

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 4th August, 1977

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

WITHDRAWAL OF REMARKS

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I am concerned at certain events which transpired last evening during the Address-in-Reply debate. I refer particularly to the manner in which two members behaved when called upon by me to withdraw certain words. Standing Orders 144, 145, and 146 set out the situation quite concisely. The elements are: Firstly, the member who is offended rises and makes his objection known to the Speaker. Secondly, the Speaker decides whether the words are objectionable or unparliamentary. Thirdly, if the Speaker has decided that the words are objectionable or unparliamentary he orders them to be withdrawn and, if necessary, an apology made.

The Standing Orders require that objection is to be taken at once. A refusal to withdraw or apologise when directed is regarded as an offence under Standing Order 70 and can lead as far as naming and suspending of that member. It is well known that at times the Speaker will intervene to require a withdrawal even if no objection has been taken. This is part of the normal authority of the Speaker to maintain order during debate. It is also a well established rule of this House that when a withdrawal of words is ordered from the Chair it shall be made without qualification. The rulings on this point are numerous and I shall not delay the House by reciting them.

Reflecting on the manner in which the member for Scarborough and the member for Swan respectively made their withdrawals last evening, I am of the view that the House was treated in a manner which brought it no dignity whatsoever. I make it quite clear that it will be my practice in the future, when I have directed a member to withdraw words, to require those words to be withdrawn without qualification.

Members should consider the damage that can be done to the parliamentary institution if its rules are flouted. The very privilege which is cherished most highly of all, that of freedom of speech, is in far greater danger from within the institution through its abuse than it is from any external source.

I add one more thought at this juncture. It does not necessarily follow that because a member takes objection to certain words they are therefore unparliamentary or objectionable within the meaning of our Standing Orders. It is of the

nature of Parliament one side will put points of view which the other cannot accept. The Chair should not and would not interfere in the free flow of debate and members will only be disappointed if they raise with me objections which are frivolous or objections raising points which could be made in debate. There is no requirement of the Chair, for instance, to see that any member is correct in what he said. That is a question for which members of the House should be constantly watchful.

Summing up, I expect that in future members will be suitably restrained in seeking withdrawals but, on the other hand, when a point is upheld the withdrawal will be complete and unqualified.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

BILLS (4) : INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Acts Amendment (Pensioners Rates Rebates and Deferments) Bill.

2. Perth Medical Centre Act Amendment Bill.

Bills introduced, on motions by Mr O'Neil (Deputy Premier), and read a first time.

3. Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Neil (Minister for Police and Traffic), and read a first time.

4. Education Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr P. V. Jones (Minister for Education), and read a first time.

CONSTRUCTION SAFETY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [2.56 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill has emanated from an unsatisfactory situation which arose recently during the construction of a large shopping complex in the metropolitan area.

The Chief Inspector of Construction Safety had issued an order on the main contractor to make safe some on-site work in order to protect workmen involved. At the same time, the main contractor had been served with a writ of prohibition through the Supreme Court from a property owner adjacent to the site over possible

damage through excavation work to such neighbouring property.

Notwithstanding visits by the Construction Safety Advisory Board appointed under the Construction Safety Act—which is representative of Government, employers in the industry and a Trades and Labor Council representative for building workers—the contractor chose to ignore the order of the chief inspector in favour of the Supreme Court writ and the chief inspector was powerless to take other action due to provisions in the Act which allow for an appeal against any order within 28 days of its issue. This in turn presents a difficulty in obtaining an immediate injunction from a superior court.

Legal opinion obtained from Crown Law officers suggests the best course to be an amendment to the Act to provide for the chief inspector to apply for an injunction from the Supreme Court to support a stop work order, notwithstanding that an appeal under section 18 of the Act may be pending in relation to the matter.

At the same time where the court determines the matter is affected by the provisions of some other order made by a court of the State, the court may rescind or vary that other order as circumstances require it.

The Construction Safety Advisory Board has recommended the amendment suggested and it has my support and forms the substance of this Bill.

The new section 32A to be introduced should allow safety orders issued by inspectors to rectify unsafe working conditions to be implemented with minimum delay or obstruction, particularly once the necessity for the order has been endorsed by the chief inspector and the Construction Safety Advisory Board.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Tonkin.

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Chief Secretary) [3.00 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The section relating to the Physiotherapists Registration Board constituted by the Governor for the purposes of the Act includes provision for the appointment of the Commissioner of Public Health, but does not provide for any officer other than the commissioner to be appointed to

represent the interests of the Public Health Department.

This is a small board, the commissioner is not always available, and there is no provision for a deputy. It is desirable that he be given the option to nominate a medical officer employed by the department to the board to represent the department and an amendment is sought to allow provision for this alternative appointment.

Another required appointment on this board is a person nominated by the Senate of the University of Western Australia and approved by the Minister. This was included to link the course of training previously conducted by the board to a tertiary education authority.

The responsibility for this training of physiotherapists has, for the last few years, been assumed by the Western Australian Institute of Technology and it is more appropriate that the institute be represented on the board and replace the representation of the University of Western Australia.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Davies.

COAL MINE WORKERS (PENSIONS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR MENSAROS (Floreat—Minister for Mines) [3.02 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The principal Act which this Bill proposes to amend relates to the establishment of a fund from which pensions are paid to mineworkers and their dependants. The Bill contains only two proposals.

Firstly, by an amendment to section 7(2), the Bill seeks to increase from \$17 to \$34.50 per week the amount an "incapacity" pensioner under the Act may earn without it affecting his pension entitlement.

This will bring the "incapacity" pensioner into line with other pensioners under the Act, in so far as permissible income from earnings is concerned.

The second proposal is to amend section 26(2) to afford the pension tribunal some discretion in the matter of suspending a mineworker's pension entitlement in the event of that mineworker becoming a patient as defined in the Mental Health Act, 1962. Presently suspension is mandatory, but it is desirable that suspension should be at the discretion of the tribunal to enable it to assist in special cases of hardship.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr T. H. Jones.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: THIRD DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 3rd August, on the following motion by Mr Hassell—

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

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

MR McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [3.04 p.m.]: Once again we are involved in the Address-in-Reply debate which takes place after the opening of Parliament, and we have again heard criticisms from the Opposition. Of course that is the role of an Opposition.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr McPHARLIN: I well remember that when we were in Opposition we adopted similar tactics, but there was a great deal more substance in what we said then than in what the Opposition has said this time so far.

Mr Davies: Never!

Mr Coyne: Absolutely!

Mr McPHARLIN: Some of the hardy annuals have arisen again, but we hear about increased charges all the time. The Opposition is well aware of the fact that before the increases are reluctantly agreed to—and this would have applied to the Opposition when it was in Government—they were discussed in detail in the party room.

Mr Davies: You are told what to do.

Mr McPHARLIN: The Opposition would adopt the same tactics. When the increases are brought to Parliament they are attacked by the Opposition. We attacked the Opposition when it was in Government the same as it is attacking us now. Members opposite know that these things are discussed in detail and agreed to with great reluctance.

Mr H. D. Evans: You are told what to do.

Mr McPHARLIN: Members opposite know there are very good reasons for these increased charges being applied, and they know when they criticise us they are only acting as an Opposition. Oppositions have an obligation to do this.

Mr H. D. Evans: But when you make an unfair tax on the country people, it is despicable, and you should be ashamed of yourself. You are supposed to be the champion of country people.

Mr McPHARLIN: Members opposite know that they did the same thing when they were in Government and we criticised them when we were in Opposition. In fact, last night some of my comments during that period were mentioned by the member for Warren.

Mr H. D. Evans: Our increases were only a fraction of the amount you have imposed.

Mr McPHARLIN: It is no good the Opposition criticising us for reluctantly making the increases because it did exactly the same thing when it was in office.

Mr H. D. Evans: It is a money-making tax, not a State charge!

Mr McPHARLIN: I am glad the member for Warren is so responsive because now I will answer some of the criticisms he repeats so often and which he repeated again last night. In my remarks I will also include the member for Swan.

Mr Skidmore: What did I do?

Mr McPHARLIN: The member for Warren referred to the management of the Midland Junction Abattoir and he criticised the decision made in 1968 about a recommendation in the Towns and Austen report. We have heard this criticism so often that I could repeat it without even thinking about it.

Mr H. D. Evans: We are still paying for it.

Mr McPHARLIN: The recommendation was made; no-one argues the point on that. However, in 1969 we had a drought.

Mr H. D. Evans: Drought or no drought, you should have acted as was recommended by the report.

Mr McPHARLIN: The member for Warren knows that there was an extreme urgency at the time because of the large numbers of stock coming forward for slaughter. The abattoir could not accommodate them, and had the recommendation concerning the building programme been proceeded with, at least two years would have elapsed before the accommodation was ready.

Mr H. D. Evans: Not if you had not delayed for three years.

Mr McPHARLIN: The abattoir could not cope with the stock coming forward and so an emergency situation developed because the stock just had to be handled.

Mr H. D. Evans: Of course there was an emergency, because you left it so long.

Mr McPHARLIN: Plans were made for the abattoir to try to cope with the urgency of the situation.

Mr H. D. Evans: Why didn't you start three years beforehand when you should have?

Mr McPHARLIN: I wish to make a point which the member for Warren omitted to mention. During that period of extreme urgency—

Mr H. D. Evans: Which you created.

Mr McPHARLIN: —because of the lack of slaughtermen, negotiations were made to bring 80 men from New Zealand.

Mr Skidmore: And what a crew they were, too! Magnificent!

Mr McPHARLIN: At the peak of the killing period they went on strike.

Mr Davies: The rotten things.

Mr H. D. Evans: Why?

Mr McPHARLIN: The member for Victoria Park thinks it is humorous.

Mr Davies: The way you are talking it is a great laugh. You are not listening to the member for Warren. You are shouting above him and ignoring his valid criticisms.

Mr McPHARLIN: They went on strike.

Mr Davies: What were the reasons?

Mr H. D. Evans: Tell us the reasons.

Mr McPHARLIN: They could not care less about the farming community or about those people who were suffering as a result of the extreme drought conditions.

Mr H. D. Evans: Tell us why.

Mr Davies: Yes. Tell the story properly.

Mr McPHARLIN: Members sit there and defend those slaughtermen who went on strike.

Mr H. D. Evans: Tell us why.

Mr Davies: You still haven't told us.

Mr McPHARLIN: Their action was inexcusable. Members opposite do not like the truth. We have noticed this before.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the two members who appear to be interjecting simultaneously to refrain from so doing, and I also call on members to keep down their background conversation.

Mr McPHARLIN: Last night the member for Swan criticised the management of the Midland Junction Abattoir.

Mr Skidmore: With justification.

Mr McPHARLIN: I think that criticism was a little unfair because the people concerned are not here to answer and defend themselves.

Mr Skidmore: I have criticised them to their faces; it is no secret.

Mr McPHARLIN: I have no hesitation in saying there would not be a better abattoir manager in Australia than Mr Brian Wilson.

Mr Skidmore: I did not say anything about that.

Mr Tonkin: The subject is a bit smelly!

Mr McPHARLIN: The people responsible do everything possible to manage the works efficiently.

Mr H. D. Evans: Why do you not give them a decent abattoir set-up to run?

Mr McPHARLIN: The manager and others quite often work up to 17 hours a day.

Mr H. D. Evans: He is a good manager.

Mr McPHARLIN: The problems occur largely because the number of stock which comes forward for slaughter fluctuates a great deal.

Mr H. D. Evans: If only we had a decent Government.

Mr McPHARLIN: Other problems are caused by inflation, increased costs, and increased wages and salaries. However, the main problem is the fluctuation in the number of stock arriving at the abattoir. It is not an easy situation to overcome.

Mr H. D. Evans: How much water and how much electricity is used at the abattoir?

Mr McPHARLIN: The abattoir is endeavouring to get rid of the obnoxious smell which has caused some trouble in the surrounding area. In spite of what has been said by the member for Swan, the management has done its best.

Mr Skidmore: A sum of \$500 000 has been wasted.

Mr McPHARLIN: The management has done its best, and a chemical engineer has now been employed. The rendering plant has been brought up to date.

Mr H. D. Evans: But because of the stupidity of the present Government in making the abattoir so large, it is not possible to dispose of the quantity of offal.

Mr McPHARLIN: The member opposite is ignoring the cause of the situation at the time, and the urgency of the need to provide additional facilities.

Mr H. D. Evans: Rubbish; you started three years too late.

Mr McPHARLIN: One becomes a little cautious of the comments made by members of the Opposition when they start to present themselves as being champions of the country people. Their comments are not fair.

Mr Davies: The reluctance is on the part of the National Country Party members.

Mr McPHARLIN: Perhaps if I were to quote one or two words from a speech by a prominent Labor person members opposite might be reminded of the attitude which is prevalent among many Labor Party members, and which has been prevalent for a considerable time. Members opposite will recall that there was an incident in Forrest Place.

Mr Bryce: Had the same action been taken by trade unionists it would have been labelled as organised disruption.

Mr McPHARLIN: The demonstration was against the attitude of the Labor Government. The man who was the then Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam), recently commented in Federal Parliament. He was talking during the debate on the prices and wages freeze which was instituted a few months ago, and the now Leader of the Opposition made certain remarks. These comments appear in *Hansard*, and I mention that to make sure there is no mistake. He said—

There is no evidence and no likelihood that prices will be held at present levels. Already exemptions include the miners, the manufacturers, the farmers, many of whom are no more than corporate dole bludgers.

And members opposite set themselves up as champions of the country people. That is the sort of comment from their leader in the Federal Parliament.

Mr H. D. Evans: I do not think you know what those remarks mean.

Mr McPHARLIN: There it is in *Hansard*; he is saying the farmers are included as dole bludgers.

Mr Davies: Corporate dole bludgers. You do not appreciate the difference.

Mr McPHARLIN: When members opposite talk about being champions of the rural people they are talking with their tongues in their cheeks.

Mr Tonkin: Do you know what the word "corporate" means?

Mr McPHARLIN: I would like to refer to a small section of the Governor's Speech. Under the heading, "The Economy", His Excellency said—

Industrial disputes continue to cause the Government serious concern.

They cause not only the Government serious concern; they cause everyone serious concern.

Mr Davies: The Government does not do anything about it.

Mr McPHARLIN: Industrial disputes cause many people concern. I hear about it from people in my electorate.

Mr H. D. Evans: Why do you not do something about it?

Mr McPHARLIN: The people in my electorate are very seriously concerned with the industrial unrest we are experiencing.

Mr Tonkin: So are we; why does not your Government do something about it?

Mr McPHARLIN: The Minister for Labour and Industry has moved in the right direction by holding top-level negotiations and discussions. That is the type of action I favour.

Mr Davies: Three years too late, again.

Mr McPHARLIN: Let us examine the number of man-days lost during the last 12 months.

Mr Tonkin: Due to unemployment. It is absolutely shocking.

Mr McPHARLIN: During the September quarter—July to September, 1976—90 782 man-days were lost.

Mr Tonkin: Due to what?

Mr McPHARLIN: During the full year a total of 333 554 man-days were lost through industrial disputes.

Mr Tonkin: A lot of the disputes were provoked by your Government.

Mr McPHARLIN: The figures are available for anybody to see; it is not supposition, it has actually happened.

Mr Tonkin: Why does the Minister for Labour and Industry provoke disputes?

Mr McPHARLIN: The estimated sum lost in wages between January and December, 1976, is \$8.46 million. When compared with 1975, this is more than double. For the first four months of this year the loss in wages amounted to \$2.4 million.

In the Pilbara region we have 3.7 per cent of the Western Australian work force, and between January and May inclusive that section of the work force was responsible for 72.8 per cent of the man-days lost. The recent strike in the Pilbara lasting approximately 30 days caused a loss of about \$1 million each day.

The small passage I quoted from His

Excellency's Speech, of course, is true. Every one of us is concerned about industrial unrest, and I am very much in favour of more high level—top level—discussions similar to those in which the Minister for Labour and Industry has taken part in an effort to alleviate or obviate unrest.

Mr Skidmore: I will take you to the next deputation to the Minister for Labour and Industry.

Mr McPHARLIN: I have with me a small book published by The Central Industrial Secretariat. It is issued by The Australian Council of Employers' Federations, and The Associated Chambers of Manufactures of Australia. Those organisations are aiming towards a better understanding between the work force and management. It is a very interesting booklet to read, and it covers every aspect of work organisation, workers' self-management, employee suggestion schemes, worker participation, and all that sort of thing. I believe we should be aiming for more involvement with employers and employees in an attempt to obviate the unrest we have been experiencing. It is a very useful little document and an effort should be made to get hold of it.

Mr Tonkin: Did Mt. Newman contribute to that?

Mr Skidmore: Might I tell the member for Mt. Marshall that that particular organisation did not read its own booklet and did not put its ideas into practice. It is one of the most obstructive bodies in industrial matters.

Mr McPHARLIN: Surely the honourable member cannot say that an effort towards better understanding, more involvement, and a clearer concept of what is required of employers and employees can be obstructive?

Mr Skidmore: I am not saying that, but I am saying that on many occasions when an effort could have been made towards better industrial relations, the federation went out of its way to obstruct. It uses every legal dodge it knows of to get its own way, but when we do anything the Minister cries wolf.

Mr McPHARLIN: I now wish to refer to the very serious drought situation in the north and north-eastern parts of the wheatbelt. In case any members consider I do not know very much about it, I would like to say that my farm happens to be right in the middle of this drought area for the second year in succession.

Mr Barnett: That does not mean you know anything about it.

Mr Sodeman: That is the normal inane comment expected from you.

Mr McPHARLIN: I treat comments of that nature with the contempt they deserve.

The drought is causing a great deal of distress and concern to all of those affected by it. This includes not only the farmers themselves, who in many cases are suffering serious financial difficulties, but also the businesses in the area. For the second year in succession many farmers' incomes will be practically nil. Members can perhaps imagine how they would feel if their salaries were cut for one year, and then they received practically no salary the next year. This is what is happening now, and unless there is considerable rain between now and late September, a number of farmers will not grow sufficient crop to deliver grain to the bins.

The effects of the drought are twofold. The farmers themselves face serious financial difficulty but it has a direct impact also on the community generally and the businesses in the country towns. The situation is so serious I believe it is necessary for immediate action to be taken in more than one direction.

I spoke recently to several farmers who supplied me with figures in relation to the rainfall on their properties until the end of June. One property received 198 points, another one 204 points, and the third one 240 points. So as well as the financial difficulties, the farmers face extra costs in regard to carting or storing water. Conservation of water is an expensive business when a farmer needs to employ private contractors for water boring and dam sinking.

I know the Government is conscious of the problem, and I do know that it intends to offer drought relief employment finance to shire councils as it did last year. Unless some useful rains fall quickly, not only will there be a need for such a scheme to be applied, but also the shire councils will need additional finance. Several councils have indicated to me that they will be seeking assistance to supply materials.

Water supply is perhaps one of the most serious problems that Western Australia faces, and this year the effects of the shortage of water have been felt more strongly in the metropolitan area than ever before. The level of water in our dams is nowhere near as high as it was at this time last year, and unless more heavy rains fall, the water situation will be serious right throughout the area supplied by the dams in the metropolitan water catchment areas. In my opinion the whole situation needs further examination.

During the 1969 drought the Government

assisted financially towards a water boring programme through the affected areas. At that time about 2 600 bore holes were sunk, about 10 per cent only of which were successful. The people involved in the drilling programme stated that once the areas were covered there was little point in further drilling in the same area. Just a few weeks ago I watched a very efficient boring contractor—

Mr Tonkin: I think you are an efficient boring contractor.

Mr McPHARLIN: The honourable member would not understand how to sink a hole.

Mr Sodeman: So would he from a different point of view.

Mr McPHARLIN: This drilling plant is capable of boring a five-inch hole through granite at 15 feet an hour.

Mr Tonkin: What was the velocity?

Mr McPHARLIN: This boring contractor found a better water supply near an existing bore which had been producing around 6 000 to 7 000 gallons a day. The contractor tested the new hole and found that it was producing 24 000 gallons a day. On analysis the water was found to contain—in farming terms—48 grains of salt per gallon and, of course, this is a lower content than our scheme water. I make the point that there is always a possibility that a previous bore did not reach the main stream and it is quite feasible that a greater supply could be obtained from a bore just a few feet away. In the case to which I refer the second hole was approximately 20 feet away from the first.

I believe the type of boring programme conducted by the Mines Department in 1969 should be continued as possibly it would alleviate the situation in those areas. This could alleviate the necessity of employing contractors to cart water to the various tanks as they are now doing. Members will be aware that this a fairly expensive exercise.

If a survey into the cost of drilling were carried out over a 12-month period, I believe it would be no more expensive than carting water over the same period. Therefore, I urge strongly that this course be considered and brought into operation.

I wish also to refer to the increasing salinity in various water catchment reservoirs.

Mr Tonkin: Gross mismanagement!

Mr McPHARLIN: We are all aware of the problem in the Wellington Dam catchment area.

Mr Tonkin: That is not the only one.

Mr McPHARLIN: The salinity level in the

Wellington Dam is increasing. So serious is it that last year the Government introduced legislation aimed at controlling clearing in the catchment area. Unless something is done to reduce the salinity level in the Wellington Dam, the water will become so affected that it will create a very great problem for those who draw off it.

Mr Barnett: Do you have a solution?

Mr Tonkin: No, it is in suspension.

Mr McPHARLIN: If members opposite listened they might learn something, if that is possible.

Mr Tonkin: Extremely difficult in the present circumstances.

Mr McPHARLIN: In the last six to nine months I have been very involved with Mr Harry Whittington who has a property at Brookton. Over a long time this gentleman has been testing various methods to reduce the salt land encroachment on his property. He has used his own money to carry out trials to achieve this object.

I have spent several days in the field with him and have discussed his methods. The farmers in the area are so convinced that his methods can be effective, that many are adopting them and they are preventing salt encroachment on their farming land.

Something like two million acres of farmland has gone out of production in Western Australia due to salt encroachment. It was for this reason that Mr Whittington spent a great deal of money and put in a lot of work in an endeavour to find a solution, and he has proved his methods to be effective. Many hundreds of farmers visit his property to see what he has done. Only in the last three weeks he has received requests from farmers up to 300 miles away to visit their properties. They are prepared to fly him there and back and pay all his expenses, just to receive his advice on their salt encroachment problem. That is how serious the situation is.

Mr Barnett: It is good for the farmer, but how is it good for the catchment area?

Mr McPHARLIN: In 1975 a group of farmers in the Cunderdin area made inquiries as to whether any other survey had been carried out into what Mr Whittington was doing. WAIT-Aid and the Farmers' Union got together and examined the situation, and it was agreed that WAIT-Aid would conduct an independent survey. WAIT-Aid provided \$750, and the Farmers' Union provided \$500 to cover the cost of the survey.

The investigations were carried out and a

preliminary report was released on the 17th May, 1977. In effect that report supported the methods advocated by Mr Whittington and said it was believed his methods were of sufficient importance to warrant further surveys being conducted. Further to this—and perhaps the member for Rockingham may be interested in this—

Mr Barnett: I am.

Mr McPHARLIN: —I introduced Mr Whittington to the Minister for Works and Water Supplies, and after the Minister listened to Mr Whittington and examined the graphs supplied by him, he agreed that his method should be given a trial at the Wellington Dam catchment area.

Mr Barnett: Terrific.

Mr McPHARLIN: Mr Whittington has been given permission to go ahead and conduct tests to see how effective his methods are in that area. I accompanied Mr Whittington to the Wellington Dam catchment area and spent a full day with him looking at the tributaries, studying the salt encroachment in various areas, and boring holes to see how deep the clay is and where the water lies. Mr Whittington will be visiting the area again shortly for further examination, and I think we will all look forward with very great interest to hearing the results; because if his methods are as effective in that area as he thinks they will be, then they may be able to be applied to many other areas.

I would like now to refer to another matter which concerns people in country towns and areas. Of course, the drought to which I have referred affects them greatly; but I want to refer now specifically to small businesses. I believe there are something like 250 000 small businesses throughout Australia, and they employ something like 40 or 42 per cent of the total work force. Small businesses operate in all sorts of areas in the manufacturing industry, and contribute to export earning.

Small businesses assist larger businesses, because the latter rely quite heavily on small businesses for the supply of various items. Small businesses are relied on for daily service in the city, the suburbs, and large and small country towns. They provide wholesale and retail services, and also service large industry. They also assist the State Government to foster decentralisation.

When one examines the number of large businesses established each year, one finds it is relatively few; but many hundreds—maybe many thousands throughout the whole nation—of small businesses are established each year and they

provide an opportunity for those who operate them to engage in private enterprise.

We find the number of people coming and going in the small business sector is so great that it is a matter of concern.

Mr McIver: A change of Government will soon make them viable.

Mr McPHARLIN: Perhaps we should consider the definition of a small business. I think the main ingredients of a small business would be that it is basically independent—that is, it is controlled by only a few owners—and that it controls a relatively small share of the total market. Perhaps in the manufacturing industry an enterprise employing 150 people could be termed a small business, as could a retail business with a turnover of perhaps \$1 million a year. A wholesale business with a turnover of \$3 million and service industries which employ fewer than 50 staff each probably could also be termed small businesses. In respect of rural enterprises, perhaps those with a turnover of less than \$500 000 could be termed small businesses. However, this all depends on the type of business. The key element is independence.

From figures with which I have been provided it appears most small businesses are facing severe financial difficulties, because two-thirds of them are not earning adequate amounts for their owners, who are facing increasing debts and taxation burdens. If a big business cuts back its operations, then the small businesses which supply it also suffer. It appears no financial institution is readily available to assist small business operators.

Another aspect about which each of us, as members of Parliament, ought to be more cautious is that when legislation is introduced we often ignore the impact it may have on small businesses. This applies in both the State and the Federal spheres. When legislation is introduced we should examine its impact on these people.

Perhaps action could be taken to assist them. I am aware that small business bureaux operate in certain areas. I know we have such a bureau here, but I believe it is restricted in what it can do.

I believe it would be advisable to institute a training programme for participants in small businesses to provide guidance in financial systems, which could be given on an industry basis. It could also provide advice on the Commonwealth taxation laws, trade practices laws, and company legislation. The effect of amendments to these laws should be ascertained before legislation is passed.

If there were a bureau which could feed out

information and publicity to businesses in all parts of each State the people concerned could be better informed as to the pitfalls which may occur.

Mr Skidmore: There are three very good booklets issued by the Commonwealth public relations office. I do not know whether you are aware of those?

Mr McPHARLIN: I know, but I think there ought to be more of this sort of thing.

Mr Skidmore: I could not agree more.

Mr McPHARLIN: There does not appear to be a financial institution which can assist these people. Of course they want what the farming community would like, which is long-term low-interest finance. There has been some talk lately about reducing interest rates and I think we should be looking not at short-term interest, which is now indulged in by many people in rural communities, but at long-term finance on which the interest rates should be kept low.

The SPEAKER: The member has five minutes.

Mr McPHARLIN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Thirty years would not be an excessive time over which to lend money to those engaged in rural pursuits because of the fluctuating markets that affect primary industry; and of course those same fluctuating markets affect people in country areas who are engaged in businesses. In other countries a considerable amount of advice is given. I believe in the United States approximately 4 500 of these information centres are spread around the country to assist small business operators with advice.

I wish to make reference in the few minutes remaining to me to the consumer affairs inquiry which was conducted last year. Members will recall that the member for Geraldton moved for a Royal Commission. It was decided by the Government not to have a Royal Commission for several reasons: Several other Royal Commissions were being conducted, the cost factor had to be considered, and a Royal Commission would probably not reveal any more than an inquiry would reveal. So the bureau, in association with members of Parliament, conducted these inquiries. If I remember correctly, only one Opposition member arranged a meeting of the people in his electorate. In all 46 meetings were held and I held eight of these in my electorate.

Mr Davies: You are not patting yourself on the back, are you?

Mr McPHARLIN: I am just telling the House the facts. The average attendance at all these meetings was approximately 40 people. They represented community business interests, which

comes back to my point about small businesses. These people were given the opportunity to present their arguments, their points of view, and their dissatisfaction. All the information which was collated has been submitted to the bureau, and I was pleased to hear the Minister indicate in answer to a question that the report I have in my hand is but an interim report and a more comprehensive report will be submitted in due course.

Mr Bryce: How many of your colleagues did likewise?

Mr McPHARLIN: Quite a number of members on this side of the House. I am not sure of the number, but I can assure the honourable member the number would be greater than the number of Opposition members who did so. The point is that these people were given the opportunity to raise points of concern, which they did. Many submissions were made. I think it is a credit to the Government that the opportunity was provided to the people about whom we are concerned and about whom the Opposition says it is concerned.

Mr Carr: And we are.

Mr McPHARLIN: The Opposition had the opportunity to call these people and advantage was not taken of that opportunity. Yet Opposition members criticise this side of the House when we did everything possible in this regard. When the people whom the Opposition claim to support were given the opportunity to present their case the Opposition did not take advantage of that opportunity.

Mr Jamieson: They told you to go ahead and increase charges.

Mr McPHARLIN: I would have imagined Opposition members would be very reluctant to make that criticism, although I know they will make it. I think they should have second thoughts about doing so because they did not accept the opportunity that was given to them.

Sitting suspended from 3.46 to 4.04 p.m.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [4.04 p.m.]: I do not suppose any honourable member has ever spent more time or been more nervous than I in preparing his maiden speech to present to this House. I hope to do my best today. I have polished my shoes and put on my best tie, and come down to present myself as the first member for Gosnells. I might say I purchased my tie last week at a local establishment—it was the ordinary type of family establishment from which one would purchase a tie—but it turned out to have a rather startling feature. I am not prepared to demonstrate the feature to members in this

House at the moment, because it is a feature to which I feel sure the member for Moore would take exception and may well lead you, Mr Speaker, to ban the wearing of ties in the Chamber.

I might also take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your election to the high and honourable office of Speaker in this House. I also congratulate the member for Cottesloe who moved the adoption of the Address-in-Reply. His maiden speech was a fine effort. We have been sparring partners since our university days and I am sure we will continue to exchange points of view. I would like to extend my gratitude to the members of the staff of the House for the patience they have shown me during the first three months I have been a member before the sitting began.

I have been told it is traditional for a new member to give some eulogy of his predecessor. I noticed that the member for Cottesloe followed that tradition, and I listened to his maiden speech with some interest. In this regard I will listen to the maiden speeches of the member for Mundaring, and the member for Clontarf. However, I came into this House unprecedented and, therefore, I can offer no eulogy. Members opposite may like to draw conclusions from my lack of antecedents, but all I can say is that, "It takes one to know one".

I want to say that probably no member has had an easier ride into Parliament than mine. I am reliably informed my seat was the first to be officially declared after the last election. I feel somewhat embarrassed when my seat is compared with the seat of Nedlands or the seat of Floreat.

The members representing those seats must have had some worries while they had to sit out and wait for some weeks before they knew the final and official result of the election!

Had Parliament met at 9.30 a.m. on the 28th February, I would have been a one-man Parliament, and literally holding the position now virtually held by the member for Nedlands! I also felt that I had just the right majority—not too large to lead to over-confidence, nor too small as to lead to legal action. Members will be aware that since I won the seat there has been a considerable amount of hostility towards me in that the Liberal Party was denied the opportunity to govern in its own right. There was much speculation leading up to the declaration of the poll that the Liberal Party would go it alone without the National Country Party. When the result of the election was finalised, that was found not to be possible. Being quite innocent in these matters, for some time I was hoping for some sign of gratitude from the National Country Party for my efforts on their behalf. Some of the more

cynical members might not be surprised to know that no token was forthcoming. Possibly, a large sum of money will be placed into my coffers prior to the next election! As the member for Ascot has reminded me, I did not even receive a Queen's silver jubilee medal.

On the question of the National Country Party, I noticed with some little cynicism that prior to the election of the leader of the Country Party the Premier let it be known he hoped certain gentlemen would be elected and, lo and behold, a day later I was surprised to see those certain persons elected. I do not know whether that can be quoted as an example of a "Court controlled ballot".

My electorate is one of the expanding outer suburban electorates which I feel sure will come to play a greater part in the affairs of this country than those in some of the more rapidly growing cities in the Eastern States. As the population is increasing the problems seem to gather at a faster rate than elsewhere. Very often, the problems are associated with the growth which occurs. Over the last six years the old electorate of Canning has been broken up into three separate electorates. Since the election, some three months ago, this area has expanded rapidly, with nearly 3 000 new electors going on the roll.

I hope that my area will not get much larger because it will mean my voters will get only one-third of the value of their vote instead of the effective one-half they get now compared with some neighbouring electorates.

Transport is another problem in my area. The centre of my electorate would be some 1.5 miles from the centre of the city. Far-flung suburbs develop naturally as a result of corridor development. New areas have to be provided with the necessary transport, and I think there should be some form of financial relationship between State Government authorities and local shire authorities to assess future needs. Shires such as the Armadale-Kelmscott Shire and the City of Gosnells are forced to provide a larger number of facilities than are required in the older-established shires. It will be necessary for the State or the Federal authorities to provide much more assistance to local authorities in this country.

I will mention, particularly, the lack of shopping centre facilities in my area. Langford comes to mind. The situation at Langford demonstrates one of the failures of private enterprise in that the site allocated for a shopping centre has been up for tender on a number of occasions, but no private authorities are prepared to put up the money. Perhaps they consider that

the provision of shopping facilities for the people in Langford is simply not profitable. In those circumstances it is clearly incumbent upon the Government to provide such facilities.

In seeking election to this House obviously I had some area of interest to myself which caused me to feel that if I were able to gain a seat I would be able to contribute to the deliberations of this House. At the beginning, because of my association with education, I was moved to seek election to this House. I observed some unfortunate and dangerous trends developing within the Government and within society. I am sure that in the months leading up to the election, and certainly during the month or two after the election, we saw increasing attacks on educators and the education process that was to soften up the community for cuts in educational allocations, both in Federal and State terms. What I said before the election, and certainly after the election, turned out to be true so far as the Federal Budget is concerned.

I notice that the Federal Government claimed that the rate of expenditure on education would be maintained. That may be true in strictly cash terms, but the growth allowed for, for educational needs, does not match the growth in the population. It is of no use claiming that to maintain funds at a certain level is to provide the same amount of money in real terms, if the school population is rising. The school population is rising at more than 2 per cent allowed for in the education Budget. We have yet to see what the State Government will provide in the forthcoming Budget, but I will be very surprised indeed if there are any significant increases in real spending.

Both the Minister for Education and the Premier have made statements during the last few months, and an article appeared only last week, to the effect that a cut in funds did not necessarily mean a cut in the quality of education. There has been a tendency to say that the expenditure of more money does not necessarily improve the quality of education, and I have to agree with that. On the other hand, the corollary that seems to be drawn is that the Government cut-back of funds will mean the quality of education will be improved. Patently and clearly a cut-back in the quantity of funds available for education does not guarantee a cut-back in quality, but is it not more likely that if more money and facilities are available the quality is likely to improve?

These generalised statements are only of value if it is true, as the Premier and the Minister have claimed, that there has been a waste in education funding. I think they should go out to my

electorate and point to the areas in which this waste is taking place.

Indeed, I issued a Press statement asking either of those gentlemen to do just that and it was not even acknowledged. No-one has pointed to waste in any of the schools in my electorate or any in which I have been involved. In a statement which *The West Australian* did not publish I asked, "If there is a waste in education who is to blame for it?" Who is in charge of education in this State? The Minister for Education, and he is talking about waste in the system for which he is responsible.

It is all very well to say these things but those on the opposite bench have an opportunity which is not available to us on this side—that is, they can do something about it—and we must question the sincerity of statements made by the Government when it takes no direct action on the matters about which it is complaining.

The laugh I got out of the whole question of the waste in education was that the Liberal Party was elected in 1974 on a promise of massive expansion in the funds for education. When the Liberal Party turned up for the 1974 election it contested the election on a fairly comprehensive policy, as the member for Karrinyup should remember, which would have meant expenditure of something just under \$20 million a year, on 1974 figures, in increased educational funding on a recurrent basis, and something like \$156 million on capital expenditure necessary to set up the scheme.

The scheme to which I am referring is the compulsory extension of primary education to five-year-olds, which would have added a vast number of children to the school system; the arbitrary transfer of year-seven students from primary to high school; and the split-up of high schools into two sections, which would have necessitated the construction of a large number of additional high schools. The free textbook scheme was to be extended at a cost of over \$3 million and there was to be increased aid to independent schools. That was the 1974 policy on which the Liberal Party ran and won the election.

Of course, none of those proposals was put into effect, and I think educators around the State were probably in large measure grateful for that. But the same Government turns up in 1977 and runs on a policy of quality of education without spending very much money on it at all, when it had proposed in 1974 to improve the quality of education by massive expenditure. The Government learnt its lesson over the three years but I

feel it was inconsistent thinking aimed at gaining votes at both elections.

I am choosing the example of education but what I have said applies in other fields when one compares the 1974 and 1977 policies. The Government promised to beat inflation State by State and in six months. An editorial in *The West Australian* stated the Labor Party was irresponsible if it said it could make some improvement in inflation or unemployment levels, that it could not be done, and that no-one should elect a Labor Government on promises like that. The editor could have drawn from that a conclusion that the 1974 promises were unreliable and that those making them must have known they could not be put into effect; but that was beyond the ken of the editor of *The West Australian* in 1974 and 1977, I take it.

In my opinion education is an area which requires a fair amount of specialised knowledge. I do not argue that education must be left to teachers and educators, and that the community does not have a real interest or the right to participate in educational decisions. However, I think the person appointed to the office of Minister for Education should understand something about the job involved. I do not reflect directly on the Minister for Education personally, because he did not put himself into the job; but it seems people are appointed to jobs on the front bench about which they know nothing and one has to rely on them to assimilate a vast area very quickly or rely on the department. My advice to Liberal back-benchers is if they want to gain a portfolio in any area the thing to do is know nothing about it because studied ignorance seems to be required, and I suppose the obvious corollary to that is if one wants to be Premier one should extend one's study of ignorance to all possible areas.

In the functioning and operation of the Education Department there is a good deal of ill-feeling and unnecessary confrontation. Several members on this side of the House have talked about unnecessary confrontation in industrial matters, but it seems to me the confrontation which now exists between the Teachers' Union and the Education Department is not only unnecessary but also highly unfortunate, and there are lessons to be learnt from it in industrial areas.

During the reign of the Tonkin Government from 1971 to 1974 a very good working relationship was built up between the Teachers' Union, the Education Department, and the Minister for Education, and there was a great deal of consultation and co-operation. I was a

member of the union at the time and one who was dissatisfied with the degree of co-operation which existed previously, to the detriment of some educational objectives, and campaigned against too much co-operation and consultation when it meant giving up what I thought were desirable objectives.

Nevertheless, a union such as the Teachers' Union, which is a conservative, right-wing union and has not been on strike since the 1920s or 1930s, suddenly found with the loss of the Tonkin Government and the accession of the Court Government that getting co-operation and consultation out of a Government which said it valued those objectives was very difficult. I sat through several executive meetings of the council at which the Minister guaranteed consultation, and we had to call him back to repeat that guarantee. He then sent us copies of his Press releases at the same time as he sent them to the Press, which meant if we had a meeting on the night he sent out a Press release we would learn from him what we could read in the newspaper the next morning.

The Teachers' Union feels quite strongly it has not received the promised degree of consultation and co-operation, not only from the Minister but also, probably more seriously, from the departmental head who appears to be effectively running the whole of the educational system in the State; so much so that the issue before last of *The Western Teacher* carried as its headline an instruction to members not to apply for certain positions as principals of experimental high schools which were currently being advertised.

I was involved in setting up the experimental high schools scheme in the days of the previous Director-General of Education, and through the union which had a very strong commitment to hierarchical procedures of promotion. The union decided to put aside hierarchical procedures of promotion in order to promote teachers more rapidly to special innovative schools. That was a very important step.

In the new Director-General of Education we have a man who understands the field of innovative education and is an expert in it; yet within a few months he had brought the union to the point where it wanted to scrap the whole scheme and was prepared to direct its members not to participate because they were not being consulted. Consultative processes had been written into the agreement reached between the department and the union but they were not being put into practice by the director-general who simply advertised vacancies without consulting the union about which schools were to be declared

special schools. The union was prepared to stick with its position and it was the Minister who had to back down.

Where ill-feeling is built up between a union such as the Teachers' Union, the department, and the Government, unfortunate consequences can follow. There is a message to other unions in what has happened to the Teachers' Union. The Government says it wants responsible, nonmilitant unions, which will not go on strike and are committed to the objectives of co-operation and consultation. The Government has such a union in the Teachers' Union, yet it walks all over that union. Unions which value consultation and co-operation do not get it. The only unions which do get it are those which are more militant, and one cannot blame the more militant unions when they see what happened to the Teachers' Union.

If the Government values consultation and co-operation, let it consult and co-operate and it will find rank and file unionists much more prepared to go along with the agreements worked out between the leaders on both sides, even if they are not completely what the rank and file members want.

There are many needs in education at the present time, and I am prepared to agree with the Minister that there is a great necessity for investigation, research, and remedial programmes to cure the problems of literacy, numeracy, and specific learning difficulties. Many of the experts do not understand the nature of the problem and how it is to be diagnosed and cured.

The Minister has made a brief statement on the matter but one had the impression from the National Country Party's policy speech that an attempt was being made to establish a mythology of fear about what was going on in schools—that dastardly things were being done in schools and there had to be a return to the “three Rs”, back to the 1920s or 1930s or even the 1890s. It was a vote-catching move.

Nevertheless, the National Country Party is right in saying there is an unacceptable degree of functional illiteracy in the community. There is much less than existed in years gone by when fewer people went to school. However, there is a problem to be dealt with. I was interested in a question asked today by the member for Cockburn in relation to what was being done to cure these problems. The reply revealed that very small things were being done, no substantial research or diagnostic programme was being put up, and no substantial effort was being made to educate teachers widely in diagnosing and treating these problems, particularly at the

primary level. In fact, very little is being done. Much noise is being made and many votes are being won but not much actual effort has gone into it since the Government was returned.

Many members will have received a series of letters from a private group which one would have thought would appeal to the Government. The Dyslexia Research Foundation cannot even squeeze a miserable \$7 000 out of the Government to promote a campaign to tackle what the Minister acknowledges is a great problem in education. I know cut-backs are being made but if the Government cannot find \$7 000 for research by a private enterprise group I will be very surprised.

One other matter relating to education which has come up since I was elected and to which I have turned my attention is the Government's proposed interference with the student guilds in the tertiary institutions. If ever I saw a politically motivated move, this is it. I imagine the process began before the election and the Government thought it could buy some cheap popularity with the public by buying into the debate about what was happening in regard to the Australian Union of Students. The national Press has carried articles about the problems that organisation is experiencing.

In order to prevent these independently-constituted student guilds from sending money to the Eastern States the Government proposes to make their membership voluntary, conveniently and neatly overlooking the fact that on every university student guild statute there is an opt-out clause which has been used in the past to allow people to not be members of the organisation. Ignoring that, the Government announced it was going to legislate by amending the University Acts and Statutes to make the opt-out provisions stronger and to make membership even more non-compulsory than it presently is.

The Minister for Education (Mr P. V. Jones) has said a number of times that there is no intention to interfere with the structure of the guilds. That was the essence of the answer he furnished to a question I placed on notice yesterday. If anything shows the ineptness of the Government's approach to problems, it is this example of mismanagement.

However, having said it would legislate to make membership non-compulsory, the Government discovered that the guilds in themselves are very large financial organisations; in fact, they are not only large financial organisations, but also are largely indebted financial organisations. I am speaking specifically now of the University of

Western Australia, where the guild owns two of the university buildings; namely, a building which houses the refectory and many other services and the university sports centre. Large loans over a very long period have been taken out on both buildings. If the membership were to become non-compulsory and a large number of students opted out of paying their \$72 fees, the loans on these buildings could not be financed by the students, and somebody else would have to take up the responsibility.

So, having removed any suggestion of compulsory membership of the guilds, the Government will turn around and permit the tertiary administration itself to collect a compulsory fee. In other words, students will be able to opt out of guild membership so that they will not have to pay a fee to sit for their examinations, but they are going to be charged a fee by the university administration to sit for those examinations. This is a typical example of the Government's duplicity in this area.

Then the Government discovered it had no-one to administer the fee; either the student organisation administers it, or the administration does. Apparently, the Government was not prepared to take the complete step and leave everything in the hands of the university administration. One must realise that a tremendous amount of this work is done in an honorary capacity; students carry out a great deal of this work without pay, and in fact it can be considered as part of their education. It would cost a fortune to pay for the work now being done voluntarily.

Therefore, I envisage that the following situation may develop: A compulsory fee amounting to some 95 per cent of the present student fees will be handed over to the student organisation to administer. However, that organisation may well be a non compulsory organisation, which could mean that the Government will be handing over this money to a very small proportion of the total student population at the university. In trying to beat the leftists in the AUS, and stop the students' money going out of the State, the Government effectively may be handing over control to the very student activists it is trying to defeat. This Government may be responsible for the most significant move towards leftism in universities ever seen in Western Australia.

Another thing which really bugs me is that the system of the Guild of Undergraduates came into being when the university itself was established by the late Sir Winthrop Hackett, who was the proprietor of *The West Australian* and not a

radical by any stretch of the imagination. I am not one who continually screams that we should save our heritage, but the Student Guild is an integral part of the history of the University of Western Australia and is almost unique to Western Australia in that it has been copied by only the Queensland University. The other States still operate on more traditional, overseas lines, which I believe to be more costly and less effective than the system which operates here.

The Minister is not even a Western Australian, but should he examine the situation in the University of Tasmania, he would find that system certainly does not operate on the same lines as the guild in Western Australia.

I feel the Government has given insufficient attention to detail in this whole matter before coming in feet first and putting both feet in its mouth with all the facility of a double-jointed hippopotamus. It has discovered the implications of its proposed actions too late, after it has committed itself.

In this whole matter, one is reminded of the 1974 election campaign, when exactly the same thing happened. The Government raised many vote-catching issues and proposed streamlining education and giving it a new look—the words flow to mind only too readily. Yet after the election the Government's proposals turned out to be impractical and had to be discarded. In this case, because there is not so much money involved and only a small number of people, the Government may foolishly go ahead with its current proposals.

The Minister for Education has complained that the Government's intentions are being misinterpreted. If they are, it is only because the Government has not made clear its intentions in respect of this matter. It has not announced the details of how it intends to implement its proposal. In fact, I invited the Minister for Education to appear with me at the university—I even arranged a venue—to discuss the matter with the thousands of interested students. However, the Minister replied that if I had an interest in the matter, I could raise it in Parliament, as if it were only the member for Gosnells who was affected by the proposals. The Minister was not snubbing me by refusing to appear at the university; he was snubbing the many interested students.

This leads me to another area of considerable concern. I refer to the whole problem of authoritarianism both in education and the community at large. Throughout my career in education I have, been very much opposed to

authoritarianism, which I suppose was why I took so much exception to the policy speech of the Leader of the National Country Party, when he spoke of returning to those concepts if his party were ever returned to power. I certainly hope that does not eventuate. In fact, I spoke strongly on authoritarianism at the pre-selection interviews. Authoritarianism in education is only the beginning; it leads the community to accept the concept of authoritarianism. This Government is one which practices authoritarianism quite deliberately as part of its political strategy.

In the short time I have been here I have been amused at the words which have been thrown across the Chamber, words such as "facism" and "totalitarianism". However, we should try to remove the emotive elements from these words. I believe the word "authoritarianism" adequately sums up the situation in this State under the present Liberal Government, where the Liberal Party says, "We know what is best for the students. We cannot put them in positions of authority because they cannot be trusted to make decisions affecting hundreds of other students." What was actually the problem was that the guilds were not running the operations as the Government would like them run, and these proposals are designed to make sure the Government's wishes are carried out.

For a Government which pretends to be a free-enterprise Government, I find that policy to be quite remarkable. Of course, the Government often tends to justify its authoritarian policies by referring to the great silent majority. In fact, only this morning there appeared in *The West Australian* a letter using this very phrase.

I am always astonished by the number of individuals who pretend to speak for the great silent majority, without any backing for that statement. I listened to a recent talk-back programme on radio station 6PR where a gentleman who was organising a walk through the streets of Perth to Trades Hall, was inveighing against people who were doing things they were not elected to do. I felt like telephoning the radio station and saying, "At least I was elected, and at least union leaders were elected. Who elected you to speak on behalf of the great silent majority?" Something like 2 000 people turned up to support him and, by the way, they were not very silent. I wonder what terminology will be used to describe the great number who stayed away; I suppose they will be called "the missing majority".

Authoritarianism has its base in seeking confrontation as a policy. How often have we heard it said that the Government was elected to govern? I would not agree with that statement in

its entirety. Simply because a Government was elected to occupy the benches of Parliament, does not mean it can govern without reference to the people. It is all very well for the Premier to say, as he did last night, that he was elected to govern for three years. Certainly his party was elected to hold those benches, but that does not mean open slather on all sections of the community—not even on all those areas of policy which were presented to the people before the last election.

It would not have been very proper had the Government tried in 1974 to implement its astounding education policy, against the wishes of all the State educators and education departments, and against the declared wishes of the people, revealed through Gallup polls and the like. In other words, the Government is not the repository of absolute power in the State. Certainly, morally, the Government is not justified in doing anything it wants to do. Rather, a Government should govern well instead of just governing or not being able to govern at all, simply because it was prepared to antagonise a certain section of the community, especially people in positions of power. It is my belief that Governments should govern by consultation; certainly, that is the principle espoused by the Opposition.

Any discussion of authoritarianism inevitably leads to the politics of fear. The "we know what is best for you" approach generally spills over into "we know what is going on behind the scenes on the other side". The communist can has been pulled out from time to time ever since before the Second World War in order to strike fear into the hearts of the community and shift electoral confidence away from the Labor Party.

I thought the communist can had been laid to rest in the early 1970s. However, I was astounded to hear the Premier in his policy speech say something like, "Socialism is the bridge over which communism crosses". Yet the Premier had the gall last night to say that people misrepresent positions for purposes of attracting votes. I am not even sure that I could argue cogently what his expression means, but I assume he means that if the people had elected Colin Jamieson at the last election, the next day Ho Chi Minh would have led the yellow hordes across the Narrows Bridge.

I suppose such a statement would have some influence on people in the electorate who are not all that interested, concerned or informed about politics, political processes, or even political parties. That is the sort of emotionalism Governments can well do without. This Government has an adequate majority and is in a strong position to govern, and it should adopt a

more responsible attitude to government. It needs to adopt two responsible policies, the first of which is to stop that type of emotionalism, which is inherent in its policy of union bashing and teacher bashing, in its confrontation policies with the unions and in its attitude towards minority groups within our community.

The second thing the Government should do is to endeavour to put some rationality into the debate which comes from its side of the House, and into the political debate in the community generally. The first method by which this aim can be achieved is for the Government and its supporters to stop kicking the communist can and the union can.

If the Government has a conscientious belief in the merits of the political philosophies it is espousing, it should be able to get along on that belief. If the Government cannot command a majority from the community on the basis of those political philosophies it should accept that fact and not endeavour to promote the politics of fear as a means of gaining or holding office.

Perhaps it is clear from what I have said tonight that I see my role in this House as a double one, representing some bodies of opinion in this House as well as the people purely within my electorate. It is a problem with the type of electoral representation we have that people can come here in a sense representing only a narrow territorial interest, and many of the larger interests can be left by the way. I feel the role of any member of Parliament is to represent these larger interests as he sees and interprets them, as well as representing the people within his electorate.

I certainly have every intention of working as hard as I can for the people of Gosnells and I hope that in my efforts on their behalf and in the things I shall say on the larger issues before the Parliament they will find me a worthy representative.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch) [4.45 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, I rise to support the motion moved so ably by the member for Cottesloe. In doing so I wish to congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your election to the high office you now occupy. I am sure you will carry out your duties in this position in a fitting and honourable manner, bringing credit to both yourself and this House.

I should also like to congratulate all other members elected to high office and all new members. My sincere thanks are extended also to all members of the staff and all members of this House and the other place who have assisted me in my early days in this Parliament.

As a new member representing a new electorate I am naturally greatly honoured to have been elected to this Parliament. I am also fully aware that I have much to learn and much to do in my electorate to justify the confidence which the electors of Murdoch have placed in me. For the information of the member for Gosnells, this will not include the study of ignorance.

I also wish to place on record my sincere thanks not only to the electors of Murdoch but also to all those people who assisted in my election campaign. I would especially like to thank all the campaign helpers, in whatever manner they assisted; our various committees; my parents, who gave me outstanding support; my wife; and the honourable Clive Griffiths, the President of the upper House, for his valued advice, assistance, and guidance.

It is very tempting at this stage to depart from my prepared speech to answer some of the criticisms raised by the previous speaker. However, I am sure that in time to come in this House there will be ample opportunity to debate those issues quite adequately. Suffice it to say that the people of Western Australia made their decision on the 19th February on most of the matters raised by the previous speaker.

As the first member for the new electorate of Murdoch I feel it is my responsibility to inform members about my electorate. I shall start with the great person after whom my electorate was named. This man was Professor and later Sir Walter Murdoch. He has been described as an essayist, a biographer, an anthologist, and an occasional poet. Of these activities he was noted mostly for his essays and his articles in local newspapers which naturally extended his influence within the Western Australian community.

Sir Walter Murdoch was born in 1874 in Scotland and was the last of 14 children. When he reached the age of 10 he moved with his family to Melbourne and was educated at Scotch College and then at the University of Melbourne, graduating with honours in logic and philosophy. He then began as a tutor, at that stage for the princely sum of £40 per annum which is roughly equivalent to a current member of Parliament's salary.

In 1903 he took up a position as a lecturer in English at the University of Melbourne. Walter Murdoch filled this position for eight years and at the same time was a large contributor to the *Argus* newspaper in Melbourne. However, in 1911 the University of Melbourne professorship of English became vacant. Walter Murdoch was

passed over for this position and hence resigned his post at the university to join the *Argus* editorial staff. This was perhaps the greatest thing that has happened for Western Australia in that in 1912 the new University of Western Australia was established and Walter Murdoch was appointed as its first professor in English. In its first year the University of Western Australia had eight staff and 183 students.

During this time Walter Murdoch was active in once again writing for the local Press. His influence as a professor was great in the university until 1939 when at the age of 65 he retired. He returned to the University of Western Australia in 1947 for a four-year period to act as chancellor of that university. I think Sir Walter Murdoch's influence and his contribution to our society was summed up by the University Senate when on his retirement it passed a motion stating—

As a teacher, writer, and speaker of English his influence was felt far beyond the University of Western Australia and has helped mould development of thought in Western Australia and indeed in Australia.

Sir Walter Murdoch died in 1970 after being knighted in 1964.

My final comment with respect to Sir Walter Murdoch is one of which I think we should all take note. I think it is particularly pertinent to all members of this Parliament. I quote—

There are two sides to every question. I have always believed that to insist on this truth in and out of season is to play one's humble part in civilising one's country. For a civilised country is a country that weighs without heat, without passion and without violence, both sides of the question.

I should now like to describe briefly the university which is located in the centre of my electorate and bears Sir Walter Murdoch's name. Murdoch University was officially opened on the 17th September, 1974, and covers 650 acres or 263 hectares of land. The land it now occupies was previously part of the University of Western Australia's endowment land. It was created during the 1920s with great foresight by the Government of the day for the future needs of Western Australia. That land is now vested in Murdoch University.

The current enrolment at Murdoch University is 1 510 full-time students, and in 1978 this figure is expected to rise to 1 900. There are five schools of study at the university: education; veterinary studies, one of only four in Australia; environmental; and life sciences; human

communications, including Chinese studies, South East Asian studies, and literary theory; and the School of Social Inquiry which includes the studies of economics, social and political theory, and psychology. The university also conducts all the external study courses conducted now in Western Australia, having taken over this responsibility from the University of Western Australia. I feel sure that in time Murdoch University, as both Sir Walter Murdoch and the University of Western Australia have done, will make its influence felt within Western Australia and Australia.

I should now like to outline to members some of the characteristics of my electorate. In essence they are similar to those of the electorate of the previous speaker. It is a young and fast-growing electorate. For example, at the recent census 55 per cent of the population in Western Australia was under 30 years of age. Within my electorate this figure is 61 per cent. It is fast growing in the sense that since the election on the 19th February 1 700 people have enrolled in my electorate.

The development within the electorate is also evidence of its youth and growth. I have already touched on Murdoch University which was opened in 1974 and is in its early days of development. The Canning Vale industrial area is also located within my electorate. This area of 1 400 acres or 570 hectares is being developed by the Department of Industrial Development in co-operation with the Canning Town Council. Obviously the major development in this area at the present time is the new \$60 million Swan Brewery. Jandakot Airport is also located within the electorate and is the third busiest airfield within Australia.

There are many new schools in my electorate. Probably the most interesting of these is the Willetton schools' campus. This comprises in the one area the high school, the pre-primary school, the primary school, and the Willetton special school. The high school is a flexible area school, which is a new concept to Western Australia, and is similar to that being built at Wanneroo. The pre-primary and primary schools have been built along current lines of construction in that they are open area schools.

The Willetton special school is a new type of school. It has been built for handicapped children at a cost of \$920 000. Its facilities include a hydro-therapy pool, a physiotherapy centre and an occupational therapy centre. Next year approximately 68 handicapped children from south of the river will occupy this school. Most of these children now attend the Sir James Mitchell school in Mt. Lawley.

Naturally an area such as this is not without its problems. These problems, as one would expect, centre on the areas of youth and rapidity of development. One obvious problem which all such areas face is school accommodation. Many schools in my area are facing this problem. However, unlike the previous speaker I have found the Education Department and the Minister for Education to be totally approachable and co-operative in all my endeavours to improve these facilities within the area. The Minister has twice visited my electorate since the election and has listened with interest to the problems we have placed before him and his department is endeavouring to overcome these problems.

Traffic congestion is also a chronic problem in some areas of my electorate during the peak hours of the early morning. To country members this may not be a problem, but to the city dweller who takes three-quarters of an hour to get to work it is an immediate one. The first area of congestion is at the junction of Nicholson Road and Albany Highway. However, discussions between Canning Town Council, the City of Gosnells, and the Main Roads Department have brought about plans which are soon to be instituted to relieve this problem. Plans are also advanced for the future building of a second bridge across Nicholson Road to further alleviate the problem.

Severe problems also occur at the Riverton Bridge during peak hours. It is rather frustrating to wait in that queue of traffic in the morning while noticing nearby the new Riverton Bridge under construction. Obviously the Government and the Minister are aware of the problem and hopefully it will be alleviated in the near future with the opening of the new bridge in April or May of 1978.

I should like to remind members of the age distribution within my electorate before I explain the next problem, which is that of youth and community facilities. As I explained, 55 per cent of the population of Western Australia is under 30 years of age, but the figure in Murdoch is 61 per cent—6 per cent above the State average.

This leads to a problem concerning youth and community recreation facilities, and the problem is twofold. Firstly, due to the area's rapid growth there is a lack of community facilities normally taken for granted in most areas; and, secondly the young people in these areas are faced with a lack of organised evening activities. The youth are of an age where they find it difficult to transport themselves around the district or into the city and the lack of organised evening activity in their own area is causing some problems.

These problems are being approached at several levels. At the State Government level the Community Recreation Council of Western Australia is assisting with its officers who are employed and located in the three councils of my electorate. Their work is now bearing fruit. The electorate will benefit by some of the \$1 million promised by the Government in the 1976 Budget for sporting facilities.

Youth education officers are employed in most of the high schools in my electorate and their work is effective. The Police and Citizens' Youth Club is not active, but the nearby one at Gosnells is effective and caters for large numbers of youth.

At council level, as I explained before, the community recreation officers are receiving great support as are the community groups—sporting and otherwise. I am also pleased to report that from one end of my electorate to the other community groups are very active.

The electorate is very lucky to have so many active people who freely give of their time to help develop the community and make Murdoch a better place in which to live. However, in the sphere of youth and community facilities much remains to be done. More could be achieved if sufficient finance was available and if more attention was given by all parties involved in youth and community recreation facilities.

This can be done in two ways; firstly, all Government councils and community groups should realise they are part of a total community. Each particular group has its part to play; no single group—boy scout, progress association, or whatever—has the total answer to the problems in this difficult area. More co-operation between all groups should be encouraged by the Government, councils, and community organisations. I am happy to report that this is beginning to occur in Murdoch, but I am hopeful that the momentum will increase.

Secondly, while I realise that funding is limited, I feel a greater emphasis should be placed on improvement in the training of youth leaders in all fields. This extends from community recreation officers, youth education officers, police and citizens, youth leaders, to boy scout leaders; in fact, all leaders. This would lead to a better and more efficient use of existing funds.

In conclusion I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, and members for their indulgence while I placed before the House the characteristics and problems facing my electorate.

MR McIVER (Avon) [5.03 p.m.]: Unfortunately we enter the arena of the 29th Parliament with a coalition Government returned

as a result of the glib tongue of the Premier and the usual propaganda by which unfortunately the people of Western Australia are hoodwinked. We have witnessed the return of a Government which is changing this State into a turmoil and into a great barrel of molasses; in other words, one great sticky mess! Irrespective of the utterances of members of the Government, they cannot deny this. Unfortunately for them, they are in the same position we were in under the Whitlam regime. They are finding that the situation is exactly the same despite the fact their counterparts are in office in the Federal sphere. With the Federal Government controlling the purse strings it is not easy for the State Government to meet the financial demands of all sections of the community.

I regard myself as a very placid man.

Government and Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr Blaikie: Until provoked.

Mr Bryce: And a gentleman.

Mr McIVER: However I was extremely annoyed at one portion of the political garbage the Premier indulged in during the election campaign. Unfortunately he is not here at present. However, I would be failing in my duty and I would be failing my colleagues if I did not refer to the matter now. It was raised this afternoon by the member for Gosnells in his maiden speech, for which, incidentally, I commend him. I also commend him for discussing the issue of communism.

Mr Tonkin: A brilliant speech I thought.

Mr McIVER: Members of the Liberal Party and their supporters congregated at the Concert Hall to hear the Liberal policy speech. I have no quarrel with that. That is politics.

Mr Clarko: It was brilliantly done, too.

Mr McIVER: However, I did take strong exception to one portion of the policy speech, and I want my comments on this recorded in *Hansard*. I cannot remember word for word what was said, but in essence it was that members of the Labor Party—those who sit on this side of the House—were communists.

Mr Blaikie: Yes.

Mr Bryce: That is the sort of sickness to which we are accustomed.

Mr McIVER: It is no wonder the honourable member was relegated to the back stalls.

Mr Blaikie: I have not shifted.

Mr McIVER: In all seriousness, I took strong

exception to that remark and I am sure that those who sit on this side of the House agree with me.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr McIVER: I would be quite prepared to openly discuss the subject of communism with the honourable member. I doubt if he could even spell the word let alone understand it. There are many on the other side in that category. I doubt whether they know its meaning.

However, I give the Government full marks for the way it used the subject in its campaign. No doubt we could use it too, but not in the same way. We do not indulge in gutter politics as does the Liberal Party. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the subject last night when quoting from a newspaper article printed during the last election campaign. The Premier was sniping at the Leader of the Opposition. The Premier is so clever with his glib tongue that he did not need to make such a remark. However, at the Concert Hall he did and his supporters responded. He is so clever I am sure that if he had called out that there were fish for sale he would have been cheered.

He implied that those on this side of the House firmly believed in communism. However, to enlighten those on the other side of the House—and perhaps they will not be so vocal in the future when they have heard me—I wish to say that the very doctrine of the Liberal Party at the moment is communistically motivated. Of the two major parties the Liberal Party follows the communistic doctrine. This applies to the Liberal Party not only in Western Australia, but right throughout the nation. This is evident from a perusal of the communist document as written by Karl Marx. Of course he formulated that doctrine years ago in 1848. The manifesto of Marx and the Communist Party has been closely followed by the Liberal Party of Australia. Members should think about that and do a little research into the subject and they will see that what I am saying is not an idle statement. I especially invite the member for Vasse to carry out a little research before he opens his mouth and speaks about something of which he knows nothing.

I now wish to comment on the remarks made by the Premier last night when he was replying to the amendment moved so ably by the Leader of the Opposition and strongly supported by members on this side.

We should always be fair in the game of politics. In the past I have always admired the speeches of the Premier when he has been both in office and in Opposition. However, the speech the Premier made last night was the weakest I have

ever heard him make. It is quite obvious it is the first indication that the Premier is tired. It is time he enjoyed life with his family and grandchildren and bowed out of politics while he is still on the pinnacle. It is quite obvious from the speech he made last night that he is on the decline.

Mr Laurance: There is nothing to which he could respond because the amendment was a most dispirited effort.

Mr McIVER: That is open to debate and no doubt the member for Gascoyne will join the debate later on.

Mr Tonkin: We know how he got his promotion.

Mr McIVER: The Premier's attack on the member for Balcatta was unwarranted. The honourable member was merely making some valid points perhaps not in a way I would have made them.

Mr Blaikie: That's for sure.

Mr McIVER: He felt strongly on those aspects and yet there was not one challenge from the Premier who merely answered in his usual arrogant manner.

Mr Watt: It was out of respect to the silver jubilee medal.

Mr McIVER: I do not know the significance of that interjection so I will ignore it.

Mr Rushton: I thought the member for Balcatta was being arrogant.

Mr Watt: Perhaps you had better read *Hansard*.

Mr McIVER: Before the interjections I was referring to the communist manifesto. I ask members on the other side of the House to consider their centralist policies and the policies of the most tragic, shocking, and miserable Government we have in office in Canberra. I am referring to its policies on transport, banking, and the welfare of the people of Australia generally. If any people are following the communistic doctrine, it is the members of the Liberal Governments in all States. Fortunately, they are on the decline.

As I have stated on previous occasions I enjoy the Address-in-Reply debate because it gives us an opportunity to roam at random over many subjects. I welcome the new members to the House, but I would suggest to them that they do not miss the opportunity to speak during the debate because they have an opportunity to strongly emphasise the problems in their own electorates. The member who just resumed his seat took this opportunity.

It is quite plain from the speeches made so far by members on both sides of the House that they are interested parliamentarians, keen to do their best, and that speaks well for the Parliament and the people of Western Australia.

Although I have not been in the Parliament very long myself, I do, as I have said, suggest that members take the golden opportunity to deal with the problems in their electorates, and I do not intend to miss the opportunity myself. I first wish to deal with a town in my electorate. It is in the oldest shire in Western Australia, and is steeped in history and tradition, but it has been crucified by this Government. I am, of course, referring to York.

Usually at the time of the York Fair thousands of people flock to York. They are interested in the historical significance of the town and they wish to take part in the activities. So surely the town of York deserves some recognition and some support. Like many other speakers on this side of the House I also oppose strongly and most certainly expose the myth of the decentralisation policy supposedly held by the Government. We heard all about this myth at election time, and this brings me again to my earlier statement that the people were hoodwinked and to some degree deserve what they get in regard to decentralisation.

Prior to the State election of 1977, the Government saw fit to close the York courthouse. I have no quarrel with that decision. In a letter written to me before the closure by the then Chief Secretary (the Hon. N. McNeill)—

Mr Davies: He met his too, didn't he?

Mr McIVER: Yes, although I did not want to mention that at this stage; perhaps I will later on.

I accepted the closure of the courthouse because of the economic situation. However, I wrote a letter to the Chief Secretary and pointed out the desirability of retaining the services of a clerk-typist to issue receipts for money received from the people of York. Such a request was supported strongly by the York Shire Council. Not only did the council write to me as the parliamentary representative for the area, but also it wrote a strongly worded protest to the Premier pointing out the disadvantages that would be caused to the town if it were denied the advantages of such an employee. Surely the council was not asking too much, particularly in a time of unemployment.

Mr Watt: Who is doing that work now?

Mr McIVER: Nobody, and I am glad the member for Albany raised this point. People who wish to pay accounts must either post money

orders to Perth or travel to Northam. To answer the member's question, I will explain the situation.

Mr Watt: Was no arrangement made with the police?

Mr McIVER: The Government refused even to listen to that request. A clerk-typist, if employed could receive court fees, drivers' licence renewals, firearm licence renewals, State Housing Commission rentals, payment of water and electricity accounts. She could undertake the agency work for the State Government Insurance Office, the State Housing Commission, the Australian Government Loan and National Saving Organisation, and the Agriculture Protection Board. She could also assist with employment applications, the stamping of legal documents, and the distribution of legal documents for debt summonses.

Without the services of such an employee, what has happened? People wishing to pay accounts or have dealings with the various departments I have mentioned have two alternatives. They may send money and letters by mail—and we know many people will not choose this course—or they may travel by car to the nearest town with these facilities, and that is Northam.

Let us put ourselves in the position of a York resident who travels to Northam to undertake such business. Do members think that he would return to York to shop? Of course he would not; he would purchase anything he wants at Northam. So we have this exodus of shoppers from York and it is killing the town. This is a town that is attempting to do everything possible to attract tourism, to diversify its activities, and the Government will do nothing to assist it. The Premier told us last night that the Government is doing everything possible to advance Western Australia and to balance the Budget. I have always been of the opinion that it pays one to owe a few dollars because everyone then waves to one. I think this philosophy may apply also to a Government.

Mr Clarko: Is that why nobody speaks to you these days—you are flush?

Mr McIVER: The Government has made its decision to save a few lousy dollars. Just 20 miles away, in the town of Beverley, when the same situation arose—

Mr O'Neil: Now you are talking—a good football team that.

Mr McIVER: —and the courthouse was closed down, I had no objection to that because I could see it was an economic necessity.

Mr Clarko: It must be good for business in Northam.

Mr McIVER: Since the member for Karrinyup entered this Parliament and we have had the benefit of his interjections, I am reminded of the housewife who cooks up the leftover vegetables and calls it bubble-and-squeak. That is what the honourable member reminds me of—bubble-and-squeak. He always makes frivolous interjections on a serious matter. This is a serious matter we are discussing here.

Mr Clarko: I do not disagree with you.

Mr McIVER: The honourable member should stand up to tell the people that he does not disagree with the decentralisation policies of the Government.

Mr Clarko: It must be good for Northam, though, if people go there to shop.

Mr McIVER: Northam can stand on its own feet economically. It is a regional centre and does not need the Government to keep it alive; but it should not kill another town. I thought the Government parties were interested in free enterprise.

Beverley is in a similar situation. The courthouse has been closed, there are only two policemen whereas in York there are four, and one RTA patrolman, and eventually the position of clerk-typist will be filled.

The position of clerk-typist is not an ordinary job. Let us look at the qualifications the Crown Law Department wants for someone to write out receipts. It is no wonder the Government cannot get people to work for it. I will quote an advertisement which was inserted in *The Beverley Times* by the State Public Service Board on the 30th June last—

State Public Service
Crown Law Department
Beverley Court Office
Clerk—Permanent
Male or Female

Salary:

Under 17-20 years \$3 670-\$6 500 (gross) per annum according to age.

Qualifications:

15 and 16 years of age—Junior Certificate in six subjects, including English and a mathematics subject.

or

Achievement Certificate at third year with at least Intermediate levels in English, social

studies and science and Elementary level in mathematics.

17 years and older—Leaving Certificate in four subjects, including English and mathematics or economics or accountancy.

or

Four subjects in an approved Technical Education Division Diploma, including Communications I and one subject with a mathematical, statistical, legal, economic or accounting content.

Conditions of Service:

Superannuation benefits, 3 months long service leave after seven years continuous service, cumulative sick leave entitlements and other general conditions applicable to permanent public servants.

We are not worried about the award conditions but what a ridiculous situation that all someone of this calibre has to do is write receipts for money! Surely those qualifications are not needed for the job when there are dozens of young girls in York who cannot get work and must go to the metropolitan area to seek employment.

However, the Premier in his wisdom replied through the Premier's Department that the Government would solve the problem, and the Public Works Department at Northam was instructed to send over one of its officers on Fridays to collect the water rates. Of course, overtime will be paid.

Surely there is no shortage of money in Western Australia. We know from Press statements that the Premier has not only a balanced Budget but a surplus. There is plenty of money available. Yesterday I asked a question about the cost of carpeting the Premier's Department, the Deputy Premier's department, and other sections of the Superannuation building. I know this work has a high priority—vinyl tiles will not do and they must have the best quality carpet from Solomons or a similar firm.

Mr O'Neil: You had better come up to my office next week to have a cup of tea with me and look at that carpet.

Mr McIVER: I intend to do so; but is that all the Deputy Premier can provide? I expect champagne and caviar, not just a cup of tea, in this suite.

The question I asked yesterday was—

What was the total cost involved in renovating and refurbishing the Premier's and Deputy Premier's offices, as stated in *The West Australian* of 25th April, 1977?

The Minister for Works replied—

The total cost to the Government of repairs and renovations to the 14th floor and the eastern half of the 13th floor of the Superannuation Building was \$154 615.

After allowing for re-use of furniture and carpets in other Government offices, the net cost is \$127 615.

These floors also house support staff, and the cost relates to the overall work and not only the offices of the Premier and Deputy Premier.

I do not begrudge the Premier's Department modern facilities, but let us get our priorities right and our values in order.

I come back to my point. All the Shire of York is asking for is the employment of one girl to halt the exodus of people from the district and obviate the necessity for people to travel some distance to pay the various increased imposts which have been placed on them. I am sure members on the other side would not say that is an unreasonable request when the Government can expend \$154 000 on carpet for the Premier's Department.

On many previous occasions I have referred to the schools in the Avon electorate. I will not repeat what I have said previously but I wish to make one point. In the summer months the Avon Valley area is extremely hot. For days on end the temperature is in excess of 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Unfortunately the Minister for Education is not in the Chamber I would have liked to hear his comment on this matter but he will be hearing from me later on.

The principal of the Northam High School has requested two drinking fountains. This high school has almost 1 000 students and is the oldest country high school in Western Australia. I will quote the Minister's reply to the request, which is no doubt similar to the replies received by members of the Government to similar requests from their electorates—

Re Additional Refrigerated Drinking Fountains

I refer to your memo dated 16th March, 1977 concerning the provision of additional Refrigerated Drinking Fountains in the school, and apologise for the delay in replying.

I might mention I had to ring three times to get an answer. To continue—

I have to advise that funds allocated for this work have been fully committed for this financial year, and therefore your request cannot be approved.

However, your school has been listed for consideration in 1977-1978, and this work will be carried out subject to finance available and priority.

So, in other words, Sir, the Minister is saying let the kids drop of thirst; let those children in the central wheatbelt area go without water. The Government seems to believe that the Premier's Department needs carpet before the children are given a thought. The Premier and Deputy Premier seem to have first call on funds. Let us be dinkum and give the country people a go. We are people and not just dolls on a stick. We live. We exist.

The need for money applies also to the need for gymnasiums. Here we have the Northam High School crying out for funds—funds that were required long before I became a member of this Parliament. In the old hall that they use for flirtation barn dances the floors are so slanted and uneven that one can finish up dancing with a housewife two doors down the road. That is no exaggeration!

It is time this Government had a look at itself and considered these problems. It is time the Government back-benchers, especially those who represent country areas, had a look at the situation. For heaven's sake, come and see us. We will not bite or eat visitors.

Mr Coyne: How much does it cost to get into that dance?

Mr McIVER: Let me return to more serious matters. I do not begrudge those people living north of the 26th parallel having air-conditioners. Most certainly they are entitled to them, but believe me it gets awfully hot in the Avon Valley. I do not speak now only of the Northam High School but also of primary schools and pre-school centres, in the area. If this Government is dinkum and wants to do something for the education system, its takeover of pre-school education could be put off for a while. Money otherwise involved could then be spent on air-conditioning some of the facilities in the Avon Valley. Perhaps then people will believe some of the things they hear from the Premier on television and learn from reading his controlled media, printing all that he tells it to.

I want now to touch briefly on a subject very close to me, one very dear to my heart, and that of course is transport in Western Australia. I do not intend being the last man into bat tonight and I do not want to keep members here for too long but I hope they will bear with me on this matter.

Mr Clarko: If you bat like an Australian you won't take too long!

Mr McIVER: The Government has an inexperienced Minister for Transport who is showing a lot of ignorance in this field. He has managed recently to frighten the whole Murchison area, when he left no doubt that the Meekatharra-Mullewa line would be closed down, irrespective of the cover-up by the Premier who said no Cabinet decision had been made. Of course Cabinet has not made a decision. The Government runs from anything of this nature because it would lose too many votes. This Government bases its whole philosophy on gaining votes, not on the requirements of people. Members of the Government lose their stomach when they have to face the people on a subject such as this. I give full marks to the member for Murchison-Eyre who has given good service to the Government over the years, for the way he has stood up to the Government. I understand from tonight's paper that this line is to have a reprieve of 12 months.

I object to the remarks by the Minister for Transport which were directed at the Leader of the Opposition and myself after we had visited the area. He said we were only playing politics. In fact, we had been invited there, yet that is the best the Minister can do. I think he should resign and give back the portfolio to the previous man who held that job. He gave many years of good service before the present Minister came in. I refer of course to the previous Chief Secretary, who is still giving good service to this Parliament but has been replaced by a novice. The present situation is scandalous and if the Minister for Transport wants to make those snide remarks we will be pleased to take him on. I understand the only connection he has had with railways was when he was eight years old and took a ride on the zoo railway; that seems to be the only ride he has had. His attitude was quite apparent when he asked on hearing of his appointment, what was the need for railways, and said that roads would be king.

I would like to challenge him on that point. He has a lot to learn about this Parliament and he certainly has a lot to learn about transport; about the men who operate the whole system; and all the facets of transport in Western Australia. I can assure him he will not get far with that type of snide comment. With the closure of the Mullewa-Meekatharra line the death knell of the Murchison would be sounded. Never mind carpeting the Superannuation Building; the Government should get its priorities in order.

On the subject of fuel, what will happen in 20 years' time? Trains using this line carry 200 000 tons of freight per annum. Trains go up with loads

of nitrate and fuel and on their return they carry talc and empty drums. The closure of the line would certainly be the death knell of Yalgoo and the Murchison. Without wanting to embarrass the member for Murchison-Eyre, I am sure he would agree with me.

I wrote a letter to *The West Australian* complaining bitterly about the remarks of the Minister for Transport, which were no doubt prepared for him by some Westrail official who had not seen the Murchison or spoken to the people in the area and was unaware of what the Meekatharra line meant to them. The Minister said the Opposition was only playing politics. I think it is very appropriate now if I quote from a poem titled "Desideria" as follows—

Surprised by Joy impatient as the wind
I turned to share the transport — O! with whom
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb.

Those words were written by William Wordsworth—certainly not David.

I am sure the House would agree it is a far better attitude and the poet would have made a better Minister than the present one. The operative words are, "O! with whom". I will say more about that later in a motion in the House.

I close with these words. It is quite apparent that the Government has its benches full.

Therefore, when we crossed the floor last night during the division, we found there was insufficient room for Government members to sit on the benches on this side. But Governments change; the pendulum swings. At the moment members opposite are enjoying the height of success. They won the election, and full marks to them for it. There is no use grizzling about that because they went to the people and the people voted for those they wanted to govern.

However, in conclusion I say that the Labor Party has no room for further retreat. We on this side are united in principle; we are united in our cause, and we will advance to final victory.

I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Watt.

SUPPLY BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 5.42 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE RAILWAYS

Meekatharra-Mullewa

32. Mr McIVER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Would the Minister make available the report he presented to the Cue Shire Council in relation to the Mullewa-Meekatharra railway, as stated in *The West Australian* on the 21st June, 1977?
- (2) Would the Minister elaborate on his statement that the Mullewa-Meekatharra line cannot be upgraded by mechanical means, as per *The West Australian* of the 21st June, 1977?
- (3) (a) What cost was involved in the construction and erection of trainmen's barracks at Meekatharra and Mt. Magnet?
(b) Is it the Government's intention to utilise the buildings in the future when the railway closes?
- (4) As it has been stated by the Minister, road transport will be utilised when the Mullewa-Meekatharra line closes, will the Wubin-Meekatharra-Mt. Magnet-Mullewa roads be upgraded?
- (5) If answer to (4) is "Yes"—
(a) what is the estimated cost; and
(b) when can it be anticipated work will commence?
- (6) (a) Will railway road services be utilised in the Murchison region when the line closes;
(b) if not, why not?
- (7) If freight now being transported by rail is to be carried by private contractors, will the residents and business firms of the Murchison region receive the same concessional freight rate as now being enjoyed under Westrail's telescopic freight charges?
- (8) If the answer to (7) is "No" would the Minister—
(a) give specific details of what rate is to be charged; and
(b) say who will be given the contract to cart freight now being carted by Westrail?

(9) When the line closes, will the rails—

- (a) be withdrawn and further utilised in other areas of Westrail's network; or

- (b) be disposed of by tender?
- (10) Who comprised the committee to investigate the economics and to study all aspects of the Mullewa-Meekatharra railway?
- (11) (a) When was the study completed;
(b) would the Minister table the recommendations;
(c) if not, why not?
- (12) (a) Will the Minister advise if wool producers will be able to cart their wool clips direct to Perth; or
(b) will they be directed to cart to the nearest rail head when the present line is closed?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The condition of sections of the Mullewa-Meekatharra line is such that heavy mechanical equipment such as tamping machines cannot operate on the line.
- (3) (a) Meekatharra—\$47 452.
Mt. Magnet—\$67 829
(b) Should the Mullewa-Meekatharra line be closed, fixed facilities will be offered to shires where they can show that they are of use in supplying the alternative transport need.
- (4) and (5) In the event that the line is closed, it is not expected that any major upgrading of the Wubin-Meekatharra road will be necessary. However, provision has been made in the 1977-78 programme of works for expenditure of \$274 000 for certain specific maintenance in addition to normal maintenance.
- 23 kilometres of the Mullewa-Mt. Magnet road is currently being sealed, leaving about 143 kilometres still to be sealed. The estimated cost to seal this section is \$4.4 million. No substantial increase in traffic is expected to result from closure of the railway. Consideration will be given to provision of funds for further sealing in future works programmes.
- (6) (a) It is not envisaged that railway road services will be used if the line is closed.

(9)

- (b) In making provision for alternative services, should the line be closed, it is proposed to utilise the services of local carriers where possible to ensure a continued operation of district carriers to meet local needs. If there is a need to use other than district carriers, public tenders will be invited.
- (7) If the line closes and private contractors carry the freight now transported by rail, the charge for private road transport may well mean a reduction in freight rates on some items or an increase on others. Before any final decision is taken, every consideration will be given that the overall freight rates to be charged will not rise above rail rates.
- (8) (a) This matter is under investigation.
(b) This is not envisaged.
- (9) (a) and (b) Should the line close, the rails will be left *in situ* in case it is needed at a future time.
- (10) The original study into the economics of the Mullewa-Meekatharra railway and possible alternative transport for the area was carried out by Westrail's Management Services Division. This was subsequently examined by other authorities including the Director General of Transport and Commissioner of Transport.
- (11) (a) February 1977.
(b) Incorporated in Westrail's report.
(c) Not applicable.
- (12) (a) and (b) These matters are being investigated in case the line is closed sometime in the future.

RAILWAYS

Meekatharra-Mullewa

71. Mr McIVER, to the Premier:

In view of the reply given by the Minister for Transport in the Legislative Council on Thursday, 28th July, re question on closure of Mullewa-Meekatharra railway line, what is the purpose of the exercise by union and railway personnel currently interviewing railway employees at rail centres on this line?

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

Because of concern expressed by railway

employees regarding their future, and rumours in the area that the line will close in September, and because of representations of the local member for Murchison-Eyre (Mr Peter Coyne), senior railway men have been instructed to assure employees that if the line is closed, no retrenchments of railway staff will follow.

EMPLOYMENT

Creation in Industries

72. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

In view of the fact that:

- (a) while addressing students at the Carine High School last February he twice said that there would be 100 000 new jobs created in Western Australia within the following 18 months;
- (b) nearly one-third of the 18-month period has now passed; and
- (c) there are now more Western Australians out of work than at the time he made the 100 000 jobs statement,

will he please advise:

- (i) how many new jobs have been created in Western Australia since February;
- (ii) where have they been created;
- (iii) what industries they have been created in;
- (iv) how many jobs have gone out of existence since February;
- (v) where;
- (vi) in what industries; and
- (vii) whether the 100 000 jobs are in addition to the jobs which already existed in February or whether the figure included jobs which replaced other jobs which ceased to exist?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (i) Bureau of Statistics figures—publication 6.4—show that between April 1976 and April 1977 the number of wage and salary earners in civilian employment, in Western Australia, increased by 13 100—up 3.4 per cent. For Australia as a whole there was a decrease of 7 400—0.16 per cent—during the same period.

Between February 1977 and May 1977—the latest figures available in this series—the number of wage and salary earners in civilian employment, in Western Australia, rose by 2 900—0.73 per cent.

(ii) to (vi) This information is not recorded.

(vii) The number of jobs referred to will be new jobs, primarily resulting from the success of the Government's present strategies in relation to resource development.

The figure of 18 months referred to has been taken out of context and omits complementary qualifying statements which I made at the time, such as . . . "if projects currently being negotiated or planned got off the ground". . . that target would be achieved.

76. *This question was postponed.*

EDUCATION

East Victoria Park School

98. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Works:

Further to question 18 of the 2nd August, 1977, regarding the East Victoria Park Primary School site, can he advise details of purchase, i.e.,

- (a) cash price;
- (b) deposit paid;
- (c) instalments to follow;
- (d) interest rate?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

As advised in question 18, the site was resumed and purchased.

- (a) Compensation of \$279 199.52 was paid in full on signing of discharge of claim.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) Nil.
- (d) 11 per cent per annum from date of receipt of claim on the 6th February, 1976 until date of settlement in accordance with provisions of the Public Works Act.

AGNEW CLOUGH IRON AND STEEL WORKS

Wundowie Operations

99. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Will he advise what is the current situation in relation to Agnew Clough Iron and Steel Works at Wundowie?

- (2) On how many occasions has the company met him since it announced it may have to close its Wundowie operations?
- (3) Has the Government granted concessions to the company since negotiations began?
- (4) If "Yes" to question (3), would he advise in what form?
- (5) If Agnew Clough are unable to continue their operations at Wundowie, will he recommend the Wundowie works be again taken over by the Government?
- (6) If the answer to (5) is "No" would he state his reasons?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Production is continuing utilising one furnace.
- (2) Without checking the exact number of meetings I can assure the honourable member, there has been a number of constructive collaborative discussions on Premier, Minister, and senior officers level.
- (3) and (4) The Government has offered assistance to the industry in various forms and these are being further examined and followed up with a view to stabilising the Wundowie position.
- (5) and (6) No. The works are owned and operated efficiently by Agnew Clough. We are satisfied everything possible is being done in the market place to sell the products and sustain the industry. There is a prospect for a start shortly with the vanadium project which Agnew Clough alone have the prospect of developing based on the Wundowie infrastructure.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Expenditure Cut-backs

100. Mr JAMIESON, to the Premier:

Adverting to the Premier's answer to question 11 of 2nd August on notice, will he tell the House whether he stated, or did not state, that there would be cut-backs in Government departments to counteract diminishing funds from the Federal Government for capital works programmes, as his answer did not confirm whether or not he was correctly reported as having made that forecast in the *Weekend News* of 2nd July, 1977?

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

Yes, in the sense that there would be cuts in departmental requests for recurrent expenditure proposals. I did not state, nor is it intended, that departments would be cut back below existing levels of activity.

As I have pointed out on many occasions, the Government must hold down on recurrent spending if it is to avoid increasing taxes and, at the same time, mount a reasonable capital works programme in the interests of maintaining employment.

LAND

Reserve 33083

101. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Lands and Forests:

Would she please advise the precise location and purpose of reserve 33083?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

Reserve No. 33083 comprising Cockburn Sound Locations 2320 and 2483 is set apart for the purpose of "Public Recreation". Its precise location is shown on the plans which I submit for tabling.

102. *This question was postponed.*

103. *This question was postponed.*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Star Swamp Area

104. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (a) Will he implement a six months moratorium on development of the Star swamp area in order that an environmental impact study can be made; and
- (b) also allow sufficient time for public comment on the findings?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (a) and (b) The matter is currently under consideration by the City of Stirling and the Environmental Protection Authority. I will decide what action to take if the proposals are submitted to me in due course.

WATER SUPPLIES

Outbreak of Salmonella

105. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is there any relationship between the outbreaks of salmonella and the increased usage of underground water resources?
- (2) Have any tests been done to prove or disprove the above?
- (3) What are the results of such tests?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) Regular sampling of the underground water following treatment by the Metropolitan Water Board and subsequent testing by the Health Department shows that it is of a consistently high standard.

WATER SUPPLIES

Northern Suburbs

106. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is it a fact that it is the Government's intention to triple the out-take of underground water in the northern suburbs?
- (2) What effect is this going to have on bushland and coniferous forests?
- (3) Have any tests been done and, if so, what are the results of such testing?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Pumping will be managed with Department of Conservation and Environment involvement to minimise adverse effects. Generally speaking, the operation is one of harvesting, not mining.
- (3) Yes. Water levels are monitored at approximately 650 points. The Forests Department has, for many years, monitored the flora of a number of transects. A committee maintains a watching brief on fauna matters.

WATER SUPPLIES

Restrictions

107. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is there a recommendation on file to place water restrictions on the metropolitan area during the last summer period?
- (2) If so, when was the recommendation made?
- (3) Will he table the recommendation?

- (4) If such a recommendation was made why was no possible notice taken of it?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) to (4) Not applicable.

WATER SUPPLIES

Consumption

108. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

How much water is supplied on a daily and weekly basis for—

- (a) industry;
- (b) domestic use?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

Based on figures for year ending June 30th, 1976 the estimated average daily consumptions for that year were:

- (a) Industry—36 000 cubic metres per day
- (b) Domestic—360 000 cubic metres per day

Figures for the year ending June 30th, 1977 are not yet available.

URANIUM AND PLUTONIUM

Theft

109. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of the statement in *The Sunday Times* of 31st July by Mr James Conran, an engineer with the United States Regulatory Commission who is reported in testimony prepared for a United States Congressional panel that quantities of uranium or plutonium could be stolen with relative ease from nuclear facilities and that some stealing has already taken place?
- (2) If so, what safeguards over and above the present United States safeguards which are possibly inadequate will the Western Australian Government be adopting to ensure stealing does not take place from any established facilities in this State?

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

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Improved safeguards for the entire nuclear industry, including all steps in the fuel cycle, are under extensive study in the United States, Japan, United Kingdom, European Economic Community and Australia.

I confidently expect that more adequate safeguards will be formulated and adopted soon on an international basis. The Government will wait to see the content and implications of such safeguards before taking any decision concerning what special action might be appropriate by Western Australia.

It should be remembered that the issue facing Australia at the moment is the mining and export of uranium, which comprises only one portion of the total fuel cycle. Export would most likely be in the form of Yellow Cake and theft of this product is not a major issue in the same sense as the article referred to.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Patterson Road-Read Street, Rockingham

110. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport.

- (1) Is the Minister aware that a build-up of traffic occurs daily at the intersection of Patterson Road and Read Street, Rockingham, causing minor accidents?
- (2) Can the Minister arrange for lights to be installed at the intersection as soon as possible, before a possibly serious accident occurs?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Traffic control signals are installed in order of priority based on traffic volume and accident history. There are a number of intersections within the metropolitan area requiring treatment prior to Read Street-Patterson Road. However, priorities are re-assessed annually and this intersection will be kept under review.
- (3) Answered by (2).

GOVERNMENT REPORTS

Delay in Receipt

111. Mr JAMIESON, to the Premier:

When may I expect to receive a reply to my letter to him of 21st May, concerning delays in receiving State Government reports to which I sent a follow-up letter on 5th July, as I have not yet received acknowledgement of either letter?

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

A letter has this day been despatched to the office of the Leader of the Opposition

EDUCATION

Texts: Printing

112. Mr TAYLOR, to the Premier:

- (1) Who were the members of the Government Printing Committee for the period 1st January, 1976, to 30th June, 1977?
- (2) What are the titles, quantities, and costs to print those educational texts which the committee has directed be diverted from the Government Printer to an outside publisher?
- (3) Which of these texts were written and/or substantially prepared by—
 - (a) teachers; or
 - (b) other government employees?

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

- (1) There is no Standing Printing Committee. The Superintendent of Publications in the Education Department is responsible for the educational text books submitted to the Government Printer. The Government Printer decides which are to be placed with outside publishers.

The Government Printer has selected the following items to be let on behalf of the Education Department to outside publishers:

(2) Titles	No.	Cost	
of Copies		\$	
Animals and Us.....	10 000	4 261	
Science 5.....	18 000	4 357	
Primary Maths Book			
6.....	27 000	8 096	
Primary Maths Book			
4.....	26 000	8 183	
Spelling Book 2.....	25 000	9 801	
Beyond the Blue			
Mountains.....	25 000	4 986	
Science Year 6.....	15 000	5 799	
Across the Blue			
Mountains.....	25 000	6 964	
Science Year 5.....	5 000	2 113	
Patterns 2.....	20 170	6 446	
Hunters and Herders...	25 000	10 083	
Patterns 2.....	20 170	6 446	
Mathematics 1.....	24 000	7 565	
Mathematics 9.....	21 000	9 209	
Mathematics 7.....	24 000	8 603	

Spelling Book 3.	25 000	14 536
Maths 4.	25 000	9 379
Patterns 7.	18 000	5 025
Maths 3.	25 000	8 091
Science Year 2.	16 500	2 829
Science Year 3.	11 500	2 180
Maths 1.	27 000	9 210
Science Year 2.	17 000	2 859
Science Year 4.	18 000	3 050
Maths 5.	26 000	9 564
Science Year 1.	15 000	3 387
Maths 7.	28 000	9 635
27 Titles.....	562 340	\$182 657

This is Curriculum Branch printing only and for the period mentioned in the question, that is, 1st January, 1976 to 30th June, 1977.

- (3) All were prepared by officers employed in the Curriculum Branch of the Education Department.

EDUCATION

Texts: "Accounting I Modules"

113. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Education:

With respect to school texts entitled *Accounting I Modules* of which there are five texts and five work books:

- (1) Did the technical education service prepare these texts?
- (2) (a) In what years have they been published; and
(b) by whom?
- (3) In the 1976 school year, was the quoted cost to parents of these books \$4.25?
- (4) What is the present cost of these texts?
- (5) What is the percentage increase in cost of these books since last year?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) In 1976 and 1977.
(b) The Technical Publications Trust.
- (3) Yes, as this was a pilot project by the Technical Education Division of the Education Department and was supplied at a subsidised cost.
- (4) \$14.50; in 1977 some changes were made and the format was revised by the Publications Trust.
- (5) The increase from \$4.25 to \$14.50 is 341%, caused by substantially increased costs within the printing industry during 1976-77.

EDUCATION

Scripture Instruction

114. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) When is it anticipated that the report of the committee inquiring into scripture instruction in State schools will be presented?
- (2) Will the report be tabled in Parliament?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) The report has been received and is currently being printed.
- (2) Yes.

CATTLE

Numbers and Irrigated Areas

115. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the total number of cattle for slaughter (excluding dairy culls) which has been turned off the irrigation areas of the south-west in each of the past three years for—
(a) baby beef;
(b) export beef?
- (2) What was the number of beef cattle breeders located on the south-west irrigation areas in each of the past three years?
- (3) What has been the total number of cattle for slaughter (excluding dairy culls) which has been turned off in the South-West Land Division of Western Australia in each of the past three years for—
(a) baby beef;
(b) export beef?
- (4) What has been the total number of cattle breeders located in the South-West Land Division of Western Australia in each of the past three years?

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

- (1) to (3) This information is not available to my Department.
- (4)

March 1974	711 767
March 1975	815 221
March 1976	828 979

The above are cows and heifers one year and over in the Agricultural Areas.

WATER SUPPLIES

Dam on Harvey River

116. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) How many hectares of land are irrigated under the existing schemes in the south-west of Western Australia?
- (2) By how many hectares is it expected that the proposed new dam at Harvey will increase the irrigated land in these areas?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) Waroona District — 1 858 hectares
Harvey District — 6 077 hectares
Collie District — 6 301 hectares
Preston Valley District — 206 hectares
- (2) No decision has yet been made to build a dam at Harvey.
It is not known if the construction of a new dam would enable any additional hectares to be irrigated.

IRRIGATION IN SOUTH-WEST

Dairy Farmers

117. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many registered dairy farmers have moved from the irrigation areas of the south-west of Western Australia to regions south of Bunbury in the past three years?
- (2) What quantity of liquid milk quota entitlement has been transferred from the irrigation areas of the south-west to regions further south in each of the past three years?

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

- (1) In the past three years, only one farmer has moved from the irrigation areas to the area south of Bunbury, and two farmers are presently involved in transferring their businesses.
- (2) Market milk quotas surrendered to the Authority are re-allocated over the whole industry. There are no statistics kept for the transfers into or out of the irrigation areas but most of the total quotas surrendered over the past three years have come from the areas north of Pinjarra. When this has been re-allocated, the irrigation area would have gained a proportional amount.

IRRIGATION IN SOUTH-WEST

Financial Loss and Pasture Involved

118. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) What was the total loss incurred by the Public Works Department in providing water for irrigation in the south-west of Western Australia in each of the past three years?
- (2) What was the total area of pasture irrigation in each of the irrigation schemes of the south-west in each of the past three years?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) Total losses incurred by the Collie, Harvey, Preston Valley and Waroona Irrigation Schemes in each of the past three years are as follows:
1974-75—\$1 171 344
1975-76—\$1 267 008
1976-77—\$1 485 196

- (2) Total area of pasture irrigation is not known by the Public Works Department. However, the number of hectares of land irrigated under existing schemes in the South-West of Western Australia was detailed in the answer to Question 116.

MILK

Costs

119. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

What is the cost of production of market milk per gallon or litre in each of the following districts:

- (a) Pinjarra;
- (b) Harvey;
- (c) Busselton;
- (d) Albany;
- (e) Manjimup?

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

A survey of costs of production on market milk farms was last conducted in 1973-74. Estimated costs for 1974-75 were—

Perth-Pinjarra area...13.01 cents per litre
Pinjarra-Bunbury (dryland)....8.98 cents
per litre
Pinjarra-Bunbury (irrigated)...9.24 cents
per litre
Busselton area.....8.16 cents per litre
Albany area.....11.21 cents per litre
No estimate is available for Manjimup.

Another survey is currently being planned and will be conducted before the end of 1977.

MILK

Production, Consumption, and Costs

120. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What quantity of market milk was produced in Western Australia in each of the past three years?
- (2) What was the consumption of liquid milk—
 - (a) per capita;
 - (b) in total,
 in Western Australia in each of the past three years?
- (3) What quantity of market milk was produced in the irrigation areas of the south-west of Western Australia in each of the past three years?
- (4) (a) What quantity of irrigation water is it estimated is required to grow the necessary pasture to produce one litre of market milk in the irrigation areas of the south-west;
- (b) what is the cost to—
 - (i) the producer;
 - (ii) the Public Works Department,
 in providing water for irrigation to produce one litre of milk?

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

- (1) The quantity of market milk purchased for liquid milk and table cream from dairymen is as follows:

1974-75	113 723 887 litres
1975-76	117 051 868 litres
1976-77	120 260 498 litres (preliminary)

- (2) The consumption of liquid milk is as follows:—

	per capita/day	total/year
1974-75	0.2919 litres	100 174 442 litres
1975-76	0.2831 litres	100 217 956 litres
1976-77	0.2815 litres	101 984 259 litres

The *per capita* figure is based on the Metropolitan Area only.

- (3) The actual amount of market milk produced in the irrigation areas is not available, but an indication can be obtained from the total intake of factories and depots serving the area as follows:—

1974-75	61 217 287 litres
1975-76	65 377 813 litres
1976-77	66 242 533 litres

- (4) (a) It is estimated that approximately 1 400 lies of irrigation are required to produce one litre of market milk.
- (b) The cost to the producer for this amount of water is 0.52 cents. The cost to the Public Works Department is 0.63 cents.

PRE-SCHOOL BOARD

Abolition: Reason

121. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Why is it intended to abolish the W.A. Pre-School Board and what are the advantages?
- (2) (a) Will parent elected committees who choose to stay out of the proposed new system be permitted to charge parents of five-year olds fees to pay their running costs; or
- (b) will they be totally reliant on fund raising activities;
- (c) if fees are not permitted, will Government aid be available to help meet costs?
- (3) As the Federal Government have cut funds for Education funding in 1978, and if present committees choose to retain their own buildings for four-year age groups as pre-school centres—
 - (a) how will moneys be allocated to erect the proposed pre-primary centres for five-year olds;
 - (b) will present pre-school buildings be taken over and used thereby leaving no facilities for four-year age group?
- (4) Would he advise if outstanding debts incurred by pre-school centres and present loan repayments to shires be also taken over by the Education Department when the takeover by the department has been finalised?
- (5) If answer to (4) is "No" what provision, if any, will be made by the Government to repay existing loans?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (5) There has been a growing need to establish a co-ordinated and controlled approach to the Government's programmes in all early childhood education. Currently the Government is providing funds for programmes administered by several different agencies and instrumentalities. Details

of the proposals are contained in the notes attached to this answer.

122. *This question was postponed.*

HEALTH

Transport of Bodies

123. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that an ambulance is not permitted to pick up a body in a private home following death by natural causes?
- (2) In what circumstances is an ambulance permitted to pick up a body?
- (3) (a) Is a funeral director permitted to pick up a body before a death certificate has been issued; or
(b) to take a body to a hospital to enable a doctor to issue a death certificate?
- (4) What persons are permitted to issue a death certificate?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) (a) Yes;
(b) yes.
- (4) A registered medical practitioner.

POLICE STATIONS

Greenbushes, Bridgetown, and Donnybrook

124. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Does the Government intend to proceed with the closure of the Greenbushes police station?
- (2) If "Yes"
(a) when is it intended that the Greenbushes police station will be closed;
(b) on how many occasions each week is it proposed that Road Traffic Authority officers will patrol Greenbushes;
(c) on how many occasions each week is it proposed that police department officers will visit Greenbushes after the police station in that town closes;
(d) will police officers who are stationed at Bridgetown and Donnybrook be replaced by a relieving officer when leave is taken?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) This matter is still under consideration whilst the Department is reviewing the matters raised with it by a deputation to the Minister for Police on Wednesday, 27th July, at which the honourable member was present.

EDUCATION

Illiteracy

125. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What recent studies have been undertaken with respect to illiteracy in Western Australia?
- (2) What studies are presently being undertaken?
- (3) What special action, if any, has the Education Department undertaken in recent times to minimise illiteracy?
- (4) What special action, if any, is the Education Department presently planning to undertake with respect to illiteracy?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) The Education Department participates in sample surveys such as those conducted by the Australian Council of Educational Research and will continue to do so.
- (3) and (4) Student learning is largely dependent upon the ability of teachers to promote and sustain such learning. A major in-service programme is in progress which is planned to enable senior teachers to assist other teachers on the same staff to undertake diagnostic and remedial teaching as part of the normal teaching process. A survey of teacher induction is also in process which will provide information on the beginning teacher and means by which such teachers can be assisted.

NURSING HOME PATIENTS

Commonwealth Subsidies

126. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What effect will the Australian Government's changed method of subsidising nursing home patients have on patients in State Government nursing homes?
- (2) What additional cost, if any, will have to be met from State finances as a result of the proposed changes?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) Full details of the Commonwealth's arrangements have not yet been received but I understand that the proposals will not affect the charges raised against patients in State Government nursing homes.
- (2) No additional cost to the State is expected.

HEALTH

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

127. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

What amounts come to the State Government from the Commonwealth due to the application of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

The State Government receives reimbursement from the Commonwealth Government under the pharmaceutical benefits scheme in accordance with agreed formulae in respect of the cost of drugs supplied by public nursing homes and designated mental health institutions.

WATER SUPPLIES

Mt. Hampton

128. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has the Department of Agriculture been requested by the Public Works Department to assess the need for provision of an emergency water supply in the form of a rock catchment at Mt. Hampton in the Yilgarn shire?
- (2) If "Yes"—
 - (a) when will the assessment be completed; and
 - (b) will it be available for public perusal?

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

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Within approximately four months
- (b) The report was requested by the Minister for Works, and the extent to which it will be available for public perusal is a matter for him to decide.

WATER SUPPLIES

Southern Western Australia

129. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

Has a survey been conducted in the southern half of Western Australia to determine:

- (1) The future needs of the area for potable water;
- (2) The feasibility of harnessing any source of potable water to supplement existing supplies?
- (3) If so, are they available for public perusal?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) Alternative future needs over the next 30 years have been estimated.
- (2) The Public Works Department has a continuing investigation programme. This programme includes feasibility studies for the harnessing of potable water resources. The depth to which these studies are carried out varies from source to source.
- (3) Three documents are available:

System 6 and Perth Water Supplies—Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board, May 1977

Water Resources in System 6—Public Works Department of W.A., May 1977

The Usable Surface Water Resources of Western Australia—Interim Report June 1977—Public Works Department of W.A.

WATER SUPPLIES

Key Dam Loan Scheme

130. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Would he give details of areas of Western Australia in which farmers are eligible for assistance from the key dam loan scheme?
- (2) What is the total value of assistance that may be provided under this scheme?

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

- (1) The areas currently eligible for assistance under the farm water supply loan scheme do not conform to shire boundaries. In general terms, the areas are east of the western boundary of the comprehensive water scheme. The northern boundary is somewhat irregular. Farmers north of the line running from Lancelin to Mogumber are eligible. The boundary then runs from Mogumber to Watheroo, from Watheroo to Nugadong and thence in an irregular south-westerly direction to include an area of Bindi Bindi, and from there in a southerly direction conforming to the western boundary of the reticulated areas. While farms

reticulated are not eligible, farms not serviced by reticulation within the comprehensive scheme are eligible. There is no eastern boundary currently operating, but the scheme is confined to farming properties and not pastoral leasehold properties. The boundaries of the scheme are currently being rationalised and hence modifications are likely to be made in the not distant future.

- (2) The total value of assistance which can be provided under this scheme is \$5 000, but in exceptional cases the Farm Water Supply Advisory Committee has the power to approve the loan being extended to \$6 000.

RAILWAYS

Claisebrook Bridge Piles

131. Mr McIVER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Having regard for the Minister's reply to my question 40 on 3rd August, 1977, would the Minister advise of the bridge piles of the railway bridge at Claisebrook have been examined since 1971?
- (2) If "Yes"—
 - (a) when was the examination carried out; and
 - (b) by whom?
- (3) If the answer to (1) is "No" would the Minister make immediate arrangements for an inspection to be made?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) In February, 1977.
(b) By a diver employed by the Fremantle Harbour Works.
- (3) See answer to (2).

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

RURAL AFFAIRS INQUIRY

Report

1. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

Last night in the House I understood the Minister to say that the document which I have here in my hand—the Interim Report of the Commissioner of Consumer Affairs on the Rural Affairs Inquiry—was to be the only report issued out of the inquiry because it contained all the relevant information

arising from the inquiry. I now ask the Minister—

- (1) Is it a fact that this is to be the only report forthcoming from the Rural Affairs Inquiry?
- (2) If there is to be a subsequent report, can he indicate when it will be presented to the Parliament?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) Apparently the member for Geraldton did not hear my comment last night which was to the effect that the document he has is an interim report only. I did suggest, however, that it contained virtually all the information of consequence. There will be a second report, but unfortunately I am not in a position to indicate when it will be available.

GOVERNMENT PROJECTS

Plans, Costs, and Employment

2. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

In view of the statement made by the Minister in the House during a debate yesterday, and his advice to me to ask about projects that the Government had planned, I now ask the Minister—

- (1) What are the projects that the Government has planned to commence?
- (2) What are their costs?
- (3) How many workers are estimated to be employed on each job?
- (4) When will the projects be commenced?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) to (4) Although I did have some notice of this question as it was phoned through to me this morning, so many projects are involved and such a tremendous amount of detail is available in respect of each of them, I will ask the member for Swan to put the question on the notice paper. There will then be time between now and Tuesday to amass the information.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Rate

3. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

Do the latest unemployment statistics indicate that Western Australia has the fastest rate of increase in unemployed people in Australia?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

The last unemployment statistics reveal that we have a 4.6 incidence of unemployment, which gives us the second lowest figures in Australia. Victoria has a 4.6 incidence, and we are second to that State.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Rate

4. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

The Minister has not answered the question I asked. The question was—

Do the latest unemployment statistics indicate that Western Australia has the fastest rate of increase in unemployed people in Australia?

Mr Bryce: The rate of increase.

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

I do not imagine that the figures indicate anything of that kind. However, if the member will put his question on the notice paper, I will gladly obtain the statistics for him.

CASINOS

Government Action

5. Mr JAMIESON, to the Acting Premier:

I would like to ask the Acting Premier the following question, although I do not know whether or not he has had notice of it—

What action does he propose to take, in view of the commitment of his Minister for Labour and Industry that "the law must be upheld, come what may" and also the statements of the former Minister for Police that "a limit would have to be set on the number of illegal gambling casinos operating in Perth", to deal with the problem of illegal casinos in Perth?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

The Premier acknowledges the notice given of this question, but due to the fact that he had to leave the State at midday today, he has not had an opportunity to prepare a reply and he suggests to the Leader of the Opposition that the question should be placed on the notice paper.

WATER BORES

Golden Bay-Peelhurst Area

6. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is his department responsible for the bores that were dug at the Golden Bay-Peelhurst area approximately three months ago?
- (2) How many were dug and would he please give the precise locations?
- (3) What is the purpose of the bores?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) Yes, the Metropolitan Water Board has drilled exploratory groundwater bores in the Peelhurst locality.
- (2) In 1974 a groundwater level observation well was drilled in Crystaluna Drive some 19 metres west of Mandurah Road. In 1977 an investigation well was drilled some 48 metres farther west in Crystaluna Road. In 1974 a groundwater level observation well was drilled in Anstey Road some 580 metres west of Forty Road. In 1977 an investigation well was sunk close by the observation well in Anstey Road.
- (3) The observation wells are drilled to obtain initial information on groundwater levels and strata. Investigation wells are drilled and test pumped to obtain information on the water yielding capacity of the aquifers with pumping. This work is portion of a programme for evaluating the groundwater resources of the region.

NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Federal Funds

7. Mr JAMIESON, to the Premier:

I am not sure whether the Acting Premier has the answer to this question, either. As his answer to my question 63 gave no indication whether his Government supported the Federal Government's decision to increase funds to Level I private schools, will he now give an answer to the question?

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

Once again, I apologise on behalf of the Premier. Due to the absence of the Premier, I ask that the question be placed on the notice paper.