# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 20th September, 1978

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

## BUDGET SPEECH

*Printing Error: Statement by Speaker*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Thompson): I have to announce that a printing error has occurred in the printed version of the Budget speech given to the House last evening by the Treasurer.

In the fourth line of the third paragraph on page 10 reference is made to a sum of $7.7 million, being the commercial loss on railway operations. The correct figure, and that given to the House by the Treasurer last evening, was $27 million.

In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 235 I authorise the necessary correction to be made to the copy of the speech which was tabled.

The copies of the speech which have been supplied to members will be corrected in due course.

## ENERGY: NUCLEAR POWER STATION

*Establishment: Petition*

**MR SKIDMORE** (Swan) [4.33 p.m.]: I have a petition from citizens and ratepayers of Western Australia which reads as follows—

> The Petition of Citizens and Ratepayers of Western Australia showeth:
>
> Our opposition to the proposed establishment of a nuclear power station in our State and the use of nuclear energy above other forms of existing and possible developing alternatives within the next two decades. This because of its endangering the lives of present and future generations and the many questions concerning its safety.
>
> Your Petitioners, therefore, pray that your Honourable House in its wisdom will not take action on such legislation without consulting the wish of the general populace and your Petitioners will ever pray.

The petition bears 448 signatures and I have certified that it conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

*(See petition No. 17).*

## QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

## ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

*Dismissal of Employee: Grievance*

**MR WILSON** (Dianella) [4.59 p.m.]: My grievance is directed towards what appears to be the gross inhuman treatment of a former employee of the State Energy Commission in terms of his dismissal. The employee concerned received a letter dated the 24th August in which he was informed as follows—

> As the work for which you were engaged is now nearing completion, it will be necessary to terminate your services and therefore your retrenchment from the Commission will become effective on completion of your duties on Friday 8th September, 1978.

After receiving that notification, which came like a bolt from the blue, the employee contacted his union as a result of which an arrangement was made for a conference to be held before Commissioner Martin on Friday, the 8th September.

The employee was incensed, particularly by virtue of the fact that the basis for his dismissal was very much to do, apparently on investigation, with the fact that the State Energy Commission is in the practice of employing relief staff for people who are on long service leave or workers' compensation.

In the process of the hearing at the industrial conference it was divulged that the basis of this employee's dismissal was that he had been employed as a relief person to fill in for someone who was on workers' compensation. However, the employee disputed this on the basis that when he had been employed he was told he was to be employed for one month on a temporary basis and then he was to be employed on a permanent basis.

He had every reason to believe this would be the case because he had been employed by the State Energy Commission nine years earlier for a period of 3½ years. It was his understanding that after a month's vetting on the basis of previous employment he would be employed on a permanent basis. In fact, at the time he was accompanied by a witness who is prepared to swear he was informed in this manner.

However, before the commissioner the representatives of the commission were quite emphatic in stating that the man had been employed only on a temporary basis as a relief for

someone who was on workers' compensation. This was contrary to the fact that he had been working for a much longer period than a month and on further questioning it was found that he may not have been employed on the basis of relieving for someone who was on long service leave or workers' compensation.

When the representative of the State Energy Commission was asked who this man was replacing a name was given of a person who the union representative was able to say had been gone from the employ of the commission for six months. Subsequently, the name of another person was brought up as the person whom he was relieving and it was found that that person had already been back for three weeks. Then a third name was put forward as the person whom he was supposedly relieving and it was found that that person was still on long service leave. In fact, there was no proof that the man had been employed on the basis of replacing someone on workers' compensation or long service leave.

So the conference went on to consider what was the actual reason for this man's dismissal. A statement was made about his attitude being wrong, but the representative of the State Energy Commission was not prepared to elaborate on that. Some reference to late attendances was made but on further questioning the commission representative indicated that the question of late attendances was really a minor issue.

The real reason for raising this matter during the grievance debate is that there is a strong suspicion that the real reason for this man's dismissal had nothing to do with the fact he was really on relief work, that he was in the habit of being late, or that his attitude was wrong. It would seem the real reason is that this man, through no fault of his own, suffers from a condition known as dyslexia.

I shall refer to the condition of dyslexia as follows: Dyslexia is not a disease, syndrome or infirmity. It is a symptom resulting from one or more of various neurological impairments. The symptom known as dyslexia most often appears when a person has impaired visual or auditory perception.

Human beings can read because they have the neurological ability to recognise the shapes of the individual letters in their alphabet, the words they form and can distinguish the sounds those letters and words make. If a person is colour blind or tone deaf, he is not considered handicapped. His is an inconvenience, perhaps, a brain dysfunction which robs him of some of the aesthetic joys of life. But if a person has a brain impairment which inhibits his ability to read, he is robbed of an education, knowledge, meaningful employment, opportunity for a decent standard of living, and most of the satisfaction of life.

This man is dyslexic but he has made every attempt to come to terms with his handicap. I consider it to be a gross injustice, to be an act of inhumanity, for the State Energy Commission now to be unable to come up with a satisfactory reason for this man's dismissal. At the same time I have a suspicion that because this man is handicapped he is being victimised and sought out as one of the people who can be dispensed with in a situation in which it might be thought that the employment level has to be considered; a level which has to be pared because of economic stringency.

Recently, in answer to a question from myself, the Minister for Fuel and Energy indicated that the number of people attending or assisting SEC linesmen in their duties had been restricted for productivity reasons. If people are being sacked from employment with the State Energy Commission for this sort of reason I think it is a matter for concern in the community.

If Government agencies and semi-Government agencies are not going to give real consideration to the employment of people with handicaps of this nature then who are we to look for in the community to do so?

**MR MENSAROS** (Floreat—Minister for Fuel and Energy) [5.09 p.m.]: I am fairly disappointed with the way the honourable member brought up this problem because the real reason for his complaint is to gain publicity—one-sided publicity. The member in his right mind could not expect that the Minister in charge of an organisation with about 5 000 employees, no matter how good or bad the Minister was, would know the individual circumstances of each employee without receiving pre-warning on the subject.

The member must have known this; if he did not my view of his intellectual capacity would be very low. Having known this the member used Parliament as a means to gain one-sided publicity, which he can conveniently get in the Press, and so conveniently cause the SEC to be labelled unjust, inhumane and victimising, without even having to hear the other side of the matter. And there are always two sides to every matter, as we all know. It would seem the member expected the Minister then to get back to him by way of a private letter and give him the information he required and in this way gain one-sided publicity.

The matter is one dealing with an award, employment, and the behaviour of the State Energy Commission. As I have said, I do not know, nor could I be expected to know, anything about the case in question without some warning. Had the member wanted to get a reply, which he obviously did not, he would have warned me and asked me to make inquiries so that I would be able to give him a reply in just as public a way as he has brought up his grievance.

Without having been warned, I can only say the commission is a public utility, Government-owned, charged through legislation and through ministerial and Government direction to behave in a businesslike manner. It is not primarily a welfare organisation.

Nevertheless, while that is the case, I have never seen the members of the commission's executive give other than due consideration to problems confronting the commission and I would not believe they would act deliberately in a manner which could be labelled with the adjectives used by the member in his grievance.

I do not find the member's approach equitable or fair, as he has accused people who cannot answer him because they are not in the Parliament. I do look at the grievance accordingly. Nevertheless, I will make inquiries and see what the results are.

## EDUCATION: TEACHERS

*Minister's Attitude: Grievance*

**MR PEARCE** (Gosnells) [5.13 p.m.]: My grievance is directed to the Minister for Education and concerns the deplorable situation concerning teachers in this State. I ask the Minister seriously and sincerely to reconsider his attitude and allow the union and the Education Department to go to arbitration on a matter that is apparently going to lead to widespread disruption in the school system the week after next.

It really amazes me that the teachers are going on strike for the first time in something like 50 years over the issue that has come up. This situation has come about after a long line of rebuffs from the Education Department and the failure of the Minister to consult seriously with the Teachers' Union. Now, finally, the union has had enough and is determined to have its say quite forcibly.

I have warned the Minister and the Government in this Chamber, right from the time I made my maiden speech, that a serious situation was building up amongst teachers in the State. I cannot understand the reason for the Minister and the Government to have taken it upon themselves always to want to confront the union. As I have pointed out previously, most teachers probably vote for the Government. The Teachers' Union would be one of the most conservative unions in this State.

I went outside yesterday to see who had turned up at the mass meeting of teachers. According to the superintendent of police there were about 2 300 people present, which I think makes the member for Murray's "Dorothy Dix" question look rather foolish if he was trying to create the impression that teachers are not behind the union.

I was astonished to hear people on the union executive—people I have disagreed with many times in the past because of their conservatism when serious industrial issues have come up and they have consistently refused to take firm strike action—stand in front of the crowd with megaphones calling on teachers to go out on strike.

This is a serious situation indeed and I for one would be very unhappy—as would be all members on this side—to see any sort of industrial action taken in schools as from the week after next. The situation is one which should be avoided. As I said, it is a monumental situation.

Mr Shalders: It would not be if the union had a referendum and abided by it.

Mr PEARCE: I do not think that is the case. The member for Murray has already asked some "Dorothy Dix" questions on referendums. As the member for Murray ought to know, in the past the union has had referendums on whether or not particular matters are worthy of strike action, but the teachers have voted against them by varying majorities.

Mr Shalders: And they should have a referendum on this occasion also.

Mr PEARCE: I am not telling the union whether it should have a referendum on this matter; I am not asking the Education Department to have a referendum; and I am not asking the Minister to take any such action. The matter which is perturbing me is not the way in which the union organises itself, but the fact that I am quite convinced that the union not only intends to take the action it says it will take, but also that it will take it and it will be very effective because it will be disruptive. If the member for Murray had been to the WACA ground, as I have been, to listen to the first meeting on consultation issues—not just concerning the organisation of the school year which is the one which has come to the fore more and more as an issue—he would

have seen the 3 000 or more teachers there, or if he had walked outside Parliament House yesterday he would have seen the 2 300 teachers which was the estimate by the superintendent of police. If he had attended both those gatherings he would not be suggesting that teachers are not upset by this issue or are not determined to carry it through.

I am convinced that at least those 2 300 who attended the rally at Parliament House yesterday will go on strike when the groups of schools are called upon to do so. The number at that rally represents something between 35 to 40 per cent of the metropolitan teachers and if that number went on strike disruption would certainly occur.

The suggestion that the principals are not in favour of strike action is a joke because three of the five people who addressed the meeting were principals on the union executive.

I cannot understand why the Minister has allowed the situation to continue without seeking a fair solution. Specifically, as a political exercise, I cannot understand why he is seeking to confront the union. Surely he does not believe there are votes for him in such a confrontation. I would say he would be losing votes in this way.

The reorganisation of the school year would have to be a classic example. One would think that the Minister would be prepared to find an answer to the situation rather than indulge in confrontation, because in essence I think this is a trivial issue in itself.

Mr Shalders: Are you saying the union is calling strikes on a trivial issue?

Mr PEARCE: No. I am saying that the issue concerning the reorganisation of the school year is not of tremendous importance. The teachers see in it another example of lack of consultation, a subject with which we have dealt and on which I moved a motion following the meeting at the WACA ground. Another matter of importance is access to arbitration.

Can I spell out to the House what the union is seeking? It is asking for a compromise because the Minister and, presumably, the department, are in disagreement with the union on the way in which the proposed changes to the school year should be implemented. The union offered a compromise and the department has offered a compromise. The department's compromise is that it will institute the scheme exactly as it said it would, but the matter will be reviewed after two years. It is the old suck-it-and-see approach which is used quite a bit by this Government.

That does not seem to be a particularly useful compromise at all because, as I believe, if the proposed change is educationally undesirable and is no better than the system which operates at present it will in fact result in—

Mr Clarko: Can it be trivial if it will upset the education of the children?

Mr PEARCE: Where has the member for Karrinyup been for the last five minutes?

Mr Clarko: You said it was a trivial issue. I ask you: Is it? You said it was.

Mr PEARCE: I will not go over the matter again. Conciliation and arbitration are involved and the question of consultation is not trivial. I say the particular aspect which the Minister is hanging out for, which concerns the changes he proposes to the school year, is trivial. He is not consulting or allowing access to arbitration.

Mr Clarko: If they were there more often they would have to have a camp stretcher.

Mr PEARCE: Rubbish!

Mr Shalders: What is wrong with giving it a trial for two years?

Mr PEARCE: What is wrong with going to arbitration?

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: The Premier laughed. I hope *Hansard* recorded that.

Mr Clarko: How could *Hansard* record a laugh?

Mr PEARCE: *Hansard* could write it down as "l-a-u-g-h".

Sir Charles Court: If I was the Minister I would thank you for joining the "Dorothy Dix" brigade.

Mr PEARCE: Here is the Premier who prides himself on his approach to conciliation and arbitration. He is opposed to collective bargaining but he says the teachers should indulge in it in order to get consultation on their jobs.

Sir Charles Court: Don't talk rot. To think you used to teach kids!

Mr PEARCE: The Premier obviously wants the teachers to indulge in collective bargaining on the issue. When the teachers go on strike, it will have been the Premier who sent them out because of his attitude in favour of collective bargaining and because he is opposed to the union going to arbitration. The teachers have suggested that the matter ought to go to arbitration so that both sides can put their case impartially to the Industrial Commission or, possibly, the teachers' tribunal.

The union in advance also gave an undertaking to abide by the decision of the Industrial

Commission. Therefore, whichever way the decision went, the union was prepared to abide by it.

Initially I rose to ask the Minister to reconsider the matter. I imagine the Premier's interjections will prevent his doing so. Nevertheless when he is thinking about the matter after he replies to the grievance, I hope he will seriously reconsider his decision because he, and he alone, can stop the strikes which will cause so much disruption.

**MR P. V. JONES** (Narrogin—Minister for Education) [5.22 p.m.]: What a wonderful opportunity the honourable member has given me to allow a few misleading statements to be corrected and, more particularly, to allow the provision of a little more information which is somewhat different from that which has been provided to date.

He suggested there has been a long line of rebuffs so far as this particular issue is concerned, bearing in mind that we are talking about nothing more nor less than one day's holiday. In a television interview at the conclusion of the third day of the Teachers' Union conference this year, after others had been interviewed and had spoken about various matters, the president of the union said that "it comes down to one thing—an erosion of teachers' working conditions; the loss of one day—and no worker can put up with that." So do not let members consider any other argument about consultation, professionalism, and so on. This is nothing more nor less than naked industrial muscle for the loss of one day!

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr P. V. JONES: In relation to this issue, the honourable member suggested there had been no consultation. This matter has been discussed since May of 1977—and all this has been freely publicised so I will not waste the time of the House by detailing it—but the Teachers' Union advanced the view that there had been no consultation on this issue. However, the union has now changed its mind completely and in a letter sent to all members—the date of the letter escapes me—asking them to disallow the regulations relating to the changes when presented in the House, was a statement which referred to the long period of discussion or the long period of consultation. As I have reminded the union, this is an admission of the exchanges between the union and the department, and the union has agreed.

Therefore to suggest that there has been no consultation is to deny the truth and to discount the acknowledgment made by the union.

So far as the attitude of the Government is concerned, let me make it quite clear that it will not alter. The union has admitted and acknowledged that in all matters regarding the administration of education, the final decision rests with the Government. In my office on the 2nd May, at a deputation, this fact was acknowledged and the concern expressed was that adequate consultation should occur before any decision was made on any matter. I agreed and acknowledged that such consultation should continue.

Mr Pearce: Why are they going on strike then?

Mr P. V. JONES: I will tell members. It was acknowledged that the final decision rested with the Government. What it amounts to is that the final decision has been made after a long period of consultation, but the union will not accept it. It will not accept what it is prepared to acknowledge should be the situation. Indeed the union wrote to its affiliates in the Eastern States—the Australian Teachers Federation—the secretary of which wrote to me and expressed his sorrow at the situation. He requested that the position prevail in this State which prevails in New South Wales where it is acknowledged that the Government or the director general will make a decision on those matters which fall within the Minister's or the director general's decision-making province only after considerable consultation. He hoped that situation would prevail here. I was very happy to be able to assure him that that was the position in this particular instance relating to the restructuring of the school year, and that it would continue to be so in the future as it had been in the past on most issues.

Therefore not only are we not out of step on this issue, but we are also following a pattern which the Secretary of the Australian Teachers Federation suggested we should adopt.

The reason there is to be a strike or a call-out starting from yesterday fortnight is simple: It is because the conference of the union ordained that it would be so. Indeed, as the acting president (Miss Harken) has freely acknowledged, the union executive is committed by the conference to have strikes.

Mr Pearce: Why did it decide that?

Mr P. V. JONES: It was committed to have that rally yesterday because conference passed a motion determining that this would be so.

Mr Pearce: Why?

Mr P. V. JONES: The union is in a bind because the supreme body of the union is the conference. The executive has been and is obliged, to pursue the course which conference ordained

for it. If I were to change my mind—and let me make it quite clear that will not occur—the union executive, so I am advised, would not be in a position to overturn a motion of conference.

Mr Pearce: You mean to say that if you changed your mind on this issue, the strikes would still continue?

Mr P. V. JONES: I have not said that.

Mr Pearce: That is what you say. It is exactly what you say.

Mr P. V. JONES: I am saying that the union executive discussed with the director general the question of the union's power to overturn a decision of conference; and, indeed, it was indicated that the matter would have to be referred back to the membership of the conference.

Mr Pearce: If you do not change your mind—

Mr P. V. JONES: Wait a minute. Can I just repeat what I said so that the honourable member is in no doubt?

Mr Pearce: I understand you.

Mr P. V. JONES: A decision of the conference of the Teachers' Union—the supreme body—cannot be overturned by the executive without reference back to the membership.

Mr Pearce: That is right.

Mr P. V. JONES: That is quite right; and in this instance the executive, as it has been indicated, is locked in to following a conference motion to have a mass rally yesterday; to call rolling strikes; and so on.

Mr Pearce: Why did the conference decide that? The conference represents about 500 teachers. It is a big, democratic organisation.

Mr P. V. JONES: The other question which was raised concerned arbitration. I have indicated that on this particular issue the decision has been made, and the union executive acknowledged that the ultimate decision rests with the Government. Now it is suggested that the ultimate decision has not been made, because the ultimate decision the union is now requesting is that the matter be referred to arbitration, and that is the way the matter has been put to me.

Mr Pearce: What is wrong with that?

Mr P. V. JONES: That would be to go against the facts which have been acknowledged by the union. Indeed, its request relates to consultation, and that having been carried out, and the opinions of the union having been taken into consideration, the Government has made concessions to the union. However the union has not made one concession.

Mr Pearce: What were the concessions made by the Government?

Mr P. V. JONES: One concession related to Easter Tuesday and an adjustment to the early closure of schools in 1978.

The introduction of a two-year trial period, and various other concessions all along the line, have been made by the Government during the course of these discussions, with nothing—not one thing—coming from the executive of the Teachers' Union. Now the same body of people is saying, after the decisions have been made, they want the matter referred to arbitration.

I leave the question at this stage because it cannot be denied, in any way, that if it were not holidays—if it were not the loss of one day a year which we are talking about at the present time—the executive charging along and, in fact, disrupting the school system in a manner which is, indeed, offensive to many teachers—if there was not disagreement on this particular issue, it would be on another issue. Because when the situation is broken down, the real issue is that the executive wants to run the education system in this State. I am quite happy to indicate to you, Mr Speaker, and to other members in the House, that it will not be the executive of the Teachers' Union which runs the education system.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr Skidmore: Do you want to be part of the system, or do you want to destroy it?

Mr P. V. JONES: The executive of the Teachers' Union has a prominent role to play in industrial matters, so far as they affect teachers' conditions, and that role will be protected and recognised by the Government and the Education Department. That is why I indicated a week or so ago that we have deferred for comment matters regarding registration.

The final decision with regard to education in this State, and the formulation of policy—whether it be with regard to holidays or employment—will be made by the Government, the Minister, and the Director General of Education and not the executive of the Teachers' Union.

Government members: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Grievances noted.

## BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Act Amendment Bill.

   Bill introduced, on motion by Sir Charles Court (Treasurer), and read a first time.

2. Local Government Act Amendment Bill (No. 3).
Bill introduced, on motion by Mrs Craig (Minister for Local Government), and read a first time.

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS: PRECEDENCE

*All Sitting Days*

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [5.34 p.m.]: I move—

That on and after Wednesday, 4th October, 1978:—

(a) Standing Order 226 (Grievances) be suspended, and
(b) Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day on Wednesdays as on all other days.

I invite the attention of members to the fact that the date nominated, the 4th October, is after the recess for the Royal Show. It is customary about this time of the session to suspend Standing Order No. 226, and also to suspend the Standing Order relating to private members' business.

I will undertake, as is normal on occasions such as this, that so far as items already on the notice paper are concerned we will—on and after the 4th October—in consultation with the Leader of the Opposition, provide reasonable time for these items to be dealt with. So far as any new business is concerned, I cannot give that undertaking. That is normal procedure. So far as business on the notice paper is concerned, the normal undertaking is given

I do not think there is anything further to add. The Budget has been introduced so far as the Consolidated Revenue Fund is concerned. The Loan Budget will be introduced tomorrow afternoon after which we will have a fairly full programme in dealing with those items, apart from other legislation.

**MR DAVIES** (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [5.35 p.m.]: I must confess that when the Premier spoke to me in the corridor yesterday afternoon I thought he meant he would move his motion next week so that it would apply from the 11th October. That seemed to be a little early to me. The fact that the suspension will apply from the 4th October is the earliest we have ever had it apply during the past five or six years.

Mr O'Connor: We will not be here next week. The Leader of the Opposition said he thought the motion would be moved next week.

Mr DAVIES: That is right; I did mention the 11th October, which meant when we resumed the sitting. I thought the suspension of Standing Orders would apply from the 11th October instead of the 4th October.

I have had a quick look at the date on which Standing Orders have been suspended in recent years, and it appears that in 1972 this procedure was adopted from about the 25th October; in 1973, it was adopted from the 18th October; and in 1974 it was adopted from the 30th October.

The point is that Mr Tonkin was leading the Government; a Labor Government was in office and we were prepared to make a decision then to allow a much longer period for the introduction of private members' business.

Mr Laurance: I think the Leader of the Opposition will find that the Budget has been introduced earlier on the last couple of occasions than it was at the time he is quoting.

Mr DAVIES: The Budget really does not have any significance. The real significance, I suppose, is the amount of legislation which is still to come forward and whether we are getting towards the end of the session. Always the Budget is part of the legislation introduced in the latter part of the session, but quite often there is also other legislation.

To continue—if there are no further queries or interjections—in 1975 the suspension of Standing Orders applied from the 30th October; in 1976 it applied from the 3rd November; and in 1977 it applied from the 2nd November. So, generally, the present suspension will be three to four weeks earlier than the motion which usually applies.

I do think that perhaps we might have had a little more notice, particularly as the usual rules will continue to apply; that is, the Premier has given an undertaking that the private members' business on the notice paper will be given an airing before this session closes. However, he has pointed out—as former Premiers in previous Parliaments have pointed out on other occasions—any new business which is introduced might not necessarily receive an airing.

I conclude by saying that perhaps there is not much more Government business to be introduced because an examination of the notice paper will show that once Orders of the Day Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 have been dealt with there is nearly as much private members' business left on the notice paper as there is Government business. I do not believe notice was given today of the intention to introduce any further Bills. It would appear that perhaps we are getting towards the end of the legislative programme and it is necessary for the Government, in order to wind up this session, to move at this stage.

I repeat that we believe the motion could have been moved a little later. Frankly, I was expecting it to be a little later and when the Premier and I had our brief conversation yesterday afternoon, when the bells were ringing, I understood that the Premier was to move for the suspension to apply from the 11th October and not from the 4th October. Even if the suspension had applied from the 11th October that would have been a week or a fortnight earlier than the general rule. That does not mean to say that because it has been the custom in the past, or the general rule, it should continue.

We are always subject to change, and we acknowledge that. It is just that there was not a clear understanding and I was unable to give my members as much notice of the motion as I might have been expected to give them. However, there is no excuse because notice of the motion appeared on the notice paper for one and all to see.

I do not know whether the Premier is able to indicate how much more Government business is to come forward. I hope we will be able to regulate the business so that we have plenty of time to discuss it. I do not like to refer to what happened towards the end of the autumn session when some major pieces of legislation were hustled through this House without sufficient thought or debate being given to them. The reason was that very often we were not able to get a feedback from the electorate.

I do not believe there is any unnecessary haste to close the session but, of course, the Premier will decide when that will be. I repeat: I am sorry we had this misunderstanding—or that I did not clearly understand the Premier. The motion does seem to be much earlier than has been the custom in the past.

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [5.41 p.m.]: I am sorry if there has been a misunderstanding. I thought that in bringing in the motion yesterday, and moving it today, we were being fair because it meant that anything of which notice was given yesterday would, of course, either be introduced today or during this evening.

In my understanding, in the past once we get to the Royal Show break, it is usually assumed by the Leader of the Opposition that the suspension of Standing Orders will be moved. The matter of timing of the motion customarily takes place if not to coincide with the Royal Show break, then fairly soon afterwards.

I can only repeat that so far as business on the notice paper is concerned we will work out a time mutually satisfactory so that the items will receive a reasonable hearing. If there happens to be any special item which the Leader of the Opposition feels the Opposition has some special claims to introduce, we will be able to confer on that. Although I cannot give an undertaking I will be only too pleased to confer with the Leader of the Opposition.

I do have in mind that although the official suspension of private members' business will apply from the 4th October, I intend to try to work out a block of time on a number of days so that private members are not on tenterhooks as to whether the items in which they are interested will be plucked out of the air at an unreasonable time of any day or night. I believe the method we have followed in the past is better because members know there will be three or four hours of private members' business and they will be able to plan accordingly to ensure that business is introduced at a reasonable hour. Also, it enables members to organise private members' time between themselves. I think on that basis members will find the day we fix will not be unreasonable and the procedure we will follow will not be unusual.

I cannot be precise about the nature or the amount of Government business which will be introduced, but I have given notice to Ministers that when the House reassembles I want to be able to be in a position to indicate to the Leader of the Opposition a programme of legislation through to the end of the session.

Question put and passed.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by Mr Bateman, leave of absence for four weeks granted to Mr B. T. Burke (Balcatta) on the ground of urgent public business.

## PUBLIC SERVICE BILL

*Third Reading*

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [5.45 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

In moving the third reading of the Bill, I want to report to the House on a number of matters. I shall be as brief as I can.

Members will recall that while we were debating clauses 35 and 36 of the Bill, an amendment then before the Committee was discussed. In particular, the Leader of the Opposition raised the question whether or not the amendment, in the form then before us, would be effective, and whether or not it would work in

practice. I undertook to discuss the matter with the Public Service Board and with the Crown Law Department because I could appreciate the pertinence of the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition.

There were two aspects of the matter then being discussed. The first point was whether the singular included the plural, and the second point posed the question, where there was more than one appellant and the appellants sought to make nominations to the appeal board, whose nomination would be taken. The Public Service Board has acknowledged that, although this would be very rarely the case in practice, it is fair enough to devise an amendment to clarify it so that the position would be beyond doubt, and that the Public Service Board, the appellants, and the appeal board, would know what to do.

I have had drafted an amendment to clause 36 to cover this situation. I have given a copy of this amendment to the member for Maylands and to his leader so that they may study it and let me have their reactions to it. Also, I have asked the Public Service Board to discuss the matter with the Civil Service Association, as no doubt the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Maylands will do. Then the matter can be sorted out in another place.

Mr Speaker, I did not place the amendment on the notice paper here because I felt it was a fairly long and complicated one, and it would be unfair to expect members to react to it immediately. However, I felt it was desirable to indicate to the House that it was thought necessary, following the representations of the member for Maylands and the Leader of the Opposition, that some clarification should take place.

Coincidentally with that, there are two other minor amendments that we will seek to move to clause 35 in another place. This amendment is to insert after the word "Minister" in line 18 on page 19 the words "of the Crown for the time being charged with the administration of this Act".

It has been pointed out in a review of the Bill as amended, following its passage through the Committee, that if this amendment is not made, the Minister would be taken as the Minister administering a particular department where an officer of that department is involved, and not the Minister administering the Public Service Act. Members will quickly appreciate the significance of this, because it would be quite farcical if we did not clarify that, for the purposes of clause 35, we are talking about the Minister administering the Act and not a Minister who would have responsibility for a particular department under his portfolio.

The other amendment refers to clause 55 and it is to delete the word "for" and insert in lieu thereof the word "to". If members look at the clause in question, they will see it is a very necessary, although not very important, amendment, now we have deleted the word "applicant" and substituted the word "person".

I wanted to let members know that those amendments will be proposed in another place, following the explanations made here.

During the Committee debate, there seemed to be some uncertainty regarding the terms "senior offices" and "senior officers". So that we do not have any misunderstanding, I feel it is desirable to spell out the situation as I see it. I know that when a new classification or a new title such as this is introduced, there can be a little bit of controversy; most of us are a little cautious when change is involved.

To codify the matter, the appointment of a head of a department must be made by the Governor sitting in Executive Council. That will be the only way such appointments can be made. The appointment of a person to the position of "senior office" would be accomplished in the same way. In one department there could be a number of people who are senior officers filling positions that have been classified as "senior offices". The whole purpose of this exercise is to have the heads of the departments and the senior offices and senior officers subject to the Executive Council procedures so that these very senior appointments are in the hands of the Government of the day, but beyond that, there will be a clear line of demarcation and the administration will be in the hands of the Public Service Board.

Mr Harman: Will it be possible to appeal against those appointments?

Sir CHARLES COURT: No, these appointments are outside that provision, and this is the case at present. I have listed here some of the departments, and I have worked out the classification of various people in those departments. The permanent head of the Public Works Department is the under secretary. Then there would be a senior office, and the person filling this position would be the Director of Engineering, bearing in mind that the Act spells out very clearly that this appointment may be either administrative or professional. The Principal Architect would also hold a position of senior office. I have selected various departments that we know well. The Director of Engineering and the Principal Architect would be senior

offices within the provisions of this Act, and such appointments are subject to Executive Council approval.

The permanent head of the Department of Industrial Development is the co-ordinator, and the senior office will be the deputy co-ordinator. In the Department of Tourism the permanent head is the director, and the senior office is the deputy director. The Director of the Department of Conservation and Environment is the permanent head, and the assistant director is the senior office. Another senior office in that department is the senior research scientist analyst.

The Public Health Department is a much more complex department, with a good many very difficult demarcations to be drawn between various professional skills. The head of the department would be the Commissioner of Public Health and Medical Services, and as members know, this is Dr McNulty. Then there will be a series of senior offices, the Director General, Medical Services (Dr Roberts), the Director General, Public Health (Dr Holman), and the Director of Administration, (Mr Horrie Smith). I believe I have covered sufficient positions in the various departments that are well known to members to clarify what is intended in the application of this legislation so far as the position of senior offices and senior officers are concerned. I commend the Bill to members.

**MR DAVIES** (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [5.54 p.m.]: First of all, I want to thank the Premier for making available to me a copy of the proposed amendments. I must confess. I have not had time to study them yet. I believe my colleague, the member for Maylands, has had some discussions with the Civil Service Association, and when we can compare notes, we will be able to decide the Opposition's stand. However, that is immaterial at this stage because the amendments have not been moved. We have the amendments before us, and we will study them before the Bill is debated in another place. However, I am not sure that the amendments will overcome the difficulty.

The Government has fallen over backwards to try to fit in all possible situations. When I was debating the matter of appeals earlier, I said that in the case of a classified job, a union would cover the situation, and no matter who the appellant was, whether or not he was a member of that union, the union should appoint the member to the board. That is a very good principle, and once we move away from it, we get into situations of trying to accommodate too many people. One person may be a member of a union, and one person may not be a member; he may have opted out, he may have a certificate of exemption, or he may never have joined a union. There could be several appellants, some in one category, some in another, and it would be left to each of them to nominate a member to the board, and the chairman of the board would select from the nominations the person who would sit on the board to represent the appellants.

I do not think the solution is wholly satisfactory; I believe it will cause some discontent. However, as I have already said, the matter is not open for debate here. Once we move away from the principle that the professional organisation, union, or association that covers a particular job classification shall appoint a representative to the board, we get into all kinds of trouble. That is where the Government is in trouble with this amendment.

No doubt the amendment will come back to us, having been considered in another place, and we will let the Government know what we think of it. However, I thank the Premier for the courtesy he has extended in making available to us a copy of the proposed amendments.

I thank him also for seeking to clarify, in some part, the position regarding senior offices and senior officers. The query I raised during the debate was whether or not there would be one or more senior officers, and how they would be selected. The Premier indicated to us the way in which he sees the position, and no doubt if he sees it that way, the Public Service Board will see it that way also.

Possibly in the final analysis the positions will be determined on a salary basis; in other words, any position attracting a salary above a certain level will be a senior office, and any position with a salary level below that will fall within the usual classifications. After all, at the present time the line of demarcation in regard to promotions appeals is general because of the use of the term "justiciable salaries"; that is, a movable salary that is adjusted from time to time up to which the right of appeal exists and beyond which appeals can be granted only under certain circumstances, usually by direction of the Governor, which means, of course, direction by the Government of the day.

So that matter has been clarified to some degree, although I must say that I really do not know why the provision was included. I cannot see any great advantage in it, and it may cause some heartburnings amongst Government employees. If the Government feels it is necessary—although I do not think it is necessary—it is entitled to include the provision. I hope that it will mean

something to the employees and to the Civil Service Association. I again thank the Premier for the courtesy extended to us.

**MR HARMAN** (Maylands) [5.59 p.m.]: One of the reasons for our opposition to the Bill was that the Government did not provide any sort of explanation for the creation of the new category of "senior offices". The Premier, after many hours of debate, has been able to provide some explanation of the reason for the creation of this new designation.

Looking through the Bill we see that the provision of a senior office is made by the Governor; in other words, by the Cabinet. Originally the Premier wanted a Public Service that would operate unfettered and would become a responsible organisation without too much interference from the Government. However, now we find that the real reason for the creation of this provision of "senior office" is that the Government wishes to interfere with the Public Service so that it can appoint persons to particular positions within the Public Service, and not necessarily public servants. The way it can do that is by creating that position as a "senior office". Finally, we have this explanation from the Premier.

As our leader said, it is going to cause a number of problems. Firstly, there will be persons in departments who feel they should have the status of "senior office" but they will not have that status while others will. So, there will be jealousy and bitterness; it will create friction and cause dissent and for reasons which now are fairly obvious; namely, that the Government wishes to bring persons into the Public Service from outside the service to fill those positions.

It also will create another problem because the status of "senior office" will be a position against which there is no appeal. Those positions will be created by the Government and the persons who get the jobs will be awarded them as a result of the approval of the Government. So, the selection will be made by the Government.

In between the justiciable salary level against which, lower down, appeals are allowed there is another bracket of public servants who will be appointed by the Public Service Board but there will be no right of appeal against those appointments. It has been understood that because the Cabinet appoints people above the justiciable level, no right of appeal exists.

This new provision will create a great deal more agitation amongst public servants to have the right of appeal, up to the level of "senior office". So, again, this provision is a prescription for more dissension, doubt and suspicion within the Public Service. I think we were right initially when we opposed the Bill for that reason and others, and I am sure we are right now in opposing it.

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [6.02 p.m.]: It is about time I learnt the lesson that if one tries to be helpful in this place one gets oneself into an awful lot of bother.

Mr Davies: I said "Thank you".

Sir CHARLES COURT: Yes; I will refer to the Leader of the Opposition's comments in a moment. If we just bulldoze through, everyone seems to accept it.

Mr Bryce: We have seen plenty of bulldozing and not too much acceptance.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I wish to refer to the comments of the member for Maylands because what I have said today is no different from what I have said on the Bill all the way through. What I was trying to do was to record in *Hansard* in a more specific nature the actual type of appointment and to put a name to appointments that we all understand and with which we have everyday dealings. There is no change from what I have said already.

Also, I remind the member for Maylands that the type of "senior office" that is going to be created—remember, it will be dealt with only through the Executive Council—will be no different from the procedure we follow at present in respect of the special division of the Public Service. We are not introducing some mystical, underhand thing; we are trying to make certain that henceforth we will have the permanent head and we will have the "senior offices"—and the senior officers who are appointed to their respective positions through the Executive Council procedure—and from that point on, the line of demarcation will be very clear. Anyone who does not fall within those categories will be dealt with administratively by the Public Service Board within the provisions of the Act.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his support and comments.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

## ACTS AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SERVICE) BILL

*Third Reading*

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [6.04 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

In doing so, I wish to report on a further undertaking I gave in respect of clause 15 of the Bill. Members will recall that the member for Maylands raised a query regarding paragraph (j). Whilst I could not see any reason for concern, I thought I should follow it up just in case we had overlooked something in the course of the original drafting of the Bill and then in the amendments.

So, I would like to record the following information, and if the member for Maylands wants to follow it up further I will be only too pleased to discuss the matter with him before the Bill is proceeded with in another place.

Clause 15 relates to absorbed personnel. Clause 25 of the principal Bill states that where a body or an organisation becomes a part of the Public Service—that is, is established as a department or sub-department—a person who is employed by that body or organisation may receive an appointment under the Public Service Act. In other words, if an organisation is brought under the Public Service Act the staff also may be taken over.

Clause 25 goes on to provide that if the Public Service Board determines that the salary and allowances payable to an absorbed officer shall be at a rate less than was payable to him as an employee of the body or organisation immediately prior to it becoming part of the Public Service, the officer may appeal against the board's determination to the Public Service Arbitrator appointed under the Public Service Arbitration Act.

The reference in the Public Service Act to a right of appeal exercisable under the provisions of the Public Service Arbitration Act is insufficient, and it is necessary to insert a complementary reference in the latter Act. This is achieved by paragraph (j) mentioned in clause 15 of the Bill. Paragraph (j) amplifies the matters in which the arbitrator has jurisdiction to hear and determine appeals. I have been assured that the clause at present provided, including paragraph (j), does that.

I gather from the honourable member's comments that he has some reservation as to whether it does or not. If he still has the reservation, I would like to hear from him. I will certainly do my best to see if the matter can be clarified beyond any doubt.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

**BILLS (3): THIRD READING**

1. Valuation of Land Bill.
2. Land Valuation Tribunals Bill.
3. Acts Amendment and Repeal (Valuation of Land) Bill.

Bills read a third time, on motions by Sir Charles Court (Treasurer), and transmitted to the Council.

*Sitting suspended from 6.10 to 7.30 p.m.*

## ACTS AMENDMENT (PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION) BILL

*Second Reading*

**MR JAMIESON** (Welshpool) [7.30 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I should like to remind members of a comment I made earlier this year when I introduced the Acts Amendment (Conjoint Elections) Bill. At that time I said it is a brave member indeed who tries to overcome the prejudices which are inherent to amendments put forward to Electoral Acts or Acts dealing therewith. I refer particularly to the Electoral Districts Act and the Constitution Acts Amendment Act. However, I am prepared to be like Bruce who, after watching the spider, said, "Ever give it a try." One day goodwill may prevail and we may succeed in obtaining some worth-while amendments.

The proposal before you, Sir, amends three Acts which are those which I mentioned a short while ago. It is always necessary to take such action in cases like this, because these matters are entwined to a certain degree and it is necessary to deal with all of them by the introduction of an amending Bill if one is dealing with a new principle.

The principle involved in this case is the principle of proportional representation in the Legislative Council. In effect this would mean the State would have in one Chamber a one-vote-one-value principle. If a case could be made out for disproportionate voting values in electorates, surely it would be made out only in respect of the House which is vital to the governing of the State; that is, the Legislative Assembly. I do not go along with that argument. However, if there is an argument in favour of that, the Legislative Assembly should be elected under such a principle, as it is now. However, I do not agree with that.

In the past, those who have controlled the legislative halls of this State have maintained this imbalance; but not only have they maintained it in respect of Legislative Assembly districts, they have also maintained it in an even worse form in respect of Legislative Council provinces.

We have all heard the figures over and over again that the voting power of the smallest province is 14 times the voting power of the largest metropolitan province. The voting power in the strongest Assembly electorate is about one-tenth that of Murchison-Eyre. The largest electorate in the State would possibly be one of the northern suburbs electorates. In voting strength, such an electorate would be 10 times worse off than the Murchison-Eyre electorate. That is all very interesting and we have heard it over and over again. It bears repeating only to record the fact that members on this side of the House have been unable to achieve electoral reform. However, we appreciate this needs to be carried out on a gradual basis.

When I was the Leader of the Labor Party I put forward such a proposition at the last election. I said that the only matter which would be attempted in the lifetime of the Parliament should the Labor Party be elected to Government would be to achieve proportional representation for election purposes in the Legislative Council. That was made very clear at the time. To do this a number of variations must be made to the present Act, as I have already indicated.

The result of this Bill would be that the whole State would become one Legislative Council province and all the members elected at a general election would be elected *en masse* in a list form. I will deal with that later. The Bill provides for transitional provisions in 1980 when 16 members will be due for re-election on a single province basis. This would be repeated again in 1983. By that time the process would have converted to a true proportional representation system.

In the meantime casual vacancies which occur would be filled by the sitting of both Houses together for the purpose of determining a replacement for the balance of the period of time the person who has resigned, is deceased, or is no longer a member for whatever reason would have remained a member. Should the Houses be in recess the provisions are similar to those for the replacement of members in the Senate. The Governor would appoint a person and the appointment would be subject to ratification within 14 sitting days of Parliament coming together. Those provisions are contained in part I of the legislation and they deal with the amendments to the Constitution Act.

Part II sets out the members who shall retire on each occasion. As is the case at present, the 16 senior members would retire and an election would take place on a proportional representation basis on a listing similar to Senate voting for the purpose of determining how many members from each party would be elected to Parliament.

To achieve this, the Council candidates may choose to have their names grouped. If such a grouping occurs they must all agree to be grouped in one category. Unless otherwise advised, the electoral officer would list the names of the group in alphabetical order. However, being familiar with the party political system, the other option contained in the Bill would probably be taken. Under this option the parties would choose to indicate in the list the order in which they wished their candidates to appear on the ballot paper.

As is the case with Legislative Assembly members, at the time of nominations the positions on the ballot paper would be drawn for and they would be placed horizontally on the paper in the order in which they were drawn from the box. They would then be in position of order and the ballot paper could be printed accordingly.

Incidentally, the Bill contains a provision for people who do not want to be grouped. They would be grouped in groups of one. If there was one or more, they would appear in their own separate groups. They would not be bundled together in a single group as is done in the Senate. As a result, they would have the opportunity to draw a place between the other groups as they came out of the ballot box.

When we come to the election stage, it is proposed the provisions for optional preference should apply in respect of proportional representation in the Legislative Council. It would apply as follows: a person voting need vote for one group only if he or she so desires. If a person wished to vote in a preferential manner for all the groups, he would be entitled to do so and his preferential consideration would be taken into account when necessary and it would be counted in the same way that ordinary preferential voting is counted. However, there would be a need for quotas. That is always the case when dealing with proportional representation schemes.

The counting system would be similar to the system used at present in the Senate except that a smaller fraction of votes would be required. If 16 were elected at one time, the number of valid votes would need to be divided by 17 and another vote would need to be added to give a quota. It is proposed that if any group did not obtain 50 per cent of a quota, it would no longer be eligible to take part in the further distribution, should there be a need later on to determine the last few positions.

In other words, a group in this situation would be eliminated and its preferences would be

allocated to the groups which remained and had the required quota. In the case of a group receiving more votes than the number required for a quota, those votes would remain uncounted in that group. The votes would not be transferred to another group. However, when it came to the last few members to be elected, the people who had the highest number would be chosen. If two members were required and quotas had not been obtained, the second highest number of votes remaining would decide the issue. The Bill sets out the whole system of counting in respect of the election of candidates.

The other part of the Bill deals with the Electoral Districts Act. It is necessary to tidy up a few matters which refer to Legislative Council provinces. As we intend that the whole State should form one province, the Act will need to be altered so that every reference to "provinces" is changed to "province" and, of course, the other necessary alterations would need to be made.

I have had some figures taken out in order to give members an idea of what it would mean in terms of the last election. We have heard many quotes about the voting that took place on that occasion. It is interesting to note what did happen so far as the Legislative Council was concerned.

On the occasion of the 1977 February election, the Liberal Party received 289 416 first preference votes; the ALP received 244 922 first preference votes; the National Country Party received 31 974 first preference votes; and sundry Independents received 8 970 first preference votes.

The percentage of first preference votes was, Liberal Party, 50.3 per cent; ALP 42.6 per cent; National Country Party 5.5 per cent; and the Independents, 1.6 per cent. The number of seats which each party received for their particular percentages were, the Liberal Party, nine; the Labor Party, four; the National Country Party, three; and the Independents, of course, did not receive a seat for their efforts.

Those figures mean, of course, that for its 42.6 per cent the ALP received 25 per cent of the seats at the last election. For the 50.3 per cent which the Liberal Party received, it scored 56.3 per cent of the seats; and the National Country Party, for its 5.5 per cent of the vote, received 18.7 per cent of the seats.

So one can see that the present disproportionate representation continues in the Legislative Council very much against the voting power of the public of this State. Surely if the Legislative Council is to be a House of Review then it should represent the opinion of the State and not represent so much the opinion of the districts. Although it is not my opinion, it is possible that an argument could be made out in favour of the disproportionate representation which applies in the Legislative Assembly.

It is interesting to note that under the proposed system, on the last occasion of voting a quota would have been 33 841. The minimum vote a group would have needed under that situation, to remain in the count after first preferences were counted, would have been 16 921. That may appear to be a considerable number of votes, but in the whole of the State there are only some 575 282 votes. So, it is not such a very large quota when looked at in that manner.

Under the system that applied on the last occasion, if taken out in a count for the purpose of giving some idea of what would have happened, the ALP would have received 7.237 quotas; the Liberal Party would have received 8.552 quotas; the National Country Party would have received .945 of a quota; and the Independents would have received .265 of a quota. That would have given a breakdown of 16 people elected, eight representing the Liberal Party; seven representing the ALP: and the National Country Party would have had one representative—a total of 16. That gives some idea of what would have occurred at the last election.

However, I do not want the Liberal Party to get too excited about the idea, and consider that it would do rather well. It must be remembered that if an election took place over the whole of the State the National Country Party could be expected to receive a vote similar to that which it receives for the Senate, representing about 10 per cent-plus. Bearing in mind the requirement of about 6 per cent of the vote for a quota, the National Country Party would be approaching two quotas and most of that—particularly in the metropolitan area—would be taken from the Liberal Party. Some would be taken from the Labor Party.

Those figures give some idea of how the situation would develop. I have had prepared for the benefit of members a table which sets out the position which would have applied at the last election. I think I now have some right under Standing Orders to have the table included in the record of proceedings.

The SPEAKER: For the guidance of the honourable member, I would point out that it will be necessary for him to move, at the conclusion of his speech, for leave of the House to have the table of figures incorporated.

Mr JAMIESON: I will follow that procedure. It will be far more sensible for the table of figures to be incorporated in order that members will be able to read it, because it would not make much of an impression if I were to read it out. It is probable that it will not make a great deal of impression upon Government members even if they do read the table of figures.. However, it will be clear what is intended. The table merely sets out to compare the two positions as at the last election.

However, one must be aware of the corrective factor which is that the province represents the whole of the State. The other parties which were rather minimal on the last occasion could sneak up with their percentages, particularly the National Country Party. That means if there is any change from the last situation it is possible that the ALP would receive, in a normal election, approximately seven seats; the Liberal Party would receive approximately six seats; and the National Country Party would receive approximately two seats. Generally, that is how the situation would prevail. At the same time, if the overall vote of the Labor Party was higher it would probably get eight seats; the Liberal Party could probably be down to five seats; and the National Country Party could be as high as two seats. Alternatively, the Liberal Party could have six seats, and the National Country Party could have one seat. One cannot foretell the future but the table of figures gives an indication of how the system will work if it is put into operation.

It is high time we had a good look at our present system. We are a long way behind the times and modern practices, and we are way behind accepting the United Nations' dictums on voting values. If we are not prepared to accept the proposed system in respect of this Chamber, then surely we should be able to accept half a cake instead of no cake at all. That half a cake would be in the form of having a Chamber at the other end of this Parliament which is often referred to as a House of Review.

As you well know, Mr Speaker, the other place has an almost equal right to this Chamber legislative-wise in that its members are elected to a Chamber which represents the whole of the State, and it should therefore reflect the opinion of all the people of the State.

I believe no more needs to be said at this stage except to ask members to have a really good look at the table of figures, and not to pass them off lightly. Sooner or later someone or some Government must take action to improve the situation. We often hear the Premier talking about his much-vaunted democracy. Of course, there is no democracy without democracy. The Premier has not lived in a democracy in Western Australia, so far as a democratic voting system for the State Parliament is concerned. So, he has not lived in a democracy.

It is high time we in this State made an effort to make sure that we are able to set an example for other people. Otherwise, all these things we hear about, such as uprisings in the streets, and the necessity to have armed people to put down trouble which might occur—and keeping in mind all the other parties which might be under the bed—could possibly manifest themselves. As the population becomes more educated, and our standards increase all the time, people understand the ramifications of Government. They understand the ramifications of democracy and they will demand their just rights to which they are entitled.

So, in some small way let us make a start towards achieving that goal.

Mr Speaker, in commending the Bill to the House I ask leave to incorporate in the record of proceedings the table of figures to which I have referred.

Leave granted.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr O'Neil (Deputy Premier).

*The following table was incorporated—*

| | Results of Legislative Council Elections (1977) (under existing system of majority representation) | | | | | Results of Legislative Council Elections (1977) (under list system of proportional representation with optional preferences) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Party | Total first preference vote | % of total first preference vote | number of seats gained | % of seats | number of quotas gained | Number of seats | % of seats |
| A.L.P. | 244 922 | 42.6 | 4 | 25.0 | 7.237 | 7 | 43.7 |
| Lib. | 289 416 | 50.3 | 9 | 56.3 | 8.552 | 8 | 50.0 |
| N.C.P. | 31 974 | 5.5 | 3 | 18.7 | 0.945 | 1 | 6.3 |
| Indep. | 8 970 | 1.6 | — | — | 0.265 | — | — |
| Total | 575 282 | 100.0 | 16 | 100.0 | | 16 | |

## COLLIE COALFIELD AUTHORITY

*Establishment: Motion*

MR T. H. JONES (Collie) [7.56 p.m.]: I move—

> In the opinion of the House the Government should establish a Collie Coalfield Authority due to the fact that at present, legislation provides almost no services to the coal mining industry at Collie by comparison with the Coal Board and

State sponsored research organisations in other States.

The aims of the Authority should be to:—

(1) Make an unbiased assessment of the resources at Collie by further drilling if necessary.
(2) Recommend the allocation of resources (e.g. leases) to interested applicants in such a way and with such regulations as to assure their most efficient development.
(3) Sponsor and carry out research on all aspects of the industry, particularly with the aim of keeping it in the forefront of mining technology.
(4) Work towards the establishment of a State-owned and operated deep mine.

I take the opportunity tonight, in the time available to me, to introduce this motion to establish a Collie coalfield authority. With the indulgence of the House, I intend to refer, firstly, to the subject matter behind the idea and, secondly, to refer to the individual items contained in the motion standing in my name.

We have observed the many changes which have taken place in recent years, particularly since the Arab oil situation arose. As a consequence of that situation, the coalfields, are a very important segment of this State. That is why I believe—and the mining unions on the Collie coalfield believe—I should move this motion. I do not know the views of the mining companies.

It will be appreciated by members that before coming to Parliament I was a secretary to a miners' union for a period of 17 years. I was closely associated not only with the Collie coalfield, but also with the policies which were initiated from time to time.

I refer to the question of long-term planning; the question of stability; and the question of support systems which naturally would be associated with any mining venture such as the coalmining industry of this State.

It will be appreciated further that since coming to Parliament I have made a special effort, on at least three occasions, to spell out the need for some greater control and some greater investigation by the Government into policies for the coalmining industry in Western Australia.

When I first came into Parliament in 1968 I moved a motion calling for a greater utilisation of coal based on what was happening in other parts of the world. In 1970 I saw the need—as a result of the policy which was adopted and followed by the State Electricity Commission of this State—to move for the appointment of a Royal Commission. Although that request for a Royal Commission was rejected, reference to the speech I made in this House on the 7th October, 1970, will clearly spell out that what I had to say at that time has now proved to be correct. Unfortunately, what was happening in Western Australia was contrary to the world power generation scene. Unlike other major countries, we were swinging back to oil for the generation of electricity whilst most larger nations, such as America, were swinging back to the use of coal.

When I called for the appointment of a Royal Commission I took the opportunity to outline the systems adopted in other parts of the world, and also the systems that were adopted in other States of Australia. However, whilst my request for a Royal Commission naturally did not succeed in this House, because it is purely a numbers game, I think in fairness to myself and the views I expressed on behalf of the mining industry in this State the submission I made at that time was spot-on.

In fact, much that I had to say has now come to pass. In my submission I opposed the extensions to Kwinana. I did not oppose the building of Kwinana because I was not here when the decision to build it was made, but I did oppose the extensions to it. Everyone knows what has happened since that time.

Mr Coyne: Fourteen times over.

Mr T. H. JONES: It does not hurt to remind people. I am sure at election times the member for Murchison-Eyre reminds his electors of the wonderful job he does. It is appropriate to remind people on occasions. Perhaps some of the reminders are not kind or do not fit in with the opinions and feelings of the people who are being reminded. I do not think it can be argued that many members in this place have a very short memory, and while I am on my feet for two or three hours tonight it is my intention to remind members of a number of things which they might overlook. Some of the decisions which have been made have had a big impact on the industrial scene in this State.

Mr Sibson interjected.

Mr T. H. JONES: The more members interject, the longer I will be on my feet. Members may try to put me off if they so desire but I have plenty of time, and that is the name of the game from now on.

Mr Blaikie: I can assure you we will be listening to you even when your friends desert you.

Mr T. H. JONES: My friends know the story. It is quite apparent we are starting off on a very good footing. We obviously understand each other.

Mr Coyne: A small group out at Warburton is not aware of it yet.

Mr T. H. JONES: When my speech has been printed I will place a copy of it in the honourable member's hands, and I hope he will make it available to them on my behalf.

Mr Sibson interjected.

Mr T. H. JONES: I have a copy of the letter the member for Bunbury wrote on behalf of the Bunbury Branch of the Liberal Party and I will refer to it in a moment. I have a little surprise in store for him. I will read out a letter he wrote to the Liberal Party in relation to the Collie coalfield.

Mr Sibson: If you have forgotten your copy I will slip down and get one for you. It was a very important letter.

Mr T. H. JONES: My final reference is to the matter I raised in the Budget debate, relating to the use of coal and oil for power generation. It will be seen I have paid attention to the policies which have been adopted from time to time in relation to the coalfields of Western Australia.

Turning to the problems of the industry, which are innumerable, there are major problems in relation to the lack of control in the operation of the field generally. As members probably know, up to 1960 three companies operated on the field—Amalgamated Collieries, Western Collieries, and Griffin Coal Mines—and prior to 1957 the orders were arranged by agreement between the companies involved. In 1957 we saw the signing of the first Government coal contract under the Labor Government. That policy was extended and in 1961 a complete change came over the coal industry when Amalgamated Collieries, the largest contractor, was left out of the Government coal contracts. This had a very drastic effect on Collie, when 600 men lost their jobs.

On the industrial scene, the industry has had a 35-hour week since 1961 and industrial relations are excellent. Only three days' work have been lost in 18 years and at the same time productivity has increased and conciliation has been established on the field.

The number employed in the industry has diminished. In 1954 we had record employment on the coalfield of 1 550 members, whereas at the present time slightly less than 900 men are employed.

Up to 1960, when Amalgamated Collieries was operating, there were 14 deep mines and two open cuts, whereas today we have one deep mine and two open cuts. In 1960 we were producing in the vicinity of one million tons, whereas it is envisaged that with the changeover at Kwinana and the construction of additional units at Muja the coal requirements of the State will increase to between 3.5 and four million tonnes.

If I were asked what controls are available for the efficient working of the coalmining industry, I would have to reply that there are very few. We have firstly the companies, and secondly the Mines Department. The Chief Coalmining Engineer retired in 1961 and was not replaced. This has been worrying us for some time because the coalmining industry was placed under the jurisdiction of the State Mining Engineer. I am not reflecting on the State Mining Engineer when I say he has paid little attention to the Collie coalfield—perhaps he has not the time or the interest. This year he has not made one visit to the coalfield. In view of the important role coal is now playing, we would expect the coalmining engineer to make at least one visit to see what is going on in the industry in this State. In fairness to him, he made four visits in 1976 and three in 1977, but unfortunately no visits have been made in 1978.

As far as legislative provisions applying to the coalfield are concerned, we have the Coal Mine Inspectorate, which is mainly concerned with the safety and health of the mineworkers and the plans which are submitted by the mining companies to the Mines Department at Collie, a senior inspector, a workmen's inspector, and an electrical inspector. In addition to very limited coverage under the Mining Act we have the Coal Industry Tribunal, the Coal Miners' Welfare Board which looks after the funds coming from the production of coal, and the Coal Mines Regulation Act.

There is no authority to direct what shall occur, how the mines shall be worked, or whether it shall be deep mining or open-cut mining. These matters are left to the whim of the company. Under the terms of the new Mining Bill it is contemplated doing away with two of the bodies—the Coal Distribution Committee and the Coalmines Advisory Board. Here we see a diminishing of power as far as the operations at Collie are concerned.

I ask the Minister: What jurisdiction does the Government have over the operations of the Collie coalfield? It has none. All the Government does is call tenders for coal on behalf of the State Energy Commission. One company can tender only for

open-cut coal and the other company can tender for a quota of deep-mine coal and a proportion of open-cut coal.

One of our problems in the future is that Western Collieries, with one deep mine, has said, "We will let the mine close and not develop another colliery." This will cause 300 to 350 men to lose their jobs, and it is the reason I have moved this motion.

When we look at the other States we find more controls are available to the industry than exist in this State, where in my opinion we have limited control. The Joint Coal Board submits annual reports, which are available in the Parliamentary Library, and makes recommendations in relation to the operation of the coalmining industry in New South Wales and, to a lesser extent, in Queensland. We have no such authority.

The Joint Coal Board makes a very close investigation of the coalmining industry, particularly in New South Wales. The headings in the reports refer to marketing of coal, district review, research and primary energy, coal resources, mineworkers' compensation insurance, and a number of miscellaneous matters. It can recommend and direct, and it has wide powers. This is the type of organisation which is available in the Eastern States but is certainly not available to the coalmining industry in Western Australia.

The mining unions at Collie are worried about the role of the shareholders. I am not reflecting on the two companies operating on the field, but everyone knows that people invest capital because it gives them a good return on their money. Those who invest in the iron ore industry, mineral sands, or other industries usually do so to get a return on the capital they invest. Of course, it can also be said they will adopt policies to give them the greatest return.

At the moment there is no direction on the field as to whether there shall be one or two deep mines. Only one deep mine is operating at present. I have asked the Minister many times what the State would do for its coal requirements if we had an inrush of water as we did in the Hebe mine in 1965, and what would happen to the jobs of hundreds of men. It is for this reason we say an authority should be established to direct the proper and efficient working of the coalfield in Western Australia.

In addition to the Joint Coal Board, New South Wales has the Industrial Research Laboratories which make extensive studies of the coalmining industry in that State. Victoria has the Brown Coal Development Organisation, and at universities in New South Wales and Queensland there are schools of fuel technology. We cannot match that in Western Australia.

Members opposite were very vocal when I commenced my speech. We have nowhere near that amount of control in Western Australia. We have very little control, and at this stage no-one has authority to direct the development of our coal reserves. It is time action was taken to set up an authority with legislative power to determine the correct working of the coalfields, to their best advantage. It would prove to be of benefit in many ways.

In the first part of my motion I stress that, with the exception of the Mining Act in which coalmining receives very little mention, the Coal Mines Regulation Act, the Welfare Board, and the Coal Industry Tribunal, there is no legislative authority in this State to determine and direct the proper operations and development of the coalfield at Collie. This is very worrying, not only from my point of view but also from the point of view of the unions located on the coalfield itself.

My motion goes on to state—

> The aims of the Authority should be to—
>
> (1) Make an unbiased assessment of the resources at Collie by further drilling if necessary.

The member for Bunbury, who was very vocal a moment ago, once said the time was right for the Liberal Party to do something about supporting me in the Parliament. I will read his letter in a moment so that he may remember what he said.

In order to demonstrate the importance of my call for a coal authority it is necessary for me very briefly to trace the history of the coalfield and the known reserves of coal. In the 1950s, it was estimated that extractable coal reserves on the collie coalfield were some 87 million tons—not tonnes.

Mr Blaikie: What is its metric equivalent?

Mr T. H. JONES: If the member for Vasse has so much time, let him convert it and give me the figure. That disposes of the member for Vasse. Knowing his very agile brain, he will have the answer over to me within seconds.

The Marshall report was presented in 1961, and it somewhat extended the known reserves. Five bores were put down ahead of the Stockton mine when it was closed and a small drilling programme was carried out in the Ewington Depression.

However, the major breakthrough came when the Tonkin Labor Government came to power. Members will recall that the Liberal Government decided the Muja station could not be extended

because there were only some 30 years' coal remaining at Collie. On the basis of that estimate, the Brand Government determined in 1964 that coal would be finished as a power generating fuel in 30 years.

It was the Tonkin Government which took the initiative, in conjunction with the Peabody Corporation of America and Westcoal, and these activities lifted the known reserves to 390 million tonnes, 282 million tonnes of which were extractable. The argument put up by the Liberal Government in 1964 was quite specious; Sir Crawford Nalder said, "We cannot extend Muja even if we wanted to because there is insufficient coal at Collie."

Mr Young: If Sir Crawford Nalder had not said that in 1964, you would have had nothing to talk about for the last 14 years.

Mr T. H. JONES: By the look of the Budget, the member for Scarborough will have his hands full with health; he will have plenty of problems of his own, without worrying about coal. He should allow me to talk about coal, because it is a subject I know a little better than the Minister. If he would like to take me on in Forrest Place, I will be available; he has only to name the date and I will be there.

Mr Young: On coal or health?

Mr T. H. JONES: On coal, of course.

Mr Blaikie: Of course, the reason Old King Cole was such a merry old soul was that he had good health.

Mr T. H. JONES: Not only is the member for Vasse very articulate but he is also a poet; he now is quoting nursery rhymes to the House. By the time I conclude my speech at about 11.00 p.m. he might even be a professor if he keeps performing in the manner he has performed this evening.

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest the member for Collie ignores the interjections.

Mr T. H. JONES: It is very difficult when I am receiving so many, Mr Speaker. I would hate them to go unnoticed because it might appear that I did not know my subject. However, I will abide by your suggestion.

The Peabody drilling programme proved the Muja station could be extended. Of course, this programme was carried out prior to the Arab oil crisis. It completely disproved the claim of the Brand Government and, in particular, the then Minister for Electricity (Sir Crawford Nalder) who believed coal was finished. If he had had his way, there would be only limited operations at Collie today.

However, wiser counsel prevailed and, as a consequence, the known reserves were lifted to some 390 million tonnes. My leader mentioned that he was challenged in Bunbury by the Minister for Mines that it was known the extractable reserves at Collie were in the vicinity of 900 000 tonnes, but that was not information I obtained.

Of course, there are other coal reserves in Western Australia. It is estimated there are some 38 million tonnes of extractable coal at Eneabba. In addition, there has been a discovery, although not reported, of a large deposit located at Hill River. I could stand corrected on this one, because it is not recorded in the Mines Department reports. Possibly the member for the district might know what I am talking about, because it appears to be a very closely guarded secret.

My motion calls for the allocation of resources located by future drilling—if necessary—to interested applicants in such a way as to assure their most efficient development. What action has been taken to prove conclusively how much coal is at Collie? Can any member tell me what we are doing about this matter? We proved the Brand Government was wrong in its 1964 estimate that the reserves stood at 87 million tons. The Tonkin Government in conjunction with the Peabody Corporation, lifted those known reserves to 390 million tonnes. But what is the Government doing about proving the coal reserves in Western Australia? The answer is easily found: Nothing!

There are good reasons for initiating more drilling programmes. The *Collie Mail* of the 24th August contains a report that Western Collieries, one of the companies operating in the area, is spending $400 000 of its own money to prove more reserves in Collie. If the coal reserves were known, why would one company spend $400 000 of its own money to prove more coal exists on the coalfields? The answer is easily found. One of the major companies does not even know what is there. It is certain no member of this House and no respresentative of the Government would know either.

Mr Fogarty, the superintendent of the particular company concerned, said that it was necessary to expend the $400 000. He indicated how effective the previous drilling programme had been.

I want to bring the member for Bunbury into the argument. He was very vocal when I commenced my speech. I have a letter which he signed. I will read it because I want it in the record. In the letter he says it is time the Liberal Party did something about supporting me in the

Parliament to have some further drilling done in Collie. Let us learn what the Liberal member for Bunbury wrote on the 20th July of this year. He wrote the letter to Mr R. H. Scott, the Secretary of the Bunbury Branch of the Liberal Party, 1 Willoughby Street, Bunbury. The letter is dated the 20th July, 1978, and it reads as follows—

> Dear Bob,
>
> Please find attached copy of a letter from Mr C. J. Elias, Secretary of the Collie Branch of the Liberal Party to the Hon. A. Mensaros, MLA, requesting that further drilling and proving of the Collie coalfield be undertaken as soon as possible in order to assess future life of the Collie coalfields.
>
> Mr Elias has requested that the Bunbury branch consider giving support to this request, as Bunbury is closely associated with Collie in regard to power generation and the fact that people of Collie give considerable support to Bunbury.

I have lived in Collie for some years. I believe this request is timely. In this letter, the member for Bunbury is attacking the Liberal Party at Bunbury.

Every effort should be made wherever possible to assess our future energy reserves—

Mr H. D. Evans: Which way is he going to vote on this motion?

Mr T. H. JONES: I do not know. It will be interesting when it comes to the vote.

The last paragraph of the letter written by the member for Bunbury, which in my opinion is the most important part of the letter, reads as follows—

> I recommend the suggestion to you in the hope that the branch would support Collie in their endeavours on this matter as I know that Mr Jones, MLA, member for Collie has been making some requests in this regard for some time and I think it would be fitting that the Liberal Party was seen to be taking an interest also.

This is a clear letter. It is a letter from the member for Bunbury saying, "Look, you Liberals, it's time you got off your backsides and supported me. Here is the member for Collie getting up in the House at every opportunity and asking for a boring programme." How nice it is! I have been in this Parliament since 1968, and I now see a member of the Liberal Party supporting me in my endeavours. There is only one problem—

Mr Sibson: It has already been done, because the company is doing it, partly. That is the way in which private enterprise works. In other words, my letter has got the thing going, and the company is doing it. Everything is on its way.

Mr T. H. JONES: I do not know what the member said, but that is the longest speech he has made this session. At least he is improving. That letter is important, because it could not be denied that since I have been in this House I have been pressing various Governments, including the Tonkin Labor Government, to do something about proving the Collie reserves. I am trying to obtain a new life for the coalfields. I have been trying since 1968. It is nice to know that the member for Bunbury has been saying to his Bunbury branch, "It is time you got behind Tom Jones and did something with our Government about a boring programme." No doubt he will discuss that letter with his Government at the appropriate time.

Mr Sibson: All we are saying is that what should be done is being done. It is being done by the mining companies. They are the right people to do so.

Mr Pearce: Send us all a letter. You are good at that.

Mr T. H. JONES: The member for Bunbury is saying more tonight than he has done in the whole session. It is nice to hear his voice.

This call I am making has not been made only by the mining unions and by me; it has been made by the Shire of Collie. The council of that shire carried a resolution asking for a boring programme to be initiated in the Collie basin. That resolution was supported by the former Shire President, Mr L. Piavanini, who is an official in the Collie mining industry. He supported these moves very strongly, because he believes there is possibly more coal at Collie than has been proven.

This view is not shared only by myself and the unions; it is shared by all those associated with the industry.

I have some reports that have been issued by the Fuel and Power Commission of Western Australia. I refer to report No. FP of March, 1974. This report was issued without the Fuel and Power Commission making an assessment of the Collie coal reserves. Its views were the same as mine. The views it expressed in this document are precisely the same as the views I am expressing in this Parliament tonight.

I quote from page SI of that report. It reads as follows—

> An up-to-date assessment of Collie coal reserves and markets has been carried out.

It continues—

> The main facts, conclusions and recommendations emerging from this review are as follows:—
>
> 1. Coal reserves considered suitable for economical extraction by either open cut or deep mining were assessed by the Director of Geological Surveys in July, 1973 at some 282 million tonnes—(187 million tonnes open cut and 95 million tonnes underground). This quantity is expected to be increased in the future by developments in mining technology, by larger scale mining operations than now envisaged and as a consequence of the increasing cost of other fuels which would make economical the working of reserves excluded from the present assessment.

The report goes on to say that more geological work should be done on the Collie mineral field. The Minister cannot deny that. Of course—

Mr Mensaros: That just proves there is no need for your motion.

Mr T. H. JONES: It is a view expressed—

Mr Mensaros: The Government is doing what you want it to do.

Mr T. H. JONES: The view expressed by the Fuel and Power Commission is that there are more coal reserves at Collie than the geological survey section of the Mines Department or the Fuel and Power Commission would know.

Would Western Colleries be spending $400 000 if it knew the coal was there? Of course it would not. I have a letter from members of the Liberal Party in Collie agreeing with my stand on this subject and indicating they believe the Minister should vote with the member for Collie in the Parliament.

We in Collie are a little worried about the concept of nuclear power and this worry is embraced in the motion. There was an article in *The West Australian* dated the 12th September headed "N-Power reliable, cheapest by 1955—SEC". The SEC Commissioner, Mr Kirkwood, said, "the SEC policy was to use no more than half of Collie's coal reserves for power generation". He then went on to speak about relying on oil.

I came back at him in Wednesday's edition of that paper and I was quoted as follows-

> It is hard to understand why SEC policy is to use only half Collie's extractable reserves.

When we know the SEC is considering nuclear power and that the commission is expected to use about 3.5 million tonnes of coal a year, and when we consider that Mr Kirkwood is of the opinion there may not be a great need for the Collie coalfield after 1990, although for some years the Muja power station may be put to work, it can be understood why we are worried.

The problem is that we know what extensions are being made now. We know the programme being carried out at Kwinana and we know about the two 200-megawatt units which are being built at Muja. What will happen between now and the 1990s if the programme of building nuclear stations is continued? What will happen when the East Perth station closes; and the Minister knows it is a worn-out station, although its production costs are still cheaper than Kwinana? In a few years the Bunbury and South Fremantle stations will be obsolete. So there are a number of questions in Mr Kirkwood's statement that remain unanswered.

In comparison, if we have a look at the 1976-77 Joint Coal Board report we will see that drilling in New South Wales for the year was 131 430 metres. That metreage includes numerous districts in that State. The figures show there has been more emphasis on drilling in recent years. The figure for 1973-74 is 42 717 metres; 1974-75, 66 991 metres; 1975-76, 79 920 metres; and, as I have said, for 1976-77 it was 131 430 metres.

So it can be seen that the Mines Department in New South Wales is very active. Of course, anyone who follows the mining scene would know that a deposit considered to be larger than the Hunter Valley deposit has been found by the Mines Department in New South Wales.

I refer now to an article in *The Miner* dated the 17th September, 1978, which reads as follows—

> HUNTER VALLEY RIVAL?
>
> A report of a vast coal discovery covering a huge area of the Gunnedah Basin in New South Wales has been confirmed.
>
> The exciting new find is being hailed in some quarters as possibly rivalling the Hunter Valley deposits.

Further it states—

> Geologists of the Geological Survey Branch of the department had made the discovery during part of a systematic program to explore and assess the coal resources of the state.

Mr Coyne: You are not taking credit for that too, are you?

Mr T. H. JONES: I am pointing out that the New South Wales Government is active in this regard. If the member had been listening he would have heard that its drilling has extended

from 42 717 metres in 1973-74 to 131 430 metres in 1976-77. From that same paper we find the following comments—

> The new discovery by diligent work from the Geological Survey Division of the Mines Department has certainly added a cap of lustre . . .

Further on it says that it "was as a result of years of hard work by geologists in New South Wales". Anyone knowing New South Wales as I do, and others in the House may know it better, would know the extensive reserves that exist in the Hunter Valley basin, yet that State's Government geologists have found an even greater reserve of coal. That clearly demonstrates the necessity to set up drilling operations and so find additional coal reserves.

Are we adopting a similar policy in this State? The answer of course is, "No". We have done nothing for some years and when something has been done it has been merely on a limited basis. Mr Kirkwood and the Minister have refuted on numerous occasions the claim that there are 286 million tonnes of extractable coal available. Mr Joe Lord has said in a report there are 5 000 million tonnes of coal at Collie. I think the Minister would be aware of the report I am referring to, because a report confirming this has also been issued by Mr Kirkwood; the report was issued on the 19th September, 1973.

We are told that we cannot extend mining at Collie because of limited reserves, but if we consider the matter in perspective we will see there are enormous seams of coal at depths that have not been mined before. The Griffin seam is 2.3 metres at a depth of 382.2 metres. The Wyvern seam is 2.7 metres at a depth of 141.1 metres. The Neath seam is 2.1 metres at 160.4 metres. The Stockton seam is 3.3 metres at 238 metres and there are other similar sized seams in the Collie basin. This has been proven by Mr Joe Lord and referred to in the report of the Mines Department. Coal has not yet been mined at these depths in Western Australia. The coal is there. It has been proven by the Mines Department that there are 5 000 million tonnes of coal in the Collie basin.

I am suggesting that exploration should take place and that development work should be undertaken to determine if we can recover coal economically at those depths. It is done in other parts of the world and, indeed, in New South Wales this is happening. I have seen mines in England where coal is being mined at depths far in excess of the depths I have mentioned tonight.

The 5 000 million tonnes I have mentioned does not include Eneabba and it does not refer to the deposit situated some miles away at Hill River.

If we are to extend the coal-fired system in Western Australia there is ample opportunity for us to do the necessary work so as to reliably prove the coal deposits in the State. The SEC has been talking about pump storage, where special units would generate power by a pump process. It is time that we did like the Americans and got down to some real planning and determined what amount of that 5 000 million tonnes is extractable, because in the long term it will be needed.

Possibly it will not be needed in our time. The proven coal reserves will be sufficient. But is it wrong for me to suggest that six seams of two metres and thicker cannot be extracted? Of course it is not wrong for me to suggest that. Other countries have been able to mine coal successfully at that depth.

Of course, when we talk about coal reserves it places the Minister in a rather peculiar position if the following statement attributed to him is correct. He wrote a letter to *The West Australian* on the 6th September, 1978, in answer to Mr Kevin Bligh. This is what the Minister for Mines had to say—

> Moreover, I believe Mr Bligh is missing the main point. The share of the commercially extractable coal reserves at Collie available for power generation is likely to be completely committed during the 1990s.

This is not right and the Minister knows it is not right, because if he does his homework he will be aware that if the maximum burn is 3.5 million tonnes of coal per year, and the anticipated reserves are 282 million tonnes of extractable coal it will not be used before 1990.

Mr O'Neil: He said "committed", not "used".

Mr T. H. JONES: On the Minister's figures, there are 282 million tonnes of extractable coal. If we divide 3.5 million tonnes into 282 million tonnes, how many years does that give?

Mr Mensaros: Where do you get the 3.5 from? By 1990 the demand will be about five million tonnes.

Mr T. H. JONES: Of course, this is a matter which the Minister has not revealed. He has not taken Parliament into his confidence. He has not taken the mining unions into his confidence because he does not know what will happen when the last two units at Muja are completed.

The Minister's reports go only as far as 1981.

Mr Mensaros: How would you know what sort of generating will be carried out after that? You cannot plan that far ahead.

Mr T. H. JONES: Why does not the Minister tell us?

Mr Mensaros: It depends on the pattern of growth.

Mr T. H. JONES: I will mention growth in a moment, because the member indicated in this House the week before last—

Mr Mensaros: About 7 per cent.

Mr T. H. JONES: On his own figures, the Minister said, "We will require somewhere in the vicinity of 3 000 megawatts of installed capacity by the year 1990". That is what the Minister has said. However, he then disproved these figures by saying in the House the week before last when he was speaking to the fuel and energy legislation as follows—

> If we accept that the figure for generating capacity in 1982 will be about 1 800 megawatts, on a simple calculation and allowing for approximately 7 per cent average growth a year, the compounded growth by 1990 would require not 2 500 but about 3 100 megawatts. By 1995, allowing for only 7 per cent increase a year—which we have sustained so far, and last year it was higher—the figure would be 4 300 megawatts. To this we must add the deduction which naturally occurs through some of the power stations becoming obsolete, because they do not last for ever. Adding that figure, roughly speaking we will need a capacity of about 5 000 megawatts by 1995.

The Minister told me in an answer to a question that by 1990 we will require 3 000 megawatts of installed capacity and it would go up another 2 000 megawatts in a five-year span. These are the Minister's own figures. Of course, I cannot justify them.

Mr Mensaros: Some of the power stations will be obsolete. You have to deduct that too. My figures are quite correct.

Mr T. H. JONES: If a power house is taken out of commission, it must be replaced with another power house. The Minister told me by way of question and answer in this House on Tuesday, the 1st August, that by 1990 we would require 3 000 megawatts of installed capacity; but the week before last when we were debating the fuel and energy legislation, he said that by 1990 it could be 5 000. Therefore, I have assumed in the space of five years there is an increase of 2 000 megawatts.

It is time the SEC carried out a survey and analysis of future power demands so everyone in Western Australia knows the situation, because at the moment we are living from day to day. Mistakes have been made in the past. When I began my speech, I referred to the mistakes which were made when we converted to oil; the mistakes made at Kwinana; and the mistake of deferring the construction at the Muja power station which has cost the State millions of dollars. The history of the administration of our power system by successive Liberal Governments in this State paints a very bleak picture. I am not blaming the Minister for this; but all members opposite must agree when I say successive blunders have been made by Liberal Governments over the years.

When the rest of the world was returning to the use of coal, we were turning to oil. This was the biggest mistake we ever made in this State. Of course, in 1970 we warned the Government when I moved that a Royal Commission should be set up. I am on record as saying, "Either we are in step or the rest of the world is out of step." It has been proved who was right and who was wrong. We were certainly out of step, because we were forced to pay the heavy conversion charges at Kwinana to convert the power house back to coal.

Mr Laurance: He will catapult us into the 1970s one day.

Mr T. H. JONES: The taxpayer of Western Australia has been required to pay for these mistakes. That extra money could have been spent on schools, on hospitals and on assisting pensioners. All of these moneys could have been available had it not been for the successive blunders over the years on the part of Liberal Governments so far as power generation is concerned.

Mr Davies: Who is paying for it now?

Mr T. H. JONES: My leader asks who is paying the penalty? We are still paying the penalty. We are still paying for the conversion of Kwinana. We are still paying for deferring for 12 months the Muja power project at Collie. This has cost the State millions of dollars and it is indicative of the bad policies which have been introduced by successive Liberal Governments.

Anyone with a knowledge of power generation would know the old East Perth power house is worn out. We have engineers in this Parliament and they would know it is obsolete. However, we have a situation where the production costs at East Perth are cheaper than the production costs at the handsome oil-powered station at Kwinana.

The production costs revealed in this House on the last occasion showed that East Perth power generation resulted in a cost of 3.14c per kilowatt hour, whereas at Kwinana it was 3.39c per kilowatt hour. Does this not spell out the mistakes which have been made and is it any wonder I am on my feet tonight speaking on behalf of the coalmining industry and saying it is time the Government adopted a policy to make the best use of the reserves of coal in Western Australia?

Mr Barnett: The Government should resign.

Mr T. H. JONES: Of course, in another supplement to the report of the SEC, and many have been issued, it was said—

> The fuel cost for the Kwinana units at present is 3 times the cost of coal at Collie on a heat basis (1.58 per million BTU's at Kwinana compared with a 50c per million BTU's at Muja Power Station—Collie).

That is an admittance of a mistake and of a bad policy initiated by this Government.

Members laughed at me when I was secretary of the union. Members laughed at the Hawke Opposition when it said, "Do not go ahead with Kwinana. Extend the Muja coal-fired system at Collie." We were attacked in the Press and in the Parliament; but the chickens are now coming home to roost. This is the unfortunate story I have to tell Parliament and no doubt members will appreciate the reasons I am moving this motion tonight.

I hope when the Minister replies he will tell members of Parliament, the coalmining companies, and the unions the future policy of the Government on the completion of the two 200-megawatt units at Muja, because the programme outlined in the report issued by the State Energy Commission does not go beyond the year 1982. This is when the last unit at Kwinana will go on load.

Mr McPharlin: How long in your estimation would the reserves last?

Mr T. H. JONES: If the member for Mt. Marshall had been here earlier he would have heard me give the figures. The anticipated burn on the figures indicated by the Minister is 3.5 million tonnes. Without any more boring the proven extractable reserves are 282 million tonnes.

Mr Young: Who is boring?

Mr T. H. JONES: It is a joke as far as the Minister is concerned, but it is not a joke to me. The member for Mt. Marshall asked a question and I am doing my best to answer it. There are 282 million tonnes of extractable coal. We say there is more because Western Collieries is embarking on a $400 000 programme. If members do a little quick arithmetic they will know how much coal we have. Supposing we were to double the capacity. Supposing our burn was increased to seven million tonnes a year. If we divide the seven million into 282 million we will know the period the reserves will last. I am confident, for the edification of the honourable member, that with a bit more work it could be proved that the reserves are far greater than this.

Members must agree that in the olden days when the fields were bores—the situation is not much different from the situation on the goldfields—a hole was put down in a certain position and about a quarter of a mile away another one was put down; but with the modern system it is more efficient and it can disclose the faults.

Let us have a look at Westerns No. 5 open cut at Collie operated by Western Collieries. The open cut had advanced to a certain stage where they thought the fault would go through the open cut, but it disappeared. A down throw fault had occurred and the fault had disappeared. Consequently what the company had to do was shift the river. This is just an example of what we did not know.

As in New South Wales, we will have to introduce a new boring programme so that we can rebore some of the areas previously bored on a very limited basis.

Mr McPharlin: Can you obtain information to indicate that power generated by coal would be cheaper than power produced by a nuclear plant?

Mr T. H. JONES: On the figures available at the moment, no, but these figures are not supported. I will refer to that in a moment, because in my possession I have a report submitted to the United States Congress on the 26th April this year. With your permission, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Watt) I hope to refer briefly to some of the findings in that report. I want to indicate what the subcommittee, appointed by the Senate of America—there were 30 members in all—had to say about nuclear power. Not only is the cost of production involved. Firstly, there is the excessive capital cost and, more importantly, there is the problem of the disposal of waste. Thirdly, the dismantling costs must be considered. In a moment if members care to listen I will give them the findings of that Senate Committee submitted in April of this year.

What worries us is the nuclear target date stipulated by the Government. Members recall that when the Premier (Sir Charles Court) was

overseas he announced that the Government would set its sights on building a station by the mid-1990s. This was reported in *The West Australian* dated the 17th June this year. The report states—

> The Premier, Sir Charles Court, hopes to announce a proposed site for a nuclear reactor in the next few months.

He referred to "the next few months". However, what did the Minister say to me in reply to a question? The Premier said on the 17th June that he would announce the programme in a few months' time. However, on the 1st August this year I asked the Minister—

> What is the estimated capital cost of a nuclear energy State power station compared with a coal-fired station on the basis of megawatts?

The Minister replied—

> As no recent detailed work has been carried out on nuclear power station costs in Australia, only very approximate figures can be given.

The Minister said that no work had been done, yet the Premier, knowledgeable as he is, and again remembering that he was the one to play a big part in the construction of the power station at Kwinana, has said that in a few weeks he will announce the massive nuclear programme for Western Australia. On the other hand in answer to a question the Minister said that Australia knows little about nuclear power.

When the Premier lobbed back in Western Australia the following was reported in *The Sunday Times* on the 18th June—

> "We will not do anyting that is not safe." he said.
>
> Western Australia's vastness would be an advantage when it was time to consider disposal of waste.
>
> Nuclear power was the cleanest energy alternative to oil, he said.

He referred to the cleanest energy alternative. However, if members studied power generation to the limited extent I have studied it they would know how much sulphur is contained in oil compared with the amount contained in coal. Yet these bold statements are made. I do not know who is guiding the Premier. Is the SEC guiding him or is he guiding the SEC? I do not know, but I would like to know.

Mr Harman: Would you like to have a guess?

Mr T. H. JONES: I certainly would, but I could be wrong. The Premier indicated that the reactor would be ready in 1995. This is despite the fact that Australia does not know very much about nuclear power. The Minister told us that Australia knows very little about it. We do not know anything about the capital cost, about waste disposal, or about decommissioning. Certainly the report submitted by the Senate in America will clarify the situation in the minds of members. On the 19th June the Premier is reported as having said—

> State Energy Commission officials privately recognise that Western Australia's existing small reserves of coal . . .

This is what the Premier is on record as saying. The SEC and the Premier are aware that there are 5 000 million tonnes of coal in reserve, but the problem is that we are doing nothing about the situation. Coal is being mined by the shaft method in other parts of the world. Why is it not possible in Western Australia?

If South Australia were talking about nuclear power, perhaps it would have a valid reason for doing so, because it has limited coal reserves at Leigh Creek Coalfield. If South Australia were talking about nuclear energy it would have a good reason for doing so, because that State has limited alternative fuels available to it. However, to my knowledge South Australia is making no mention of nuclear energy, neither is New South Wales. Tasmania has hardly any coal reserves, but it is not referring to nuclear energy; neither is Queensland.

Mr Mensaros: Tasmania has a bit of water though.

Mr T. H. JONES: Tasmania also has had a few droughts which have caused problems, as the Minister would know. The only reason the coalmine was closed was that it was uneconomic.

This is the story and the Minister cannot deny it. If South Australia were considering nuclear energy it would be because it had no alternative, but the same situation does not apply to Western Australia.

Mr McPharlin: Do you know whether Collie coal is suitable for extraction of oil?

Mr T. H. JONES: I will deal with that subject in a moment, because I had a session with the Vice President of Mobil Oil in America when he was in Perth two weeks ago. If the honourable member is patient I will answer that question for him before I resume my seat. Does the honourable member have any other questions he would like me to answer?

According to *The West Australian* of the 2nd August, a nuclear station would cost $800 million

more than a coal-fired station. Of course we must consider the question of waste disposal, and on the 9th August I asked the Minister the following question—

> Is it a fact that among the serious problems associated with nuclear power plants are—
>
> (a) the disposal of waste; and
> (b) the safeguards to be adopted regarding safety and health, when the station is taken out of commission?

The Minister replied—

> There are a number of matters which have to be considered in detail when considering a specific nuclear power plant and the matters mentioned by the member are two which require attention.

The Premier has said there is no problem and that within a few weeks he will announce the construction of a nuclear power station in Western Australia. He claims there are no problems with nuclear power. He says he has spoken to someone about it, and he wants the conversion. However, let us look at what a Congressional committee in America had to say on the 28th April of this year. I will quote from the 23rd annual report of the Congressional committee as follows—

> Contrary to widespread belief, nuclear power is no longer a cheap energy source. In fact, when the still unknown costs of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel management, decommissioning and perpetual care are finally included in the rate base, nuclear power may prove to be much more expensive than conventional energy sources such as coal, and may well not be economically competitive with safe, renewable resource energy alternatives such as solar power. Nuclear power is the only energy technology which has a major capitalization cost at the outset of the fuel cycle and at the end of the fuel cycle. As the cost of nuclear energy continues to climb, and as a solution to the problems of radioactive waste management continues to elude government and industry, States such as California are rejecting the increased use of nuclear power and favoring the greater use of renewable energy technologies. These developments and others discussed in this report raise major questions for Federal decisionmakers about how best to cope with the Nation's energy crisis in the years ahead. Practical recommendations aimed at greater economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in government actions are proposed.

At page 2 of the report, it goes on to summarise as follows—

> Congress and the American people should understand the full implication of the nuclear option, since its increased use—from some 9 percent of electricity today to the President's National Energy Plan proposal of 25 percent by 1985—

The report then mentions President Eisenhower signing the Atomic Energy Act in 1954. The report continues—

> That extraordinary growth rate was achieved and continued through the early 1970's, but then it plummeted. Major economic, as well as technological and safety problems had become evident. In 1974, 9 units were canceled and 91 deferred; from 1975 through the first 6 months of 1977, 20 more were canceled and 192 units deferred.[3] A total of 67 commercial reactors are now operating, supplying some 9 percent of U.S. electricity needs.

These are not my views. This report was tabled in the Senate in America. If members would like me to go further into the report, at page 4 it deals with nuclear waste and it states that because the cost of decommissioning a plant remains unknown, and may vary considerably depending upon the size and type of reactor, the problems of nuclear power cannot be assessed.

The report goes on to state that it is unthinkable that the United States should continue without a national programme of radioactive waste disposal.

Right through the report there is an indication of projects which have been deferred. Other references also deal with health. Unfortunately the Minister for Health is not in the Chamber at the moment but I will quote as follows—

> Deaths in future generations due to cancer and genetic effects resulting from the radon from the uranium required to fuel a single reactor for one year can run into the hundreds.

So, there are problems associated with health. These are all questions we have to examine if we are to go into nuclear power. Dealing with waste, at page 12 of the report it is stated—

> Meanwhile, some States have decided not to wait for a Federal strategy for waste disposal.
>
> Illinois opposes the General Electric Co.'s petition to expand a heavily-used spent fuel

storage facility at Morris, Ill. GE has asked however, that further proceedings on its petition be indefinitely postponed.

The California Legislature recently passed a law requiring utilities to demonstrate a proven method of waste disposal before granting a license for nuclear plant construction.

This type of comment appears right throughout the report. At page 16 it states—

There are too many unanswered questions in the economics of nuclear power generation, especially as they relate to radioactive waste management.

Then there is reference to decommissioning costs. The following comments appear at page 17—

To decommission a nuclear plant for $70 million in 1976 dollars would add only .4 mills per kilowatt-hour to the consumer's electric bill, he said. The consumer now pays 12 mills per kilowatt-hour for nuclear-generated electricity in New England.[82]

The report then goes on to refer to dismantling and decommissioning costs in the United States. At page 22 it states—

Dismantling a nuclear plant now may cost anywhere from $31 million to more than $100 million in 1977 dollars—between 3 percent and 10 percent of the $1 billion capital cost.

These figures have been presented to the Senate in the United States.

At page 26 of the report there is reference to the reliability and capital cost of nuclear power plants compared with coal-fired plants.

The estimated cost of a nuclear fired plant in 1967 was $134 000 per kilowatt for plants beginning operation in 1973. The actual costs were between 50 per cent and 280 per cent greater in 1974.

And so I could go on and on. Members can obtain a copy of the report from which I have quoted because it is available in our library.

At the moment I am unable to find a further reference I wish to quote, but it is sufficient to tell members that it is a report which was tabled in the Senate and it condemns nuclear power stations in America. However, the Premier recently said that within a few weeks he will announce the construction of a nuclear power station in Western Australia.

Is not the message coming out loud and clear that experience in larger nations than ours shows that the nuclear power policy is running into trouble, not only in the United States, but in other parts of the world also? We have to take heed of these reports before it is too late. We have made a mess of our generating policy, but let us not make any additional blunders.

Mr Clarko: Would you not agree that the Labour Party in Britain is totally in favour of nuclear power generation?

Mr T. H. JONES: The Labour Party is involved; I have seen the plants. I have figures available to show that in Scotland the cost of electricity produced in nuclear power stations was greater than electricity produced by coal. I do not know whether the member for Karrinyup is interested in looking at the figures. If he was as interested as I am he would have found that in the south of Scotland the cost of electricity produced by a coal-fired plant, when converted to Australian currency, averaged 61c. That was in Scotland, and I referred to that figure in a previous speech.

Mr Mensaros: A cost of 61c, for what?

Mr T. H. JONES: Per kilowatt hour. The Minister can check it out. Admittedly, the figures are not up to date. I referred to the figure in answer to a previous interjection. I know what has gone on in Britain; that country is now embarking on an extensive coal-fired policy.

We cannot get away from the American experience. The Minister for Fuel and Energy, and the Premier have no experience. The Premier did not have a lot of experience when he decided to build Kwinana, which was a blunder. Here the Premier is now saying that irrespective of the experience in America within a few weeks he will announce the establishment of a nuclear power station in Western Australia.

Unfortunately the Premier is not here tonight. He has to accept a lot of responsibility for what happened at Kwinana. The Minister and the Deputy Premier cannot deny that; the Deputy Premier was in on numerous consultations in his capacity as Minister for Labour at the time.

Mr Harman: Where is the proposed site for the nuclear station?

Mr T. H. JONES: It is between 50 and 60 kilometres north of Perth. I do not know where it is but that is what the Premier said in the Press.

Mr H. D. Evans: What will happen to the waste?

Mr T. H. JONES: I do not know. Apparently waste is not a factor to be considered. It has worried the Americans but it is not a problem here.

Mr Harman: What about the workers and the people living in the area.?

Mr T. H. JONES: There is no problem about them. The problems encountered in America will not arise in Western Australia. The decommissioning costs do not worry us; the disposal of waste does not worry us. The Americans have learnt from their mistakes but those mistakes will not happen here. I suggest members on the other side of the House do some study to ascertain what the world thinks about nuclear power and the problems associated with it.

Mr Harman: Government members will not be consulted. The Premier will make the decision.

Mr T. H. JONES: That is so. Kevin Bligh said the same thing in *The West Australian* on the 17th August. He also said—

> A nuclear power station also costs more to construct—at least $1 400 million as against $400 million for an equivalent coal-fired plant.

He went on to mention the decommissioning costs and other evidence in relation to this problem. Extensive problems are associated with nuclear energy.

What are the Eastern States doing? What does the 13th annual report of the Joint Coal Board for 1976-77 say? On page 163 of the report, referring to primary energy, it says—

> Even with vigorous conservation, America's demand for energy will continue to grow. The United States will need increased domestic energy production if it is to avoid shortages and unacceptable levels of imports . . . Federal policy should stimulate the expanded use of coal—

That is the finding on primary energy of the Joint Coal Board.

We do not have to rush into nuclear energy. There is no urgency about it. Any member who read an article in *The West Australian* on the 19th September will have seen that Russia is leading the world in relation to a new concept for taming the power of the sun. Technological development is taking place and the experts say it will take another 20 years to perfect it.

Enormous questions are to be considered in relation to nuclear power—not only the saving in electricity costs but also the capital cost of the plant compared with coal-fired plant, decommissioning, the disposal of radioactive waste, and the very important question of the danger to health. All these matters are covered in the report presented to the Senate, to which I have just referred.

I will now turn to paragraphs (2) and (3) of my motion, which read—

> (2) Recommend the allocation of resources (e.g. leases) to interested applicants in such a way and with such regulations as to assure their most efficient development.
>
> (3) Sponsor and carry out research on all aspects of the industry, particularly with the aim of keeping it in the forefront of mining technology.

I will deal with these two matters together.

Anyone who knows the conditions at Collie will be aware that roof control in the underground mines presents a greater problem than it does in New South Wales. Roof supports must be erected at Collie, whereas in most mines in New South Wales warning timber is used in construction which, when pressures are applied, indicates that separation is occurring, and that is a sign that there may be a fall. We must look at the development of new techniques at Collie.

Thousands of dollars are being made available each year to look into problems with flora and fauna, agriculture, and many other matters, but if I were to ask what is being made available for coalmining and technology in this State the answer would be "Very little or none at all."

My motion calls for an investigation of the areas to which I have referred. We must look at the proper allocation of resources for the efficient development of the coalfield and introduce technology.

What has happened since Collie has been a coalfield? Since deep mining commenced at Collie in 1895, 36 million tonnes of coal have been extracted from underground and 81 million tonnes of coal have been left in the ground. On a quick mathematical calculation it will be seen we are taking about 30 per cent of our coal. We are leaving too much behind. The figures could be reversed without affecting safety.

The long wall method has been investigated. It is operating in parts of New South Wales and in America and England, where they work on a 100 yard-long face. We must reverse our figures, but who is doing anything about it? Is anyone engaging in technology or research to see whether we can introduce a new system to try to alter the quantities that are being left and being taken? Of course, not. We are just going on from day to day.

I am not reflecting on the companies. They are not worrying because they know the Government

must get its coal from somewhere. The Government should be establishing an authority to look at new mining techniques, whether long wall units or some other system. It is criminal to allow the industry to operate as it is at the moment.

We have made mistakes in the past. In the late 1940s we embarked on a programme for the deep mines at Collie and brought in shuttle cars, miners, and other heavy equipment. A mistake was made in trying to make the industry suit the machine, instead of realising ours is a peculiar industry, with problems associated with deep mining which are not encountered anywhere else in Australia, and we must use different methods.

Heavy equipment was purchased, but we have soft floors in our mines and when they are damaged productivity drops. When Amalgamated Collieries was operating the average production per shift for each worker employed was between three and four tons, whereas today with small equipment and little end-loaders in the deep mine productivity has been increased to between six and eight tonnes per man shift, with very little capital cost.

This is what can be achieved. In the near future some people must look at these problems and they must say, "We are going to experiment with this system in Collie to try to reverse the situation of leaving more coal behind than we take out." Very little has been done in relation to research. In fact, nothing much has been done in Collie at all since the Government fuel technologist (Mr Paul Donnelly) left in 1969. No other person was appointed to this position.

Limited work has been carried out at the Government Chemical Laboratories, but nothing of the scale required by the industry. Even worse, under the provisions of the Federal legislation, coalmining companies must pay 5c a tonne into the Coal Research Trust Fund. Although this fund has been operating for a short time only, the Western Australian coalmining companies have paid in $109 149. In reply to a question I asked in this House, I was informed that not one tonne of Collie coal has been sent to the Eastern States for experiment. This fund was commenced on the 17th August, last year, and our companies paid in the sum of $109 149 up to the 9th August, this year, but what benefit have we received? Nothing at all. No coal has been sent for testing and it is time that the authority or somebody got to work to assist the coalmining industry of this State. This is more evidence that insufficient emphasis is placed on this industry.

Every year in its annual report the Joint Coal Board recommends that such and such should take place at Maitland, at Wollongong, or at Newcastle. What recommendation do we receive from any authority to say that this policy should be initiated here to improve the operations and conditions generally on the Collie coalfield?

A moment ago I mentioned the State Energy Commission. The commission changes its ideas from time to time. Once it thought in terms of oil, then it was coal, then oil, then pump storage, then back to coal, and now it is looking at nuclear power generation. I wonder what we will be looking at next? The SEC jumps from point to point, with no consideration at all for the world trend.

An environmental assessment was carried out in 1974. Looking into the future, the EPA thought that by the year 2000, 1 880 men would be employed in the coalfields. This indicates that changes in thinking are now taking place.

I spoke recently to the Vice President of Mobil Oil while he was in Perth. He said that the company is confident it could extract oil from Collie coal. He did not say that Collie coal had been tested, but he said that if carbon was a component of it, then oil could be extracted. He probably gave the same information to the Minister, and he did say, quite honestly, that at the present time extracting oil from coal is not an economic proposition. However, members know that if more oil is not found by 1985, oil supplies throughout the world will suffer a cut-back. If that occurs the new Mobil Oil process will become effective. Surely this is sufficient reason for us to place greater emphasis on the very important coal reserves we have in Collie and, indeed, in other parts of Western Australia.

In the Press on Monday, the 21st August, it was reported that the Minister said Collie coal could be used more due to some technology that had been introduced. What did the Minister then say in the *Daily News* of Wednesday, the 16th August? It really frightens me that the Minister says one thing one day and another thing the next. This is what he is reported as saying in that edition—

> In answer to a question from the deputy Opposition Leader, Mr Bryce, Mr Mensaros said the 6.5 million tonnes of liquified natural gas which was expected to be exported from the North-West Shelf each year could generate 11.4 million kilolitres of methanol.
>
> In answer to another question from Mr Bryce, Mr Mensaros said the State Energy

Commission was keeping fully abreast of developments within Australia and overseas, relating to the production of liquid fuel from coal.

He said the main thrust in Australia was in the Eastern States, where there were abundant reserves of both black and brown coal.

"Present reserves of coal in WA do not justify their use for the production of liquid fuels," Mr Mensaros said.

Is it not time we considered this 5 000 million tonnes of coal that we know about at Collie and that Joe Lord mentioned? This was not a report put out by the unions or put out by the mining companies, but was the report of a geologist. He spoke of the possibility of mining coal by the shaft method instead of by tunnelling. If the answer is just to say, "We cannot look at this new concept because we do not have enough coal", why is not the Government doing something about it? We are asking the Government to do something, to take some action such as that taken by the Joint Coal Board. Over the last three years the boring programme was increased, and there was a new discovery of coal.

We must do something; the Government must give the lead. At the present time the companies are organising the industry. I do not say that the industry should not be worked on a proper and efficient basis, but at the moment there is no control of the companies. Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd. is paying good dividends; I am not opposed to the payment of good dividends, but while it is making this money surely the company should be required to put down a deep mine at the Muja open-cut operation. What is happening? Simply nothing. What is worrying me and what is also worrying the union is that Western Collieries Ltd., although it has had a deep mine operating, has said, "We will let it work itself out. We will not make money available for mine development. So we will not undertake some planning now." We know that once a mine is put down, it takes quite a few years for it to get into production. If we go just for open-cut coal, we will finish up in a terrible mess in this State. This is the reason that I am moving my motion tonight.

Mobil Oil of America sent its Vice President out here to look at the new Mobil concept. I had quite a long session with this gentleman, and his company is quite confident that, with the technology and experiments carried out to this point, it will be in a position to extract oil from coal—including Collie coal—when it is necessary.

Large sums of money have been spent in research in other fields, and I could refer here to various departments including the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. We all know that hundreds of thousands of dollars has been spent on research into the problem of salinity in the Wellington Dam catchment area, and I do not for one minute suggest that it should not be spent. Solar energy research has attracted attention, as has research undertaken by the Department of Agriculture. I could go on and on to list areas where this Government has set money aside to conduct experiments, but if I were to ask the question, "What money has been set aside to look at the coalmining industry?" unfortunately the answer would be "Nil". It is time that some positive action was taken to remedy the unfortunate position in which we find ourselves.

I now turn to the last paragraph of my motion which reads—

> Work towards the establishment of a State-owned and operated deep mine.

Members on the Government side of the House may say that this is a socialistic policy, but I would like to remind them of the operation at Vale's Point in New South Wales. The biggest power house in the State is Liddell's, and the second at Vale's Point where a State mine operates alongside two privately owned mines, and the reason for this is clear. In this way the State Electricity Commission knows the production costs. We are not in this fortunate position in Western Australia, and the same operation is not necessary in South Australia, because the coal reserves at Leigh Creek are operated by the Electricity Trust of that State. A similar situation applies in regard to the brown coal reserves at Yallourn and Morwell in Victoria where the SEC of that State operates the open cuts. The coal is fed directly into the power house.

I mentioned before that the mining companies are in this industry for profit. No-one would invest in a company which did not pay a good dividend. The companies' main interest is the profit motive. New South Wales has the opportunity to gauge its costs of production, and this has resulted in benefits. I think it is in our interests to do this in the long term; if the time is not opportune at the moment, certainly it is something which is worthy of consideration.

I hope I have made my position clear and have provided sufficient reasons in support of the motion. If members opposite consider my views and then consider the situation in which they find themselves I am sure they will agree with me that there is a need for the establishment of some

authority in respect of the Collie coalfield. In moving this motion I am in no way reflecting upon the two companies which are operating at Collie, because they have played the game so far as Collie and the State are concerned.

Mr Mensaros: Then why do you want to nationalise them?

Mr T. H. JONES: I mentioned nationalisation only on the basis of price. I mentioned a State mine only for the reason that if there is one State mine operating we can consider the price structure, as is occurring at Vale's Point.

Mr Mensaros: It is in the contract that they have to divulge the price structure, so don't worry about that.

Mr T. H. JONES: That is news to me. However, manipulation can occur. I am not suggesting the companies would do that, but even the Minister's Government manipulates things from time to time. The Government knows how to take a bit from here and put it there. Only last night we were told the Budget contained no taxing measures. Of course, it does not because the taxes were already imposed before the Budget was presented to the House. That is manipulation. Everyone knows there are areas in which things can be manipulated in the business world.

In conclusion, I hope the Minister will give consideration to this motion. He would know there is a need for some direction. Perhaps I see the Collie coalfield playing a more important role than the Minister sees it playing; because unfortunately I have seen the fortunes of Collie fluctuate greatly over the years. We in Collie remember the problems that occurred in the 1960s when Kwinana was constructed and we had 600 men out of work in Collie and the closure of 14 deep mines. Then we saw the introduction of oil, and now we have seen a swing back to the use of coal. We thought that once again the future of Collie was guaranteed, but then we had the announcement regarding a nuclear power plant.

We had the recent announcement by Mr Kirkwood; and I understand he was misquoted. If he was misquoted he has the right to come out and say so, because it is frightening for the people of Collie to hear that he said only half the Collie coal reserves will be used. I understand Mr Kirkwood phoned the local union secretary and told him that his announcement was quoted out of context. If that is so, why was not the matter rectified in *The West Australian* by way of a Press release or a letter to the editor?

I hope I have established that there is a need for a directive authority on the Collie coalfield, in line with those which exist in other States. Certainly the situation will not worry me because I will be out of the power scene when the time arrives. However, I hope in the interests of the State favourable consideration will be given to the establishment of an authority in view of the importance of the Collie coalfield to the industrial expansion of the State.

Mr BRYCE: I second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Mensaros (Minister for Fuel and Energy).

## PLANT DISEASES ACT AND FRUIT-FLY CONTROL

*Inquiry by Select Committee: Motion*

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren) [9.35 p.m.]: I move—

> That a Select Committee be set up to examine the provisions contained in the Plant Diseases Act, the operation and administration of fruit fly baiting schemes currently operating in this State, to determine the reasons for the failure of schemes which have ceased to operate and to make recommendations to improve fruit fly control methods in W.A.

I move this motion because at the moment it is more than obvious that the existing fruit-fly schemes just do not work. The situation has reached the stage where control measures are virtually nothing more than a hollow gesture. This is becoming increasingly obvious by the decrease in the fruit-fly baiting schemes, which have decreased from 55 in 1972 to 26 at the moment.

All those schemes have ceased to function in six years, with the result that organised control of fruit-fly is simply non-existent in the areas in which the schemes formerly operated. A particularly good indication, and the most practical one, of the result of this is the manner in which fruitfly has spread in the last several seasons. Certainly climatic conditions have been most conducive to the spread of fruitfly. Nevertheless, the efforts of the Department of Agriculture and the Government, and the decrease in the number of schemes have enabled this situation to occur.

We have reached the stage now where the Government must determine just what it proposes to do in respect of fruit-fly control in Western Australia. No indication of Government policy in this matter was given when we recently discussed an amendment to the Plant Diseases Act—which amendment could bear our having a second look at it. There was not even any attempt to give an

indication of what is proposed in the future in respect of the control of fruitfly.

This omission of policy must have some reflection in the fruit industry of Western Australia. It must also be felt by the backyard growers, many of whom must be suffering extreme frustration at the present time.

Fruit-fly control is at present carried out in three tiers, and under the Act as it stands the basic responsibility rests with the individual, and probably this needs must be. The Department of Agriculture has the role of enforcing the Act, and it employs a number of inspectors to ensure the provisions of the Act are carried out in the interests of the State and the fruit industry.

According to figures supplied to me in answer to a question on Wednesday, the 6th September, the number of inspectors decreased by three in the three-year period in respect of which I sought information. The attitude of the Government is reflected in that decrease in the number of inspectors and in the decrease of the amount of funding available for fruit-fly control by the Department of Agriculture; and the time has come when the Government must give an indication of whether it will continue with this sham or whether it will measure up and decide whether or not fruit-fly control is needed and just how it will be implemented. This is the reason that I have introduced the motion.

As a third adjunct to the fruit-fly control methods, baiting schemes were introduced; these assisted the individual in his control measures. By working as a community it was hoped that a joint approach to the problem would reduce costs and provide an effective control; and, in fact, it was effective in many areas.

However, this structure has broken down largely through a lack of supervision and administration on the part of the authorities. I have already mentioned there has been a decrease in the number of schemes operating in recent years. An all-pests control committee established to consider this problem felt some three years ago there could be a return to the original number, but this has not eventuated. In fact, between 1972 and 1978, the number of schemes in operation has decreased from 54 to 26; the committee has reason to feel its prognosis was not completely accurate. It was pointed out by the Minister that 26 schemes were in "long-term recess"; that was one of the reasons for the amendment, to give greater ease and facility in disposing of these non-operative schemes.

A considerable number of difficulties has confronted the fruit-fly baiting schemes. In addition, the schemes have not had a great deal of encouragement; in fact, they have had rather the reverse in recent years. Basically, the administrative and financial problems cover quite a range of difficulties, not the least of which is obtaining suitable staff for baiting. It is difficult to obtain the services of the type of person who will accept that sort of job on a semi-permanent basis and, once that individual has been found, usually he proves difficult to retain, because of the lack of co-operation and all the other problems which pertain to the job.

The recent amendment to which I have referred provides some clerical assistance by way of a local government authority officer being nominated as secretary. This could help, but if it reduces costs it will be only in a very marginal way. It is more of a gesture than a sincere effort to remedy the problem.

The attitude of the public to fruit-fly baiting schemes has deteriorated to the extent where frequently it now is one of resentment. The resentment of the public is fairly general to those who administer the scheme on a voluntary basis and to the staff who endeavour to carry out the baiting operations. One of the reasons for baiters being hard to find and retain is that they are confronted with householders who are dissatisfied, who do not understand the operations of the baiter, and who do not appreciate the work being done by these committees and just what they are attempting to do. These are all matters which manifest themselves within the operation of the schemes.

The conscientious baiter who faces this attitude of the public is not going to stand for the abuse and vilification he receives. Obviously, too, there is a lack of awareness on the part of the public as to the intent of the schemes and, probably, as to the content of the Act under which they have responsibilities as individuals who are growing fruit trees.

These facts have become increasingly clear over the years and, obviously, there is no intention on the part of the department or the Government to inculcate or effect some educational campaign to ensure people realise they have responsibilities and that there is an Act—the Plant Diseases Act—with which they are expected to comply.

There is also a lack of power to enforce actions taken by these committees, especially in regard to fallen fruit. Under the Act, fallen fruit must be picked up each day and destroyed in accordance with the method laid down in the legislation. However, I am sure many people do not realise they have this responsibility. Many people have

unwanted fruit trees and it does not worry them one little bit if fruit lies on the ground.

One of the increasing problems in country areas is that of absentee landowners. On small properties, the owners of which live in the metropolitan area and come down every weekend or every second weekend, there could well be a couple of apricot trees carrying 30 or 40 bushels of fruit, laden with fruit fly. The fruit falls, and nothing is done about it.

The only recourse of the committee is to take these people to court, but the $10 fine they receive probably is cheaper than disposing of the fruit from the trees. So, these landowners simply allow matters to proceed and, if they are unlucky enough to receive a fine, it is only of the order of $10; very seldom is it more than that. In addition, the number of fines levied is far less than the number of infringements which occur. Basically, those are the problems confronting these schemes. It is no wonder they have dispersed into infinity.

The spread of the fruit-fly base probably is the most practical indication of the failure of the department and the schemes to keep up with the problem. This has been especially evident in 1977 and 1978. There have been outbreaks in the lower south-west even in towns such as Manjimup, where fruit fly seldom is found. Towns to the north such as Donnybrook, Collie and Darkan all have experienced extensive outbreaks.

The problem in Collie highlights the ludicrous situation which is created, where half the town is under a baiting scheme and the other half is not. Of course, the entire town has no chance of effecting adequate control, no matter how hard the baiters work. The situation in Donnybrook is much the same, and here we are dealing with an area that is of importance, commercially.

The problem has even reached Brookton where this year, for the first time, fruit-fly maggots have been found in Granny Smith apples. It is not unusual for them to be found in red eating apples—Jonathans or the softer varieties—but it is most unusual to find them in Granny Smiths. This is indicative of the early outbreak which has occurred; probably, they started in loquats and built up from there to some very heavy numbers.

Only a matter of some weeks ago, the Government took action to amend the Plant Diseases Act, and the two principal provisions of that amending legislation bear repeating because, in practical terms, they achieve very little indeed. As I say, they were purely a gesture, and a very hollow one at that.

The first of these provisions was to allow the Minister to name a committee to include an officer nominated by a municipality as secretary. The present procedure of appointment is that the committee is set up at the request of a municipality or association. Following a referendum, the Minister makes the appointments that have virtually been set up for him. This cuts through the red tape.

The second provision provided that the Minister could direct that a scheme go into liquidation where its operations were in abeyance. That makes the winding up of a scheme much easier, but I am wondering what this achieves in practical terms as far as the control of the fruit industry is concerned. The previous method of controlling a scheme was that there had to be no less than 10 per cent of the people in the scheme requesting a ballot to be held in the months of June or July. No contribution was made by the Government in this regard.

Tonight we have the opportunity to examine in detail the change of attitude by those opposite towards fruit-fly control. It is rather remarkable, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Watt). The change in heart and the change in attitude and approach of those opposite from the time when they were in Opposition to the present time when they are in Government where they are in a position to wreak extensive changes is almost beyond belief. I might add it is not only a revelation, but also it is hypocritical to the point of being laughable.

The control of fruit fly has been a problem in Western Australia for many years. It is one of the most frustrating problems we have. It is generally conceded that the complete eradication of fruit fly is virtually impossible, even at this stage of technology and of scientific development. However, fruit-fly infestation could be kept within acceptable limits—there is no doubt about that—if proper control measures were applied seriously.

The range of hosts that the Mediterranean fruit fly uses is extensive. It includes not only fruit but also garden plants such as the lillypilly. Even roses can harbour fruit fly. With the increase in the popularity of exotic plants in suburban gardens, the range of hosts has been extended to a very large degree.

If there is to be any impact made on the incidence of fruit fly, proper control measures have to be introduced and applied. The attitude of the Government does not ring true.

There was a deal of debate on Tuesday, the 15th August last, when a Bill dealing with this subject was before the House. I made reference at the time of that debate to what had occurred. I mentioned the total lack of impact that that

amendment would have on the existing situation. I made reference to the difference in approach and attitude of some of those members from that which we noted in years gone by.

I regret that the present Minister for Transport is not in the Chamber because, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Watt), in a grievance debate on Wednesday, the 23rd May, 1973, he had this to say—

> This is all I need to say on this matter because I believe the responsibility lies with the Government, but the Government has rejected its responsibility. In answer to questions asked only last week the Minister clearly indicated to me that the Government does not intend to shoulder this responsibility.

Those were the words of the Minister for Transport, then the member for Dale. He spoke very strongly. I can recall the heated words ringing around this Chamber at the time. I quote this to remind members opposite of what was said at the time—

> In answer to questions asked only last week the Minister clearly indicated to me that the Government does not intend to shoulder this responsibility. I ask why the Government will not do so. If it is a question of infestation or disease the Government accepts a similar responsibility in other directions. Why, then, is the Government shedding this responsibility? It is a matter of tremendous significance. It has an impact on prices and impairs our overseas markets. As a result of the incidence of fruit fly, local consumers must pay much more for the fruit they wish to purchase than would be the case if fruit-fly control were effective. The Minister, through his department, and his Government, has a direct responsibility. It is obvious that co-ordinated action is necessary to control fruit fly and surely the Department of Agriculture is best equipped to do this.
>
> I wish to indicate to the House the trauma which the local committee is experiencing in running the local scheme.

This Chamber was almost awash in the tears of concern of the Minister on that occasion. He continued—

> The position highlights the contempt shown and the disinterest, on the part of the Government, in the local committee. The committee has no certainty as to the amount of finance it will have available. Each year it is totally uncertain as to what its economic programming will be.

Those were the words of the present Minister for Transport a year after he had gone to great pains to defeat a Bill which the Tonkin Government introduced in April, 1972.

Mr Blaikie: For goodness sake! Will you give us the reply you made, because that was tremendous?

Mr H. D. EVANS: I am going to give that. I cannot allow the opportunity to pass, Mr Acting Speaker. Before doing that, there are several quotes that should be recorded in *Hansard* to remind members opposite of the attitudes that they had indicated during the time they were in Opposition.

The fruit-fly problem has not changed with the change in Government. Surely if it was a serious matter then, it must be a more serious matter now. Yet we find that the previous scheme is diminishing; the amount of money being spent by the Government is decreasing; and yet those people opposite are the ones who criticised the Tonkin Government so vindictively.

I see that the Minister for Transport has returned. At the time the Plant Diseases Act Amendment Bill was introduced the leading speaker on the other side of the House was the Hon. Crawford Nalder. I think you, Mr Speaker, would perhaps recall some of the words of the Hon. Crawford Nalder at the time the Plant Diseases Act Amendment Bill was debated on Tuesday, the 18th April, 1972. Mr Nalder, as he then was, said—

> I am sure all members believe this problem must be attacked on a united front and therefore the Government, the local authorities, and the present fruit-fly baiting people should get together.

That was the member's attitude then. I assume that there would be some support from his successor, if it was felt that action of that kind was needed. It would be interesting to note whether there has been any change of heart since then. The same gentleman said—

> Right at the beginning I said that I do not believe the present situation is satisfactory.

He admitted that after 13 years in Government. Since that time more than half the fruit-fly baiting schemes have gone out of action, so the position has not improved; it has got worse and the Government is spending less on the programme.

With regard to the measure that was introduced at the time by myself as Minister for Agriculture the Hon. Ross Hutchinson made some comments. He said—

> But let there be a campaign. Do not have a pusillanimous faint-hearted piece of legislation; it does not make sense. The objective of the Minister for Agriculture—the eradication of fruitfly—is admirable, but this legislation will not achieve it.

Our legislation was not strong enough for the Hon. Ross Hutchinson. He continued in that vein and was very critical indeed. He said he wanted to put the prime responsibility on the department and the Government. I wonder whether the same philosophy applies now among those on the Government benches.

The then member for Narrogin (Mr W. A. Manning), who was a very forthright member at all times said, "Everyone agrees that the challenge of the fruitfly must be met." He said further, "I am not opposed to many of the principles contained in the Bill because I believe there should be local control of fruitfly." He went on in that vein and he suggested caustically that the legislation was not strong enough.

The present Minister for Transport had a particularly good fruit-fly baiting scheme operating in his area. I do not know whether it is still operating because most schemes have gone and probably his has too.

Mr Rushton: You took the money off them and they had to fold up.

Mr H. D. EVANS: Not so. I was giving them support and strength and I was crucified for not making the measure strong enough. The present Minister for Transport had several gems to make and earlier I quoted his remarks on a previous debate. In his concluding remarks—and he contributed very lengthily to the debate—he commented in a very critical vein.

What I cannot understand of the Minister is that, now back in office for something like five years, he is another Government member who has made no attempt to rectify the situation that everyone at that time in 1972 complained about, agreed most heartily should not exist, and said that something should be done about it. However, when the Tonkin Government tried to do something about the matter the then Opposition, and now Government members, prevented anything happening.

We spent several late evenings on the measure and the vilifications by the then Opposition, the present Government, are still recorded in *Hansard* and they make interesting reading. Now it comes back to what the present Government is going to do about it. Government members have had their say, have had an opportunity to do something, and the ball now is right back in their court.

Mr Rushton: Was not the situation that some of your own people were missing when the vote was taken?

Mr H. D. EVANS: Just one was missing.

Mr Rushton: That was enough.

Mr H. D. EVANS: There are some things such as a flat tyre, which we cannot control. As the former member for Fremantle was pumping up his tyre on the Freeway the measure was put to the House. Obviously someone up there was on the side of the fruitfly and the measure did not go through.

Nevertheless it is true that in 1972 the then Opposition was scornful that the measure introduced was not strong enough. Some of the then Opposition members requested an investigation to learn what should be done in connection with fruit-fly control. Some of those same members who have now been in Government for five years have yet to do something about it. Nothing has transpired and so the sincerity of the present Government is seriously in question at this time. I feel I can expect with some justice almost unanimous support for the motion I am moving this evening. If previous indications mean anything Government members in all consciousness would have to support my motion, unless of course they feel it is not worth doing anything about it.

This comes back to an evaluation of our fruit industry. I suppose the first thing which would have to be determined is just whether fruit-growing interests in Western Australia desire some assistance in meeting their responsibilities in controlling fruitfly.

With the advent of modern sprays, chemicals, technology, and more effective machinery, orchardists are better able to control pests of all kinds. From the commercial growers' point of view that is a very desirable thing. Hills growers, those nearer the metropolitan area who depend on the metropolitan market, have built into their management and husbandry procedures, control—not reduction—of fruitfly by additional spraying, and this varies in different areas. They are able to produce fruit without worrying too much about fruitfly in the metropolitan area, having the advantage of higher priced markets in the region.

There is yet one aspect that cannot be disregarded and that is the fact there is a cannery at Manjimup and if fruit fly are allowed to go unchecked in the south-west the supplies of fruit that would normally go to the cannery could be

jeopardised. If to control fruitfly additional spraying programmes are used, this will mean a greater cost and growers there will not be able to afford to produce fruit, expecially stone fruit, at cannery prices. They will be tempted to send to the metropolitan area, fruit which would normally go to the cannery.

This would have an adverse effect on the market inasmuch as an oversupply could result and the hills growers could suffer. This has to be considered. While it could be suggested that growers could look after their own orchards it could result in a cost increase for the whole industry. This is a fairly important aspect. Hills growers cannot dissociate themselves from this because the end result could seriously affect their returns. This is an aspect that needs to be looked at very closely.

It would appear that nothing is being done about prosecutions. According to answers I have received from the Minister, some prosecutions have been carried out, but against the total number of infringements that must occur in the course of a season these prosecutions are negligible. I can imagine inspectors would have become most disheartened because the method of obtaining convictions under the existing laws is most difficult.

It is like trying to gain a conviction against an amateur fisherman selling fish. The procedures are almost identical. It is necessary to revise the penalties if control of fruit fly is to be treated seriously.

There are many unwanted fruit trees. There are many seedling trees and there are many trees about which people do not worry. They can be in fowl yards or in some other locality. They are very hard to bait or spray for fruit fly. As a consequence, they are a host source for a further breeding programme by fruit fly.

If the power held by local committees or local government authorities could be extended so that the control measures—the prophylactic measures—could be undertaken and unwanted fruit trees could be removed and the cost levied against the owner or occupier, we would see some results from the measures adopted. However, as the matter stands at the present time with minimal fines and ineffectual control by the committees and inspectors, the whole system is falling into disrepute. It is being regarded with something worse than suspicion. It is being looked at by the people with resentment and the whole edifice of fruit-fly control has fallen apart.

It is the responsibility of the Government of the day to initiate action to do something about an undesirable situation with which it is confronted. It is not obvious what this Government proposes to do. However, that might not be correct, because the attitude displayed in the recent amendment was one of total *laissez-faire*. The Government proposes to do nothing about the situation. It intends to allow the system to grind to a halt completely and maybe the problem will then go away. However, the problem will not disappear. It will get worse. It is entirely up to the Government whether it is prepared to see that happen. The trend that has been evident over the last three years will continue.

If from 1972 to 1978 the number of schemes has dropped from 54 to 26, what will happen in the next few years? While baiting schemes cannot control a serious outbreak, they will keep fruit fly numbers at a reasonably minimal level. The basis of any action by the Government is firstly to assess the position as it exists. The Government has not even done that. It has talked about it. In 1972 the Government talked about it. It said we should have an inquiry before bringing down legislation, especially legislation as pusillanimous as that brought down in 1972. At that time the Government said we should have an inquiry.

The Government has the opportunity tonight to do something about the situation. The Opposition is calling for a committee of inquiry into fruit fly and basic to any recommendations of suggested action will be an evaluation of the overall position in this State. First and foremost one of the recommendations should be whether action is intended to be taken. The present Government's attitude is to stand aside and the problem may go away. However, the problem will not go away. Action is needed and the first action to be taken should be the setting up of a committee of inquiry.

Many members opposite have espoused previously the cause of committees of inquiry; therefore, I look forward to a great deal of support from members opposite when this motion is formally put. I have moved the motion standing in my name in the full expectation that it will be carried.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Old (Minister for Agriculture).

## INDUSTRIAL LANDS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

*Returned*

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

*House adjourned at 10.15 p.m.*

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### HEALTH

*Chiropractors, Dentists, and Medical Practitioners: X-rays*

1664. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

(1) With reference to the answer to Legislative Council question 294 of 1978, will he supply details of how it became apparent to the Government in 1975 that despite claims of adequate training in the use of X-rays, some chiropractors were lacking in competence in this field?

(2) When the problem became apparent to the Government, was any attempt made to alert members of the public of the danger to health that excessive doses of X-ray radiation could cause?

(3) Does the Government have any record of chiropractic patients who did receive excessive doses of X-ray radiation?

(4) In what way do excessive doses of X-ray radiation affect a person's health?

(5) Were the chiropractors who were delivering excessive doses of X-ray radiation to their patients prior to 1975, registered with the W.A. Chiropractors Registration Board?

(6) In view of the fact that the Government no longer accepts on face value the qualifications of overseas trained chiropractors in respect of X-rays, will he see that in future every applicant for registration is subjected to a thorough examination conducted by the W.A. Chiropractors Registration Board before being permitted to practise in this State?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) The Radiological Council's officers have inspected the X-ray facilities of the users of X-rays since the early 1960s. As a result of these inspections, the council became aware prior to 1975 that some chiropractors were lacking competence in the use of X-rays.

(2) and (3) No.

(4) The effects of X-rays is a complex subject and can only be considered on an epidemiological basis. It is not possible to predict the effects of radiation on a particular individual.

(5) Yes.

(6) It is not essential to the practice of chiropractic that X-rays be used. Some chiropractors have insufficient knowledge of X-rays to qualify for a permit under the Radiation Safety Act. Only those registered chiropractors who satisfy the Radiological Council as to their competence can use X-rays. This has nothing to do with the place or country in which they obtained their chiropractic qualifications.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

*Large and Heavy Vehicles: Control*

1665. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Local Government:

Further to question 1600 of 1978 relevant to control of large and heavy vehicles, why was I advised in reply to question 983 of 1978 that the matter of control of large or heavy vehicles using certain streets was under consideration when in fact the proposal was rejected in August 1976?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

The reply to question 983 referred to consideration of the submission by the Local Government Association. That association and the Country Shire Councils' Association have been invited to make further submissions on the question. The decision of August 1976 has therefore not been varied.

### HEALTH: CHIROPRACTIC

*Chiropractors: "Doctor" Prefix*

1666. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Is it a fact that a number of registered chiropractors, including some members of the Registration Board describe themselves in the Perth telephone directory or on letterheads or on office nameplates and signs as "doctor" or "doctor of chiropractic"?

(2) If "Yes" what action is the Government taking to stop this practice?

(3) Will he advise me of the results of the Registration Board's examination of the advertisement referred to in question 1599 of 1978?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) The board is currently inquiring into the use of the title "doctor" by registered chiropractors. When I am advised of the result of their inquiries I will be in a position to answer the question.
(2) The administration of the Chiropractors Act is vested in the Chiropractors Registration Board.
(3) Yes, when I receive the information.

## HEALTH: CHIROPRACTIC

*Chiropractors: "Doctor" Prefix*

1667. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Further to question 1601 of 1978, will he advise the major newspapers in this State of the law prohibiting registered chiropractors from using the title "doctor" and request those newspapers to refrain from describing registered chiropractors as "doctors"?
(2) If "No" why not?
(3) Will he advise me of the result of the Registration Board's examination of the *Daily News* article of Monday, 11th September?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) No.
(2) This is the business of the Chiropractors Registration Board.
(3) Yes, when I receive the information.

## NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL

*Fire Safety Section*

1668. Mr DAVIES, to the Chief Secretary:

Will he investigate the feasibility of establishing a fire safety section within the National Safety Council?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

The National Safety Council of WA already deals with fire safety within the activities of its three divisions; namely, road, home, and water safety.

It would not be appropriate for the council to concern itself with fire safety in other areas already dealt with by relevant authorities; that is, the WA Fire Brigades Board, the Department of Labour and Industry, the Bush Fires Board, and the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention.

## ENERGY

*Electricity Supplies and Gas: Revenue Gain*

1669. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

What is the estimated gain in revenue in 1978-79 resulting from the increases in the following charges as announced before the 1978-79 State Budget:

(a) electricity charges;
(b) gas charges?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

(a) $14.1 million.
(b) $1.15 million.

## RAILWAYS, TRANSPORT, AND SHIPPING

*Fares and Freight Rates*

1670. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Transport:

What is the estimated gain in revenue in 1978-79 resulting from the increases in the following rates and charges as announced prior to the 1978-79 State Budget:

(a) Westrail freight rates;
(b) country bus and train fares;
(c) State Shipping Service freight rates;
(d) metropolitan bus and train fares?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

(a) $6.1 million;
(b) $240 000;
(c) $420 000;
(d) $2 138 000.

## WATER SUPPLIES, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE

*Revenue*

1671. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

What is the estimated gain in revenue in 1978-79 resulting from the increases in

the following rates and charges as announced before the 1978-79 State Budget:

(a) country water rates and charges;
(b) service fees for non-rated properties;
(c) metropolitan sewerage rates;
(d) metropolitan drainage rates;
(e) non-residential metropolitan water rates?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(a) $1 260 000;

(b)

| | |
|---|---|
| Water | $242 400 |
| Sewerage | $202 300 |
| | $444 700; |

(c) $3 174 100;
(d) $407 600;
(e) $1 991 800.

## HOUSING

*Rental: Revenue Gain*

1672. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Housing:

What is the estimated net gain in revenue in 1978-79 resulting from the increases and adjustments in the following State Housing Commission rents as announced before the 1978-79 State Budget:

(a) metropolitan rents;
(b) country rents?

Mr RIDGE replied:

The State Housing Commission does not have any geographic dissection of all transactions on rental account. The adjustments in rental and rebate scales to be effective from the 2nd October, 1978, are expected to produce a net revenue increase of $657 000 in 1978-79 after allowing increased outgoings of $2 534 000.

## WATER SUPPLIES

*Consumers: Residential*

1673. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What was the number of residential properties in the metropolitan area to which water was supplied in 1977-78?
(2) What is the estimated number of residential properties in the metropolitan area to which water will be supplied in 1978-79?
(3) What was the total number of accounts recorded by the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board for residential consumers in 1977-78?
(4) What is the estimated number of accounts for residential consumers in 1978-79.

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) 256 228.
(2) 288 000.
(3) 70 021.
(4) An accurate estimate cannot be given.

## WATER SUPPLIES

*Consumers: Non-residential*

1674. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) How many non-residential services in the metropolitan area were supplied with water in 1977-78.
(2) How many of the non-residential services were unmetered?
(3) What was the estimated consumption of water by the unmetered non-residential services in 1977-78 identified in (2)?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) to (3) This question was asked without notice on the 14th September, 1978 and an answer given.

## HEALTH

*Women's Refuge Centres*

1675. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

(1) How many applications for maintenance and development of women's refuge centres were refused:

(a) for the 1977-78 financial year;
(b) for this financial year?

(2) From whom were the applications received in each case?

(3) What applications, if any, are currently under consideration?

(4) What is this year's allocation of funds?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) (a) and (b) One.

(2) (a) Nardine Women's Refuge Committee (for Nardine II);

(b) Nardine Women's Refuge Committee (for Nardine II).

(3) Women's refuge centre (Jesus People Welfare Services Inc.); Belmont women's refuge (shire of Belmont).

(4) Commonwealth funds of $337 300 have been allocated.

## HEALTH: DENTAL THERAPY CENTRES

*School: Kenwick*

1676. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Is it a fact that Kenwick primary school children receive no free dental treatment at all?

(2) Can the surrounding schools in the area go to Maddington or South Thornlie dental clinics?

(3) If "Yes" to (1) and (2), will he advise why Kenwick primary school children are possibly disadvantaged as regards dental care?

(4) Will he give a definite answer as to where these children may attend for dental examination and treatment?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) Kenwick children are not yet included in the programme.

(2) (a) The following schools can attend the East Maddington clinic:

Maddington primary school; Orange Grove primary school pre-school children; total enrolment approximately 1 400 children;

(b) the following schools attend the South Thornlie clinic:

Sacred Heart, Thornlie; Yale primary school pre-school children; total enrolment approximately 1 500 children.

(3) It is proposed to include Kenwick children in a clinic to be established at Thornlie primary school.

(4) They will be able to attend the Thornlie primary school clinic when it is established, which is being considered for the 1978-79 capital works programme which at this time is undertermined.

## HOUSING

*Tone River*

1677. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Housing:

(1) (a) Does the State Housing Commission own any houses in the Tone River township; and

(b) if so, how many?

(2) (a) Are any State Housing Commission houses at Tone River made available to Bunnings Ltd. under some form of agreement; and

(b) if so, what is the nature of the agreement?

(3) In the event of these houses becoming superfluous to the needs of the company following the closure of Tone River mill in December, with whom will ownership of such houses rest?

Mr RIDGE replied:

(1) (a) Yes.

(b) 23.

(2) (a) Yes. 23 in number.

(b) Bunnings pay annual rent by monthly instalments and are responsible to keep and maintain houses in good repair, regularly and properly painted to the satisfaction of the State Housing Commission. The company recoups the commission for payment of rates, taxes, water and sanitary charges. This arrangement is to continue until such time as the company or the commission gives three months prior notice of intention to withdraw.

The company subsidised the erection of the properties.

(3) The State Housing Commission.

## OFF-ROAD VEHICLES BILL

*Debate and Amendment*

1678. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Is it intended to proceed with the Off-Roads Vehicle Bill in its present form or an amended form during this session?

(2) If it is intended to amend this Bill, what sections is it proposed to change?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

(1) Similar legislation is proposed to be introduced.

(2) The precise form of the Bill has yet to be finalised.

## LAND

*Tone River*

1679. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

What is the classification and status of the land upon which the Tone River township stands?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

The Tone River township named "Tonebridge" which was officially gazetted by notice published in the *Government Gazette* of the 25th August, 1961 comprises 6 Crown reserves, 16 vacant lots, 1 lot held under licence for residential purposes, 1 lot held under special lease for grazing purposes, with the balance of the area being vacant unsubdivided Crown land.

## NATURAL DISASTER RELIEF

*Cyclone "Alby": Applicants*

1680. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Does an applicant have to be able to give a first mortgage before being able to receive an emergency relief loan?

(2) (a) Were there any applicants refused emergency relief loans in the aftermath of cyclone "Alby" because they were unable to provide a first mortgage; and

(b) if so, how many?

Mr OLD replied:

(1) First mortgage is considered desirable but not essential.

(2) (a) No.

(b) Not applicable.

## WATER SUPPLIES

*Dams: South-west*

1681. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) How many existing farm dams in the south-west of Western Australia would be declared "referable" under the criteria laid down in the Rights in Water and Irrigation Bill which is currently before the Legislative Assembly?

(2) How many farm dams have failed in the south-west in each of the past five years?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) No survey has been carried out to accurately determine the number of dams which would meet the requirements of both capacity and height which are stipulated in either of sub-sections 1(a) or 1(b) of section 45B of the Bill. However, a Public Works Dpepartment officer with experience in the Manjimup-Donnybrook area estimates the number as being of the order of 100.

As there has been some misunderstanding of the requirement of this section of the Bill, it should be explained that a dam is referable:

under section 45B(1)(a) only if it is both more than 10 metres in height and a greater capacity than 20 000 cubic metres (that is 4.4 million gallons); or

under section 45B(1)(b) only if it is both more than 5 metres in height and of greater capacity than 50 000 cubic metres (10 million gallons).

(2) No statistics are available on the incidence of dam failure in the south-west. However, a survey of 1 879 dams in New South Wales conducted by the Australian Water Research Foundation showed that 384 had failed due to "inadequate spillways on catchment area or faulty construction".

## WATER SUPPLIES

*Alcoa*

1682. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What is the total annual quantity of water which Alcoa of Australia will require for its processing when the Wagerup refinery becomes operational?

(2) Of this amount, how much will be provided by the Government and from what source?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) The environmental review and management programme states that the water requirement of the Alcoa Wagerup refinery will range from 465 000 cubic metres per annum at an alumina production of 200 000 tonnes per annum to 4.65 million cubic metres per annum at an alumina production of 2 million tonnes per annum with a maximum requirement of 93 million cubic metres per annum at an alumina production of 4 million tonnes per annum.

(2) Alcoa proposes to meet its water requirements from run-off from the refinery site and red mud disposal area augmented by the run-off from streams which pass through the refinery area. Should this be insufficient, drainage water from the irrigation area could be utilised.

## WATER SUPPLIES

*Alwest*

1683. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What is the total annual quantity of water which Alwest will require for the processing of bauxite when the Worsley refinery becomes operational?

(2) Of this amount, what quantity will be—

(a) provided by the Government and from what source;

(b) provided by the company from its own resources?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) The environmental review and management programme states that the water requirement of the Alwest refinery Stage I will be 3.22 million cubic metres per year for an alumina production of 1 million tonnes per year and for Stage II to be 6.44 million cubic metres per year for an alumina production of 2 million tonnes per year.

(2) The sources which will supply these quantities of water have not been finally determined. Present planning is on the basis that the requirements for stage I will come from Wellington Reservoir and the additional quantities required for stage II will come from the Brunswick River catchment. Maximum use will be made of the water from within the refinery and red mud disposal areas.

## WATER SUPPLIES

*Murray River*

1684. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Is it intended to ultimately use the Murray River as a source of potable water for the metropolitan area?

(2) If "Yes" what is the estimated cost of restoration work which will be required on the Murray catchment area to yield water of sufficiently high quality to be used in the metropolitan water supply?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) The western part of the Murray River catchment was declared a water reserve on 19th May, 1972.

(2) There is no plan for development presently under consideration, and no estimate for restoration or treatment of water has been prepared.

## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

*Apple Concentrate Plant*

1685. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) (a) Further to his announcement in *The West Australian* newspaper of 23rd January, 1978, that Bulmer Ltd. was considering the establishment of an apple concentrate plant in Western Australia, has a decision to proceed or not to proceed with such a project been made yet; and
(b) if so, what was the decision?

(2) In the event of Bulmer Ltd. proceeding with the construction of an apple concentrate plant—
(a) what quantity of apples would be required annually;
(b) where will such a plant be located?

(3) (a) In the event of Bulmer Ltd. not proceeding with the establishment of an apple concentrate plant has/have any other firm/s or individual/s shown any interest in promoting such a project; and
(b) if so, what are the details of any such proposal?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

(1) No decision has yet been arrived at either way.
(2) (a) Initial studies were based on 6 000 tonnes of apple per year.
(b) No firm plans re location exist.
(3) (a) Interest has been shown by other parties, and preliminary investigations are currently proceeding with the Department of Industrial Development.
(b) No details have yet emerged from discussions but several alternatives are being examined covering plant sizes up to 10 000 tonnes apple per year, with a probable location at Manjimup.

## HEALTH

*Mussels*

1686. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Health:

Would he please advise the precise cadmium level found in mussels presented by the firm known as B & J Processors for testing by Government laboratories?

Mr YOUNG replied:

| Date Submitted 1978 | Result mg./kg. |
|---|---|
| 8th August | 1.0 |
| 28th August | 1.2 |
| 31st August | 1.3 |
| 5th September | 1.6 |
| 14th September | 1.8 |

## FISHERIES

*Heavy Metals Level*

1687. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

(1) What action is being taken by his department or any other department to his knowledge to alleviate the problem of excessive cadmium levels found in certain fish or crustaceans in and around the surrounds of CSBP in Cockburn Sound?
(2) If no action has been taken, why?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) and (2) As an interim measure the Minister for Health has advised against the taking of shellfish for consumption near the CSBP jetty. Options for reducing the cadmium levels are being discussed with the company with a view to a long term solution.

## HEALTH

*Lead Content of Atmosphere*

1688. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Health:

Further to my question 554 of 1978 relevant to atmosphere tests for lead, and his answer to parts (2) and (3), would he please advise this House how one is expected to demonstrate a need for the monitoring of lead in any area?

Mr YOUNG replied:

A need for the monitoring of lead in the atmosphere in a given area is demonstrated when it is known that significant sources of atmospheric lead occur in that area. Such sources would include lead smelters and excessive motor traffic exceeding the volume experienced in the inner metropolitan area. Such sources do not exist in Western Australia.

## CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

*Star Swamp Area: Preservation*

1689. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

(1) Has a decision been made on the preservation or otherwise of the Star Swamp area, and if so—

(a) what is the decision;

(b) what are the details of the area involved?

(2) If no decision has been reached as yet, why not?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) and (2) The Government has reached a decision in principle subject to further negotiations with the City of Stirling and the State Housing Commission. When these discussions are concluded the Government will make an announcement.

## SAND DUNES AT WARNBRO

*Retention*

1690. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Has a decision been made on the retention or otherwise of the Warnbro sand dune area?

(2) (a) What is the decision, if a decision has been reached;

(b) If a decision has not been reached, why not?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

(1) and (2) I refer the member to the answer to Question 36 of 15th March, 1978. No development proposals have yet been submitted in respect of the privately owned land.

## POLICE STATION

*Rockingham*

1691. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

Would the Minister advise the result of the investigation referred to in the answer to part (2) of question 551 of 1978 relevant to ventilation of Rockingham police station?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

The investigation referred to has indicated that improvements to ventilation are required and these will be implemented before summer.

## MINING: BAUXITE

*Stanford Institute: Report*

1692. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

(1) Relative to the proposal by Alcoa to extend its bauxite mining operations, will he advise:

(a) Has the Stanford report been seen by Alcoa or any representatives of that company, and with what result;

(b) is it a fact that the review of Alcoa's Environmental Review and Management Programme is in two parts, one by the Environmental Protection Authority and one by the technical review committee;

(c) when will the review be released to the public and will both parts be released?

(2) Has he objected, either verbally or in writing, to the timing or the contents of the CSIRO review, with the Prime Minister or any of his staff?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) (a) Not to my knowledge.

(b) I am not prepared to discuss aspects of a report which is currently under close scrutiny by the Government.

(c) As stated publicly on previous occasions, the EPA report will be released to the public when Cabinet has completed its study of it.

(2) I have reminded the Prime Minister about the agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments in respect of environmental matters.

## MINISTER FOR TOURISM

*Overseas Tour*

1693. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

Will he please provide an itemised breakdown of the approximately

$83 000 spent by the Hon. Graham MacKinnon on his overseas tour as Minister for Tourism?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I do not know how the member arrived at the total of $83 000 from the information I tabled in the House last week.

The estimated cost of the Minister's trip is, in fact, approximately $73 000.

This figure includes an estimated provision of $18 000 for expenses which still have not been finalised. It is now expected that the total will be a little less than $73 000 when all payments are completed.

The following breakup of expenses totalling $55 764.83 is provided for the member's information:—

| | | $ |
|---|---|---|
| (1) | Air fares (for the party of 6 people) | 22 154.40 |
| (2) | Accommodation and meals (for 6 people) | 6 366.44 |
| (3) | Telephone and telex | 191.29 |
| (4) | Vehicle hire—including transport of audio visual and display equipment | 1 830.33 |
| (5) | Displays | 3 024.34 |
| (6) | Freight—including multi-image audio visual equipment, Western Australian foodstuffs for promotion purposes, display equipment, brochures, etc. | 10 297.84 |
| (7) | Promotional functions—including functions held at Coventry, London, Plymouth, Paris and Acapulco | 3 120.49 |
| (8) | Multi-image audio visual production | 6 542.08 |
| (9) | Sundries—including customs duty on equipment, small equipment and spare part purchases, etc. | 2 237.62 |
| | | $55 764.83 |

## ABORIGINES

*Oombulgurri and Wyndham*

1694. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

(1) Has he investigated reports of a "big shift" of Aborigines from Oombulgurri to Wyndham?

(2) What were the reasons for this move and what was the magnitude?

(3) How many Aborigines remained at Oombulgurri?

(4) What is the extent of the involvement among Aborigines in that area of the Institute of Cultural Affairs?

(5) Who is the Institute of Cultural Affairs?

(6) Has the institute a political, economic, religious, social base?

(7) If so, what are the details and from where do they originate?

(8) How many persons from the institute are involved with Aborigines at Wyndham and Oombulgurri?

(9) Does the institute operate at Oombulgurri with the approval of the State Government?

(10) Since July 1976, what financial assistance has been provided by the State Government to the institute and for what purposes?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Since May 1978, the Oombulgurri community has been in a state of indecision as to its future on the old Forrest River Mission site. It has twice dismissed its advisers, but subsequently reinstated them. Aborigines in the group have always moved between Oombulgurri and Wyndham. On 1st September the advisers, the Institute of Cultural Affairs, left voluntarily because of trouble within the community allegedly caused by a local European fisherman. About two-thirds of the community have remained in Wyndham.

(3) About 55.

(4) The Oombulgurri community is the only group serviced by the Institute of Cultural Affairs.

(5) The Institute of Cultural Affairs has its origin in Chicago, USA and claims to be a non-profit, non-denominational organisation concerned with community development.

(6) and (7) The Institute of Cultural Affairs operates mainly in underdeveloped countries of the Third World and has no known political bias. The institute is religious in orientation but espouses no definite creed. Its approach is non-directive and relies on complete community participation. Its methods are derived from its original Chicago inner-city operations.

(8) The number varies between 12 and 15 members.

(9) Yes. It has been supportive of the institute until now.

(10) No funds have been directly supplied to the institute by the State Government.

## LAND

*Reserve 29753*

1695. Mr WILSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

(1) Further to previous answers to questions regarding the City of Stirling's request for a portion of reserve No. 29753 to be used for an autumn centre in Dianella is it a fact that after the statutory 10% public open space has been allowed for, there is an additional 5775 square metres remaining and that if 4314 square metres was to be used for the autumn centre and the necessary drainage sump, there would still be an excess area of 1461 square metres available for additional public open space?

(2) If "Yes" is he willing to review his decision against the location of an autumn centre on this site?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

(1) and (2) The figuring in the question cannot be checked as the area containing the public open space has not been defined. Nor is 10 per cent a statutory proportion. However, irrespective of calculations, the area of public open space was considered necessary in subdivisional processes and was set apart for recreation under section 20A of the Town Planning Act. It will be retained for that purpose.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

## TRADE UNION

*Teachers' Union: Referendum on Strike Proposals*

1. Mr SHALDERS, to the Minister for Education:

(1) Has it been normal practice in the past for the Teachers' Union to canvass the opinion of all members by means of a referendum to determine their attitude to strike proposals?

(2) When was the most recent referendum conducted by the union on the question of strike action?

(3) What was the result of that referendum?

(4) Has the union conducted a referendum among members to determine their support or opposition to the current strike proposals?

(5) If not, is the union's failure to hold such a referendum on this occasion to be construed as acknowledgment by it that a majority of teachers would again oppose strike action if given the opportunity to vote on the issue?

(6) Will the action taken by those teachers on probation, temporary staff and in part-time employment, who do not participate in the proposed series of rolling strikes, be taken into account for future employment purposes?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

(1) Referendums on strike action have been conducted by the Teachers' Union in the past.

(2) Within the last few years.

(3) It rejected strike action.

(4) No.

(5) It is possible to place that interpretation on the union's failure to hold a referendum.

(6) The employment and promotion of teachers, including appointment to the permanent staff, are determined by several factors, including merit, and record of service.

## ENERGY: GAS

*North-West Shelf: Contracts*

2. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

My question follows on the answer to question 1655 on yesterday's notice

paper. In the consideration of awarding possible contracts associated with the North-West Shelf gas project, is the attitude of the Government one of not wanting to develop surplus capacity and non-competitive productive capacity in the long term?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

I think this is a question on which there could be a tremendous amount of discussion. Basically it is a fact that the Government would like to avoid a situation where, on a once-only basis, capacity would be created which, when the opportunity passed, would remain idle. This would be detrimental not only to the work force employed but also from the point of view of the capital invested in the business involved. That does not mean the Government is pessimistic. I have often said publicly that we regard these projects which we have in front of us as a basis and a springboard for many more projects, particularly in connection with gas and oil, because of the dimensions of the exploration particularly on offshore areas in Western Australia. It is acknowledged that this area has among the best prospects in the world. The Government hopes that further developments will take place.

Despite the fact that the Government has to plan ahead, it cannot presently allow capacity to develop much beyond the needs of Western Australia—that is, so far as that is within the powers of the Government.

## MINING

*State Batteries*

3. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Mines:

In view of the fact that some considerable time has passed since the Minister announced that the Government was going to increase State Battery charges, and in view of the public furore caused in the eastern goldfields by the Minister's announcement, can it now be reasonably assumed that the Government will not proceed to increase charges in the near future? If so, why not?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

No.

## "THE SECRET STATE: AUSTRALIA'S SPY INDUSTRY"

*Dr Skertchly's Report*

4. Dr TROY, to the Premier:

My questions arise out of a report in yesterday's issue of *The Australian.*

(1) Was the confidential report submitted to him by Dr Skertchly circulated among police and security men earlier this year?

(2) Would he table this document?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) and (2) Frankly I could not answer precisely the first question the member has mentioned. I will have it researched, and I will advise him tomorrow. So far as the second question is concerned, the answer is, "No".

## "THE SECRET STATE: AUSTRALIA'S SPY INDUSTRY"

*Dr Skertchly's Report*

5. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

(1) I ask the Premier whether that document was circulated to all State Premiers or some State Premiers or the Prime Minister?

(2) If so, was there any response to it?

(3) If he does not have that information, could he supply it when he answers the member for Fremantle?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) to (3) In answering these questions I should emphasise that one does not want to take out of context or wrongly interpret some of the reports that have been made in respect of this document. I thought I had laid the myth low when it was first referred to in the Press. I made a very strong statement in relation to that the other day when it was again resurrected. I cannot recall the document in question being circulated by me to other Premiers. I am not suggesting I am infallible, and I might have done such a thing; but I would be amazed if I did. However, I will make doubly sure for the honourable member. I thought I had laid the myth low in relation to this particular document. I gather from what the Press tell me—not what I tell them, but what they tell me—that Dr Skertchly seemed to feel that he had some right or responsibility to circulate this document far and wide.

## TRANSPORT

*Bus Services: Metropolitan*

6. Mr H. D. Evans (for Mr McIVER), to the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is it correct that the Government is giving consideration to leasing some metropolitan bus services?

(2) If so, will he provide details?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

(1) No.

(2) Not applicable.

## MINING

*State Batteries*

7. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Mines:

Following the last question I asked of the Minister for Mines, and in view of the fact that we at this end of the Chamber could not hear his answer, could he repeat his answer, and could he answer the second part of my question which was, "If not, why not?"

Mr MENSAROS replied:

I am not quite sure whether I understand the question. I understand, "If not, why not", but not to what it refers. I took it that the honourable member asked me whether it was reasonable to assume that the battery charges will not be raised because some discussions about this subject had taken place earlier. My answer was, no, it is not reasonable to assume so. I do not know what the further question relates to.