is sacrosanct and we do not need to check it because he is always right." But, of course, in this case he is not right because our inflation rate is as high as it can go at the present time.

The claim is given the lie by figures published in the document prepared by the State Treasury and distributed with the Budget. This document is "The Western Australian Economy 1976-77". On page 7 of that document it can quite clearly be seen that during 1976-77 prices increased nationally by 13.8 per cent and in Western Australia by 15.7 per cent. I suggest that perhaps the Treasurer should consult his own documents before he makes his speeches. He should have his speeches prepared in accordance with what is stated in the documents, rather than in accordance with his own imagination.

These figures show that Western Australia is still achieving less than the rest of Australia in its fight against inflation. The inflation rate in this State has consistently been higher than the national average and in fact since the Court Government took office we have had the highest inflation rate in Australia.

Mr Tonkin: Shame!

Mr JAMIESON: This is the record of achievement of a Government whose leader claims to be a sound economic manager. I cannot manage the money from one pocket to the other; but I can very clearly understand from the Premier's actions that he is not helping in the fight against inflation by setting the lead in inflation in Australia. This is the record of achievement of a Premier and Treasurer who claims to be totally committed to lowering inflation. This is the record of achievement of a Premier and Treasurer who was elected on a promise that "Inflation can be beaten to a substantial degree State by State." Of course, he did not repeat that at the last election. According to the newspapers I was supposed to have done that; but I would never be so bold as to suggest that was my intention. The inflation figures show that this Government's leader is a hopeless economic manager. The inflation figures show that rather than being committed to lowering inflation, the Premier and Treasurer's contribution has been to drive it up to the highest level in Australia.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr JAMIESON: The Treasurer probably thinks his claim to have brought inflation to below 10 per cent is justified by the recent Consumer

Price Index figures for the June quarter, where nationally, and in Western Australia, the increase was only 2.4 per cent. He has arrived at his claim by multiplying 2.4 per cent by four, giving a result of 9.6 per cent.

However, it would be difficult to imagine a more specious and spurious device to determine the annual rate of inflation. Those with the tiniest amount of economic knowledge would know that quarters vary quite dramatically, and one cannot obtain a realistic assessment of the annual rate of inflation simply by multiplying the figure for one quarter, whether it be the highest or the lowest quarter. The Treasurer knows very well that the only fair method is to compare a particular quarter with the same quarter of the previous year, but obviously he has not done this.

The Treasurer also knows very well that seasonal factors affect each quarter. For example, he knows that the December quarter traditionally is high, and no doubt we can expect that to be the case again this year. He has no right to perpetrate such nonsense in his Budget speech by saying the rate of inflation has dropped below 10 per cent because the figure for one quarter was only 2.4 per cent. The Premier is only misleading the public, and it should not be done.

As to our economic recovery, it is not only the Consumer Price Index which highlights how badly Western Australia is faring in comparison with the rest of the nation; a number of other areas also show this State's economic situation is worse than in other parts of the nation, and the nation as a whole. For instance, in 1976-77, prices in Western Australia increased by 14.6 per cent, yet the average increase in the six national capitals was only 12.2 per cent. We are also above the national average in the fields of health, personal care, tobacco, alcohol, housing and recreation—all factors which strike at the very ordinary people.

The cost of building materials used for housing increased by 13.8 per cent in Perth in the last financial year, while the increase over the same period in the six national capitals was only 11.9 per cent. Materials used in building other than houses were up by 13 per cent in Western Australia as against 11.7 per cent in the nation as a whole. Even there, Western Australia is still ahead; we are out in front, leading the nation in the field of price increases.

I always like to know the member for Scarborough and the Deputy Premier are in the Chamber when I make such comments. The Deputy Premier claimed I said, "Let inflation

rip" which of course I did not. I always like to remind them that I did not say that.

Mr Young: I used only a direct quote from *Hansard*.

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, the honourable member used a quote from *Hansard* in his little pamphlet; he was a little fairer than the Deputy Premier. However, I never said, "Get out in front and lead it"; but this is exactly what the Premier and Treasurer of this State is doing. He is in front of Australia, leading in the field of price increases.

The State Treasury points out in its economic paper that an analysis of dwelling approval statistics suggests a reduction in home building in 1977-78, which will throw even more people onto the unemployment market in Western Australia. The number of dwellings constructed in the last three quarters of 1976-77 was well down on the corresponding level for the previous year. No matter how much the Treasurer and the Prime Minister try to hide the fact, the nation's economy is still sick, and this State's is the sickest.

The real truth of the economic situation faced by this State and the nation was put clearly into focus a few days ago when a Reserve Bank report was leaked to the *National Times*. I am not too sure whether it is the same type of leakage which has occurred in various departments in Western Australia. If it is, I certainly hope the same intimidatory tactics are not employed against staff members, where recently, members of the staff of the Leader of the Opposition were interviewed at Parliament House by members of the CIB, without the permission of the Leader of the Opposition.

These types of documents have always come to members of Parliament and the Press; they have always been around. When the Whitlam Government was in power, they seemed to be put out every second day. Since the advent of the Fraser Government, they seem to appear every time the Government or the Opposition wants them to appear. I believe this will always be a problem. At one time, it was not such a problem but the duplicating machine has made things easy these days. If somebody sees something which he believes could embarrass someone on the other side of the political fence, he is likely to seal it up and send it away. Perhaps such people are not being as loyal to the Government of the day as they should be. I certainly do not encourage them in any form. However, people are people, and this practice will continue.

Some Ministers have been known to be a little careless with what they drop around the corridors of Parliament House, but I have always been

suspicious of such documents; they could well be a plant, and we are loth to quote from such documents.

I believe if there is to be an inquiry into the leaking of confidential documents, it should be carried out by the Public Service Board, not the CIB. The recent visit to my office and other places by the CIB was quite unnecessary. It ill behoves the Premier and others associated with this matter to call in the police; they should first have used the proper channels, and inquired of the relevant departments.

Mr O'Connor: Who said the Premier and others were involved?

Mr JAMIESON: Surely the CIB would not appear for no reason at all.

Mr O'Connor: Of course they would not, but you have made an accusation which probably is quite inaccurate.

Mr JAMIESON: I do not know whether the police motivate themselves to conduct such inquiries; if they do, they are very foolish. They should not become further involved in political gimmickry; this is quite unnecessary. I am sure the police do not and would not commence investigations of this nature without a formal request. The cold, hard facts are that an examination of my staff took place in my office at Parliament House. Mr Speaker, I do not know whether the CIB obtained your permission to interrogate a member of my staff in Parliament House; if they did not, I think they have overstepped the mark.

The Reserve Bank report to which I referred forecast that prices will rise in 1978 by between 11 per cent and 12 per cent. So much for an annual inflation rate of less than 10 per cent! If Western Australia is to remain the national leader, as I suppose it will, probably we will be looking at an inflation rate of some 13 per cent.

The Reserve Bank also forecast unemployment will increase from last financial year's 5.3 per cent to about 6 per cent. As I was saying earlier, if the Premier's initiatives in creating new jobs do anything, they will only take up those who have been displaced from their employment.

Another forecast is that the short-term interest rates probably will have to rise, despite the Fraser Government's promise to the contrary. The bank also predicted the dollar will remain unsteady and credit will remain tight. These are all things which would have the effect of creating more employment if the reverse trend were the case.

It is predicted that the non-farm gross domestic product—the measure of economic growth—will

rise by only 1.3 per cent, in stark contrast to Treasurer Lynch's optimistic forecast of a growth of 2 per cent.

The Reserve Bank predicts average weekly incomes will rise by only 10 per cent to 11 per cent—less than the rate of inflation—but that the gross operating surplus of companies will increase by 23 per cent, a similar rate to that which applied last year. Is it any wonder we have industrial strife, when we hear the expectations and forecasts of these economists?

The State Treasury paper presented with the Budget also categorised the prospects for economic recovery as "slow". The Premier claimed we are climbing out of the recession; probably, it is a very steep hill.

In his Budget speech, the Premier again perpetrated the long discredited idea that any economic recovery of the nation must be investment led. That has not taken place. The Fraser Government embraced this concept when it took office and subsequently, the cry was taken up by good Liberals around Australia—including the Premier of this State, who is still crying it. The assumptions underlying this policy were always faulty. Eventually even the Fraser Government recognised this, and dropped its commitment to an investment led recovery.

In its place, it adopted the eminently sounder and more sensible proposition that recovery would have to be consumer led. The Fraser Government urged the nation to go out and spend. However, it also proposed that the levels of real wages should drop. I do not know how it can accomplish both objectives. In effect, the Fraser Government is saying to the people, "Go out and spend, but we want to cut your real wages, anyway." Of course, a consumer led recovery could not be countenanced under such circumstances.

In changing its course, the Fraser Government realised industry was and still is operating at considerably less than full capacity; it realised industry had considerable excess capacity. But it is nonsense to suggest to businessmen they should invest in new plant and equipment when they have equipment lying idle at present. They are not likely to take heed of such a request.

Another problem is that industry has a great amount of stock sitting in storage, and until it is able to turn some of this stock into cash, we are unlikely to see a recovery in this field. Industry is unlikely to invest until it can see consumer demand is strong enough to take up the existing capacity, and then create more demand.

This problem applies not only to Australia but also to the rest of the world. The over-production

of steel and other goods is a world-wide problem. After the war years, everybody went into fields where good returns were possible, and for the last 30 years, production has been building and building.

Sooner or later these people will reach the stage of a person who sets up a very remunerative factory to produce the ordinary requirements of the community—be they teaspoons or toilet cisterns—and then finds the market has been supplied and there is no further demand for the articles. In many cases throughout the world these people are finding that they have supplied the market, and they have to wait until the market catches up before they can go ahead.

It is nonsense to suggest that businessmen are going to invest, when they are not getting a return on their existing investments. It is nonsense to suggest they will order new plant and equipment when what they already have is lying idle and they have large stocks sitting in storage. They will not invest any more until they can get over this difficulty.

The Fraser Government has finally recognised this simple economic truth. So far as we are concerned it has not been recognised by the Treasurer of this State; and until he does we will not get very far. This self-styled sound economic manager is badly out of touch!

In his Budget speech the Treasurer also runs up the flagpole again the other discredited economic chestnut that Government spending damages the private sector. Let us see how much it does damage the private sector. The way in which it damages the private sector is by not spending to buy such things as pipe from Metters and Humes for the purpose of laying sewer mains and establishing additional water supplies. When the private sector does not receive such Government orders it has to put the employees off; consequently there is less employment in the private sector.

Nearly everything required in Government projects is oriented to buying from the private sector. We do not have many factories that are Government owned. Eventually the Government has to spend money with the private sector on its requirements. If it does not spend in the private sector then the private sector has to retrench its employees, and so problems arise in that sector. In the main, people long ago have stopped to salute that myth—the myth that it damages the private sector—but the Treasurer still clings to it as something of sound economic value.

If public funds are released at a careful rate, and are directed carefully to the right areas of the

economy, they will not cause inflation. Public spending will feed private spending. It is important that we understand that.

As to the specific Budget initiatives, I mentioned earlier there had been some suggested improvements in the rural sector which is undergoing a fairly tough time. The State Treasury paper points to the poor performance of the rural sector in the last financial year. The growth value of rural production in 1976-77 was down 2 per cent on the 1975-76 level. It is a pity that we in this country should see that happening. We realise there was a fairly serious drought in some areas of the State, but in other areas it was not so bad. This year we will experience much the same set of circumstances. It is sad to see this happening. The areas involved are quite substantial, and we should realise that rural production is essential for our economy.

The Treasurer points out there is a likelihood of declining returns to farmers in the wheat industry, and these farmers will be faced with continuing and increasing pressure to improve technical and economic efficiency in both production and marketing.

That seems to be the only way in which they would be able to get through. The farmers are becoming more mechanised, and they are indulging more in subcontracting. I suppose we will find in the future that the ploughing or harvesting subcontractors will strike for better contract rates, when the time is right. In that event some real complaints would be lodged with the Government, and it would be loaded with many problems from the rural sector. I hope this will not eventuate.

In regard to other grain crops, the overseas marketing outlook is not encouraging. It would appear that this year has been fairly bountiful for the world granaries. When this situation occurs we have to look to means of storing the additional quantities of grains, so that we may be able to provide for the seven bad seasons which follow, and which seem to have been experienced in biblical days.

In holding such stocks certain costs will be involved; costs will be incurred by the traders and Co-operative Bulk Handling. They will have to re-establish themselves financially to meet the costs incurred by the farmers and those associated generally with rural production.

The situation also looks bad for wool. The State's wool clip in the last financial year was the smallest since 1973-74, and indications are that the wool output will fall by a further 10 per cent in 1977-78. That is another bad mark on our rural

scene. We have been renowned for our wool output for a long time.

With regard to meat, the current financial year is likely to be marked by a further decline in the stock available for slaughter and for live export. There is little that the Government can be expected to do about these things. However, there is plenty of evidence to indicate that important segments of the rural sector are ailing. Under these circumstances they might have expected more generous treatment in the Budget than they received.

The Budget contains a number of welcome initiatives for the rural industries, but it does not come to grips with the major problems of declining rural incomes and the conditions which the Bureau of Agricultural Economics says will drive 7 000 beef producers out of the industry this year. This represents a fair number of beef producers. This decline is to be regretted in view of the fact that many people throughout the world are dying of starvation.

We have to think of more than the making of a profit and of the almighty dollar. The Treasurer seems more hell bent on his objectives of providing the things that are necessary, than on finding a way to finance their sale.

The proposal for continued drought assistance is necessary and welcome, as is the introduction of a scheme of loans at moderate interest rates for water storages.

The proposal to establish a rural marketing service is a partial introduction of a scheme put forward at the last election by the ALP. The scheme was to establish an economic intelligence unit to monitor world commodity markets and international economic trends. If we ponder on this we will see it is necessary to advise the Government, the private sector, the unions, and commerce generally of the expectations of the future. It can be done; it is merely a matter of having the will to do it.

The Government now proposes to go part of the way by establishing this rural marketing service to find out about the likelihood of overseas markets. This is most desirable in a country which is so greatly involved in primary production, whether it be primary production of mineral wealth or agricultural wealth.

The unit which the ALP proposed would involve itself in the whole range of productive activity—mining, manufacturing, and agriculture. However, the Government proposes the establishment of a rural marketing service. To the extent that the proposed rural marketing service fills these roles, it is welcomed by those on this

side of the House. However, it ought to be expanded to play the much larger role in the community that I have outlined.

The greatest assistance the Government could give to the rural industries is to allocate funds to enable the establishment overseas of marketing facilities for our produce. I am sure no-one doubts that the greatest problems which confront the rural sector these days stem from outside the farm gate. Marketing is the key to rural success.

If we established our own marketing facilities overseas in expanding markets like the Middle East countries, we could almost certainly increase our markets. As a matter of fact, this was another proposition I put forward at the last election. It needs to be taken up to establish all the things that are necessary to prevent the very wealthy markets overseas from slipping through our fingers. The Government ought to reconsider its spending priorities and move quickly on this matter. It should make money available for this purpose. It should be able to provide the money, because there seems to be plenty about. There is no need to worry when the Government is carrying in excess of \$1 000 million.

Only a few days ago the Victorian Minister for Agriculture (Mr Smith) suggested that cold stores and other marketing facilities ought to be established in the Middle East for Australian agricultural produce. I have been advocating that for a considerable time, as has my colleague, the former Minister for Agriculture, who saw the necessity for the establishment of these facilities. If we are to provide continuity of supply of goods in the markets over there we will have to provide our own storage to make sure that we do supply those countries.

The ALP in Western Australia has been advocating such a course for some time. I notice that the Minister for Agriculture will be travelling to the Middle East shortly. I am sure he will have a very close look into this matter, and determine whether or not the suggestion of Mr Smith is the correct one. All the information I have been able to obtain on this subject indicates to me that the lack of our own facilities is holding us back. Surely the best place to trade is where the people have the money; and the oil-rich countries certainly have money. They cannot produce adequate foodstuffs for their people; they cannot produce as easily as we can, and therefore some of the money we pay them for crude oil supplies could be returned to us in this manner.

However, any benefits which rural dwellers might gain from the Budget proposals will be

more than offset by the tremendous increases in costs they are being forced to bear as a result of the decisions of the Fraser and Court Governments. The Fraser Government increased the price of fuel oil by 11c per gallon after the Federal Budget; in the case of Western Australia there have been increases in the charges for electricity, water, freight, abattoir facilities, and slaughtering. These increases have a similar effect of undermining the evenly balanced economy of this country.

Subsidies for sporting teams will be welcomed and encouraged by us. One way in which to overcome many of the problems confronting the community, particularly the incidence of vandalism, is to get people to use their surplus energy in sporting activities. If we give encouragement to the top echelon in sport we would give encouragement right down the line. If we are able to spend considerable sums of money and expend a great deal of effort to promote interstate sporting competition we will encourage more people to participate in sport.

Such subsidies have been badly needed since the subsidies initiated by the Whitlam Government were abolished by the Fraser Government. To that extent the proposal in the Budget for these subsidies is a good move. Having been the President of the Amateur Football Association for some years I realise the difficulties which sporting bodies face when they have to participate in interstate competition; they have to find the money in order to compete.

I would say that a broad outlook on these sporting teams should be taken because while there is not much money allocated for this purpose, if we keep to the strict definition of sport, it would certainly be to the disadvantage of people in interstate competition in chess, bridge, and debating, activities which are recreation for many people who are perhaps handicapped physically or otherwise, but who feel they are able to participate in this kind of interstate competition. If we are to help interstate competition, then we should help them also.

However, I am dubious about how big a subsidy Western Australian teams will get from the scheme. The amount allocated is \$110 000 which seems to be pitifully small when we consider how big our State is and the great problem involved in air fares necessary for participants. The small amount of money allocated to the scheme suggests that the scheme has been initiated as a gesture rather than a real effort to help. Therefore I hope that future Budgets will be an improvement in this respect.

The Government proposes to establish an office of the Department of Labour and Industry in the Pilbara. The proposal is soundly based, but I think it is a proposal which is overdue. Probably the Government will gain some feedback from it and I hope eventually it will result in solving many of the problems experienced in the area. I do not think the Government will gain full value from the proposal as it appears that the officers involved will be appointed on a rotating basis. It seems to me that the officers should be appointed for some extended period so that they can get to know the people and the problems. They will be able to develop a feeling of the industrial climate so that when they are mediating or working in with both management and labour they will be talking to those involved on terms they will understand. This has not been the situation so far, but it is most essential.

I suggest that the Government should have a look at the situation and station the officers on a more permanent basis. This should result ultimately in an industrial commissioner being stationed in the Pilbara on a full-time basis, the same as are other commissioners who specialise in a particular field. One such person could specialise in the problems of the iron ore industry which is a special area with its own peculiar problems. If it were treated in a special way disputes would be avoided, and those which did occur would be solved quicker if they were handled on the spot instead of having to be referred to the commission in Perth.

If the Government is really serious about achieving greater industrial harmony in the Pilbara it should make provision for disputes to be dealt with on the spot. The point I make is that the sooner an industrial commissioner with the responsibility of solving the problems is stationed there, the better will be the position. In this way the proper advice would be obtained. At the moment advice is obtained from one side or the other, and each side is inclined to submit its own point of view.

Unfortunately the Government seems to think it has a vested political interest in the high levels of industrial disputation. It is all part of a campaign, I think, to lay the groundwork for elections to be fought on this trumped-up law-and-order issue the Government comes back to every now and then.

With regard to pensioner concessions, the concessions for local government and water rates are welcome, but the Government should be doing more to implement the findings of the inquiry into pensioner concessions about which we have heard so much, but which have been in the

Government's pigeonholes collecting dust and cobwebs for several years.

We cannot do too much for pensioners, but the current scheme is nothing like full compensation for the abandonment of free pensioner travel on public transport; nor is it an acceptable substitute for more direct and immediate concessions like cheaper car and drivers' licences.

With regard to Budget accounting, the Opposition is becoming increasingly concerned about some of the procedures adopted in framing recent State Budgets. In many divisions and items the actual expenditure has been considerably less than the amount voted by Parliament for those purposes. The reason for this is not any sort of prudent financial management on the part of the Government, but that in general the Treasurer has over-estimated the vote—in this case, for the 1976-77 year.

This gives the Government considerable flexibility in the way it uses its funds, but it is the sort of flexibility which is undesirable because it enables the Government to undertake all manner of financial dealings without having or even really needing parliamentary sanction. For instance, the Government seems to have been able to come up with the funds to do many major things without having the money approved by Parliament.

If we look at the miscellaneous section of the Budget for last year, we find that the Government spent about \$8 million, or 9 per cent more than was voted for that particular section. There are items of expenditure as high as \$2 million which were not budgeted for. Why do we have a Parliament?

Expenditure on items in the miscellaneous services section for which Parliament gave no vote whatsoever last year amounts to \$3.9 million. Added to this amount just quickly is the \$8 million which I mentioned which was not budgeted for, plus the \$3.4 million the Premier showed to be a surplus, plus the \$13 million from the short-term money market, plus the \$2.8 million he admitted under the new accounting system was paid last year for this year's work. All this indicates that the actual surplus in the State was something well in excess of \$20 million, and this is very clear. However, not having received the Auditor-General's report in time to go fully into the matter, I cannot give the exact figure now. Nevertheless we will deal with this more fully when we are debating the items.

No-one realises more than I do that during the year there has to be some degree of flexibility because of certain disasters which occur such as bushfires, droughts, and so on which must be

dealt with quickly, but which are unforeseen. Parliament cannot deal with them so they must be dealt with fairly quickly by the Administration. Perhaps one means by which this problem could be overcome and Parliament could have some say would be through the Public Accounts Committee which for security purposes could vet anything over a certain amount. For instance in South Australia now, any public works valued at over \$5 000 have to be approved by the Public Works Committee, and it is rather desirable that this be so.

In addition the present format of the Budget is not a tremendous help for people seeking information about how money is spent. One could be forgiven for believing that it tends to obstruct people in their efforts to discover how funds are spent, instead of making it easy for them to inform themselves fully, which would be the proper course.

It is a measure of how misleading the Budget is that the Premier can state that he has a surplus of \$3.4 million when, in answer to questions I have asked in the House, he has revealed he has more than \$13 million in the suspense account awaiting allocation for 1977-78. This is money earned in interest by the investment of cash balances, which I mentioned briefly before.

Another example of how uninformative the Budget can be is the use of Commonwealth funds by various departments. There is no way of knowing how much of the funds spent in a particular area are Commonwealth funds, and this is a major shortcoming, and the Budget papers should clearly show when there is an injection of Commonwealth funds.

Another example of the misinformation contained in the Budget shows up in item 1 of division 23, last year. It shows that the Correspondence Despatch Office employs one officer in charge, 24 mail men, assistants, and messengers, and 151 cleaners and watchmen. It must be a hell of a dirty place to require that number of cleaners.

Mr O'Neil: They employ them for all departments.

Mr JAMIESON: I know. This is plainly ridiculous. I cannot envisage how that office would require more than one cleaner. Presumably the explanation is that all the cleaners, watchmen, and so on employed by the Government are employed under that item, but it is a silly item under which to place these people. They should be under a specific item. Why on earth should they be shown as being attached to the Correspondence Despatch Office? This makes

nonsense of the Estimates when items are hidden like that.

I also urge the Government to consider including in the Budget papers a brief explanation of the various programmes and schemes on which money is being spent. The Federal Budget papers give descriptions like this and they are very helpful in understanding what is going on. Descriptions of this type should be included in the State Budget papers.

In conclusion I would like to say that no matter where we look in this Budget, there are holes and flaws. Urgent problems have been ignored; and good ideas have been ruined by inept implementation.

Specious and straightout wrong claims have been made and basic information has either been covered up or made almost impossible to find. It is a Budget which falls far short of what the State needs in many areas. Western Australian taxpayers have a right to expect that their money will be spent more sensibly and that their interests will be guarded more zealously.

There are a number of other items with which I will deal at a later stage of the debate when we consider the various items, and then I will point out to the Premier other shortcomings.

Those are the comments I make on the Budget presented by the Premier a fortnight ago. While some of the provisions in the Budget are reasonably good, many are obviously bad. The Budget will not do anything to reduce inflation, and it certainly will not do anything to cultivate the growth of activities in the State. We need definite projects, not promises or references to 100 000 jobs, when all the time there is more and more unemployment week after week.

We need action by the Government instead of all the verbiage the Premier churns out from his sausage machine in the Superannuation Building. He would do far better to put some of those involved out into the field to find jobs for the people who need them.

I support the Bill.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [8.13 p.m.]: I listened with a great deal of attention when the Treasurer presented his Financial Statement to the House and the budgetary allocation which went with it. Naturally I paid particular interest to the education provisions.

I might say at the outset that I am pleased to note that the Government has not made the cutback I, for one, was anticipating might well have been made, and I am pleased the Government has seen fit to increase the allocation

in the forthcoming year. I know the increase is not nearly as great as the Government is saying it is, and I know also that some increased State Government allocation is necessary to take up the amount which was cut back in real terms by the Federal Government's allocation.

The more one goes through the Budget papers, the more one realises that the State Government has to provide more and more to compensate for the areas in which the Commonwealth Government has cut back on allocations.

The first point I note is that on page 20 the Premier claims that the Education Department vote is up by nearly 18 per cent on last year. He claims a figure of \$295 million in real terms is to be expended, which is an 18 per cent or a \$44 million increase on what was actually spent last year. That is true, but on page 93 of the Estimates, which includes the actual expenditure for last year, it is revealed that the actual expenditure of \$251 million is nearly \$7.5 million down on last year's vote. That is to say, the Government voted itself \$258.5 million last year and spent only \$251 million of that.

Two or three weeks ago I mentioned the Government's underspending of the amount of capital funds made available to it by the Federal Government. It has been done again here. I am sure educationists around the State will be interested to hear that last year the Government did not spend \$7.5 million of State money which it voted itself for the Education Department.

Taking the 1976-77 and 1977-78 votes together, the increase in educational expenditure is not 18 per cent; it is around 14 per cent, which is in the vicinity of the inflation rate. So in terms of real expenditure the Government is not committing itself to spending—

Mr Sibson interjected.

Mr PEARCE: The money committed is capital allocations, and capital allocations do not come into this Budget. The member for Bunbury is known for making inane interjections but he should make them when we are discussing the appropriate Bill.

The increase in educational expenditure is around 14 per cent, so when the inflation rate is 12 or 13 per cent the Government has not increased its expenditure for next year to cover the increased enrolments in State schools. It is not, as the Premier claimed, a significant real increase in funds. It barely keeps pace with inflation and the growth of the school population. When we consider the need to pick up the gaps left by decreased Federal funding, we see that in real terms the State Government is not putting

into the educational system for next year any more than it voted to put in this year, so it is not a significant increase in funds at all.

Mr Sibson: What about the 640 extra teachers?

Mr PEARCE: I am coming to that. All the Government can claim is that it is keeping up in education, but I am pleased about that because I did not expect it to get even that far.

Let us turn to the extra teachers. I am referring to page 21 of the Premier's Financial Statement to the Parliament. I will begin with primary teachers. The Premier points out that there will be 250 new teachers in primary schools next year, despite an estimated increase of 3 450 in primary school enrolments. He says this will bring the pupil-teacher ratio in primary schools down to 23.3 to 1.

I want to talk about the fallacy of ratios of that type, and I will point out what will happen to the extra teachers in the primary sector. The Premier says 80 of them will be teachers specialised in physical education, music, and art. I applaud the appointment of specialists in primary schools and do not argue with that. A further 68 relieving teachers will enable the release of colleagues for special duties. I applaud that, too. But when we subtract 148 from 250, we will see some 100 extra teachers are left to take up duties in primary schools. They will be taking full-time classes, but when we consider there will be 3 450 additional pupils, that is 34.5 pupils per teacher. Enrolment rates are 35 as a maximum, and less than that for grades 1 and 2. The extra teachers will not cover the extra pupils.

So while I applaud the Government's appointment of specialists for classes in a small group situation which will enable teachers to have time off for duties other than teaching, the net result could well be that class sizes will rise marginally.

Mr Sibson: You will have to do an exercise on total numbers of teachers and students.

Mr PEARCE: That is why it is misleading. I thought the Government had learnt its lesson on this very issue. During the last election campaign it ran advertisements claiming a low pupil-teacher ratio, by taking the total number of teachers and dividing it into the total number of pupils. That is a misleading situation.

Mr Sibson: That is what you have done.

Mr PEARCE: I have not done that. That is what I am criticising.

Mr Sibson: You have done it to suit yourself.

Mr PEARCE: If the member for Bunbury were

to go into any primary school classroom in this State—

Mr Sibson: How many have you been into?

Mr PEARCE: Stacks more than the member for Bunbury has. I have been a teacher for a long time. I have not been into many used car yards but I have been into more classrooms and pre-schools than the member for Bunbury has. When it comes to used cars, he has it all over me. We would not find in any primary school classroom in the State a class of 23.3 or 24 pupils. The average actual class runs out at 33 or 34 pupils.

Mr Laurance: You are a very sarcastic fellow.

Mr PEARCE: It takes one to know one.

Mr Herzfeld: Have you been into every classroom in Western Australia?

Mr PEARCE: I quote the figures from a good deal of experience of classroom sizes.

Mr Herzfeld: With an average figure you have some below and some above.

Mr PEARCE: No class is as low as 23.3. That is the point I am making. Primary school classes vary. For grade 1 the average size should be 30 pupils but it comes out above that. A class of 30 pupils is regarded as a reasonable size. Some classes come out at around 40. If we regard the specialist teacher, who takes groups out of a classroom situation for art or physical education, as breaking down the class sizes, we are misreading the statistics. It is wrong to say that we reach a pupil-teacher ratio by dividing the total number of pupils by the total number of teachers. I challenge the member for Mundaring to name a class that has 23 or 24 pupils.

Mr Herzfeld: No-one has suggested the ratios are anything but what you understand them to be—the total number of pupils divided by the total number of teachers. How else could you come up with a figure that meant anything?

Mr PEARCE: It does not mean much. It means very little because it says nothing about the actual size of any one class. The member for Mundaring set himself up as an expert on educational matters when he spoke previously about the educational needs of the pre-primary child, so perhaps he will appreciate that a class size of 30 is educationally reasonable and those who have to struggle on in classes of 35 or 40 are disadvantaged. It is of no use saying to a child in a class of 40, "You are well off because the average is 23.3." To include extra staff of a specialist, part-time, or administrative type who take no part in classroom activities, produces a ratio which has a meaning in statistical terms but has no meaning whatsoever in educational terms.

Mr Herzfeld: In educational terms, if you take half a dozen children out of a class and give them special attention or remedial work, do you not think that is a significant factor?

Mr PEARCE: I have already said I applaud the appointment of specialist teachers, but I am pointing out the extra teachers will not have any specific effect on class sizes.

Mr Herzfeld: They are doing something to the ratio.

Mr Tonkin: Why don't you shut up for a while? Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are far too many interjections.

Mr Tonkin: Aren't you allowed to get up in this debate? Get up on your feet.

Mr PEARCE: Perhaps we will hear from the member for Mundaring later in the debate.

Mr Herzfeld: You certainly will.

Mr PEARCE: After my many calls for a contribution to debate from members on the back bench on the other side, I am pleased to know one Government back-bencher intends to get up. If Government back-benchers feel they are badly done by, they can give me their names later and I will see what I can do.

Mr Clarko: Do you know the Tonkin Government used the same formula?

Mr Tonkin interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! We will make absolutely no progress at all if two or three members from either side of the Chamber enter into matches of interjection while the member who has the floor is attempting to make his speech. I suggest to the member for Gosnells that greater progress will be made by him if he ignores the interjections and addresses his remarks to the Chair.

Mr PEARCE: I am sorry, Mr Speaker. I will attempt to address the remainder of my remarks to you.

Mr Clarko: You do not wish to answer that point about the Tonkin Government.

Mr Tonkin: Don't you have any respect for the Speaker at all? You are the Chairman of Committees.

Mr PEARCE: The member for Karrinyup interjected loudly and at length during my previous speech, and when he took the Chair he admonished me for making loud and lengthy interjections.

Mr Clarko: I have not spoken for about one

minute and you have refused to answer the question.

Mr Tonkin: He does not have to.

Mr Clarko: He cannot.

Mr PEARCE: The ratio has some meaning in purely statistical terms. We should appreciate that the Minister for Education in the Tonkin Government at least accepted the Teachers' Charter on class sizes put forward by the Teachers' Union and made a consistent effort to get class sizes down to that. Class sizes fell considerably during the period of the Tonkin Government, but they have since drifted upwards. Not only have they stopped going down, but they have also started to drift upwards again under the Court Government. So it might be true to say the Tonkin Government used this ratio, but at least it brought class sizes down in real terms at the same time.

Mr Clarko: They were higher than those we have today, which are the best the State has ever had.

Mr PEARCE: That is not true. If I say they are drifting upwards, the member for Karrinyup will understand they are increasing.

Mr Clarko: You are incorrect if you claim the Tonkin Government's figures were lower.

Mr PEARCE: Confirmation of my remarks on class sizes will be found on page 21 of the Treasurer's Budget speech. Perhaps the member for Karrinyup is not aware that in the Teachers' Charter the class size agreed to for grade 1 classes, and in fact junior primary classes generally, is 30 students. It is considered younger children need a smaller class size than do the children in primary schools generally. The old figures in the Teachers' Charter which expired last year were 30 for junior primary classes and 35 for senior primary classes.

In his Budget speech the Treasurer said—

To further lighten the load on primary school teachers 30 teaching aides will be appointed, mainly to junior primary classes with over 35 pupils.

Despite the agreement made in the time of the Tonkin Government, four or five years ago, that junior primary classes should be brought down to 30 and anything above that was educationally unacceptable, this year we find the Government appointing aides to assist teachers who have junior primary classes with over 35 pupils. Now, what is wrong in these times of teacher unemployment with appointing a few more junior primary teachers to bring the class size down to 30, which is a reasonable size?

Mr Shalders: What would you do if you were the principal and you had 36 grade I students?

Mr PEARCE: I would take my grade I and grade II pupils and have two sets of mixed classes.

Mr Clarko: That is not much good.

Mr PEARCE: The member for Murray is simply showing his ignorance of these matters. If he were at all aware of educational matters, he would understand that not every child of six or seven should have the same education. I taught for a lot longer than the member for Murray. I taught for seven years.

Mr Shalders: You are not right on that one.

Mr PEARCE: Well, if the member for Murray made a contribution to this debate I would be quite happy to listen to it.

Mr Tonkin: If you have been teaching for more than seven years it is a scandal that you are not making a contribution to this debate.

Mr PEARCE: I am prepared to withdraw the suggestion that I have taught for longer than the member for Murray if in fact he has taught for longer than I have.

Mr Clarko: The member for Morley does not believe in making speeches.

Several members interjected.

SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gosnells.

Mr PEARCE: I am sorry, Mr Speaker—

Mr Shalders: The member for Morley should get back to his swimming pools.

Mr PEARCE: I agree that the length of time that one devotes to a job does not necessarily relate to the degree of expertise that one achieves in that job. It is a perfectly sensible suggestion that instead of taking children of one age and putting them together, one should try a totally different concept—a vertical structure—and have older and younger children with quite significant differences in their ages in the one class, thereby achieving a family situation.

Mr Clarko: Which do you think is better?

Mr PEARCE: I am not certain in my own mind; but I think there is merit in some sort of vertical streaming by putting children of different ages together and creating a family concept. In terms of mixed classes, if one has children aged six and seven, they will all have different levels of ability and maturity, as I am sure the honourable member understands.

Mr Clarko: I do not believe you are right about the 36 children, because the teacher practitioner would generally rather have the 36 children together and not mix them up as you suggested. I

would think you would find most teachers in a classroom situation would say that.

Mr PEARCE: Well, it is rarely the case—

Mr Blaikie: It is not rarely the case.

Mr PEARCE: Who said that? The member for Vasse said it. I am interested to hear from the member for Vasse on a subject other than cattle and agriculture.

If we are talking about class sizes over 35, I still would argue it is a rare school that has a grade I class of only 36 children. I wonder how many of the small country schools, as a result of the unfortunate events in our time, have 36 children in a junior primary class of grade I and grade II students; whereas other schools have a reasonable class size in both grade I and grade II. I would be interested to see the figures.

There has been agreement to lowering the class sizes to 30, but this has not been done. Instead of employing more teachers in this situation, the Government is appointing teacher aides. The Government seems to alleviate symptoms instead of getting at basic problems. I will not carry the argument through in the time available to me about the number of teachers obtainable for secondary education. The Government is prepared to provide the figures of the increases in the number of enrolments in primary schools; however, it is not prepared to do so for secondary schools.

I am told that the estimates of unemployed teachers next year vary between 600 and 800 depending on who is making the estimate. The Government estimates it will be the lesser number. The Colleges of Advanced Education estimate the number will be at the higher level. The number will vary in terms of the money the Government has available. Taking the increases in enrolments into account the 600 or 800 will be unemployed after the allocation of extra teachers which the Government is granting.

Mr Sibson: The teacher ratio argument depended on the number of children teachers could cope with.

Mr PEARCE: The point is, it is not a question of being able to handle the numbers. The member for Bunbury shows the typical lion trainer attitude; as long as one can handle the number of students in one's class, that is all right. It is not a question of the teacher's ability to cope; but it is a question of the child's ability to extract educational value from the classroom situation which he is in. There are numerous studies on this matter.

Mr Sibson: I always thought a person like

yourself teaching 25 children, as opposed to the member for Morley teaching 35 children, would probably be in a similar situation.

Mr PEARCE: I have in fact taught classes up to 45; but no-one can argue that in a large class situation the child is well off.

Mrs Craig: Can you cite for us a world research study that indicates clearly a child is disadvantaged in a larger classroom group?

Mr PEARCE: I am not in a position at the moment to give a lengthy exposition on this point.

Mrs Craig: Well, tell us the names of studies that point to this. I have read some that do not bear this out.

Mr H. D. Evans: You name one.

Mrs Craig: You said you would tell us.

Mr PEARCE: I shall give the names of the studies and the actual figures when we come to the education Estimates. Is the Minister listening?

Mrs Craig: I was trying to listen.

Mr PEARCE: When we come to the education Estimates I will be well prepared to canvass the particular point. Perhaps we can have an interesting debate on it.

Mrs Craig: I am just asking the names of research studies indicating this situation.

Mr PEARCE: The point I am making is that the increases in Government expenditure are not in fact the increases that the Government claims for itself. Secondly, it will not have the effect in the classroom situation that the Government claims it will have. It seems to me—and we have heard this from the Government time and time again, which is why I was so perturbed about what the Government expenditure might be and the sorts of things the Minister for Lands and Forests was suggesting—there is a suggestion that class sizes ought to be bigger; it is cheaper and in educational terms there seems to be some doubt. I would be pleased to hear about the studies which show the other side and perhaps the Minister would be prepared to speak on that matter.

We have heard time and time again that there is considerable wastefulness in Government expenditure. Previously I have made this point that if there is waste in expenditure then the Government is to blame because it is responsible for administering educational funds. It is the Minister for Education and the Government who are responsible, and if there is waste in these areas the Government is responsible for it. I do not argue that there is waste, except where there is administrative bungling which I am told is happening in schools at the present time. When

the end of the financial year is coming up, the Government discovers there is money that has to be spent or sent back to the Commonwealth. As a result, schools receive a circular or a phone call and are told, "You have seven days in which to spend \$4 000." That would be the figure for a primary school and the figure could be as high as \$15 000 for a secondary school. The principal then has to think up all sorts of weird and wonderful ways to spend this money before it has to go back to Canberra.

Mr Sibson: This is because the planning is not done in advance. If I were the principal of that school I would have a list that long and I would need \$20 000. I would be able to spend it off the top of my head.

Mr PEARCE: I am sure the member for Bunbury would be able to spend money in educational areas. Schools are not made aware funds are available. As a result P & Cs and schools hold socials and fetes to raise money from the children and parents to provide the essential items that are not available from Government funding. Then all of a sudden, at the end of the financial year, they discover that all the things they have been working for a year or a year and a half to obtain could have been provided out of Government money. This happens because there has been no planning and the planning failure is not in the schools; it is in the Education Department, the Government, and the Ministry which is responsible for these things. The planning failure is in that area.

I have pointed out already in this debate that approximately \$7.5 million was voted but not committed and not spent on education in the last year. A sum of \$7.5 million could have gone into education in this State because Parliament agreed to the expenditure of that sum. As I pointed out some weeks ago, some \$6 million or \$7 million in capital funds from the year before that was not spent or committed, and still has not been shown to be carried over into the figures; therefore, the State missed out on that money altogether.

I think a remark made by the Premier when reading the capital allocation vote seemed to prove what I have said on that subject. It seems to me that if the Government can claim that it did not in fact cut back on education expenditure, it has not done tremendously well with it either. The Government's arguments for itself are not terribly impressive when one looks at the figures of the number of teachers and what they really mean to the schools in this State.

Perhaps I can leave the subject of education

with this final remark, which is contained in the Financial Statement, in the first paragraph on page 22—

Provision has also been made for a new scheme of subsidies of computer equipment purchased for schools by Parents and Citizen's groups. Schools will be able to claim a \$ for \$ subsidy to a maximum of \$3 000 to enable the purchase of terminals which can be linked to a central computer.

I do not decri the use of computers in schools. I think schools have to keep up with current technology in order to prepare young people to take their place in the society of today. But if the Government is claiming that it will give a school up to \$3 000 on a dollar-for-dollar basis to buy these computer terminals, then by insisting on the P and Cs raising up to \$3 000 it is making it very easy for schools in rich areas to get into computer education, whilst making it very difficult for schools in depressed areas to become involved in the same thing.

The problem with dollar-for-dollar subsidies and asking P and Cs to match the Government's contribution is that it always gives an advantage to schools in affluent areas and to the pupils who have parents who come from an affluent group in the community. So, whilst I agree there is a necessity to get into computer programming in schools, I do not think the Government, by making a dollar-for-dollar subsidy instead of providing the equipment, is going about it the right way. The Government is opting out by saying to the community, "You do half the job and if you are able to do that, we will give you the other half." It would be far more reasonable for the Government to establish the equipment in the schools by giving the money to the schools.

Mr Sibson: Are you saying the parents are not capable of doing that?

Mr PEARCE: I am saying there are many schools where the P and Cs are not capable of doing that.

Mr Sibson: One of the schools in my area, which would be considered to be one of the poorer schools, has raised the most money over the last few years.

Mr PEARCE: All that is saying is that—

Mr Sibson: It is a reverse situation.

Mr PEARCE: Well, I believe that shows a worse situation, because the member for Bunbury is saying that the Government is expecting parents in lower income groups to provide the things that it should be providing in those areas. The Government has a record of doing this.

Mr Sibson: You are talking against parent participation.

Mr PEARCE: I am not.

Mr Sibson: Yes, you are.

Mr PEARCE: The member for Bunbury thinks that parent participation is to do only with raising dollars and cents. I have spoken against that form of parent participation for a long time. That is exactly the problem—that P and Cs are forced to see themselves solely as fund raising groups.

Mr Sibson: You are insulting P and Cs.

Mr PEARCE: I am not.

Mr Sibson: You are insulting them.

Mr PEARCE: The member for Bunbury should speak to the people from the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations and see what they think.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are far too many interjections and there is far too much background conversation. The member for Gosnells.

Mr PEARCE: there is a lot of background conversation from the member for Bunbury. If he were to talk to the people at the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations he would discover that they are very concerned to have a role in decision making in the schools.

Mr Sibson: I will take you down—

The SPEAKER: Order! Would the member for Bunbury cease interjecting. The member for Gosnells is attempting to make a speech and if the member for Bunbury wishes to involve himself in some sort of discussion may I suggest that he do it outside and allow the member for Gosnells to get on with his speech.

Mr PEARCE: When one considers that the maximum swimming pool subsidy is to be increased to \$10 000 in the metropolitan area and the south-west and to \$12 500 elsewhere, one can see the Government is putting a considerable amount of pressure on parents with regard to items which it considers to be luxuries. If it is the case that parent groups have to be able to raise money for swimming pools, which are partly luxuries, I think the Government ought to be consistent, decide what are necessities, provide them for every school, and let parent groups provide luxuries, rather than providing 50-50 subsidies, because parents in rich areas are able to provide great sums. I do not agree with this matching system.

There is one other aspect, other than

educational matters, to which I should like to turn my attention.

Mr Sibson interjected.

Mr PEARCE: It seems that the member for Bunbury tonight has made the longest speech he has made during my time in this place, but I am pleased to hear that he is becoming eloquent at last. I should like to consider briefly the question of the increases in State Housing Commission rents. This is a matter in which I have been involved during the last two weeks or so because of the large number of approaches I have had from people in State Housing Commission areas in my electorate. I should like to preface my remarks on this subject with an apology to the member for Murdoch and to the President of the other place. In calling a meeting on this matter at the church hall in Langford for last Wednesday I inadvertently sent telegrams to those two gentlemen which contained a mistake in the date and, consequently, they were not able to attend. That is something for which I apologise most sincerely to those gentlemen.

I should have liked either of those two gentlemen to be present at that meeting to defend the Government's record with regard to State Housing Commission rents because it is a fairly miserable record. If we take the present 37 per cent increase into account State Housing Commission rents have increased by 113 per cent during the more than three years of the current Government. That compares with a nil increase during the three years of the Tonkin Labor Government.

Mr Clarko: What about the previous Brand Government? How much did it raise the rents?

Mr PEARCE: The member for Karrinyup is saying that the Court Government is nowhere near as good as the Brand Government or the Tonkin Government.

Mr Clarko: You left out the Brand Government. You are being selective with your facts again.

Mr PEARCE: If the member for Karrinyup wishes to point out that the record of the Court Government is not as good as that of the Brand Government or the Tonkin Government, so be it.

Mr MacKinnon: Are you saying that rents should be left alone and not put up?

Mr PEARCE: I am not saying that. I certainly accept that there should be some indexation of SHC rents. They should not be set low forever. I accept that the inflation rate is higher now than it was during the term of the Tonkin Government.

Mr MacKinnon: Would you accept that the

inflation rate on the cost of building and maintaining houses could be higher than the CPI?

Mr PEARCE: Yes, I would accept that, but I would not then accept the carry-across of that which is that increases in SHC rents ought to be the same as the increases in the cost of building houses.

Mr MacKinnon: Where do you suggest the funds should come from?

Mr PEARCE: I shall come to that in a moment. When talking of State Housing Commission rentals one ought to be looking at the capacity of people to pay. When the Government talks about bringing State Housing Commission rentals up to the market value, and understanding that approximately two-thirds of the people who occupy State Housing Commission houses do not qualify for the rebate system which the Minister praised so unreservedly earlier today, one will realise that there is very little point in at least two-thirds of the State Housing Commission operating if it is operating at the same funding level as private enterprise. What would be the point of it? When rentals reach the market value the State Government will do with them just what it is doing with the State sawmills; that is, selling them off to private enterprise.

A Government member: That is a stupid statement.

Mr PEARCE: It is not because people who let private houses do not let them out of the kindness of their hearts. They let them because those houses are being used as an investment and there is a profit involved not only in terms of rental but also in terms of the capital in the house. People who let houses do so because they want to make money. If market rentals are set at a level whereby the lessor makes money out of it and State Housing Commission rentals are put up to the same level the State Housing Commission will be making money. If it then sells the houses off to private enterprise it will be doing so at exactly the point at which it might be recouping some money from the houses.

I said earlier in reply to an interjection that I expect some increase in State Housing Commission rentals as long as they are indexed along with wages. But we find that wages are being increased by considerably under 10 per cent and rentals have increased by about 37 per cent. During the last three years the Government has put up State Housing Commission rentals by 113 per cent and wages have risen by nothing like that amount in the same period.

Mr MacKinnon: By how much has the number of rebates increased?

Mr PEARCE: Possibly the member for Murdoch will mention that subsequently, but I point out to him that the number of people entitled to rebates is a little over one-third of the total number of State Housing Commission tenants, so the number of people not entitled to rebates is approximately two-thirds of that number. If about 23 000 people live in State Housing Commission dwellings we are talking about 15 000 people who are not entitled to rebates; and not all of those people, despite what the Minister seems to be saying, are earning \$38 500 a year. In fact the Minister claims to know only one such person. We are not defending a situation in which people living in State Housing Commission homes are earning sums of that magnitude, but surely it is not beyond the wit of a Government to devise a regulation whereby such a person is obliged to buy the State Housing Commission home in which he is living and with the money it gets for that house the State Housing Commission can build another one so that people are not evicted. That is a scare tactic that has been raised by the Minister. Once a person gets to the point that he can buy his house, let him buy it and the State Housing Commission can use the money to build another house for a low-income family somewhere else.

People telephone me all the time—and I am sure this happens to other members—to ask why they cannot buy their houses. People put down their names to buy their houses from the State Housing Commission and then they have to wait four years to buy it. So the funds are tied up in that house and cannot be released for use elsewhere.

Mr Herzfeld: If it takes 3½ years now—

Mr PEARCE: It does; do not say "if".

Mr Herzfeld: If the rents do not go up it will be five years.

Mr PEARCE: Why cannot they buy their houses? The State Housing Commission can take money off the person who is buying his house and use it to build another house for somebody else. The member for Mundaring cannot have too many State Housing Commission areas in his electorate.

In the same way that the Government has bashed unions and educationists it is now bashing State Housing Commission dwellers by trying to suggest to the public that these houses are full of people who are bludging on the Government for the rent they are paying and thus keeping up a high standard of living. That is simply not true. Any member who walks around State Housing Commission areas, talks to the people, and sees

the massive problems, will understand perfectly well that that is not true. It is a heartless suggestion.

I am particularly annoyed at the Minister's appearance on the television programme "This Day Tonight" when he used his superior knowledge of what happened in the Parliament to suggest to a poor woman in a State Housing Commission home that he had not denied in this House that State Housing Commission rents were due to rise. When we tried to move dissent from your ruling, Mr Speaker, on an earlier occasion when trying to bring this question forward as a matter of urgency I brought out that the Minister had quite clearly denied in the House by way of interjection that some sort of increase was in the pipeline. I read from *Hansard* to prove that point. I gather that the Minister appeared on TDT with that self-same copy of *Hansard*, waved it in front of the cameras, and said that *Hansard* would prove his view of the matter. The poor woman, who probably could not afford to subscribe to *Hansard* at the current rates, did not have time to peruse the sections which the Minister produced. That was a performance which hardly reflected any credit on that Minister.

The Government has not done well out of this recent State Housing Commission increase. It is putting a strain on the low-income earners. The Government is saying that there needs to be subsidised housing for some people in the community, and that is true. The member for Mundaring asked where the money is to come from and I said it would have to come from the general State Budget because the other answer, which is to take it from the money raised by the State Housing Commission, would mean subsidising the very low-income earners by taking money off the next lowest set of income earners.

That involves ripping off people who do not get rebates in order to subsidise housing for the very low-income earners and people such as ourselves are not being asked to kick in to subsidise people in the community who are most in need of housing. That is not a fair way of going about it.

Mr Shalders: Why are we still losing \$2.4 million on rent?

Mr PEARCE: Even to use terms such as "losing on rent" shows that the member for Murray feels that the whole system somehow needs to be self-supporting. I wonder whether he would use the same argument with regard to unemployment benefits.

Mr Shalders: It is logical.

Mr PEARCE: Of course it is logical, but how much does the Department of Social Security lose

in a year? It is not a profit-making organisation. So we cannot talk about losing on rents because State housing ought to be subsidised by the community.

Mr Shalders: That is what I said, you fool!

Mr PEARCE: I object to the term "fool", but I shall not ask for a withdrawal because it was said by way of interjection. The point is that by this method of providing housing at a subsidised level for low-income earners the Government is moving to cut out a degree of subsidy and to make the people cover the costs themselves, which is a totally unfair and inequitable system.

Mr Speaker, I am sorry to have used up so much of your time on these random thoughts about education and housing, but I felt there were some particular points which needed to be made in the Budget debate.

MR SKIDMORE (Swan) [8.57 p.m.]: I welcome the opportunity to speak in the Budget debate tonight and I hope that the interjections which seemed to be never-ending while the member for Gosnells was speaking will not be directed to me. I do not know that I should worry very much about the Budget proposals, but one must be worried when one tries to find in them proposals for overcoming the economic problems which are facing this State and which have been brought about, I am led to believe, by the Whitlam Government which is still getting the blame after all these years for the ills of the economy.

When we look at the Budget we see that one of the highlights of it is that there will be no increases in taxes and charges. There is no need to put up any more charges in the Budget because they have already been increased quite considerably. This bears to a great extent on a matter to which I shall eventually allude when I consider the action of the Government in its endeavour to overcome the wishes of the trade union movement to opt out of wage indexation because of the attitude of Governments not only in this State but also in other States. I shall develop that argument later.

Some of the charges which come to mind are increases in licence fees for motor vehicles which many people have to use for travelling to and from their jobs. The member for Gosnells has already mentioned the increase in Housing Commission rentals. Electricity charges have been increased. There have been increases in the cost of fuel, natural gas, and all those items which are considered to be absolute necessities for working people and for which they have to pay with wages which they now wish to have determined not by

wage indexation but by a system of parity with other States. When one considers the bargaining basis of some of the larger unions, surely this is not an inequitable situation.

I will deal briefly with some of the matters mentioned in the Treasurer's Budget proposals. At page 11 of his Financial Statement the Treasurer said there would be substantial increases in the Police Force and a major re-equipment programme for the police and Road Traffic Authority. The expenditure of money in that direction is to be lauded. I have been endeavouring for years to have police patrols increased in my area. In fact, I have taken the initiative of calling a meeting to discuss this question which is of great concern to the Bassendean Town Council and other shires. I refer to the question of damage to public utilities as a result of vandalism. This problem can be overcome only by increased police patrols, which are completely understaffed at the present time.

We have said previously that the complete amalgamation of the Police Force and the Road Traffic Authority will do away with a lot of the additional administrative cost which is part of having two separate authorities. When I raised the matter of the manning of police stations I was told that I should refer to the Police Force and the Road Traffic Authority as the "Police Traffic Authority". So, I do not know where we are going. There must eventually be an amalgamation in order to save funds.

Mr Davies: We will have to get the Country Party on side first.

Mr SKIDMORE: I understand there was some sort of deal in that regard, but I will discuss that at a later stage.

At page 12 of the Financial Statement the Treasurer said there would be an expanded programme of railway upgrading and maintenance to lift employment.

Mr H. D. Evans: At Meekatharra?

Mr SKIDMORE: That is only one instance. Let us look at the employment opportunities which will occur. No doubt the inevitable closure of the line between Meekatharra and Mullewa will take money out of the area in wages. Homes will be moved to other areas of railway activity. So much for the maintenance programme to lift employment.

The Government will attempt to hang its hat on the broad gauge line which has deteriorated to such an extent that not even one kilometre of the line is not subject to speed controls. The Government has said it will provide employment by way of maintenance in the years to come, but

it has put at risk the lives of the men who have driven the heavily-laden trains over the line.

The latest statement from the Government is that it will do away with the railway line between Perth and Fremantle, and create a busway. That is the latest plan in the Government's programme to lift employment by way of maintenance! One wonders whether or not the Premier was talking with his tongue in his cheek, or with a forked tongue, when he mentioned the expanded programme of railway upgrading and maintenance to lift employment.

Some gains have been made in an area on which I have spoken at every opportunity during Budget debates. I refer to industrial safety, and the affairs of the Department of Labour and Industry and the attention it gives to the trade union movement in this State.

I find it passing strange that the trade union movement, which had accepted the Commonwealth wage indexation system, has not received its fair share of the economy due to the workers. The trade union movement has now said it does not want wage indexation, but it wants wage negotiation in industry. The Government has consistently gone to the commission, in all States and the Commonwealth, and argued that the trade union movement should have wage indexation only on the terms of the Government, which is partial wage indexation. The Government is saying that there will be wage indexation whether or not the trade union movement wants it.

Of course, it is necessary for all three parties to agree, or to make an application for wage indexation. Now the trade union movement does not want wage indexation, the Government intends that it will be forced to accept wage indexation. The Government will insist that the door be left open so that wage indexation can be applied on the specious ground that it will keep wages and conditions in line with the other States. The Minister, his advisers, the trade union movement, and the employers know that equality of wages and conditions is not attainable.

The opposition to the trade union movement is staggering in the extreme. The Government has fought tooth and nail and applied every rule in the book. The obvious reason is that the power which the State Government now has will be placed where it belongs—in the Federal field.

I did expect that the Budget would give some credence to industrial relations, but the only information I can find about industrial issues in the Financial Statement of the Treasurer is the statement that industrial disputes in the Pilbara

were of grave concern to the Government. The Premier said the Government was anxious to improve industrial relations in this region which generates such a large proportion of our export income.

Bearing in mind that the Pilbara produces such a great proportion of our export income, one would imagine the Government would go out of its way to provide a service to the trade union movement and the employees in the Pilbara commensurate with the degree of export income generated by the mining companies. However, the Premier said that a sum of \$37 000 is to be made available this year to the Department of Labour and Industry so that three officers can be recruited and stationed on a rotating basis in the Pilbara. The Premier said those officers would provide on-the-spot guidance and information to union personnel, the mining companies, and the employees. That means at any given time only one industrial officer will be in the Pilbara. He will rotate with his two fellow officers, and will cover an area stretching for hundreds of miles and will, supposedly, look into all industrial disputes.

Is there really as much industrial disputation as we are led to believe? An examination of the related figures over the last few years shows there has been a decline. In 1977, the man hours lost so far in industrial disputes, throughout Australia, are fewer than they have been for many years.

The small booklet, *Australia 1977 at a Glance*, reveals that industrial disputes in 1965-66 accounted for 794 working days lost. In 1973-74, 5 426 working days were lost; in 1974-75, 3 957 working days were lost; in 1975-76, 3 005 working days were lost, and I am led to believe that the figure for 1977 to date is well down on the 3 005 working days lost in 1975-76.

Where is the bogey that claims the worker is always on strike and is always causing disputation? At the moment we find a group of self-employed people, subcontractors, whom the Government professes to look after in its liberal thinking, struggling with their employers—the cartels which control the transport industry in this State. Those contractors are arguing with their employers, and the Government has given them away. The Government will not assist in any way, and has made it difficult for them to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion to their problems. The Government is placing all sorts of hurdles in their way.

I want to develop the theme that the worker has at long last been asked to handle too much of the burden of the economic loss of this country which

results from the mismanagement by Liberal Governments, both Federal and State.

Let us examine the Consumer Price Index. Taking the base year of 1966-67 as 100, and taking the average of the six capital cities, in the period from 1966-67, to 1975-76—the latest figures available—there has been an increase from 100 to 193. That is an increase of almost 100 per cent in the Consumer Price Index.

The full CPI is not granted under wage indexation and the workers are unable to buy those goods which the Government wants them to buy so that the producers can get rid of their surplus stocks and increase their production and profits, and reinvest their capital in industry. I advise the Minister that I can identify my source of information; it comes from table 3 at page 10 of the Consumer Price Index for the December quarter, 1976. In the food group, dairy produce, cereal products, meat and seafoods—including beef and veal, lamb and mutton, pork, poultry, other meat, and fish—fruit and vegetables, including processed fruit and vegetables, soft drinks, ice cream and confectionery, take-away food, and other foods are listed.

The table also includes a comprehensive group of clothing such as piece goods and other clothing, footwear, and clothing and footwear services.

In the housing group, rent for privately-owned dwellings and Government-owned dwellings, and home ownership including local government rates and charges, house price, repairs and maintenance are listed. I imagine the CPI will have taken an upward swing during the last two or three months, and we will have a further increase with regard to Government-owned dwellings in the near future. In the home ownership area, Government rates and charges have increased between 10 and 15 per cent.

Under the household equipment and operation group, fuel and light, furniture and floor coverings, appliances, drapery, household utensils and tools, household supplies and services, and postal and telephone services are listed. I have already mentioned the disastrous results of the increases in charges for fuel and electricity.

Under the transportation group, private transport, including motor vehicle purchase and motor vehicle operation, and public transport fares are listed. This group will be forced up when the increased licence fees are reflected in the CPI. The increase in public transport charges also will affect this group.

Other items taken into account in the Consumer Price Index are tobacco and alcohol, health services, personal care products and

services, and, under the recreation group, books, magazines, newspapers, other recreation goods, and holiday accommodation. The special groupings cover items which are not specifically mentioned in other groups.

The unions accepted the increase in the Consumer Price Index as being total, but the Government of this State has repeatedly said the worker is not entitled to the total increase in the Consumer Price Index because it is unearned, productivity is down, and the workers are not able to sustain their entitlement to it. It should obviously be given to them in view of the fact that the items I have read out are the basic items for a family to exist.

It might be asked what justification there is for saying the Government's union bashing in this State has an effect on it. I would have thought in such a tender area of concern the Government would be more conscious of its responsibilities and allocate more funds to industrial relations and the Department of Labour and Industry so that the Minister and his officers are able to do much more to overcome the disputation between the unions, the employers, and the Government.

When handing down the national wage decision on the 22nd August, Sir John Moore gave the lie to the suggestion that militant unionists were the root cause of Australia's economic ills. He said in the past year real wages had decreased and the proportion of the national product going to wages had decreased. That is exactly what I have been saying—that the proportion of the national product going to wages had decreased because the worker was not getting his fair share of the national product.

Sir John Moore also said that substantial compliance with wage-fixing guidelines had been met by the unions. In view of their attitude towards the Consumer Price Index and wage indexation, neither the employers nor the Government has complied with the guidelines.

Sir John Moore went on to say corporate profit had increased by 23 per cent, and the proportion of the national product going to profits had increased; but in spite of all this economic recovery was slow and unemployment had increased.

The Minister is confused about unemployment. He said Western Australia had a 4.6 per cent incidence of unemployment, but in fact it was 4.7 per cent. Victoria had 4.6 per cent. The Minister said Western Australia had 4.6 per cent.

Mr Grayden: That is not so.

Mr SKIDMORE: If the Minister checks *Hansard* he will find that is what he said. He also

said this State had the second lowest figure for unemployment. The Minister tends to use statistics without stating their source, and then piously says, "I did not say that, and in any case what does it matter?" What does it matter about another 10 000 or 15 000 unemployed? Is that what the Minister is saying? I am concerned about it.

I find little in the Budget Estimates to give me any hope that industrial relations in this State will improve. The Government has a parsimonious attitude towards funding for this purpose. I have repeatedly raised in this House the issue of safety on the job. Employers are faced with ever-increasing workers' compensation premiums, to such an extent that a small businessman of whom I know, who employs an average of six to 10 workers in the rigging industry, is facing a bill for \$6 000 to \$7 000 per annum for workers' compensation.

It might be said that is a reflection of the fact that a worker now receives 100 per cent of his earnings for injuries sustained at work. Perhaps some would be polling on the fact that it is easier to exist on 100 per cent of earnings than on 85 per cent, but the number of people in that category are a drop in the ocean. The genuine worker has an absolute need of 100 per cent of his wages while he is on workers' compensation.

This Government has repeatedly said it is interested in industrial safety. I will mention a matter which came to my knowledge on Sunday last. At a flour mill in Northam—it can be easily identified because there is only one in that town—an accident occurred to a worker when using what is known as a man hoist. He sustained broken limbs, extensive bruising, and internal injuries, and received workers' compensation. I believe it was reported after an examination by an inspector from the Department of Labour and Industry that there did not appear to be anything wrong with the hoist if it was used in the correct manner. But a notice suddenly appeared on the notice board beside the lift. I received this information in a roundabout way, and I might be wrong in saying the lift was examined by an officer of the Department of Labour and Industry. If it was not examined, I owe the department an apology. However, this notice appeared beside the lift—

Operation of Man Hoist

Persons using this Hoist do so at their own risk.

In other words, a hoist provided for the men to use on the job will be used at their own risk. The notice continues—

The following precautions must be followed by persons using the Hoist

1. Handgrips must be used at all times (To avoid being thrown off by sudden stop)
2. Handgrips should be held with the knuckles to the outside (To avoid hands being jammed and broken wrist)

This is supposed to be a safe hoist. It continues—

3. Feet must be on steps (Not on handgrips)

I am not sure of the significance of that instruction. I do not know whether people were standing on their heads with their feet where their hands should be, but for some inexplicable reason a safety-conscious employer saw a need to suggest the feet might be where the hands should be.

Mr O'Neil: Perhaps it depended whether the lift was going up or down.

Mr SKIDMORE: The notice continues—

4. Stop cord to be used only in emergency (To avoid danger to others through sudden stops)

What would be the purpose of a stop cord if it was not to be used in an emergency? It goes on—

5. Bulky or long objects must not be carried on lift (To avoid being jammed by floor)

That is the only safety measure that has any relevance to the use of this man hoist. The notice continues—

6. No horseplay at any time

That may satisfy the member for Roc, who interjected a while ago—possibly unheard by the *Hansard* reporter—that it appeared to be quite all right in these conditions. I agree there should be no horseplay. Then a remarkable statement follows, from an employer who is supposed to be conscious of his responsibility and has had the lift examined by an inspector of the Department of Labour and Industry—

Management warns that although this lift is safe—

It has just stated six good reasons why the lift is not safe. To continue—

— if used properly it could be dangerous if misused. Dangerous practices or horseplay will be regarded as misconduct in the terms of section 8(a)(i) of the award.

Here is a classic example of lack of responsibility for the safety of workers in a country town. I consider this particular management should be condemned out of hand for posting a notice like that beside a man hoist. People are not to stop the lift in an emergency because they might endanger

someone else. What about the man who wants to stop it because he has his wrist outside the cage and it might be jammed against one of the floors? It does not matter about his wrist.

No effort appears to have been made by the Government to get to grips with safety. The Minister has said in this House that he has 13 inspectors sitting at telephones waiting for someone to ring them up—waiting for someone like the man at Northam to tell them he has broken limbs, extensive bruising, and internal injuries, and that he is in hospital. Had the inspectors been doing their job the man hoist would have been put out of action. That is what we should be doing in the matter of industrial safety.

Mr Grayden: A thousand inspectors would not be sufficient.

Mr SKIDMORE: I suggest the Minister check whether there has been an inspection of that man hoist, and if not, get one of his inspectors up there. We will provide a union vehicle to take the inspector up there, if the cost is too much for the Government to sustain.

Mr Grayden: May we have the document?

Mr SKIDMORE: Yes. It is the flour mill of W. Thomas & Co. at Northam. There is no name or authorisation on the notice. I hand the Minister a photostat copy of the original, which I have in my possession.

Mr Blaikie: Is it being tabled?

Mr Tonkin: Government back-benchers have nothing to do but sit there and make stupid comments.

Mr Grayden: I do not think you have been reading the document correctly, anyway.

Mr SKIDMORE: Would the Minister tell me where I was incorrect? I am not a liar.

Mr Grayden: It says, "Stop cord to be used only in emergency". You are giving the impression it could not be pulled at all.

Mr SKIDMORE: The *Hansard* record will reveal that I said a moment ago if a man had his wrist jammed in between floors and wanted to pull the cord in an emergency he would not be able to do so because he might endanger someone else, according to the employer. That is exactly what it says.

Mr Grayden: Yes, but the point is that it is used only in an emergency.

Mr SKIDMORE: That is right; it is for use in an emergency, so someone could use it in an emergency and endanger someone else.

Mr Grayden: Have you ever been on a train?

There is a notice saying that the cord should be pulled only in an emergency.

Mr Tonkin: Yes, but you don't kill someone if you pull it.

Mr SKIDMORE: I think far too many things are being pulled here at the moment, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Sibson), and I think we ought get back to the principle I enunciated in respect of this document which the Minister seems to find rather funny.

Mr Grayden: I do not see anything wrong with it at all.

Mr SKIDMORE: Here we have a Minister who sets himself up as being responsible for the safety of workers, and he finds nothing wrong with that document. I certainly find a great deal wrong with it.

I move now to another area of concern and to dwell briefly on the matter of the Aboriginal people in the Swan Valley. I looked in vain for something in the Budget speech which would reflect any degree of concern on the part of the Government for these people; I found nothing. I could find no mention of the expenditure even of Commonwealth funds for the benefit of the Aboriginal community.

Mr Herzfeld: Did you look under the heading of "Fares from Canberra to Perth"?

Mr SKIDMORE: I will deal with that; I will not run away from anything in respect of Aboriginal people, as the member for Mundaring well knows. That is an issue I intended to mention; that is, the trip these people made to Canberra.

However, before doing so I want to refer to an article in respect of the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Mr Viner), which appears in the *Commonwealth Record*, vol. 2, No. 30, on page 991. It is indicated in the article that early in August Mr Viner made an extensive visit to the central desert region of Australia, to look at settlements such as Alice Springs, Amata, Fregon, Mimili, Docker River, Wingellina, Jamieson Range, Warburton and Laverton. When he returned on the 7th August he reported on the fierce determination of central desert Aborigines to preserve and follow their traditional cultures. The article states—

Mr Viner said that throughout his visit Aboriginal groups had emphasised their strong desire to identify with their land and protect traditional sites of ceremonial significance.

I would now like to put the record straight concerning the trip to Canberra made by some

members of the Aboriginal community of Lockridge. Much has been said in the Press in an endeavour to denigrate the Fringe Dwellers Association, the members of which in my opinion are the salt of the earth when it comes to their endeavours to succour and defend the sad lot of the Aborigines. I attended a meeting at Lockridge—one of many—at which we sat cross-legged on the ground in a sort of semi-circle in the normal Aboriginal fashion. We spoke to the elders and other Aborigines and discussed the problems at Lockridge. It was finally resolved at that conference that the only way the Aborigines would be able to present their protest in a valid way was to take some positive action. The Aborigines had been shifted from Guildford to Lockridge, and although they were given a piece of ground they were being neglected.

So the Aborigines themselves determined—and this is where I want to put the record straight—that they wanted to go to Canberra. Nobody, as was reflected in the Press, twisted their arms at all; in fact I and others said to them that it was wrong to spend money in such a way. I felt, and I told them so, that it would be better to spend the money to give some of the young children a better way of life, at least for a short time.

However, as they were so set in their view, the question which became apparent was how to get 35 Aborigines to Canberra, bearing in mind they had no money. So these much-maligned people tried to assist these poor unfortunate Australians by lending them two of their own cars; and two members of the association took time off from work to travel with the Aborigines to Canberra in the two cars. So much for the statement made that the Fringe Dwellers Association is misleading the Aborigines.

First of all, the Aborigines determined that they wanted to go to Canberra; and, secondly, the Fringe Dwellers Association, acting on that value judgment of the Aborigines, gave them the opportunity to make their protest in Canberra. The party travelled to Canberra, and I might point out that they did not have a picnic on the way over. They had a very hard time getting there. Had it not been for the good grace of the Federal Government in providing the bus fare home for some of the party, goodness knows what would have happened. One of the women concerned, who is a great fighter for the rights of her people, may not have been able to get back to Western Australia had it not been for the Federal Government. Fortunately she came back in a bus; she is a very sick woman.

I wanted to set the record straight so that there

is no doubt in the minds of the people of Western Australia about what happened, and I thought that by some magic the media might be bothered to print the true facts instead of continually denigrating those who are trying to help the Aborigines.

As I said, I tried to find something in the Budget speech which would be of assistance to Aborigines, but could find nothing. This Government controls the allocation of funds for Aborigines. Mr Viner has said time and time again that until such time as he receives a brief or an acknowledgment from the State Government in respect of the need for funds in a certain direction, he cannot allocate funds. Therefore, the Government is delaying the matter.

I attended a conference between the Shire of Swan, the State Housing Commission, and the Aboriginal community from Saunders Street. At that meeting the Aboriginal community was promised eight houses in Saunders Street.

Mr Herzfeld: By whom?

Mr SKIDMORE: By the State Housing Commission. What happened was that it was proposed at the conference that, first of all, four houses would be erected. On their completion, four families would move into the homes, and the remainder of the Aborigines would be allowed to remain where they were because they would have access to proper toilet and washing facilities. Then the State Housing Commission was to make application to the Swan Shire for another four homes to be erected there; in other words, to have two homes on each of the blocks.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Sibson): The member has three minutes.

Mr Herzfeld: That is not the agreement that was signed.

Mr SKIDMORE: I will go through this very quickly. The Shire of Swan—that great hope for the Aboriginal community in the Swan Valley—went away from that meeting and immediately coerced the Aborigines into accepting only four homes. It did not even bother to go to the Saunders Street people and tell them about it until it was a *fait accompli*. Only four homes were constructed, and the money that was available for the additional four homes was expended in another area. I am not sure that it was even expended on Aboriginal housing. The Shire of Swan welshed on the agreement that was made before myself and the officers of the Housing Commission at that conference. There is no question of that at all.

I conclude with this summary: I am concerned the Minister for Labour and Industry should treat

with such levity a document which is a condemnation of management in respect of safety. I condemn those people who are responsible for saying to the Aborigines at Lockridge, "You were misled" when in fact they made their own decision. I am also concerned that the four additional homes were not constructed as promised for the Saunder Street Aborigines.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I direct that the document quoted in the speech of the member for Swan be placed on the Table of the House for the information of members.

The document was tabled.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Shalders.

INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee

Resumed from the 22nd September. The Chairman of Committees (Mr Clarko) in the Chair; Mr Grayden (Minister for Labour and Industry) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2: Section 11A amended—

Progress was reported after clause 2 had been partly considered.

Mr TONKIN: Members will recall that when we were discussing this clause previously the member for Swan and I sought certain assurances from the Minister. The Minister sat pat and refused to get up, which we on this side interpreted as being an example of his arrogance. When I appealed to the Premier and pointed out the Minister would not even give us the courtesy of a reply, the Minister then rose and demonstrated that he does not understand his Bill. He read some paragraphs from his second reading speech which were irrelevant to the assurances we had sought, thereby indicating he does not really understand the measure.

I might add that in the course of my remarks in the second reading debate I referred to the fact that the Government never appeals against decisions of industrial magistrates which let employers off lightly, although it appeals against decisions which it considers let citizens off too lightly. The Minister asked, "Do they have the right of appeal?" implying strongly no right of appeal exists. This indicated he does not know the provisions of the Act he is required to administer, because the right of appeal from decisions of industrial magistrates is set out in section 103A.

Since that time I have been informed by the Trades and Labor Council that in spite of consistent undertakings given by the Government to confer with it before amendments are made to the Industrial Arbitration Act, no discussion has

taken place between the Government and the Trades and Labor Council in respect of this Bill. Therefore I believe the debate should be postponed to give the Trades and Labor Council a chance to make submissions to the Government on a matter which affects it considerably. I have already spoken to the Deputy Premier and requested that the Bill be postponed.

We are concerned there has been no conference between the Government and the TLC. Frankly, I doubt the Government's sincerity when it says it believes in industrial peace. If it wants industrial peace, there are several things which can be done, the most important of which is to remove the cause of industrial unrest. Here I blame the media for a conspiracy of silence in not informing the public about the facts with respect to the present TWU strike, where people who provide over 90 per cent of the effort, the money and time in getting goods to the north receive less than 50 per cent of the proceeds. The only part of the media I exclude from that charge of a conspiracy of silence, ironically enough, is *The West Australian*, which to some extent at least has indicated these figures.

If the Minister wants to preside over a Government in which there is turmoil, industrial unrest and disaffection because he believes it will assist Fraser at the forthcoming election let that be on his conscience.

Mr Grayden: The member for Morley is making a second reading speech.

Mr TONKIN: The fact of the matter is that if the Minister wants to get rid of industrial unrest, he should get rid of the underlying cause.

Mr Grayden: What has this to do with clause 2?

Mr TONKIN: It has to do with industrial arbitration. Does the Minister not know we are dealing with a Bill to amend an Act which is designed to settle industrial disputes? Industrial disputes are not caused by people who have a hotline to Moscow; industrial disputes are not caused by people who suddenly have no desire to earn money, who suddenly seem to want to go without weeks and weeks of pay. They are caused because of basic injustice. We have had an inflationary situation over the previous few years in which costs have been increasing, yet some of these subcontractors transporting goods to the north have had their proceeds reduced, not in real terms, but in money terms.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I urge the honourable member to confine his remarks to clause 2 of the Bill.

Mr TONKIN: That is one cause of industrial

unrest. The other cause is the lack of conference with the TLC. Because there has been no conference, and because the TLC should have a chance to make submissions to the Government, I intend to move that progress be reported.

Progress

Mr TONKIN: I move—

That the Chairman do now report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 16

Mr Barnett	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Bertram	Mr Pearce
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr H. D. Evans	Dr Troy
Mr Grill	Mr Wilson
Mr Harman	Mr Bateman

(Teller)

Noes 25

Mr Blaikie	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr O'Neill
Mr Coyne	Mr Ridge
Mrs Craig	Mr Rushton
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Mr Grayden	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grewar	Mr Spriggs
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Watt
Mr Laurance	Mr Williams
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Young
Mr Mensaros	Mr Shalders
Mr Nanovich	

(Teller)

Pairs

<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Noes</i>
Mr Jamieson	Sir Charles Court
Mr Bryce	Mr McPharlin
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Stephens
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr P. V. Jones
Mr Hodge	Dr Dadour
Mr McIver	Mr O'Connor

Motion thus negatived.

Committee Resumed

Mr SKIDMORE: We are seeking an assurance from the Minister in regard to whether or not an amendment to the Act may in fact negate the intention of the Government. We are concerned that because cover is being given in such a complex manner to union members already covered by industrial awards, confusion will arise.

Mr Grayden: It is up to the Industrial Commission.

Mr SKIDMORE: I am not too sure whether I am right or wrong, but I believe sufficient doubts exist in our minds and in the minds of the unions concerned to warrant the Minister delaying the passage of the Bill until they are resolved. There is a very real concern that an overlap in

jurisdiction may be created, which could have the direct result of leading to industrial disputation. Surely this is something we should seek to avoid.

Mr Grayden: That is the whole object of the Bill.

Mr SKIDMORE: If that is the case, it will not achieve the Minister's objective. The unions concerned share our fears.

Mr Grayden: Any union can put its case to the Industrial Commission.

Mr Tonkin: That is right, but the commission should not have that power.

Mr SKIDMORE: We should try to make this amending legislation do the job it was meant to do, not try to make it do what it cannot do. The member for Morley moved for progress to give the Minister the opportunity to consult the trade union movement on this issue. Whether or not the Minister likes it, the greatest area of disputation in the union movement is over the question of constitutional cover, of who will be covered by whom. The Minister should hold his hand and check out the situation.

Mr Grayden: You have had three weeks to check it out.

Mr SKIDMORE: But what has the Minister done to alleviate our concern? He has not even bothered to treat our remarks with any degree of responsibility. He has simply pooh-poohed the whole idea and said, "Disputation? It doesn't matter about that. We will handle it by bringing in some other Act, to make sure the unions get beaten over the head." What a ridiculous attitude for the Minister to adopt.

Mr Tonkin: The Government wants disputation.

Mr SKIDMORE: That is right. A moment ago the Minister said that we had had three weeks in which to investigate the matter. We have been to the unions concerned and to the TLC in an endeavour to ascertain their attitude. They are concerned about this matter, but all the Minister has done has been to sit pat for three weeks, not taking the slightest notice of our arguments and not even bothering to find out whether our fears were groundless or indeed had some basis in fact. I do not know whether it is due to incompetence on his behalf or on the part of his advisers but certainly, the Minister has treated this issue in a cavalier fashion.

I can assure the Minister this is a very serious matter. However, it is quite obvious we are not going to get an answer from the Minister. If that is to be the case, and disputation is caused as a result of this amendment, the Minister must take

the blame for it. Surely to goodness a little common sense could have solved the problem.

Mr Grayden: It has been on the notice paper for seven weeks.

Mr SKIDMORE: And in that period, the Minister has done absolutely nothing about our complaints. He has just sat there, pig-headed. He has buried his head in the sand like the emus people want to shoot up around Merredin, and done nothing about the situation.

Mr Bertram: Do not compare him to the emus.

Mr SKIDMORE: Well, the emus look more elegant with their heads in the sand than does the Minister, with his head in the sand.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would urge the honourable member to confine his remarks to clause 2.

Mr SKIDMORE: Mr Chairman, I was endeavouring to demonstrate how the Minister has not been conscious of his responsibilities and has not bothered to answer our objections. It appears we are not to get any assurance from the Minister, which leaves us with no alternative but to oppose the clause. Previously, of course, we were prepared to support the clause upon the assurance of the Minister.

Mr GRAYDEN: It has been claimed the Opposition and the TLC have had insufficient time in which to examine this clause.

Mr Skidmore. I did not say that at all.

Mr GRAYDEN: That is virtually what the honourable member said.

Mr Skidmore: It is not. What I said was that the member for Morley said you have not even bothered to consult the TLC on this matter.

Mr GRAYDEN: That is a different matter altogether.

Mr Skidmore: That is what he said.

Mr Tonkin: Do not shift ground.

Mr GRAYDEN: Members opposite are saying the TLC and the Opposition have had insufficient time to consider the clause.

Mr Tonkin: Rubbish! We did not say that at all.

Mr GRAYDEN: This Bill was introduced into this Chamber seven weeks ago. It is a relatively simple measure.

Mr Tonkin: You did not understand it. Why did not you understand it before?

Mr GRAYDEN: It is a three-page Bill, introduced seven weeks ago. There has been ample time for all parties to examine the

legislation. It is idiotic to suggest there has been insufficient time.

The queries raised are answered by the fact that we can simply say, "It is up to the Industrial Commission to make the decision."

Mr Tonkin: We are making the law, not the commission.

Mr GRAYDEN: It can decide who is an officer under this legislation; it is as simple and cut-and-dried as that. The unions place their arguments before the Industrial Commission and the commission makes a decision. Both the member for Morley and the member for Swan know this to be the case. Nothing sinister is contained in this clause. Members of the Opposition are simply trying to delay the Committee, and in those circumstances I ask members to support the clause.

Mr PEARCE: I did not intend to join the debate, but I take exception to the remarks of the Minister who suggested that, in fact, no explanations on the Bill are necessary. That is a lamentable statement.

Mr Tonkin: He cannot explain it because he does not understand it.

Mr PEARCE: It may be that the members behind the Minister will follow his lead without any explanation, but those who take Parliament seriously expect some explanation from the Minister before being asked to vote. The Minister has said the Bill has been on the notice paper for seven weeks. Has there been co-operation and consultation between the Government and the unions? The Minister did not address himself to the point. He is not concerned. His answer is that no explanation is necessary. What an incredibly poor performance that is.

Mr Mensaros: Is this about clause 2?

Mr PEARCE: I am saying more about clause 2 than the Minister did. The Minister for Mines is renowned for not speaking to the subject matter under discussion.

The Minister has not answered the query. It is as simple as that. It is no good his saying no explanation is necessary. He is showing his contempt for the Parliament, and I entered the debate to express my contempt for the Minister.

Mr DAVIES: There have been some misstatements made in regard to the Bill and not by those on this side of the Chamber. We are asking for consultation and explanation and the Minister is saying that it is our fault there has been no consultation or explanation.

The measure was introduced on the 18th August, which was not seven weeks ago by any

means. It is something less than that. It was debated on the Thursday before the week's recess. At that time the Minister was begging us to keep the debate going until 6.15 so he could obtain some destructive information in regard to the Opposition and particularly the member for Morley.

Mr Tonkin: I tried to get the call, but he had the debate adjourned.

Mr DAVIES: At that time we asked for an explanation. Of course we know he is exceptionally adept at certain things. He tells us to wait a minute and he will do all sorts of terrible things to us. We gave him the opportunity. The debate was adjourned, I think, at 6.13 p.m. We thought that after the arguments submitted by the member for Swan and the member for Morley the Minister would at least have consulted with his officers and asked whether any further explanations were necessary in regard to the request we made. The debate on the Bill had been delayed for so long to enable us to take it to the unions and ask them about it. We have come back with a query from the unions and are asking the Minister to give an assurance to the unions that certain things will not happen. It is as simple as that.

The Minister is in charge of the Bill and he is supposed to be able to answer queries. We have asked what this clause means. The Minister has had an extra 10 days not only to get together the scurrulous recordings and writings he was going to get together to try to embarrass the member for Morley and make the whole Chamber aghast at what might or might not be done, but also to answer the query by saying "Yea" or "Nay". It is as simple as that. We want an assurance.

Mr Grayden: What is the assurance you want?

Mr DAVIES: It has been detailed. Here again the Minister—

Mr Grayden: What is the assurance you are asking for?

Mr DAVIES: It has been going on—

Mr Grayden: The member for Victoria Park does not know.

Mr DAVIES: —ever since the Bill was introduced. The Minister has only to read *Hansard*.

Mr Grayden: You tell me.

Mr DAVIES: Would you like me to read it again, Mr Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: No, I would urge you to confine your remarks to clause 2.

Mr DAVIES: We want the assurance as to what will happen.

Mr Grayden: Spell out the assurance you want.

Mr DAVIES: The query has been raised but not answered.

Mr O'Neil: What query has been raised and by whom?

Mr DAVIES: Is the Minister going to answer the queries which have been raised?

Mr O'Neil: You said the unions have queried certain things. What?

Mr DAVIES: The member in charge of the Bill for the Opposition—

Mr O'Neil: I think you had better check with him about what he told me just before we resumed the debate on the Bill.

Mr DAVIES: Is the Chief Secretary coming back to corridor whispering?

Mr O'Neil: No. The member for Morley asked me for a deferment of consideration of the Bill because they have not received representations from the unions. I said the Bill has been on the notice paper since the 18th August, which was ample time, and it is in Committee anyway. You said that the unions are asking for an explanation. What are they asking? What assurance are they asking for?

Mr DAVIES: I am taking it for granted that the discussion—

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Victoria Park.

Mr DAVIES: I am taking it for granted that the discussion in the party room and the work done by the member in charge of the Bill—

Mr O'Neil: I am not denying any of that.

Mr DAVIES: —would have adequately brought forward any queries which needed to be raised and which have been raised.

Mr O'Neil: You said earlier the unions have raised a query. I am asking: What is that query?

Mr DAVIES: They are seeking an assurance.

Mr O'Neil: What assurance?

Mr DAVIES: Read the Bill. Obviously the Government does not know what is going on with the Bill.

Mr O'Neil: What assurance did the unions ask you to get?

Mr Tonkin: I will tell you. It is the assurance I asked of the Minister for Labour and Industry, and which he was not able to give, which is that

this will not take coverage away from existing unions.

Mr O'Neil: I am glad you have helped the member for Victoria Park.

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Victoria Park.

Mr DAVIES: The Minister was given an opportunity to produce some supposedly damning documents, which he has not done. The fact remains it is not our place to arrange deputations. We have asked for an assurance which the unions are seeking, but that assurance is not forthcoming. It is obvious the Government does not care.

Mr Grayden: It is not for the Minister to give those assurances.

Mr DAVIES: Surely the Minister is able to tell us the intention of the Bill.

Mr Grayden: It is up to the industrial commissioner to make the decision.

Mr DAVIES: If a commissioner or court does not act according to the intention of the Government then the Government can amend the legislation if it so desires. It can indicate that, as recorded in *Hansard*, it acted in good faith and that the commissioner or court has taken an opposite view. The legislation can then be amended. It is as simple as that. If we are to have responsible government in this country, and particularly in Western Australia, the Minister should tell us what he thinks the legislation does.

Mr SKIDMORE: Mr Chairman—

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Swan is not entitled to speak again.

Mr SKIDMORE: That is exactly what I was going to ask.

Mr PEARCE: I am still entitled to speak.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no need for you to inform me of that.

Mr PEARCE: I am sorry, Mr Chairman. I did not mean to reflect on you. On page 1658 of *Hansard* of this year the member for Swan said—

We want a simple assurance from the Minister that unions which already have coverage will not be interfered with. Such an assurance would solve many of our problems.

The Minister seemed to be saying that he cannot give that assurance. He does not think it is his job to understand the Bill. Then he went so far as to say that the Government cannot be responsible for understanding what effect the legislation will have on unions because that is up to the commission. The Government is introducing the

Bill and cannot say what the effect will be on certain unions. That means the Government does not understand the Bill. If the Government cannot say what effect the legislation will have, why does it introduce it? I would think that if a Minister were responsible for a portfolio, he would be responsible for any legislation which affected it. Perhaps he means it is not his job to give assurances like that to the Opposition. Perhaps then he should give them to the unions. He does not believe it is his job to discuss the matter with the unions or to give us assurances. Apparently he believes it is his job to make provocative statements to build up confrontation in industrial disputes. If the Minister could give us the assurance we seek much of the heat would go out of the argument.

I concur with the member for Victoria Park that we are having this debate because the Minister was going to bring forward some shocking revelation about a circular from the member for Morley. That is why the Committee is spending further time on this clause.

Mr Grayden: We could have it on the third reading if you want to.

Mr PEARCE: Perhaps it is just as well he does not give us an assurance because he does not keep those he does give. Now apparently we are going to hear about the circular during the third reading debate.

The Minister is responsible for industrial harmony and he is doing nothing to promote it either here or outside with individual people and unions. It is his job to understand the legislation and be able to answer questions the Opposition raises. But instead he just behaves provocatively. I have said many times that this Government does not consult with the people affected by legislation. This is the sixth instance of this. The Government is encouraging confrontation, not co-operation. It should consult and co-operate with the people affected by the legislation it introduces. Instead, the Minister makes provocative statements and says that no explanation is necessary.

Clause put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 25

Mr Blaikie
Mr Cowan
Mr Coyne
Mrs Craig
Mr Crane
Mr Grayden
Mr Grewar
Mr Hassell
Mr Herzfeld
Mr Laurance
Mr MacKinnon
Mr Mensaros
Mr Nanovich

Mr Old
Mr O'Neil
Mr Ridge
Mr Rushton
Mr Sibson
Mr Sodeman
Mr Spriggs
Mr Tubby
Mr Watt
Mr Williams
Mr Young
Mr Shalders

(Teller)

Noes 16

Mr Barnett
Mr Bertram
Mr B. T. Burke
Mr Carr
Mr Davies
Mr H. D. Evans
Mr Grill
Mr Harman

Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Pearce
Mr Skidmore
Mr Taylor
Mr Tonkin
Dr Troy
Mr Wilson
Mr Bateman

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes

Sir Charles Court
Mr McPharlin
Mr Stephens
Mr P. V. Jones
Dr Dadour
Mr O'Connor

Noes

Mr Jamieson
Mr Bryce
Mr T. J. Burke
Mr T. D. Evans
Mr Hodge
Mr McIver

Clause thus passed.

Clause 3: Section 94A amended—

Mr SKIDMORE: Mr Chairman, just briefly I want to rise on this occasion to oppose clause 3 and, in simple terms, because it is conditional upon the carrying of clause 2. Clause 3 is a requirement under the amending Bill and we oppose it in those terms. We will oppose it because it makes sense as a matter of principle to oppose it, and because it is part and parcel of clause 2.

Mr TONKIN: I just wish to say that I concur with the member for Swan. This clause is consequential upon clause 2. If the Minister had been prepared to give us the assurances for which we asked—in other words there is no intention to cause demarcation problems—

Mr Grayden: There is certainly no intention.

Mr TONKIN: Well, why did not the Minister say that on the Thursday before the recess?

Mr Grayden: You can take it for granted.

Mr TONKIN: One can take nothing for granted in this place. I asked for that assurance several times and the Minister refused to get up. The member for Swan got up; but the Minister just sat there. Eventually he got up and spoke in a manner which indicated he did not understand the Bill. The Minister read a part of the second reading speech which was not relevant and dared me to keep the debate going until 6.15 p.m. in order that he could reveal some scandalous things

contained in a news sheet put out in my electorate. Then the Minister chickened out because he caught the Chairman's eye and said, "I move that you do now report progress and ask leave to sit again."

Clause put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 25

Mr Blaikie
Mr Cowan
Mr Coyne
Mrs Craig
Mr Crane
Mr Grayden
Mr Grewar
Mr Hassell
Mr Herzfeld
Mr Laurance
Mr MacKinnon
Mr Mensaros
Mr Nanovich

Mr Old
Mr O'Neil
Mr Ridge
Mr Rushton
Mr Sibson
Mr Sodeman
Mr Spriggs
Mr Tubby
Mr Watt
Mr Williams
Mr Young
Mr Shalders

(Teller)

Noes 16

Mr Barnett
Mr Bertram
Mr B. T. Burke
Mr Carr
Mr Davies
Mr H. D. Evans
Mr Grill
Mr Harman

Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Pearce
Mr Skidmore
Mr Taylor
Mr Tonkin
Dr Troy
Mr Wilson
Mr Bateman

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes

Sir Charles Court
Mr McPharlin
Mr Stephens
Mr P. V. Jones
Dr Dadour
Mr O'Connor

Noes

Mr Jamieson
Mr Bryce
Mr T. J. Burke
Mr T. D. Evans
Mr Hodge
Mr McIver

Clause thus passed.

Clause 4: Section 98A amended—

Mr SKIDMORE: We wish to oppose clause 4 because it is the considered opinion that it adds nothing whatsoever to the Industrial Arbitration Act the purpose of which is to conciliate between organisations, employers, and unions. One would feel that an award which has been established between the employer and employee would be sufficient reason to feel that that would be sacrosanct from interference by Governments, having become an award of the commission. To get an award before the commission, of course, a union has to go before a Commission in Court Session to argue the justice of the award, all the conditions therein, and what is contained in the award.

The commission then says that it is an agreement between the employer and employee. A strange thing happened; because of the thinking of this Government that it controls the destiny of the workers' conditions far better than industry

can control the destiny of the workers' conditions, it wants to have a finger in the pie.

The Government wants to say to a union, "We are going to have the right to interfere in your award and the affairs of your union by adding to section 98A the words 'Attorney General or the' "; so the section would then read—

(1) Where on the application of an industrial union or person who in the opinion of the Commission has a sufficient interest or of the Attorney General or the Registrar, it appears to the Commission

(a) that an industrial union which is a party to an order or award or industrial agreement has by act or omission contravened this Act, or an order, or award, or industrial agreement;

The pertinent point is that if this amendment is passed a union which breaches an award is to be subjected to interference through the ability of the Attorney-General to seek to become a party to the dispute.

Why does the Government feel a compelling need to go before the commission and say, "We do not believe the workers should get an increase in wages under the terms of this award; we do not believe holiday pay is a matter which should concern the workers"? Why does the Government want to interfere with a normal agreement or award between an employer and a union and the workers it represents? There are some further paragraphs to subsection (1) of section 98A which might reveal why the Government wants to have a finger in the pie. Quite frankly, the Government will not succeed in overcoming industrial disputes if it continues to bring forward legislation of this kind. It will continue to cause confrontation with the unions.

Paragraph (b) of section 98A(1) reads—

(b) that a number of members of an industrial union, sufficiently large to form a substantial part of the industrial union refuses to accept employment either at all or in accordance with existing orders, awards or industrial agreements;

An award having been made, the employee is bound to observe a contract of service. If he breaches that contract of service the employer can take action against him in the Industrial Commission. Why does the Attorney-General want to be able to put his spoke in? It could be that the worker refuses to work because of a question of safety. Is it envisaged the Attorney-

General will have the right to demand that the worker, having negotiated an agreement with the employer, be subjected to the scrutiny of the Government of the day? So much for the Government's desire for industrial peace.

Paragraph (c) of section 98A(1) states—

(c) that for any other reason an order or award or industrial agreement ought to be suspended or cancelled in whole or in part;

Let us look at the history of an action which took place when one of the unions was in disputation. As I understand it, the commissioner said to the union, "I will remove all the clauses of your award except the title and the scope. That is all you will have left. The rest of the conditions will be open to anybody to negotiate." That is a far-reaching power the Industrial Commission has at the present time. The Government now wants additional powers.

When we raised a question in regard to clause 2 of the Bill, the Minister said it is the Industrial Commission which will give the assurance. He now wants to say to the commission, "You do not have to worry about assurances any longer; the Government will give the assurances through the Attorney-General." How can we get industrial peace with this kind of legislation? There is no need for it. There is sufficient scope for a person to engage himself in disputation under the Act as it exists at present.

Section 98A makes it clear that a person—a Minister or anybody at all—can come before the commission and argue on any matter in dispute, and if the commission so agrees he must be heard. What more do we want?

In his second reading speech the Minister referred to other sections of the Act where this provision existed. Most of those sections relate to procedures in which it is necessary for the Government to have some say; they are areas of disputation in which the Government is entitled to become involved. But the provision was deliberately omitted from section 98A by the Government which introduced it in Act No. 76 of 1963, because that Government was of the opinion that it was not necessary in this section. Yet today we find the need for it has now arisen because the Government thinks the unions are stepping out of line and must be controlled, so the Government needs another whip in the form of the Attorney-General or the Government interfering in awards and agreements. Of course, we oppose it vigorously. It should be thrown out by this Chamber.

Mr TONKIN: The purpose of this clause is to

enable the Attorney-General to interfere in matters in which he has no place. In his second reading speech the Minister stated it was necessary for reasons of economic management.

Mr Grayden: I think you are on the wrong Bill.

Mr TONKIN: The Minister is sure of that, is he?

Mr Grayden: Read out the passage.

Mr TONKIN: It will not make any difference if I do; the Minister will say I misread it. It reads—

The decisions of wage-fixing tribunals these days have such an effect upon economic trends, it is vital that the State has the opportunity to appear before a tribunal as required to represent the public interest.

That means the Attorney-General has the opportunity to appear before the tribunal. The Minister says I have the wrong Bill! He is incredible. This is a very sensitive area, and the Minister does not know what appears in his second reading speech. The long title of this Act reads as follows—

An Act to amend and consolidate the law relating to the prevention and settlement of industrial disputes.

What will happen when the Attorney-General, representing the State, wants to interfere because he is concerned about economic trends that are vital to the State? That may require the policy to go in one direction, but the settlement of a dispute may require the policy to go in another direction. Quite clearly these two objectives can be incompatible, but which one will be pre-eminent? We see the same thing with the Fraser Government which is attempting to subvert the whole method of industrial arbitration for economic management. If the Government wants legislation to manage the economy, it should introduce and pass a Bill to this effect. I must point out that if we took this action it would be called socialism.

Unless the Government amends the long title to the Act and admits that it is not interested in settling industrial disputes but rather it is interested in managing the economy, then it should not bring this kind of management into the system.

I will not repeat my second reading speech, Mr Chairman, even if you would allow me to do so. We oppose this clause because we believe this Government—and the Minister has certainly demonstrated it to be so—is mischievous as far as industrial relations are concerned. It cannot be trusted to see to it that there is industrial peace; it

foments industrial disputation and keeps it going wherever possible. For these reasons we believe the Government should not be trusted with the power to interfere in a very sensitive area in order to make the wage earner bear the full costs of inflation while profits and prices are subject to no constraint at all; while they are allowed to go merrily on.

It is a basically unjust situation that he who sells his labour is required not only to go before a tribunal to justify a wage rise, but also has to put up with conservative Governments which can come in to say, "It is not in the public interest to give this wage rise", while other people who sell commodities do not have to justify their situation at all.

We hear at times that the country is being put to ransom or is being blackmailed by trade unionists when in fact the manufacturers of commodities—wholesalers and retailers—are able to hold the country to ransom day after day because if one is not prepared to pay the price the manufacturers ask for an article, one can go jump in the nearest lake.

In our community no attempt is made to question the right of a seller of a commodity to withhold that commodity if he does not obtain his price. As soon as labour organises itself and withholds its labour to obtain its price, it is condemned. While this basically unjust situation continues, we will have industrial disputation. I believe this Government wants industrial disputation because it believes that its electoral stocks rise as a consequence.

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister should be made aware of what appears in *Hansard* because he seems to have some doubt about it. This appears on page 711 of *Hansard* of Thursday, the 18th August, 1977. The Minister said—

The decisions of wage-fixing tribunals these days have such an effect upon economic trends, it is vital that the State has the opportunity to appear before a tribunal as required to represent the public interest.

One could say that under a general order of the commission it would be right and proper for the Government, as an economic determining factor, to have the right to appear before the commission to argue on economic grounds that any general award increase should not take place. It has that power at the present time in another section of the Act.

Mr Grayden: What are you complaining about then?

Mr SKIDMORE: I am complaining that that is not what the Government now wants. The

Minister has drawn red herrings over the trail because of his inability to accept the facts as put forward by members on this side. At present the Government has an opportunity to interfere when the economy of the country is in jeopardy because of a general order of the commission.

In his second reading speech the Minister said that in 1947 the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act was amended in this form. What happens now in the Commonwealth field? The Federal Government has appeared before the commission to argue on general orders and on general orders only. It has not intruded in regard to awards and agreements in such a far-reaching way as the Government seeks here.

As I quoted earlier this evening, Mr Justice Moore made it abundantly clear that the Government's arguments were fallacious. He said that the workers' capacity to purchase had decreased, their wages had decreased, and their cost of living increased. In the Federal sphere the Industrial Commission would not listen to the Government's arguments; the commission ruled in favour of full indexation. Now we see a State Government which wishes to interfere with award conditions. Under this provision the Government could interfere with the first-aid kit in any factory, it could interfere with the rights of a person to sick leave, as well as many other things.

Mr Grayden: You just told us that the Attorney-General has this power.

Mr SKIDMORE: I said the Attorney-General had the power under the Act. The Minister is so stupid that it amazes me. I said the commission had the power to allow the Attorney-General to appear before it on a general order. However, this Government wants the power to appear before the Commission to interfere with the domestic affairs of a union, and this is the reason I oppose the insertion of the words, "Attorney-General or the".

The Minister does not know what he is talking about. He does not know his own Bill, he does not know about the constitutional rights of unions, or about general orders, awards, or agreements. Let us just say that he does not know anything. Nowhere has he attempted to justify the arguments we have put forward other than to lampoon them on the basis that they have no substance. For that reason alone he stands condemned. We oppose the clause most vigorously.

Clause put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 25

Mr Blaikie	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr O'Neil
Mr Coyne	Mr Ridge
Mrs Craig	Mr Rushton
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Mr Grayden	Mr Soderman
Mr Grewar	Mr Spriggs
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Watt
Mr Laurance	Mr Williams
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Young
Mr Mensaros	Mr Shalders
Mr Nanovich	

(Teller)

Noes 16

Mr Barnett	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Bertram	Mr Pearce
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr H. D. Evans	Dr Troy
Mr Grill	Mr Wilson
Mr Harman	Mr Bateman

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Sir Charles Court	Mr Jamieson
Mr McPharlin	Mr Bryce
Mr Stephens	Mr T. J. Burke
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr T. D. Evans
Dr Dadour	Mr Hodge
Mr O'Connor	Mr McIver

Clause thus passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

As to Third Reading

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [10.43 p.m.]: I move—

That leave be granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

The SPEAKER: Is leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading of the Bill?

Mr Tonkin: No.

Leave denied.

PUBLIC SERVICE ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 18th August.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [10.44 p.m.]: The Opposition, in its usual fashion, is quite willing to co-operate with the Government when the Government is prepared to co-operate with it. Therefore, we do not oppose 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

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Grayden (Minister for Labour and Industry), and transmitted to the Council.

**CLOTHES AND FABRICS (LABELLING) ACT
AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 24th August.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [10.47 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, this Government has been fiddling while children burn. For nine years now a campaign has been conducted throughout Australia to do something about this matter. We recall that the member for Maylands, when he was the Minister for Labour, introduced legislation because the Labor Government wanted to take action at that time. That Bill was chopped around in the Legislative Council, and when it was passed it contained a particularly obnoxious section which put profits before the safety and lives of little children—

Mr Grayden: What else would you expect from the member for Morley?

MR TONKIN: —because it said a period of six months was to elapse before the Act would be allowed to operate.

In answer to the interjection made by the Minister for Labour and Industry, what one would expect from the member for Morley is the truth, and the truth of the matter is that the Legislative Council put into this Act a provision which ensured that no retailer was left with stocks on his shelves. Those stocks had to be cleared; but to whom? Who would wear the garments? Children! The garments would fit only children, and so those retailers, in the name of profit, were permitted to flog off the garments which were admittedly unsafe and were allowed to risk the lives of children. That was done in the name of that holy of holies: profit.

The Opposition does not put profit before the lives and the welfare of little children; yet we see again in this Bill a requirement which allows retailers six months in which to get rid of deadly, dangerous, inflammable material; to sell garments to be worn by children and to say, "There you are darling; this is to enable me not to lose my stocks

even though you may well burn to death as a result of this sale." What kind of legislation is this? It is disgraceful legislation. Therefore, the Opposition is opposed to this provision.

The Minister showed himself to be a perfect fool on television. The Minister was asked by the interviewer, "What about the stock on the shelves? Is it right to give the shopkeeper six months in which to clear goods which are dangerous to children?" The Minister replied, "That will not happen, because there is no stock on the shelves; the people have known about this for ages, and they have cleared their stock." The interviewer then said, "If that is the case, why have a provision to allow for a cooling period to enable shopkeepers to clear stock?"

Mr Davies: What was the Minister's sharp answer?

MR TONKIN: I cannot recall precisely, but it was the usual sharp answer. That is the position in which we find ourselves. We maintain that people who are in the business of selling children's clothes have known for a decade that this material is unsafe. This Bill has been before the House for many weeks, and during that time these people have had ample opportunity to get their house in order.

While we welcome this very slow and tardy movement on the part of the Government, we wish the Government had acted with greater speed. We are reminded that this Parliament was on holiday from the election in March until late July. We believe with a matter of such urgency, in which the lives and welfare of children are concerned, Parliament should have been brought together at a much earlier stage.

The Government, in acting so slowly, has not shown regard for the children. Indeed, not only has the Government not shown regard by failing to pass this legislation months ago but also it still wants to give the shopkeepers another six months after the proclamation of the Act in which to clear their stock. When may the proclamation be? The legislation may not be proclaimed for months and months, yet the shopkeepers are allowed another six months in order to clear stock. If this material is dangerous, it is dangerous, and should not be on sale. If it is not dangerous, there is no need for this Bill. Clearly, it is dangerous and in that case the sale of this commodity should be discontinued immediately. We should not allow a period of grace during which people can increase their profits at the expense of the lives of little children.

MR HARMAN (Maylands) [10.53 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, it was my honour in 1973 to bring before

this House the Clothes and Fabrics (Labelling) Bill. I think you might remember that Bill, Mr Speaker, because you were the lead speaker for the Opposition on that occasion, and you thought it desirable to move some amendments to the Bill. On that occasion, they were not accepted by the Legislative Assembly. However, when the Bill went to the Legislative Council, certain amendments were made which had to be accepted by this House, otherwise the Bill would have been lost forever, and children's lives would have been placed in jeopardy from that point onwards.

I believe members should hear again what the Minister for Labour and Industry had to say when introducing this amending legislation. His second reading speech appears at page 894 of *Hansard* and, in part, states as follows—

The Standards Association of Australia has more recently published a series of new standards in the garment field. The standards have been discussed at the last two conferences of Ministers for Consumer Affairs and at the conference held on the 1st April, 1977, it was agreed that all States would incorporate the new standards in clothes and fabrics legislation.

Additionally, it was agreed that all States would amend their legislation to permit the banning from sale of children's nightclothes made of material having a surface burning time of less than 10 seconds as determined by the standard as 1176-1976. The authority to ban from sale has not previously been in the Act.

The Minister referred to two previous conferences of Australian State Ministers for Consumer Affairs. These conferences are held at the minimum of every six months, but the regular conferences are held at at least 12-monthly intervals. So, we can assume the conference in 1976 decided Ministers would do something about the standard set down by the Australian Standards Association.

If one were a manufacturer or an importer, one surely would have some regard for what the Australian Ministers were discussing in 1976; certainly, one would take into account the ASA decision. If one were a reasonable importer or manufacturer, one would come to the conclusion that the Australian States would take some action to ban that sort of material; one would also come to the conclusion that the Australian Government would ban the import of that material.

Why should it be, then, that in Western Australia we should give the people who sell this sort of material additional time during which they

can jeopardise the whole livelihood of children in this State for at least another six months, and possibly another nine months.

Mr O'Neil: The sale of the material is not being banned: it is the sale of nightclothes made from this material.

Mr HARMAN: That is right.

Mr O'Neil: You said the Commonwealth could ban the importation of this material, but I do not think that is suggested in this legislation.

Mr HARMAN: According to the Minister, it is.

Mr O'Neil: They can ban the importation of anything but the intention of this Act is to ban the sale of nightclothes made from this material.

Mr HARMAN: In his second reading speech, the Minister said—

The Commonwealth will control the imported nightwear under its legislation.

Mr O'Neil: Yes, the nightwear, not the material.

Mr HARMAN: We have a situation where the Australian Government is to control the importation of nightwear which does not meet the ASA standard. Additionally, some States already have passed legislation disallowing the sale of this fabric if it is involved in the making of children's clothes. This legislation has been enacted for good reason; namely, because the sale of such clothing jeopardises the health, safety and future lives of children who wear it.

Yet we in this State are being asked to say, "We agree with all this, but we are going to let the matter go on for another period of time." This legislation could take perhaps another week or two to pass through the Legislative Council. It will then go to the Governor to receive assent, following which various Government departments will take certain action by regulation as outlined under the legislation. Therefore, it could well be another eight months before the sale of this clothing—which is said by the ASA to be absolutely detrimental to the life of a child if it catches fire—is banned. How can any member in this Chamber allow such a Bill to go through in its present form?

Each member has to think about this matter. Would members like to see this legislation passed and in a few months' time a child burnt to death because of their lack of consideration of this legislation? I do not think they would. I do not think members really understand what is being pursued in this Bill.

In 1973 it was argued that we should not deal with this matter by regulation and that this House

should be able to determine its own destiny in relation to this legislation. That argument was presented very forcibly to the House by none other than the present Speaker. He was able to achieve his ambition in the Legislative Council because that is where the amendments were finally made. But now we are being asked to say, "We can do this by regulation. The Government at some time in the future can decide that from a future date shopkeepers in Western Australia will have six months in which to get rid of stock which we have already agreed will cause unmistakable damage and possibly even loss of life to a child".

I am asking members of this Assembly to review the decision they made in regard to this legislation and, when we reach the Committee stage, to say we will stop the sale as from the date this legislation is passed.

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [11.03 p.m.]: I shall not reply to the member for Morley mainly because the statements he made were straight political propaganda and were nonsensical to such an extent that they simply do not warrant answering.

A lot of nonsense has been talked about this Bill because, as has been emphasised by the member who has just resumed his seat, the matter has been under discussion at conferences of Ministers for Consumer Affairs for some time in an endeavour to get some sort of uniformity throughout the Commonwealth. The legislation has been introduced in New South Wales and Victoria. Some uniformity was desired and the rest of the States undertook to introduce the legislation; and we gave this undertaking as late as April of this year. Parliament was not meeting at that time and this is the first opportunity we have had to introduce it. The various States are going to introduce the legislation and the Commonwealth also has given an undertaking that it will control the importation of nightwear into the Commonwealth. It has not done so yet but it is going to do so. That answers to some extent the argument in respect of the urgency of the matter.

When this Bill was introduced during the term of the previous Government there was absolutely no reason that these amendments could not have been introduced if the Government at that time had so wished. It was not considered necessary because parents cannot abdicate their responsibility with respect to inflammable fabric. The fact that fabric is highly inflammable does not relieve parents of some responsibility.

I once had the experience of going into a home at about one o'clock in the morning where some

sort of function was going on, and there was a naked baby of about nine months of age crawling along the floor with a carving knife. I took this carving knife off this naked child and put it on a table. The mother immediately handed the carving knife back to the child and said, "He is allowed to have that." If parents are going to abdicate their responsibilities in this manner there will be a continuation of accidents. I understand there have been about five minor cases in the last two years of burning as a result of the use of this sort of fabric, but people at Princess Margaret Hospital do not regard this as being of very great consequence in comparison with many other matters.

A member has mentioned that because of a provision in this Bill it cannot become operative for another six months. That provision was inserted for the specific reason of allowing the Bill to pass through both Houses. We did not wish to place ourselves in a situation in which a Labor member from somewhere north of the river would say, "I have a small shopkeeper in my area who has some of these garments on his shelves. He bought them in good faith and we ask you not to proclaim the Bill." We did not want to put ourselves in that position. We want to have the Bill passed through both Houses and we can do that by inserting this provision.

I have already indicated in the Press and elsewhere that we are by no means hard and fast in regard to this matter. But whilst I am not prepared, for various reasons, to accept what the member for Morley has put forward, I suggest an amendment which would be infinitely more effective. I emphasise that the reason the time limit was inserted was simply and solely to overcome Labor Party opposition to this Bill. If the Labor Party is happy about our removing it, I welcome that and I will move the amendment.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Clarko) in the Chair; Mr Grayden (Minister for Labour and Industry) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4 put and passed.

Clause 5: Section 5 amended—

Mr GRAYDEN: I have an amendment to clause 5. Mr Chairman, are you prepared to take this before you take the one which has been foreshadowed?

Point of Order

Mr HARMAN: I raise a point of order. I should like to know what the amendment is which the Minister proposes.

The CHAIRMAN: That may be helpful to the Committee, but the amendment proposed by the member for Morley deals with lines 6 to 8 which precedes the Minister's proposed amendment, although they overlap.

Mr HARMAN: Is it not the rule here that the amendment is actually presented to you in writing?

The CHAIRMAN: It has been.

Mr HARMAN: As a matter of courtesy are not amendments usually circulated amongst the Committee?

The CHAIRMAN: Other amendments have been moved in previous Committees and have not been circulated. Perhaps it would be clearer for all members if I read out both amendments.

Committee Resumed

Mr GRAYDEN: I have had a look at the amendment which has been proposed by the member for Morley and I think it would weaken the Bill in quite a significant way. At the moment clause 5 reads as follows—

Section 5 of the principal Act is amended by adding two new subsections as follows—

- (3) Where a minimum surface burning time is prescribed in respect of any particular kind of article the Governor may, from time to time, by proclamation fix a date, being a date not earlier than six months after the publication of the proclamation in the *Government Gazette*,

Points of Order

Mr PEARCE: On a point of order, Mr Chairman—

The CHAIRMAN: I understand the Minister to be making a point of explanation and I think it would be appropriate if he continues. The Minister is seeking to help the Committee and as far as I can see it he is making a point of explanation. If that is so, I would ask him to continue, otherwise I will take a point of order.

Mr TONKIN: On a point of order, Mr Chairman, the Minister is speaking to the Bill and any member speaking to a Bill can have a point of order taken against him. If you do not intend to take the point of order, I intend to dissent from your ruling, as the member for Gosnells has asked for a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: I call the member for Gosnells to state his point of order.

Mr PEARCE: As I understand it an amendment was put forward by the member for Morley and that is what we should be discussing.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order. The member for Maylands felt it was desirable that the other amendment to clause 5 be put before the Committee. It was my intention to do that, but whilst I was about to do it the Minister rose to make a further explanation. I will now explain to members what the two amendments are.

The member for Morley proposes to move an amendment as printed on the notice paper, as follows—

Clause 5.

Page 3, lines 6 to 8—To delete the passage “, being a date not earlier than six months after the publication of the proclamation in the *Government Gazette*,”.

The Minister for Labour and Industry has given notice of his intention to move in that same clause, page 3, line 7, for the deletion of the word “earlier” and the substitution of the word “later”.

Mr TONKIN: On a point of order, you said that the Minister for Labour and Industry had given notice of his amendment. I have not received a copy of the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: When I assumed the Chair I was advised this amendment was proposed to be moved.

Progress

Mr HARMAN: I move—

That the Chairman do now report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 15

Mr Barnett	Mr Pearce
Mr Bertram	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr H. D. Evans	Dr Troy
Mr Grill	Mr Wilson
Mr Harman	Mr Bateman
Mr T. H. Jones	

(Teller)

Noes 24

Mr Cowan	Mr Old
Mr Coyne	Mr O'Neil
Mrs Craig	Mr Ridge
Mr Crane	Mr Rushton
Mr Grayden	Mr Sibson
Mr Grewar	Mr Sodeman
Mr Hassell	Mr Spriggs
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Tubby
Mr Laurance	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams
Mr Mensaros	Mr Young
Mr Nanovich	Mr Shalders

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Jamieson	Sir Charles Court
Mr Bryce	Mr McPharlin
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Stephens
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr P. V. Jones
Mr Hodge	Dr Dadour
Mr McIver	Mr O'Connor
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr Blaikie

Motion thus negatived.

Committee Resumed

Mr O'NEIL: It appears to me that what went on a little while ago was a matter of confusion on the part of many people. The Minister had risen to speak to clause 5 and at that time I imagined he would have suggested what his proposed amendment would have been. The member for Gosnells raised a point of order and then you, Mr Chairman, chose to indicate what amendment the Minister had placed before you.

There is no amendment before the Chair; that has been conceded. I think the Minister would have explained quite clearly what he had intended to do. In other words, it was simply to ensure that instead of the words reading "being a date not earlier than six months" that it be "a date not later than six months" which then gives the Government of the day the opportunity to ensure this is brought into operation as quickly as possible.

That is the situation as I understand it. A problem could exist if the Committee either agreed to or defeated the amendment proposed by the member for Morley.

Mr Tonkin: No chance of agreement because you have the numbers.

Mr O'NEIL: There is an endeavour on the part of the Government to go some of the way to meet with the general desires of the Opposition, but I am a little concerned that should the amendment of the member for Morley be defeated—and it apparently does have precedence over the one of which the Minister gave notice—the Government may not be in a position to insert its amendment.

Mr GRAYDEN: Mr Chairman—

Mr TONKIN: Mr Chairman—

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister.

Mr Tonkin: Two calls from the one side of the House?

Mr GRAYDEN: As the Deputy Premier pointed out, I was endeavouring to explain the difference between my amendment and the amendment of the member for Morley.

Mr Tonkin: We have not seen yours.

Mr GRAYDEN: I am quite certain the Opposition will agree when it sees my amendment.

Mr Tonkin: Why not let us see it?

Mr GRAYDEN: The amendment—

Point of Order

Mr DAVIES: On a point of order, I think the Deputy Premier raised an important point. Who is getting precedence? Are we to be precluded from moving our amendment if the Minister's amendment is accepted?

The CHAIRMAN: You could not amend anything preceding the word "earlier" or the word "later".

Mr DAVIES: Are you ruling that our amendment will not be considered at all?

Several members interjected.

Mr DAVIES: It is all very well for the Minister to grin like an idiot and bury his head in a paper.

Mr Tonkin: He does it very well.

Mr DAVIES: Does it mean that our amendment will not be considered at all because it concerns lines on either side of line seven? Are you ruling that way at this stage?

The CHAIRMAN: It is a question of which amendment comes first. If the amendment of the member for Morley were to come first, then there would be no opportunity to proceed with the amendment of the Minister. On the other hand, if the Minister's amendment were to succeed and the word "earlier" were to become "later", it would be possible for another amendment to be moved to alter subsequent wording, but not the words as desired by the member for Morley because we cannot backtrack.

Mr DAVIES: Do not the rules provide that the member who has the first words gets the first call when amendments are being considered? The Minister has no prior right because he wants his amendment through. Is it not the usual procedure for a person who wants to amend the earlier part of the clause to be given the call? The Minister and the member for Morley stood up at the same time. Are we getting a fair go? That is what I am asking.

The CHAIRMAN: I gave the call to the Minister because he attracted my attention first. I understand that the practice in the past has been for someone in those circumstances to move for the deletion of only some words. In this case the words would be "being a date not". Then when that amendment had been decided, we would know how to proceed. On the other hand if we go past the word "earlier", as would be the case if we proceeded with the amendment of the member for Morley, we could not backtrack. The question is that clause 5 be agreed to.

Committee Resumed

Mr TONKIN: I do not know why we should give this Government any courtesy at all. We have put our amendment on the notice paper. I would not expect some members opposite to understand common manners, and certainly not the Minister who has not even had the courtesy to show us his amendment. What is the point of our trying to understand his amendment when we do not have a copy of it?

Mr GRAYDEN: May I finish my explanation? I am certain the Opposition will see the significance of what I am saying because it is relatively simple. If we pass the amendment of the member for Morley it would be up to this Government or any other Government at its leisure, if at all, to introduce the safeguards. There would be no time limit and nothing to ensure the Government introduced them within six months, 12 months, or two years. If there were a change of Government it could be that the new Government would not introduce them for five years. My amendment is to ensure that the Government will introduce them within a period of not more than six months. It can do so immediately, but certainly not later than six months.

The amendment of the member for Morley will take out all time limits, which would mean that the Government could please itself about introducing safeguards. Is my amendment not preferable?

Mr Tonkin: We do not know. We have not seen it.

Mr GRAYDEN: What we want to do is to ensure that the safeguards are introduced as quickly as possible, and my amendment will ensure that. Under the amendment of the member for Morley the Government could take its time.

Mr TONKIN: The Minister, of course, has the advantage over us because he has both amendments in front of him.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you like me to read it?

Mr TONKIN: No. I would like to see the amendment, as is the normal courtesy in this Chamber.

Mr O'Neil: You can do.

Mr TONKIN: That is very kind. That has been asked for about eight times and the Minister is so thick that we have not got through to him yet.

Several members interjected.

Mr TONKIN: What do members opposite expect? They have never had this kind of treatment from members on this side of the Chamber.

Mr Sodeman: Not much.

Mr TONKIN: Why not shut up for a while? If the member for Pilbara wants to take part in the debate let him get up and do so. He merely sits on his fat backside with his fat head opening and shutting. Why does he not make a speech in a proper way?

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Morley.

Mr TONKIN: I am sick of interjections from that destructive person who does nothing but make snide remarks. He is not allowed to get to his feet.

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr TONKIN: The plain fact is that the Minister is in an advantageous position because he can compare the two amendments.

Mr O'Neil: You may not have noticed, but the Clerk has placed a copy beside you.

Mr TONKIN: While I am on my feet. Why was it not done earlier?

Mr Grayden: The deletion of one word and the substitution of another!

Mr TONKIN: What we need to do is to study the amendment.

Mr Grayden: Study it? To delete one word and substitute another? The member for Morley wants to study it.

Mr TONKIN: That is right. It has to be studied in the context of the Bill and the Act. It should be studied and I do not think it is right that we should waste the time of this Committee by my having to study it while I am on my feet. If the Minister is saying there is no point in my studying it he is merely saying that he has the numbers and he will do what he likes.

The Minister is making the whole place a farce and we will not be part of that farce. We think the Opposition should be treated courteously. We

represent people and we want to be able to contribute to the legislation, but we are being denied this opportunity by my having something thrust into my hand while I am speaking.

As to Progress

I move—

That the Chairman do now report progress and ask leave to sit again.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not 15 minutes since the last motion for progress was moved.

Mr Tonkin: How long is it?

The CHAIRMAN: It is nine minutes.

Mr Tonkin: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Committee Resumed

Mr HARMAN: This debate has reached a rather ludicrous stage. We are talking about the health and safety of children; the lives of children. The Minister, without any notice at all, has suddenly introduced an amendment to the Bill. The amendment proposed by the Opposition has been on the notice paper for some considerable time.

Mr O'Neil: But it has not been moved.

Mr HARMAN: We have not had an opportunity.

Mr O'Neil: You could move it now.

Mr HARMAN: The amendment proposed by the Opposition will take out of the Bill the provision which will allow the Government to proclaim a period of six months at a certain time. The Government has now come along with another amendment which states that the proclamation will be within six months. Is that not really splitting straws? Are we not here to concern ourselves with the safety of children?

Mr Grayden: That is precisely what we are doing.

Mr HARMAN: I get the impression that we are here to protect the shopkeepers.

Mr Grayden: It is the other way around.

Mr HARMAN: The shopkeepers will be given a period of six months during which to sell their murderous stock which the Standards Association of Australia has decided is not proper for children in this State to wear.

Mr Grayden: Under the amendment proposed by the member for Morley, they could have a period of four or five years.

Mr Shalders: The Opposition has introduced private member's Bills previously. Why not on this occasion?

Mr Tonkin: Because members opposite will not agree to anything. The place is a farce.

Mr HARMAN: At least the member for Murray seems to be supporting me. We all have children and we all know the dangers. I do not believe many shopkeepers in Western Australia have this stock on hand. I think this is just an excuse for the Retail Traders' Association.

We ought to be courageous enough to accept the amendment which is to be moved by the member for Morley. If the Government wants to clarify the situation further, at a later stage it can move to insert the words "immediately after the proclamation of this Act". Proposed new subsection (3) of section 5 would then read—

Where a minimum surface burning time is prescribed in respect of any particular kind of article the Governor may, from time to time, by proclamation fix a date, immediately after the proclamation of this Act . . .

Mr O'Neil: No, this amendment is to cater for materials which are proclaimed separately. The banned material must be proclaimed in the *Government Gazette* first.

Mr HARMAN: Firstly, the Government has to accept the amendment proposed by the member for Morley.

Mr O'Neil: Then there is no set date; none at all.

Mr HARMAN: That is right. If there is to be argument, let us report progress. Why should politics become involved in the life of a child?

Mr Grayden: You are introducing politics; we are trying to keep them out.

Mr HARMAN: If we continue to argue as we have done for the last three-quarters of an hour, and we do not reach a satisfactory conclusion, a child might be burnt to death during the next six months. That will be on the conscience of the Government.

Mr Grayden: What is this six months? It is not later than six months.

Mr HARMAN: Why cannot we report progress and seek leave to sit again? Let us clear up this matter. It is most important because the lives of the children of Western Australians will be in jeopardy as a result of what we may determine during the next half hour. We should reconsider our position.

It will not matter if this debate is continued on Thursday next; that is only another two days. At least in that two days those shopkeepers who have this sort of murderous material in stock will be able to get rid of it.

Another aspect which the Minister has not explained to this Committee is the likely number

of shopkeepers in Western Australia who have large stocks of this flammable material on hand. No-one suggested there is any tremendous stock. The Minister has not suggested it; he is silent. I wonder whether he has received any representations from the Retail Traders' Association? He is silent again.

Mr Grayden: Most of the big firms stopped buying this material two years ago.

Mrs Craig: Do you consider the parents have a responsibility?

Mr HARMAN: Yes, but the parents cannot be held responsible for all the material they purchase. The member opposite would know there are so many fabrics available throughout the world today that it would be impossible for any consumer to have a full knowledge of the composition of all those fabrics. Even with the present system of labelling it would be impossible for parents to have knowledge of the flammability of fabrics unless they were associated with the industry.

Progress

Mr HARMAN: For the reasons I have mentioned, I move—

That the Chairman do now report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 15

Mr Barnett	Mr Pearce
Mr Bertram	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr H. D. Evans	Dr Troy
Mr Grill	Mr Wilson
Mr Harman	Mr Bateman
Mr T. H. Jones	

(Teller)

Noes 24

Mr Blaikie	Mr Nanovich
Mr Cowan	Mr Old
Mr Coyne	Mr O'Neil
Mrs Craig	Mr Rushton
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Mr Grayden	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grewer	Mr Spriggs
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Watt
Mr Laurence	Mr Williams
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Young
Mr Mensaros	Mr Shalders

(Teller)

Ayes

Mr Jamieson
Mr Bryce
Mr T. J. Burke
Mr T. D. Evans
Mr Hodge
Mr McIver
Mr B. T. Burke

Pairs

Sir Charles Court
Mr McPharlin
Mr Stephens
Mr P. V. Jones
Dr Dadour
Mr O'Connor
Mr Ridge

Motion thus negatived.

Point of Order

Mr DAVIES: I would like a ruling from you, Mr Chairman, as to how long we can debate this clause without someone moving an amendment. We have been talking generally around it. There are two amendments, and an amendment is usually put straightaway. I want a ruling for the future because I find it a handy device if someone does not want to get on with an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no time limit.

Committee Resumed

Mr TONKIN: The Minister for Labour and Industry has said in regard to my amendment that the material need not be banned for years. On his amendment the material need not be banned for years. If the Government does not want to act, it does not proclaim the Act; if it wants to act, it proclaims the Act. It is as simple as that. Does the Minister want to ban the material or not?

Mr Grayden: Yes, within six months.

Mr TONKIN: We are saying we believe the legislation should go through and be proclaimed and that the material should cease to be sold immediately.

Mr Grayden: You are leaving it wide open for this or any other Government to introduce—

Mr TONKIN: If that is the attitude, the Government is not fit to be in office. We cannot make the Government do it. It has the numbers in this place and the other place, so it will carry an amendment. If the Government does not want to ban the material for a year or two, it will not do so.

Mr O'Neil: If a material comes on the market and is found to exceed the ASA standards, the first thing to do is to proclaim that material, whether it be 10 or 20 years hence. The Minister is suggesting that once a flammable material is proclaimed in the *Government Gazette* the sale of that material will be an offence attracting a penalty of \$500. If we remove the part you are talking about, there is no question that the time at which the sale of that material is banned can be infinite.

Mr TONKIN: It says—

... the Governor may, from time to time, by proclamation fix a date, being a date not earlier than six months after the publication of the proclamation in the *Government Gazette*, as the date on and after which the provisions of subsection (4) of this section shall have effect . . .

Supposing the legislation is in force, and the Government sees a certain material on the market, with my amendment the Governor can say, "As from tomorrow that material will be banned", or "As from next week the material will not be sold", or it could be in a month's time or in 10 years' time. With the Government's amendment the material cannot be sold after six months from the date of proclamation, but the Governor can still say the date after which it cannot be sold is many years hence. The Government is in a position to say, "That material is on the market. We will not proclaim at the moment that it is an offensive material. We will make Press statements and ensure the trade knows all about it." It could go on for years. Under either amendment it could go on and on. If a Government does not want to act in that way it will not do so, and I suppose the only thing that would make it act in that way is public pressure.

The Government is not big enough to accept an Opposition amendment. People who are sure of themselves can admit someone else might have a point.

Mr O'Neil: The amendment has not been moved, so there is no question about the Government accepting it. If your amendment is moved and accepted, we can move an appropriate amendment in another place.

Mr TONKIN: I know it has not been moved but the Government knows very well it has the numbers in both places, so it can do with my amendment what it will.

Mr Grayden: Ours is a preferable amendment.

Mr TONKIN: That is the Minister's opinion. The fact remains under my amendment or the Government's amendment, the Governor will decide a certain date on which something is to be banned.

Mr Grayden: Our amendment writes a date into the Bill.

Mr TONKIN: It does not limit the time from which the Governor can make the proclamation, so it does not alter it at all. The Government is not prepared to listen. I move an amendment—

Page 3, lines 6 to 8—Delete the passage " , being a date not earlier than six months after the publication of the proclamation in the *Government Gazette*,".

Mr PEARCE: I think this amendment is preferable to the one the Minister is suggesting. There ought not to be a presumption in the legislation that a period of six months from the proclamation date is all right. The amendment the Minister is suggesting is preferable the way

the Bill is worded because it is unacceptable that the use of a highly dangerous flammable fabric cannot be banned within six months. To say it must be banned within six months is more acceptable but leaves a presumption in the wording of the legislation that up to six months is all right, when it is not all right in those circumstances. It is tighter than it would be if no date were expressed at all, but surely the clear presumption is a date will be proclaimed as soon as possible, which is almost immediately.

If there are dangerous fabrics which it is desired to ban as soon as they are considered to be dangerous, the deletion of the reference to six months would lead to more rapid action. The Minister is concerned that a Government might wish to hold things up for 10 years. If a Government does not want to do that it will not proclaim a date. It will announce in the *Government Gazette* a date when the material will be banned, and if it did not proclaim it no action would be taken. Proposed subsection (3) concludes with the words "and may by subsequent proclamation amend or revoke any such proclamation". So if a Government wanted to stretch the time beyond six months, after 5½ months it would revoke that proclamation and add another six months to it by a subsequent proclamation.

So clearly the Government has all sorts of loopholes, whichever Government it may be, which the Minister's amendment simply does not overcome. That being the case, there is no value in the Minister's amendment except that it would remove the reference to a mandatory six-month period. That is not as preferable as the member for Morley's amendment, which would remove not only the mandatory six-month period, but also the presumption that up to six months is all right. Therefore, the amendment moved by the member for Morley is in fact a very sensible one and it does achieve what the Minister set out to achieve by his amendment, but it achieves it more clearly.

I hope that, on reflection, the Minister and his colleagues on the other side of the Chamber will support this Bill and amend it in this manner to protect the children whom it sets out to protect.

Mr GRAYDEN: Quite clearly—and members of the Opposition will realise this on reflection—my amendment is preferable to the one which has been moved by the member for Morley. I suggest to members that they defeat the amendment which has been moved by the member for Morley and I will give the undertaking that I will have my amendment moved in another place.

Mr HARMAN: I realise the implications of the amendment moved by the member for Morley because he is deleting the words, "being a date not earlier than six months after the date of the proclamation in the *Government Gazette*", where a minimum surface burning time is prescribed.

I also realise that it leaves the situation up in the air. The Minister's subsequent amendment says that the date will be at least within six months after the proclamation. It says, "fix a date being a date not later than six months". So some time after the proclamation of this burning material, the Government will come along and fix a date. I can understand that and I am sure everybody else in the Chamber understands it. The point is this: Should the shopkeepers be allowed that space of time in which to sell the material?

Mr Davies: They can buy it knowing that they have six months in which to sell it.

Mr HARMAN: Shopkeepers are not dumb people. The people who supply the fabrics to the shopkeepers are not dumb. They know that for some considerable time the question of burning fabrics has been discussed throughout Australia. Anyone who is in the industry would know that. Therefore, why is there a need to protect shopkeepers when the Bill is designed to protect those people who may buy that sort of fabric, whether it is for nightwear or for clothing for children? Why cannot we say, "Well, let us go back and re-examine our situation." The Minister has already said tonight that the shopkeepers in the industry have known about this for two years and no-one has been buying this fabric at all.

Mr Grayden: Not "at all"; virtually none has been coming in.

Mr HARMAN: So now for another six months we are protecting the storekeepers who purchase this burning fabric material. One of the children wearing this type of fabric could suffer injury or lose his or her life in that time. All this argument should not occur. We should be big enough to admit that both amendments do not really achieve what the members of this Chamber want them to achieve. We ought to say to the Minister, "Be big enough to go back and have a look at it with your Parliamentary Draftsman." Let us make a decision straightaway if we intend to ban that sort of material.

Mr Grayden: There should be a time limit on it. It covers not only this Government, but any other Government in the future.

Mr HARMAN: It is more important to preserve the life of a child than to see that the storekeeper makes another dollar profit.

Mr Grayden: That is why we have done this.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 15

Mr Barnett	Mr Pearce
Mr Bertran	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr H. D. Evans	Dr Troy
Mr Grill	Mr Wilson
Mr Harman	Mr Bateman
Mr T. H. Jones	

(Teller)

Noes 24

Mr Blaikie	Mr Nanovich
Mr Cowan	Mr Old
Mr Coyne	Mr O'Neil
Mrs Craig	Mr Rushton
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Mr Grayden	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grewar	Mr Spriggs
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Watt
Mr Laurance	Mr Williams
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Young
Mr Mensaros	Mr Shalders

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Jamieson	Sir Charles Court
Mr Bryce	Mr McPharlin
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Stephens
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr P. V. Jones
Mr Hodge	Dr Dadour
Mr McIver	Mr O'Connor
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr Ridge

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Grayden (Minister for Labour and Industry), and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 12.01 a.m. (Wednesday)

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

MOTOR VEHICLE LICENCE FEES

Pensioner Concessions

823. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Treasurer:

(1) When the pensioner concession for vehicle licence base rate stood at \$48.50 what was the basis of that assessment?

- (2) What percentage did the rate of \$48.50 bear to the combined pensions of married couples when that rate was assessed?
- (3) What is the present percentage ratio of the pensioner concession as applied to to-day's combined pension rate?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) I find the question difficult to follow, as a base rate has never applied to the vehicle licence concession granted to pensioners. However, I can only assume that when the member refers to a base rate of \$48.50, he is referring to the State basic wage, which until the 1st January, 1977 was used to determine eligibility of civilian invalid pensioners for the concession.

Prior to the 1st January a full concession was granted to those pensioners whose combined income, from the pension and other sources, did not exceed the State basic wage. A 50 per cent concession was granted where combined income did not exceed the State basic wage by more than \$6.00 per week.

From the 1st January this year, eligibility for the concession has been related to the minimum wage. This change was introduced because the basic wage had remained static since May 1974, and with subsequent pension increases, had become outmoded as an appropriate standard for the purpose of the concession.

Under the revised conditions, the scheme now operates as follows—

- (a) Pensioners on full pension and no other income—100 per cent concession.
- (b) Pensioners on full pension and in receipt of other income whose combined value does not exceed the minimum wage—100 per cent.
- (c) Pensioners on full pension and in receipt of other income whose combined value is greater than the minimum wage—50 per cent concession.
- (d) Pensioners on less than full pension because of other incomes—no concession.

POSEIDON LIMITED

AIDC Loan

824. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

Is his Government aware of the detailed reasons why the Poseidon group of companies was not fulfilling its obligations to repay a loan owed to the Australian Industry Development Corporation thus causing AIDC to send the Poseidon group of companies into receivership?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

The Poseidon group went into voluntary receivership in October 1976. During the last year AIDC has provided invaluable support to the project up until the purchase of Poseidon's interests in the Windarra project by Shell. Poseidon's difficulties were due to insufficient cash flow from Windarra and Burra operations to cover the interest charges on the substantial loans. Low metal prices at a time of escalating costs were the main reason for the reduced cash flow. Complete details were given in *the Australian Financial Review* in various articles appearing on the 19th, 20th and 21st October, 1976.

POSEIDON LIMITED

Windarra Project

825. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Is he aware that bids are currently being made for Poseidon's interest in the Windarra project?

- (2) Can he state whom the bidders are?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Poseidon no longer has an interest in the Windarra project.
- (2) Shell purchased Poseidon's interest some six weeks ago. This was announced in *The West Australian* on the 18th August, 1977.

SUPERPHOSPHATE

Moisture Content

826. Mr GREWAR, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What was the permissible moisture content allowed in superphosphate prepared for sale?
- (2) Were samples being regularly tested for moisture percentage?
- (3) Was this figure being declared in the analyst's report?
- (4) When the analysis indicated that a sample had a moisture content in excess of that prescribed, was the matter reported to him?
- (5) Has there been any superphosphate with excess moisture distributed for sale from any manufacturer over the past five years?
- (6) Will the new Fertilizers Bill and/or regulations adopt the formerly used parameters for moisture content?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) No limit on moisture content is prescribed.
- (2) Only as part of the analytical procedure.
- (3) No.
- (4) Answered by (1).
- (5) Not that I am aware of.
- (6) At this stage no change is envisaged in the present testing and reporting procedures for moisture content.

WOODMAN POINT EXPLOSIVES DEPOT

Materials Stored

827. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Mines:

With respect to the Woodman Point explosives depot:

- (1) What percentage of available storage space is presently being utilised?
- (2) (a) What quantity of materials generally described as "explosives" is presently stored there; and
(b) what percentage of the total space available does this occupy?
- (3) (a) What other materials are presently stored there;
(b) what is the quantity; and
(c) what percentage of space is occupied?
- (4) For what reasons are materials classified other than under the general category of "explosives" stored at the site?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) As at today's date 65 per cent of the total magazine capacity is being utilised.
- (2) (a) 316 tonnes.
(b) 33 per cent, plus a further 15 per cent used for manufacturing and packaging purposes.
- (3) (a) Ammonium nitrate and explosives accessories; for example, exploders, circuit testers, crimpers packaging materials, etc.
(b) 67 tonnes of ammonium nitrate and 15 tonnes of accessories.
(c) 17 per cent.
- (4) To have them stored and readily available with the explosives.

FISHERIES

Jewfish

828. Mr CRANE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) What is the bag limit imposed in respect of jewfish?
- (2) How many prosecutions have been made in respect of these limitations on jewfish since they have been imposed?
- (3) In the interest of conservation and propagation of this species will the Minister impose stricter controls on these bag limitations?
- (4) Is there any estimate of the number of jewfish taken and marketed by fishermen licensed to take rock lobster?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) There is a bag limit of 10 fish per day for a combination of any of the following species: jewfish, snapper, north west snapper, blue groper, samson fish, spanish mackerel and blue morwong.
- (2) Nil.
- (3) This measure is policed to the full extent of manpower available.
- (4) Weight of jewfish taken by rock lobster fishermen is recorded on monthly fish returns but is not kept as a separate statistic.

SCHOOL DENTAL THERAPY CLINIC*Middle Swan School*

829. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) When was the dental therapy unit at Middle Swan primary school commissioned?
- (2) How many patients have been examined or treated by the unit to date?
- (3) (a) Are these only from Middle Swan primary school;
(b) if the answer to (a) is "No", would he indicate contributing school and number from each?
- (4) What additional schools are intended to be served by the unit?
- (5) What is the enrolment at each of the schools intended to be serviced by the unit?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) April, 1976.
- (2) 930.
- (3) (a) No;
(b) Middle Swan primary—365.
Midland primary—60.
St. Brigid's Convent—251.
Herne Hill primary—113.
West Midland primary—26.
115 pre-primary school children also attend the clinic.
The total numbers of children in these schools is:
Middle Swan primary—385.
Midland primary—114.
St. Brigid's Convent—354.
Herne Hill primary—137.
West Midland primary—31.

(4) and (5) None at this time.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Prosecutions*

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

- (1) How many prosecutions have been made against holders of:—
(a) vehicle dealer's licences;
(b) yard manager's licences;
(c) salesman's licences;
(such licences being held pursuant to the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act) for breaches of the Criminal Code while engaged in their duties as dealers, yard

managers and salesmen in each of the following years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) 1977;

and of what sections of the Code were they alleged to be in breach?

- (2) What were the results of those prosecutions in each of the breaches?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) This information is not available.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Applications*

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

How many applications have there been for:

- (a) vehicle dealer's licences;
- (b) yard manager's licences;
- (c) salesman's licences;

pursuant to the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the following years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) 1977;

and how many applications were granted in each case?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

As at 30th June each year—

	Salesmen		Yard Managers		Dealers	
	No. Applicants	No. Licences Issued	No. Applicants	No. Licences Issued	No. Applicants	No. Licences Issued
1974.....	942	830	364	312	479	82
1975.....	1 489	1 295	484	424	644	559
1976.....	1 377	1 228	404	391	644	607
1977.....	1 414	1 208	456	433	648	606

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*"Ghosting"*

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

- (1) Is the Consumer Affairs Bureau still checking the practice of "ghosting" by which motor vehicles are advertised when they are not available for sale?
- (2) How often are checks made?
- (3) How many cases of such "ghosts" have been discovered in each of the years:
(a) 1974;

- (b) 1975;
- (c) 1976;
- (d) 1977?

(4) What action was taken when this practice was discovered?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) Since the introduction of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in 1974, it has been mandatory for motor vehicle dealers to include the registration number of the vehicles in any advertisement. These advertisements are checked regularly for the registration number and other details as prescribed in the sales regulations.
- (3) and (4) No cases of "ghost" advertising have been detected since 1974.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT

Prosecutions

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

- (1) How many prosecutions have been made against holders of:
 - (a) vehicle dealer's licences;
 - (b) yard manager's licences;
 - (c) salesman's licences;
 (such licences being held pursuant to the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act) for breaches of the Hire Purchase Act while engaged in their duties as dealers, yard managers and salesmen in each of the following years:
 - (i) 1974;
 - (ii) 1975;
 - (iii) 1976;
 - (iv) 1977;
 and for which sections of the Act were they alleged to be in breach?

(2) What were the results of each of those prosecutions?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) The Bureau of Consumer Affairs and the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board are aware of three prosecutions of motor vehicle salesmen for breaches of the Hire Purchase Act. There was one prosecution in 1974 and two in 1976.
- (2) The prosecutions were successful.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT

Disqualifications

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on the application of the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (a) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied—

None.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT

Disqualifications

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on the application of the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (b) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied—

None.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT

Disqualifications

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on the

application of the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (c) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

None. A recent application by the commissioner for the cancellation of the licenses of a yard manager and a salesman is currently listed for hearing by the board.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT

Disqualifications

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on the application of the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (d) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

None.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT

Disqualifications

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on the application of the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (f) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (a) The bureau has made one application for the cancellation of the licence of a motor vehicle dealer under section 20 (1) (f) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act.

The Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board subsequently recorded a reprimand against the dealer.

- (b) and (c) are not applicable to section 20 (1) (f). Section 20 (1) (f) relates to a person being the holder of a dealer's licence.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT

Disqualifications

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on its own motion, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (a) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

1974—1 dealer.

1975—Nil.

1976—Nil.

1977—1 salesman.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Disqualifications*

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on its own motion, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (b) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

1974—Nil.

1975—1 salesman.

1976—3 yard managers and 1 salesman.

1977—Nil.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Disqualifications*

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on its own motion, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (c) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

1974—1 yard manager.

1975—Nil.

1976—Nil.

1977—1 salesman.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Disqualifications*

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on its own motion, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (d) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

1974	1975	1976	1977
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Disqualifications*

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

How many times has the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board, on its own motion, disqualified a person who was at that time holding:

- (a) a vehicle dealer's licence;
- (b) a yard manager's licence;
- (c) a salesman's licence;

from holding such a licence pursuant to section 20 (1) (f) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

(a)	1974	1975	1976	1977
	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

- (b) and (c) are not applicable to section 20 (1) (f). Section 20 (1) (f) relates to a person being the holder of a dealer's licence.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Prosecutions and Convictions*

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

(1) How many times has there been a prosecution for an offence committed against section 25 of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (a) 1974;
- (b) 1975;
- (c) 1976;
- (d) hitherto in 1977?

(2) How many times has there been a conviction in respect of section 25 of the Act in each of the years:

- (a) 1974;
- (b) 1975;
- (c) 1976;
- (d) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

	Prosecutions by RTA	Convictions
(a) 1974	1	1
(b) 1975	13	13
(c) 1976	7	
(d) 1977 to 3rd October	17	17

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Complaints*

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

How many complaints have been made by a servant of the Crown or by some other person to the Consumer Affairs Bureau that section 25 of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act has been breached in each of the years:

- (a) 1974;
- (b) 1975;
- (c) 1976;
- (d) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

1974 to 3rd October, 1977 by RTA—Nil.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Complaints*

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

How many complaints have been made to the Consumer Affairs Bureau, to the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board or to any other State instrumentality that section 26 (1) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act has been breached in each of the years:

- (a) 1974;
- (b) 1975;
- (c) 1976;
- (d) hitherto in 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

1974 to 3rd October, 1977, by RTA nil.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Prosecutions and Convictions*

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

(1) How many prosecutions have there been for alleged breaches of section 26 (1) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act in each of the years:

- (a) 1974;
- (b) 1975;
- (c) 1976;
- (d) hitherto in 1977?

(2) How many of those prosecutions resulted in convictions in each of the said years?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

	Prosecutions by RTA	Convictions
(a) 1974	3	3
(b) 1975	4	4
(c) 1976	1	1
(d) 1977 to 3rd October	2	2

Offences of failing to apply for transfer are also dealt with under Road Traffic Act, but separate figures relating to motor vehicle dealers are not available.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Complaints, Prosecutions and Convictions*

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

(1) How many complaints have been made by:

- (a) servants of the Crown;
- (b) any other person;

to the appropriate authority that a breach of section 28 (2) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act has occurred in each of the years:

- (i) 1974;
- (ii) 1975;
- (iii) 1976;
- (iv) hitherto in 1977?

(2) How many prosecutions for the offence reference referred to in (1) above, have been made in each of the years:

- (a) 1974;
- (b) 1975;
- (c) 1976;
- (d) hitherto in 1977?

(3) How many convictions occurred in each of those years for the alleged prosecutions referred to in (2) above?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Complaints	Prosecutions	Convictions
(i) 1974	1	1
(ii) 1975	1	0
(iii) 1976	0	0
(iv) 1977 to 3rd Octo- ber	1	1

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Complaints, Prosecutions and Convictions*

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

(1) How many reports have been made by an officer of the Crown or any other person to the appropriate authority that section 29 (1) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act has been breached in each of the years:

- (a) 1974;
- (b) 1975;
- (c) 1976;
- (d) hitherto in 1977?

(2) How many prosecutions for the offence referred to in (1) above, occurred in each of those years?

(3) How many convictions arising out of those prosecutions occurred in each of the years earlier referred to?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Complaints	Prosecutions	Convictions
(a) 1974	0	0
(b) 1975	1	1
(c) 1976	2	2
(d) 1977	3	3

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT*Section 33 (3) (g)*

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

What other particulars are prescribed pursuant to section 33 (3) (g) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Other particulars in addition to those nominated in the Act are outlined as follows in Sales Regulation 5(2)(c)—

5(2)(c) shall contain, in addition to the required particulars set out in subsection (3) of section 33, the following particulars:

- (i) the make, type and model designation of the vehicle;
- (ii) the engine number of the vehicle;
- (iii) the reference number of the vehicle in the dealer's register of transactions for the premises in which the vehicle is displayed;

and shall make provision for the insertion of—

- (iv) the reading of the odometer of the vehicle at the time of the sale by the dealer who is offering it for sale;
- (v) the date of the sale by the dealer; and
- (vi) the signatures of the dealer and the purchaser.

MILK BOTTLES*Date Designation System*

851. Mr SHALDERS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

In view of the fact that few people equate a particular date with the numerical sequence during the year of

that date, would he take steps to ensure that a more readily understood system of designating the date of manufacture on milk bottles be introduced, than that currently under consideration?

Mr OLD replied:

The day of the year dating of milk bottles has already been introduced to overcome the misleading system previously in use. I have asked the Dairy Industry Authority to review this form of dating after a suitable trial period.

ROTTNEST ISLAND

Diseases in Trees

852. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Lands and Forests:

- (1) Are some trees on Rottnest Island affected by jarrah dieback or other diseases likely to lead to the death of affected trees?
- (2) If the answer is "Yes", what remedial action is being taken?
- (3) How many trees have been planted on Rottnest Island in each of the past three years?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) To 30th June, 1977—

29 acres of ti trees and Rottnest Pines were planted in an area west of the main lighthouse. Unfortunately lack of rain caused many trees to die. 60 trees were planted in the cottage area of Bathurst Point.

To 30th June, 1976—

54 acres of ti trees were planted in the area north-east of the main lighthouse.

To 30th June, 1975—

Some 500 replacement trees were planted in existing plantations. Major works in this year were sand-dune control and the landscaping and tree planting in the Geordie-Longreach Bay area.

COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

Mt. Lawley

853. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

Is he now in a position to state whether

teachers will be released on a full-time paid basis to attend the special education course at the Mt. Lawley College of Advanced Education in 1978?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

A decision has been made, but no announcement will be made until after discussion with the college.

SHEEP

Compulsory Dipping

854. Mr GREWAR, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Since the relaxation of compulsory dipping for the control of external parasites on sheep, has he knowledge of an increase in the number of affected flocks?
- (2) (a) If "Yes" could he detail the number of properties now under quarantine;
(b) the number under quarantine for the five years preceding the relaxation of the regulation?
- (3) If the incidence has shown a dramatic increase, would the department be anxious to reimpose compulsory dipping requirements?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) There has been an increase in the number of lice-infested flocks known to my department. This is believed to reflect increased detection rather than an increased incidence of lice.
- (2) (a) 691 at 30th September, 1977;
(b) 366 at 30th September, 1976,
401 at 30th September, 1975,
379 at 30th September, 1974,
443 at 30th September, 1973,
450 at 30th September, 1972.
- (3) Not at this stage. The matter will, however, be kept under review.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

STOCK

Hazelmere Holding Paddocks

1. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that overstocking of the holding paddocks in the area of Hazelmere is again taking place?

- (2) Is the Minister aware that this overstocking denudes the pasture and creates a potential dust hazard at the same time?
- (3) Will the Minister overcome the problem by—
 - (a) having the stock in the holding paddocks reduced to an acceptable level;
 - (b) immediately having the regulations under the Clean Air Act gazetted so that the stock firms concerned can be controlled and thus prevent the dust problem in the area?

Mr RIDGE replied:

I thank the member for Swan for prior notice of the question, the answer to which is as follows—

- (1) No. Officers of the clean air section who inspected the stock holding paddocks on Monday, the 26th September, reported that in their opinion the paddocks were not overstocked.
- (2) It is agreed that a dust hazard would occur from overstocking.
- (3) Stockyard regulations to control the dust problem have been prepared and submitted to the Air Pollution Control Council for approval and should be in my hands shortly.

I would add that I hope "shortly" will be within the next couple of weeks, and then we will have the authority to act in the event that it is necessary.

USED MOTOR VEHICLES

Complaints

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

- (1) Who is responsible for the gross deception of the public that, as is stated in *The West Australian* of the 30th September, 1977, the number of complaints received by the Consumer Affairs Bureau with respect to used cars has dropped to 108 when in fact that figure relates only to a specific category, and the total number of used car complaints in the year in question is 875?

- (2) Is it not a fact that the total number of complaints has dropped from 1 285 in 1973-74 to 875 in 1976-77—a drop of a meagre 31 per cent; I repeat only 31 per cent—and not 400 per cent as stated?

- (3) What different guidelines are now used for listing the number of complaints received by the bureau, as compared with the guidelines in operation during the term of the Tonkin Government?
- (4) What instructions, verbal or written, have been given to the bureau to reduce the number of complaints recorded?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) to (4) In order to give the member for Morley a specific answer, I ask that he place the question on the notice paper; and I can assure him he will be shocked by the reply.

LESCHENAULT INLET

Revegetation of Sand Dunes

3. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) Has any money been set aside in this year's Budget for the specific purpose of revegetating the sand dunes along the western side of Leschenault Inlet?
- (2) How much has been set aside for this specific purpose and how much in total has been allocated to the Leschenault Inlet Management Authority?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) There are a number of programmes dealing with foreshores. Some come under the various management authorities of the Waterways Commission, others come under the Public Works Department and still others under the soil conservation service of the Department of Agriculture. It is believed that the information required by the member is probably in one of the Public Works Department programmes.
- (2) The amount set aside for the purpose referred to by the member is therefore not known. However, for his information, the total amount allocated for the Leschenault Inlet Management Authority for all its activities is approximately \$40 000.

LIQUOR LICENCES

Albany

4. Mr BERTRAM, to the Chief Secretary:

In the area of Stirling Terrace, Aberdeen Street, Serpentine Road, and Duke and Collie Streets, Albany, how

many current licences exist under the Liquor Act for—

- (1) hotels;
- (2) liquor stores;
- (3) restaurants;
- (4) otherwise?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

I thank the member for Mt. Hawthorn for adequate notice of the question, the reply to which is as follows—

- (1) 5.
- (2) 1.
- (3) 4.

The SPEAKER: Order! Apparently some members in the House are experiencing difficulty in hearing Ministers answer their questions. I am not singling out the Chief Secretary, but I would ask all Ministers to speak up when answering questions.

Mr O'NEIL: I thought I was answering the member for Mt. Hawthorn.

The SPEAKER: You are answering to the House.

Mr O'NEIL: I am answering the question asked by the member for Mt. Hawthorn. The answer is—

- (1) 5.
- (2) 1.
- (3) 4.
- (4) Five, consisting of two club and three wholesale. (One of the three wholesale licences is presently under suspension.)

TRANSPORT WORKERS' UNION

Dispute with Owner-drivers and Subcontractors

5. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

In view of the suggestions in the *Daily News* of today's date that police escorts and the use of farm or Government vehicles are among secret measures being considered by the State Government to weaken the transport strike, will the Minister advise the House of other measures proposed to weaken the strike which might be taken and which so far have been kept secret?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

As far as the Government is concerned, no details of the discussions which have taken place have been released, for obvious reasons.

Mr Tonkin: Who is leaking it from the Cabinet?

HOUSING

City of Melville

6. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

In an article appearing in *The West Australian* of Monday, the 3rd October, concerning a decision by the Melville City Council to restrict unit development and high density accommodation the Minister was quoted as saying he was concerned about the increasing pressure from councils to restrict development in the light of future energy problems.

Was the Minister correctly quoted; and, if so, would he please explain the reason for his concern and the connection between the type of decision taken by the Melville City Council and the impending world energy crisis?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

In answer to the question of the member for Melville, and I cannot thank him for any notice of it—

Mr Tonkin: It is a question without notice.

Mr RUSHTON: —I expressed in that news comment my concern in respect of decisions being made without relating them to the total responsibility that we have in respect of housing and transporting people. I can only say that at one time one is criticised in respect of urban sprawl; and on another occasion one is criticised because people are living in residential areas which are too dense.

I was expressing the view that we need to know far more about the issue when we give consideration to the points raised by the citizens of Melville. I am endeavouring to obtain all the information I can so that when I receive a submission from the City of Melville I will be in a position to make a decision based on fact and the need to discuss the matter with the council.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Answering of Questions.

7. Mr TONKIN, to the Premier:

Is he concerned that some of his Ministers know so little about their departments that they are unable to

answer even quite simple questions without first referring them to their departmental officers so that they may be told what to say?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

First of all, I regard this as a contemptuous question.

Secondly, I know of no example that fits the category—

Mr Tonkin: The Minister for Labour and Industry a few minutes ago.

Sir CHARLES COURT: —the member for Morley alleges to exist.

Mr Tonkin: You want to listen.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I did.

FIRE BRIGADES BOARD

Appeal against Pay Increase

8. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

In view of the decision of the Industrial Commission to grant a pay rise to firemen and fire brigades officers on the basis of work value and further, the concession by the board that such categories as outlined in the case were real, why did the Minister ask the Fire Brigades Board to appeal against this decision?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

The honourable member's assertion is quite untrue; no direction came either from the Government or the employees' section of the Public Service Board. The decision was one for the Fire Brigades Board alone to make. However, before it made the decision, it referred the matter to the employees' section of the Public

Service Board. The recommendation of that section was that an appeal should be lodged. My recommendation was that an appeal should be lodged, and for a very good reason: The increases were going to cost this State \$1 million. The firemen were being placed on the same basis as police, nurses, and prison officials, all of whom are working virtually for the entire year. My information is that firemen actually fight fires for about two hours a year; also, that many have two jobs, and some have three jobs. In these circumstances, when we get a recommendation where some \$1 million of taxpayers' money is involved, is it not reasonable that both the employees' section of the Public Service Board and I should recommend an appeal? However, I stress this was a decision for the Fire Brigades Board alone to make.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Star Swamp Area

9. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) What stage have investigations into the future use of the Star Swamp area reached?
- (2) Have any decisions been reached on whether certain areas will be developed?
- (3) What are those areas concerned and what are those decisions?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) Negotiations towards what is hoped will be a satisfactory solution to the problem are proceeding.