

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 3rd October, 1978

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

MINING

Amending Legislation: Petition

MR T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [4.32 p.m.]: I have the following petition addressed to the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled—

We, the undersigned prospectors and concerned citizens of this State, hereby Petition and Enjoin you to:—

1. Reject the new Mining Bill, as we believe it to be against our best interests.
2. Retain the existing Mining Act; modified to suit present needs; and especially Miners Rights, with their traditional powers and existing legal rights.
3. Consult with Prospectors on the future amendments to the Act, both directly and through our elected committees.

Your petitioners therefore, humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition complies with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly and contains 1 421 signatures.

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

(See petition No. 18).

WATER SUPPLIES

Allowance Increase: Petition

MR BARNETT (Rockingham) [4.33 p.m.]: I present a petition to the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. It reads as follows—

We the undersigned residents of the State of Western Australia humbly request that the Parliament give its serious attention to increasing the basic rate of water allowance to an amount which would more closely approximate a normal household annual usage.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioner, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The petition contains 785 signatures and conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly. I certify to that effect.

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

(See petition No. 19).

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

Fremantle: Petition

DR TROY (Fremantle) [4.34 p.m.]: I have a petition addressed to the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. It reads as follows—

We, the undersigned small business proprietors in Fremantle are concerned about the general level of trade.

The fall in the income of workers in this area is hitting hard. Concessions to single retailers to sell on board such ships as the 'USS Enterprise' does not benefit the whole community.

Concessions to Providoring companies to trade in normal retail items has caused a further disruption to retail shops in our area.

We ask the Government that any policies should not give unfair advantage to any particular business enterprise at the expense of the majority of businesses.

Further we ask the Government to take steps to create more jobs in this area.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your Honourable House will give this matter earnest consideration and your Petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

I believe this to be a fair and proper petition and submit the 60-odd business names to the House.

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

(See petition No. 20).

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

Tabling

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I have for tabling the report of the Auditor General, together with the statements of the Public Accounts for the year ended the 30th June, 1978.

The report was tabled (see paper No. 376).

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Report: Tabling

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I also have for tabling report No. 7 of the Legislative Review and Advisory Committee, dealing with by-laws of the Shire of Three Springs—fencing.

The report was tabled (see paper No. 377).

CYCLONE "ALBY": RELIEF FOR ORCHARDISTS AND FARMERS

Tabling of Statement

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Deputy Premier) [4.36 p.m.]: On behalf of the Premier, I have for tabling a statement on hardship relief 1975-1978. By way of explanation I wish to state that the document arises from part (a) of the motion of the House listed as Item 24 in the *Votes and Proceedings* of Wednesday, the 2nd August, 1978—Cyclone Alby—Disbursement and Criteria of Fund Assistance.

The information is more comprehensive than the motion required, but it was felt desirable to cover the whole of the hardship relief provisions from 1975 to 1978 in view of the relativity of all of the events which generated hardship necessitating relief measures.

This information is to the 30th June, 1978. There have been further approvals since then. For example, a further eight small businesses have received loans totalling \$190 100, making a total of 13 approvals, with an overall total of \$239 500.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 392).

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from the 19th September.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [5.12 p.m.]: Since this Bill was first introduced about a fortnight ago I have had a chance to have a careful look at the figures in the papers provided. It is difficult to get an actual forecast of just how the money is to be spent and who might benefit from it. I have puzzled over the papers for a long time and have come to the conclusion that we are no longer in the State of excitement; I think more properly we are in a State of decline.

The Treasurer himself, when he introduced the measure, indicated it was a standstill Budget. I think he is wrong; the Budget has put the State in reverse. The Budget itself is dull, unimaginative, and does nothing to cope with the problems which confront us these days; the problems of unemployment, inflation, and the economic recession.

As far as I can see the Budget is framed against a background of compliance—and pathetic compliance at that—with the Fraser Government's disastrous, dishonest, and unfair financial policies. The Court Government has fallen in completely and dramatically with those policies and whilst the Premier tends on occasions to be critical of Canberra, he has only himself to blame for the state in which we now find ourselves. I can see no improvement in our position as long as Fraser remains in Canberra and Court remains in Western Australia.

I look upon it as the final act of capitulation by the Court Government to the policies of the Fraser Government. The Fraser policies have locked this State and the nation into a continually increasing unemployment situation and continued economic recession.

If anyone can see any light at the end of the tunnel in regard to those matters, I would be delighted if, later in the debate, he will get up and tell me from whence this light approaches; because as far as I can see unemployment is getting worse. I shall have more to say about that later on. The economic position is showing no signs of recovery. Western Australia continues to have the highest inflation rate in Australia. This Budget does nothing about that.

Mr Clarko: That is a falsely based figure.

Mr DAVIES: I wondered how long it would be before someone said the figures of the Bureau of Statistics are false. Government members have juggled around the unemployment figures to try to make them look better and now the changes made by the Government have in fact made the figures look much worse. The member for Karrinyup tells us the figures on which we have been basing our inflation rate over the years are false.

Mr Clarko: Would you like me to tell you why?

Mr DAVIES: I should be delighted to hear from the honourable member later in the debate.

Mr Clarko: One must take into account the differences in the cost of living in the various cities in Australia. The percentage increase is greater on a lower figure than it is on a higher one.

Mr Jamieson: That is a case of the figures lying if ever I heard one.

Mr Clarko: The cost of living is much higher in Sydney than it is in Perth.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr DAVIES: That is a lot of coddswallop. Surely the honourable member does not believe we will go along with that kind of argument. He must take us for suckers. It gives an indication of how the Government as a whole is treating the population of Western Australia.

Mr Clarko: I will bet you do not know much about the economy either.

Mr DAVIES: The Government is treating the people of Western Australia as idiots. The Government has been juggling with the figures to try to make a gloomy picture look bright; but it has not been successful. We continue to have the highest inflation rate in Australia. It does not matter how one assesses the situation. The Government does nothing about the problems. Unemployment continues to grow. Last year we had the lowest unemployment rate of all the States. At the present time we have the third highest unemployment rate of all the States. What is the answer to that? Are those figures incorrect?

Mr Clarko: What about the population growth and matters related to that?

Mr DAVIES: As I have already indicated, I will deal with the population growth very shortly. I will relate population growth to economic growth. Members should be patient. I will deal with all these aspects.

We now have the third highest unemployment rate in Australia. By this time next year, unless something drastic and dramatic is done, 50 000 people in Western Australia will be out of work. The totally inadequate, ineffective, and inappropriate relief measures which the Government introduced last year appear once more as part of the Budget; but they have been cut back. Our manufacturing and mining industries are in serious trouble and the Budget does nothing to help them. State Government taxes and charges continue to spiral and there is promise in the Budget of further rises in the future.

In the papers tabled with the Budget, the State Treasury admitted our economic problems and it addressed itself to them. The Treasurer simply has not done that in his Budget speech. The Budget does not address itself to the State's most urgent problems and the measures contained in it are irrelevant to our needs. The economic and

financial strategies of the Fraser and Court Governments are irrelevant to the economic and social realities of this State and this nation.

Mr Nanovich: The banking people are supporting the actions taken by the Federal Government.

Mr DAVIES: The banking people?

Mr Nanovich: If you read the newspaper, you will see that.

Mr DAVIES: I know the Bank of New South Wales was taken to task for juggling figures the other day. It brought home to me that despite the fact that the Treasurer was trying to make matters look better, in fact he was dismally unsuccessful. As I have mentioned, the economic strategies of both the Fraser and Court Governments are irrelevant to the social and economic realities of this nation and of this State.

What has happened to the "firm hands"? What has happened to the firm hands which we were told at the last election were going to guide this State? In fact they are strangling the State. What has happened to the economic leadership which was promised? The Government is leading us up the garden path; there is nothing surer than that. Instead of strong leadership towards a better society, Western Australia is facing crisis after crisis and it is overlaid by a thin veneer of deception. That deception is aimed at keeping the public in the dark as to the true situation.

In summary, windy rhetoric is replacing positive action. Do we not get plenty of windy rhetoric from the Government and its Ministers? We get words which mean nothing. We want action.

Let us have a look at the state of the economy. The figures I am quoting and the facts I am drawing to the attention of the House are taken from the Budget papers and from published papers which are available to any member of the Government and to any member of the public for that matter. There is not the slightest doubt that in 1977-78 the economy in Western Australia experienced a severe downturn. It is locked into a downward recessionary spiral and there is little prospect of an upturn in the near future. There is even less evidence of Government action to try to get the economy moving again.

Many of the most important economic indicators paint a gloomy picture at present and most of them offer no hope of improvement in the future. It is significant that the Treasurer in his Budget speech—and members should have a very careful look at it—made practically no reference to the present economic climate in this State. However, his other public utterances in recent

times have dealt with the economic situation; but they have dealt with it in a most unrealistic manner. The Treasurer talks as if the economy in which we live, and which we have to put up with, has no significant problems. He gives us the feeling that where difficulties exist, they are modest difficulties and they will be short term. He maintains the difficulties will be cured by the effluxion of time. What a wonderful thing is the effluxion of time. The Premier seems to indicate that we should sit back, do nothing, and hope that time itself will cure all ills.

The Premier talks as if the problems should not give us any cause for concern. He says, "If we talk big enough and hope big enough something will turn up to deliver us to the promised land." That is a philosophy of economic management based on wishing, hoping, and talking rather than on realistic and hard-headed analysis followed up by sensible, practical, and responsible action. In other words, we want action. We do not want words.

The gloomy facts of the economy are as follows: Many key economic indicators show an economy in trouble; inflation continues to run at the highest level in Australia, hampering industry and commerce, acting as a disincentive to new investment, and hitting hardest the regional and country centres; unemployment is at disastrous levels; the building and construction industries are going to the wall; the manufacturing industries are in a parlous condition; the mining industry is suffering a serious downturn in key sectors and this is having a depressing effect on the whole of the State.

The most important problem at which we have to look is unemployment. However, when one considers 34 000 people are unemployed and take that as a proportion of the total population, I do not imagine those people in themselves are significant enough to effect any Government change. Therefore, they are really not worth very much attention. That seems to be the attitude of the Government.

If the unemployment figures increase, the Government might have to do something about the situation; but at the present time the number of people unemployed is insignificant when looked at in relation to the total population. As a result, the Government feels it does not have to do very much about the unemployed.

The clearest indicator of Western Australia's economic malaise is provided by the tragedy of our unemployment problem. It is a problem with which the Budget fails to come to grips. I do not believe there is a better indicator of the abject

failure of the economic policies being pursued by Liberal-National Country Party Governments than the unemployment figures. During the Federal election campaign last December the Prime Minister predicted, "a steady and sustained fall in unemployment from February, 1978." Those are his exact words. In fact, the reverse situation has occurred. Every month since that statement was made, unemployment has increased.

When in Opposition the Premier said he would stake his reputation on being able to solve the unemployment problem within six months of getting back into office. Members will remember those famous words. Unemployment is now much worse than it was at that time. It shows what a shallow, empty boast the Premier made then. His reputation on that matter is in tatters, because the figures speak for themselves. This position has been reached after several years of Liberal-Country Party Governments in Canberra.

There is no doubt the Premier will continue to blame the Whitlam Government for the state of the nation, because the problem was not experienced on an international scale. It was confined to Western Australia and perhaps to some other parts of Australia only. It was not an international problem. Events overseas had nothing at all to do with the position in which Australia found itself. The Premier maintains it was the fault of the Whitlam Government. Members will remember the Premier standing in this very spot and uttering those words. He repeated those words out on the hustings and in television advertisements. He said, "It was the Whitlam Government's fault." The international economy had nothing at all to do with it.

Prior to the last election the then Minister for Labour and Industry promised 100 000 jobs within 18 months. The 18 months expired last month and the unemployment figures are up.

When the Prime Minister made his prediction, he knew there was no chance whatsoever of it being fulfilled. It was an electoral confidence trick. It was dishonest; it was cynical; and it was vote-catching. I am sorry to say it worked and the Australian people are the ones who are suffering today.

I believe the point could not be better illustrated than by reference to the recent speech by the Federal Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations in which he forecast that unemployment is likely to remain high for a considerable time to come. Later the Prime Minister, having been caught out in his misleading prediction of last December and

convicted of deceit on the testimony of his very own Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, grudgingly and belatedly concurred with Mr Street's forecast.

How insensitive was the handling of that matter. The Prime Minister opened the Liberal Party campaign in Werriwa saying, "Trust our policies. They are working. We are on the road back." At the same time Mr Street was in Canberra and from a prepared statement—not from a throw-away line—said, "Unemployment is going to get worse." These two men are from the inner Cabinet. The Prime Minister and one of his senior Ministers were making opposite statements at exactly the same time. At least the people of Werriwa were not fooled by the situation. No doubt this has caused the Prime Minister to review his attitude since then.

I believe when the Premier put his reputation on the line he was hoping against hope he would not be required to make good his indiscreet pledge. He has had the opportunity to perform and he has not performed. He has been called on to honour his pledge and he has welshed on it. No-one is really surprised because the comments the Premier has made about solving the problem within six months and providing security against unemployment were rhetoric. They were not a commitment.

However, the people believed the Premier. The Government was grandstanding and people fell for it. When the former Minister for Labour and Industry made his comment that 100 000 jobs would be made available within 18 months, he really did not believe it. He knew it could not be done and he knew the Government had no intention of trying to do it. But it was election time after all and unemployment looked like being an issue.

Mr Grayden: That is absolute rubbish; exactly what is expected from you.

Mr DAVIES: He has been revived! I can see the member for South Perth is now back. I am quite certain that during this debate he will tell us why we do not have the 100 000 jobs which he promised would be available to Western Australians within 18 months. The former Minister does not have any more time to play with because the 18 months about which he spoke expired a month ago, and the 100 000-jobs promise has not been fulfilled. So, if the member intends to ask for more time then, as far as I am concerned, we are not prepared to give it to him. We want him to honour his promise, and we want the Government to honour its promise on election matters. That is not being done and I say it is one

of the greatest deceptions ever foisted on the public of Western Australia.

Mr Grayden: You are hypocritical.

Mr DAVIES: No, I am not.

Mr Grayden: Yes, you are.

Mr DAVIES: I would like the member for South Perth to tell me why.

Mr Grayden: It was generally estimated that 100 000 jobs would be created at that time. It is easy to be wise after the event.

Mr DAVIES: At the Carine High School with the member for Welshpool present the member for South Perth said that 100 000 jobs would be available within 18 months.

Mr Grayden: I did not say that.

Mr DAVIES: The member for South Perth was given an opportunity to withdraw, and to correct his statement, but he said, "No, within 18 months there will be 100 000 jobs".

Mr Grayden: Absolute rubbish.

Mr DAVIES: The member for South Perth was deceiving the electors with regard to unemployment. The previous Minister for Labour and Industry deceived the electors. The 18 months have expired and the jobs have not appeared. The Minister had an opportunity to correct his statement, or to retract it.

Mr Grayden: That is absolutely and completely untrue.

Mr DAVIES: The member for South Perth says I am wrong, but I would rather believe the member for Welshpool—

Mr Bryce: And the students and the staff of the Carine High School!

Mr DAVIES: —and the students and staff of the Carine High School. That is how I see the situation.

Mr Grayden: I would like you to produce a witness.

Mr DAVIES: As I have said, it was deceitful of the Government to make those claims. The Government felt justified in making the statement because it was election time and unemployment looked like being an issue. Something had to be done.

Mr Jamieson: I gave the former Minister a chance to refute his statement, but he took the microphone out of my hand and repeated what he had said.

Mr Grayden: Every statement you make is untrue; you are repeating an untruth.

Mr Jamieson: What is untrue?

Several members interjected.

Mr DAVIES: I think the cross-Chamber fire will have to cease because I am quite certain we will never convince the member for South Perth that he made the statement, despite all the witnesses who were present.

Mr Grayden: It was not I.

Mr Jamieson: A TV camera was there.

Mr DAVIES: As I have said, it was election time and the Government probably felt it was justified in making the statement. It had to appear that the Government had policies and plans, even if it did not have those policies and plans. So, a figure was produced out of the air and a time limit put on it. What did it matter if the Government could not deliver? That was tomorrow's problem, and tomorrow was another day. So long as the Government stayed in power it could continue with its rhetoric.

Liberal-National Country Party Governments at both Federal and State level have talked big and performed very small on employment. The Fraser Government is deliberately and callously pursuing policies which it knows full well will do nothing to mop up existing unemployment; policies which can only create more unemployment.

Unemployment is being created as a tool of economic management. It is being done because the Fraser Government lacks either the ability or the will to get the economy working again while, at the same time, getting the people working again.

The State Government is a willing accomplice in this criminal act. It has capitulated to Canberra and sold out the interests of thousands of young Western Australians seeking a start in life, and thousands of Western Australian families suffering hardship and deprivation because of its policies.

Unemployment in this State and in this nation at present is calamitous and neither the Fraser Government nor the Court Government is doing a thing about it. In 1977-78 the number of Western Australians out of work rose by 8 870. At the end of June, 1978, there were 34 443 people out of work in Western Australia—an increase of 34.7 per cent on June last year. I repeat: an increase of 34.7 per cent on the June figure of last year from a Government that professes to have all the answers. Unless Federal and State policies are changed, this number will rise to something like 50 000 in Western Australia during the first half of next year.

I do not believe figures alone tell all the gloomy story. The clearest indication of just how bad is the employment situation is provided by the

figures of job vacancies. These vacancies show just how hard it is for a person to get a job and what his chances are in Western Australia. They are very small, and smaller than the national average. If inflation were lower we would be glad, but because opportunities for work are smaller we are distressed.

At the end of 1976-77 there was one job vacancy for every 14 people out of work in Western Australia. However, just one year later it had become nearly twice as hard to get a job in Western Australia as it was in the previous year. At the close of 1977-78, there were 27 unemployed Western Australians chasing every job vacancy. The national ratio is one vacancy for every 23 people out of work. At the end of 1977-78, there were 34.7 per cent more people out of work in Western Australia than a year earlier, and there were 26.4 per cent fewer job vacancies. So, whichever way one looks at the position with regard to employment, the situation is far worse.

A further example of the failure of the Fraser and Court Governments is provided by looking at job prospects when the Court Government took office. In March, 1974, there was one job vacancy for every one person out of work. I will repeat those figures: in March, 1974, there was one job vacancy for every one person out of work. That is a one for one ratio. Members can see the position at the present time. I will not repeat the figures; they are horrendous.

This is supposed to be "security against unemployment" which the Liberals promised us. This is "turning on the lights". This is "keeping the State in firm hands". If this is keeping the State in firm hands, it means squeezing the life out of families and the hope out of our young people. That is my interpretation.

The greatest tragedy of all is that of the 35 000 Western Australians out of work at the end of 1977-78, nearly one third were aged between 15 and 19 years. These young people ought to be our hope for the future, but we are leaving them bereft of hope and bereft of prospects. They have no chances and no opportunities, and their lives are likely to be blighted by our failure to carry out our responsibilities to them now.

Our young people are not dole bludgers, as many people and particularly Liberals would have us believe. They are not dirty; they are not lazy; they are not stupid; they are just ordinary kids like those of members opposite, and like mine, for whom there is no future under Liberal Governments.

If the Court Government does not have any ideas on what to do about unemployment, it has

plenty of excuses. One of its most frequently stated excuses is that the population of Western Australia is growing faster than anywhere else in Australia. Therefore, comparatively our record is good. I am sure the earlier interjector is listening to my remarks! It is true that our population is growing faster than all the other States. It grew by 2.3 per cent last year. However, employment has grown by only 1.5 per cent so we are not keeping up as the Government would claim.

In the light of our appalling unemployment situation, what is the Government doing?

Mr Clarke: That is because people are coming here from the Eastern States.

Mr Jamieson: It does not matter whether they come from Mars.

Mr DAVIES: The Treasurer claimed in his Budget speech that—

We have maintained the emphasis, which was central to the previous two budgets, on expenditure which provides the maximum stimulus to employment.

I think I should repeat those words because of the interjections—

We have maintained the emphasis, which was central to the previous two budgets, on expenditure which provides the maximum stimulus to employment.

Once again, it is a case of big words from the Government and small performance; it is a case of words which are not backed by action. One would have thought the Government, being conscious surely of the continual increase in unemployment, would have wanted to see whether its policies were really working. If those policies are not working, as obviously they are not, one would have thought the Government would want to do something practical about it.

So, what is the great thrust in the Budget which is to stimulate employment? I will tell members what it is: It is a paltry ineffective, inadequate, and inappropriate \$4 million so-called job creation scheme. That is what it is.

The scheme is nothing of the sort; it is a farce. Firstly, the allocation for the scheme is the same as last year which means, after allowing for inflation, the scheme has been cut even though unemployment is 34.7 per cent higher than it was last year. We have less money going into an ineffective scheme even though unemployment is up by 34.7 per cent.

Secondly, the money is not directed to the areas of the State where unemployment is the greatest. Thirdly, there is no requirement that the money be spent on labour-intensive work. Fourthly, the

money is not specifically directed to work which would employ people in the job categories where unemployment is the greatest.

Apart from this joke of a scheme, the allocation to the Public Works Department for minor works and repairs has been cut by 12 per cent in real terms. There is no thrust in the Budget to cope with unemployment. The Government does not care.

Let us look at the incomes associated with the economic policy. In Western Australia those people without a job have little hope. However, how are those in employment faring under the Fraser-Court economic policies? They are not faring very well. In the last financial year the standard of living of every Western Australian fell.

During 1977-78, average weekly earnings rose by 7.9 per cent but the inflation rate for Western Australia was 8.9 per cent. So, on that measure of income Western Australians are more than \$2 a week worse off. Inflation went up higher than average weekly earnings.

However, average weekly earnings are not a fair measure of how the average Western Australian family fared. Only about one-third of wage and salary earners receive average weekly earnings or better. A more accurate measure of income is given by movements in the average weekly minimum award wage rates.

During the last financial year these rates rose by only 5.5 per cent for men, and by 5.7 per cent for women. These increases were 3.4 per cent behind increases in the cost of living for men and 3.2 per cent for women.

Wage indexation decisions gave employees only 76 per cent of increases in the cost of living. In simple terms, this means that the cost of living rose faster than wages and salaries, and when this occurs the standard of living falls. Weekly pay packets are able to buy less than previously. Under the Fraser and Court Governments, the standard of living of Western Australians is falling measurably.

This standard of living is related to inflation, and when it comes to inflation, Western Australia is at the very top of the roll of dishonour. We have been there since the Court Government came into office. No-one is able to dislodge us from this position, much as we would love to surrender that place to another State.

When the Tonkin Labor Government lost office, Western Australia had the lowest inflation rate of any State; we were well below the national average. Despite our good position at that time, in his 1974 policy speech the present Premier said—

Inflation can be beaten to a substantial degree State by State. The answer to inflation on the home front is to get back to government in Western Australia.

I am sure members all remember that statement; we have reminded the Premier of it often enough. Under the Court Government, Western Australia has gone from having the lowest inflation rate of any of the States to having the highest rate. That is the record of the Government's self-proclaimed sound economic management. Have not we heard that phrase often—"sound economic management"? There has been nothing to prove that we have had sound economic management. For three of the four years of the Court Government, Western Australia has had the highest inflation rate of any of the States.

Since March, 1974, when the Court Government took office, prices in Perth have increased by 75.8 per cent. That is the highest increase in any of the capital cities in that period, and 8.5 per cent higher than the national average. What a record of economic management!

Mr Clarko: You should be wary of percentages.

Mr DAVIES: That pattern was repeated in the last financial year. During 1977-78, the average increase in prices in the capital cities was 7.9 per cent, but in Perth it was 8.9 per cent—a full 1 per cent higher than the national average. Put another way, this figure means that prices in Perth are rising at a rate 12.7 per cent faster than the national average.

I challenge the Premier to say why this has happened after his 1974 promise to bring inflation in Western Australia down. Let him tell us why his Government has a worse record than has any other Government in Australia. Let him tell us why he will not honour his election promises. This was a clear, unequivocal promise, a promise which has been repeated many times in this House and outside it. We have reminded him of it; he could not possibly have forgotten it. Let him tell us why he will not keep that promise. Let him tell us why we in Perth are worse off than people in all other capital cities in Australia.

Sir Charles Court: Have you checked the standard of living in the other States?

Mr DAVIES: Here is a new excuse!

Sir Charles Court: It is not an excuse.

Mr DAVIES: Is the Premier saying that we have to pay more for our goods here because we have a much higher standard of living? What rubbish! Has he investigated the standard of living in the other States?

Sir Charles Court: You are missing the point.

Mr DAVIES: What humbug; what windy rhetoric! Is he now saying that we are living better than the people in other States, and we should pay more for it?

Mr Young: We are not; we are paying a lot less than the other States.

Mr DAVIES: The figures show that our inflation rate is higher.

Mr Young: The point made by the member for Karrinyup is quite correct.

Mr DAVIES: How dull do Government members think members of the community are? I would like them to ask the man in the street how far his wages go each week; I would like them to ask him how delighted he is with the performance of this Government and its economic management. That is the test; we should ask the people who know.

Mr Clarko: Did you notice the results of the 1975 and 1977 elections?

Mr DAVIES: Members opposite should visit their local supermarkets. The Minister promised 100 000 jobs in 1980. That is another promise that will not be kept, an example of windy rhetoric. Day by day more and more people realise that the Court Government is a Government of unfulfilled promises.

Mr Young: You stated the Premier promised 100 000 jobs in 1980.

Mr DAVIES: No I did not; I said that the then Minister for Labour and Industry promised 100 000 jobs. That makes it different.

Mr Young: It was not in the policy speech.

Mr DAVIES: I can see that the Minister appreciates that point.

Mr Clarko: Three years ago Bob Hawke said that 500 000 would be unemployed.

Mr DAVIES: Bob Hawke is not governing, although it is quite clear we are headed that way. Perhaps we are not getting there as quickly as it appeared we might.

Mr Clarko: That was with the Federal Labor Government's Budget in August, 1975.

Mr DAVIES: I would remind the member for Karrinyup that with the change of Government the Budget was not altered at that time. Since then we have had disaster upon disaster, and change after change in the Treasury portfolio and also in the Cabinet. Some Treasurers have been sacked, and there have been a few scandals associated with the Federal Ministry. There has been crisis after crisis, and mess upon mess in Canberra. I am sure the member does not want me to detail all those situations.

Mr Clarko: Why not talk about Dr Cairns?

Mr DAVIES: I want to come back to the point I made earlier. Since 1974 prices in Perth have increased by 75.8 per cent, or by 8.5 per cent more than the national average.

Mr Clarko: How much have wages gone up?

Mr DAVIES: I have dealt already with wages. The honourable member must learn to listen.

Mr Clarko: I am trying to tell you that wages have gone up more.

Mr DAVIES: I will send the honourable member a copy of my notes later and I am sure he will find them enlightening.

As I said, I would like the Premier to tell us why these promises in regard to inflation and employment have not been kept. Where is his alleged mystique? Has it disappeared? Is there any hope for the future?

The people of this State have paid a very high price indeed for the Court brand of economic management. Those of us who live in Perth have paid a high price, but the people living in the regional centres and country areas have paid an even higher price. The Court brand of development and decentralisation has cost people living outside Perth dearly.

The latest food price figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics tell a damning tale of the Court brand of economic management. In 1974 food prices in Perth were 4 per cent lower than the average of the food prices in all the capital cities. Now they are 5 per cent higher. So we have gone from 4 per cent lower than the average to 5 per cent higher. That is bad enough, but let us look at what has happened in the country. We find there an appalling indictment of the cost of country living and the rate at which it is increasing.

Inflation in the northern agricultural region has forced food prices up to 7.4 per cent more than the prices in Perth, and 13.2 per cent more than the average in the capital cities.

In the central and eastern goldfields region, prices are 9.6 per cent more than in Perth and 15 per cent more than the average in the capital cities.

In the Pilbara food prices are 20 to 30 per cent more than the average in the capital cities, and 30 to 40 per cent more in the Kimberley. In Kununurra, that regional centre to which the Premier and his colleagues claim such a big commitment, food prices were 22 per cent above the average of the capital cities in March, 1974, when the Court Government came to office, and now they are 42 per cent more. What a record! Is

that beating inflation to a substantial degree State by State? I do not believe it is.

The worst aspect of all this is that the gap between city and country in Western Australia is widening rapidly under the Court Government. In 34 of the 40 towns surveyed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the gap between local prices and capital cities' average prices is greater than it was four years ago. In 28 of the 40 towns, the gap was greater in March this year than it was in March last year. What a record! The gap is increasing all the time.

The Government claims that it wants to see country and regional centres advance. How can they advance? What a sham!

The Liberal Party and the National Country Party have had plenty of opportunities to do something about country prices, but whenever an opportunity has presented itself, it has been rejected. This Government has not taken up any of the options available to it.

The Tonkin Labor Government twice brought forward price control legislation, but the Liberal Party and the National Country Party rejected it. In 1975 my shadow minister for decentralisation and regional development—the member for Geraldton—proposed a Royal Commission into country prices. The Government parties opposed it, and established instead a pale shadow; a rural affairs inquiry which lacked the specific brief to look at prices. When the Government received the report of the emasculated inquiry it failed to act on it. It set up a committee, received a report, but it took no action. Perhaps it hopes that the public will forget all about it. This seems to be a classic example of the way the Government deals with any problem.

Repeatedly the Australian Labor Party has proposed that we should set up a rural and commercial affairs bureau to protect the interests of country people. Every such proposition has been rejected by the Government. Earlier in this parliamentary session we sought to set down guidelines for proper regional development, but again the Government threw out our proposal. The Government behaves in this way because it does not know the problems of country living, and it does not care.

The economic consequences of the Government's failure to come to grips with inflation are clear. New investment in Western Australia is discouraged; new jobs are missed; and Western Australian manufacturers and other people are put at a cost disadvantage with the other States.

Let us look at the Treasury paper which was tabled. Undoubtedly the State Treasury takes a much gloomier, although a much more realistic, view of the economy than does the Premier and Treasurer. The paper on the economy of Western Australia prepared by the State Treasury and tabled with the Budget paints a picture of an economy in which there have been significant downturns and where the prospects of improvement are not bright. It points to a number of dismal economic indicators. I recommend to members that they should read these papers, and if they have not had time to do so, I will direct their attention to these economic indicators.

In 1977-78 savings bank deposits grew by 9.2 per cent. This means that savings are growing at a faster rate than is inflation. People are saving instead of spending, and that is always a sure sign that the ordinary people—the consumers on whom our economy depends—lack confidence in the economic future. They are putting their money away for a rainy day because they fear that rainy day is just about here. They fear unemployment and this leads to an overall reduction in economic demand which flows right through the economy. Only a sustained recovery in the economy, and particularly in the employment market, will generate the confidence which is needed before consumers will start spending again instead of saving.

The higher rate of savings and the lack of consumer confidence of which it is symptomatic show up in other indicators too. For instance, new motor vehicle registrations in Western Australia fell by 6.8 per cent in the last financial year. This is the first decline since 1971-72. During the year new motor vehicle registrations throughout Australia fell by 3.1 per cent, so that with a fall of 6.8 per cent, our decrease in motor vehicle registrations was more than twice the national average. That is a clear indication that there is less confidence in Western Australia than elsewhere.

Another indicator we should look at is the level of retail sales. Retail sales were not up to expectations in the second half of 1977-78. For instance, the sales of electrical goods and floor coverings, all of which are key consumer items, were significantly down in real terms.

In the light of the major drop in vehicle registrations and the uncertainty in retailing, it is hardly surprising to learn that the manufacturing industry is in a parlous condition. Although Western Australia does not manufacture motor vehicles or large quantities of electrical goods, the difficulties that these products are facing in the market reflect the general fate of manufacturing

industry in Western Australia. Manufacturing is undoubtedly in deep trouble.

A recent joint survey conducted by the Confederation of Western Australian Industry and the Bank of New South Wales showed that there is cause for very great concern about the future of manufacturing in Western Australia. Nationally, manufacturing is operating at only about 75 per cent capacity; but, according to the survey, Western Australia is doing worse than any other State.

Western Australian respondents to the survey expected the biggest cut-backs in employment and in overtime worked. They reported the most severe downturn in new orders and output. They expected to continue to reduce capital investment, and the majority expected the general business position to remain unchanged.

I hear a large engineering company in Bassendean closed its doors last week. Some 200 employees have been put out of work. I understand there is the possibility of another major reduction in employment in the Kwinana area in the next few weeks. That is quite regrettable. I believe we are going to see this situation developing more often.

The survey I mentioned earlier paints a very worrying picture for us. I think this has to be seen against the background of a sector of industry which has experienced many difficulties in the last financial year. The manufacturing industry has experienced a great number of difficulties, and in many instances these difficulties have made it almost impossible for the industry to survive.

During the year most manufacturers have experienced low demand and subdued activity. Employment in the manufacturing sector fell by 2 per cent, with more than 1 300 jobs being lost. There is no prospect of this trend being reversed.

I suggested earlier that generally, regarding building and construction, the picture in that sector is little better. In the home-building industry it is quite appalling. Activity in the home-building industry in 1977-78 was down substantially on the previous year, with the number of commencements and completions being significantly lower than in 1976-77. The number of dwelling approvals for the year was down by 16.2 per cent. The number of commencements fell by 22.3 per cent, and the number of completions was down by 18.8 per cent.

In the 11 months to May, 1978, the value of loans approved for houses fell by 2.6 per cent in real terms on the equivalent period in the previous

financial year. For the 12 months ended May, 1978, the number of building approvals in Western Australia for all types of building valued at \$10 000 and over totalled 19 430. For the same period in 1975-76 and 1976-77, building approvals totalled 26 048 and 21 914 respectively. If members look at those indicators, they will conclude that the building industry is in a most parlous state, and indeed the home-building industry is near collapse.

Between 1975-76 and 1977-78, as at May, the total number of building approvals had fallen by 6 618, which represents a decline of over 25 per cent. In two financial years, there was a decline of over 25 per cent! This means that the number of new building construction projects valued at \$10 000 or more had fallen by 6 618 in only two years.

Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Crane), the current decline in the building industry in Western Australia will be exacerbated by the massive cuts in Commonwealth payments to Western Australia for our capital works programmes. In addition to a decline through cut-backs in funds, problems in the building industry in Western Australia are compounded by the rate of increase in prices of building construction materials.

I have said already, and I repeat it because I think in this context it is worth repeating, that the rate of inflation in the building industry in Perth is the highest of any of the State capital cities.

Mr Clarko: What is the basic cost of a Western Australian house?

Mr DAVIES: Since the Court Government came to office, the prices of materials used in building construction, other than house building, have increased by 44.5 per cent, the highest increase in Australia, compared with the national average of 38.5 per cent. Once again, on those figures, Western Australia has the highest figure. Inflation of this magnitude means that for every \$100 000 spent on buildings constructed in 1974, the cost of the same buildings in 1978 is \$144 500.

For the 12 months ended May, 1977, the total value of building approvals valued at \$10 000 or over was \$705.8 million. Prices increased during the same period by 11.4 per cent. In order to maintain the same level of work undertaken in the period to the end of May, 1978, the value of building approvals should have been around \$783.6 million. The actual value of buildings for that period was \$719.9 million. What a drop!

These figures indicate that the value of buildings approved for the 12 months to May, 1978, fell in real terms by over \$66 million. The

major component of the building industry in Western Australia is house building which, together with the construction of other dwellings such as flats, villas, and home units accounted for over 90 per cent of building approvals in 1976-77.

The State Treasury says that an analysis of statistics suggests the industry is likely to remain depressed. It has slid way down the scale in every sector. Activity in the industry has declined. The State Treasury paper says that the industry is likely to remain depressed, no doubt as a result of the Court Government's sound economic management and good housekeeping!

One of the other factors considered by the Treasury paper was external trade. The value of overseas exports is one of the most important economic indicators for Western Australia. We are heavily reliant on exports for economic health; we are a trading State.

In the nine months to March, 1978, the value of overseas exports from Western Australia was down 1.9 per cent on the same period the previous year. In real terms, of course, the fall is much greater than 1.9 per cent.

Our overseas trade surplus was 9 per cent lower than at the same time last year. Again, the difference in real terms would be much greater.

Much of our overseas trade and exports depends on mining, and the deterioration in the value of our exports reflects the problems which the mining industry is experiencing at present. This great industry is in a sad state, with production, activity, prices and employment all down, and few bright spots on the horizon.

Let me recite a few of the harsh realities in relation to mining in Western Australia today: Iron ore shipments are down 4 per cent, and the increase in the value of production in 1977-78 was only 4.8 per cent—significantly less than the inflation rate—compared with an average annual increase of 20.6 per cent for the preceding five years; Goldsworthy is closing in 1981; Hamersley Iron's profit fell during the year and the company describes the outlook as "glum"; the value of nickel ore and concentrates produced during 1977-78 fell by 9.5 per cent in money terms; miners were sacked at Western Mining's Windarra operation; North Kalbarri's Croesus nickel plant closed with 88 people being sacked; 320 jobs were lost at Western Mining's Kambalda nickel operation; 16 men were sacked from the Nepean mine near Coolgardie; the Redross nickel mine closed with the loss of 120 jobs; the Blue Spec gold and antimony mine closed with 82 jobs being lost; the mineral sands industry is depressed and the value of production in 1977-78 increased

by a mere 2.5 per cent—a fall in real terms. There were production cut-backs and sackings during the year with the mining division of Jennings Industries laying off about 60 people at Eneabba for the second time in a year. The Eneabba work force has fallen from 200 to 70; and 70 people lost their jobs because of the partial closure of the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Works.

The worst part of this depressing picture is that in the employment and production areas of mining—iron, nickel and mineral sands—there is nothing on the horizon which gives any hope of an upturn in the next two to three years.

If members examine those facts very carefully—as I said, they are the indisputable facts taken from public documents—they will come to realise very quickly that they tell a vastly different story from the story which the Premier consistently tells.

Forestry is another area we should examine. The timber industry in Western Australia generally was depressed in 1977-78 with stocks accumulating and the industry operating at only about 85 per cent of its capacity. The downturn in home building reduced the demand for timber and local and overseas markets for railway sleepers and other timber also were depressed. The demand by Japan for wood chips is restricted.

Despite these very serious difficulties for the timber industry, the Budget seeks to increase timber royalties, placing another burden on an industry which already is in the doldrums, and making its chance of staging a revival even less likely. This is an industry which is in trouble, and should have been an area where the Government ignored royalties; however, it is to be hit with yet another impost.

In summary, the picture of the Western Australian economy is: Unemployment high and rising; the highest inflation rate in the nation acting as a disincentive to investment and representing a cost burden to industry; incomes not keeping up with inflation; and industries in decline.

The real picture is very different from that which the Premier and his Ministers are at pains to paint. Many of the elements in this dismal picture are direct results of the policies and failures of the Fraser and Court Governments.

We accept that the responsibility for other elements cannot properly be placed at the Government's feet. For example, it is not the Government's fault that overseas markets for iron ore and nickel are depressed.

However, the Government has a responsibility to be honest with Western Australians. They have a right to be told the truth about the state of things in the "State of Excitement" rather than being fobbed off with glib statements skating over the problems and expressing pious hopes of better things to come.

There is no doubt that, in the long term, this State's prospects are sound; however, in the short and medium term we face major problems. The Government should admit this frankly and adopt budgetary measures aimed at overcoming them or at least ameliorating their effects.

Western Australians are entitled to be told the truth. No-one gains any joy from preaching doom and gloom, and I have been at pains to avoid doing that. What I have had to say tonight gives me no pleasure, but in discussing this Bill we must face facts. I feel I have a responsibility to point things out as they really are rather than allow the Government's cheery distortions and omissions to go uncorrected. As I said, no-one wants doom and gloom; but we have a right to truth and realism—to the full picture.

To its credit the Treasury in its Budget paper has not bowed to any explicit or implied political pressure to put the best possible face on things, regardless of the facts.

I hope—I suspect vainly—that from now on we can expect a similar attitude from the Premier and his Ministers; surely they cannot repudiate their own Treasury document.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr DAVIES: Before concluding this part of my address I want to refer once again to a matter I mentioned earlier. In his speech the Treasurer said—

The Government is greatly concerned at the continued high level of unemployment and the under utilisation of resources. This problem is not unique to Australia, but is being experienced to a greater or lesser degree by most countries in the world, and, more importantly, by our major trading partners.

As I said earlier, I accept that some economic problems we are now facing are due to international factors, but I wonder whether the Treasurer was able to say those words without a blush of shame coming to his cheek, and without feeling he was a monumental hypocrite.

When these economic problems first surfaced in late 1973 and early 1974 the then Federal Government—the Whitlam Government—pointed to them as part of the

cause for the economic problems that Australia began to experience as a result.

The present Premier of this State and his Federal colleagues—then in Opposition—ridiculed and played down international problems. They pretended international problems just did not exist. I feel, and I am sure other thinking persons feel, that it rings very hollow indeed for them now to invoke international problems to explain Australia's economic problems under their very Government. I do not think they deserve to be believed; I am quite certain many people do not believe them. The kindest thing we can say to them is that adopting this attitude now brands them as hypocrites of the first order.

I turn now to the revenue side of the Budget. I draw attention to the fact that once again the Treasurer has sought public popularity for his Budget by excluding from it any increase in taxes and charges. But, once again, he has made significant increases in taxes and charges outside the Budget. In fact, he announced increases which will raise more than \$34 million, well in advance of the Budget. The increases are—

Country water supply increased by an average of 33 per cent in the north of the State, and by an average of 23 per cent in the south.

Westrail freight rates up 10 per cent.

Country bus and train fares up 10 per cent.

State Shipping Service freight rates up 10 per cent.

Electricity charges up by an average of 7.5 per cent.

Gas charges up by an average of 10 per cent.

Metropolitan bus and train fares up 5 per cent.

Metropolitan sewerage and drainage rates up by 12.8 per cent.

Metropolitan drainage rates up by 12 per cent, and there is more to come.

State Housing Commission rents increased by an average of 9.2 per cent in the metropolitan area and by an average of 6.3 per cent in country areas.

Metropolitan water rates for industrial and commercial consumers up by 20 per cent.

Metropolitan water charges increased by more than 50 per cent for the average domestic consumer.

The Budget and other Government statements raise the possibility of more increases to come before the end of the current financial year.

Government statistics on spending on the roads programme this financial year suggest that motor vehicle licences will probably have to rise by about 15 per cent to cover the shortfall in Federal funds. I hope I can be proved to be wrong, but as we see the situation that is most likely to happen.

The Budget shows an estimated increase of 14 per cent this year in the revenue raised from bed charges in public hospitals. Since Western Australia's population is unlikely to rise by 14 per cent this year, and since it is also unlikely there will be 14 per cent more sickness this year, it is fair to assume that the increase will come from increases in bed charges.

These increased charges are usually made to apply from the 1st January. A 14 per cent increase in estimated revenue in the second half of the financial year would be consistent with an increase in bed charges of about 25 per cent. I think that is a fairly good tip.

There is also a hint in the Budget that bus and rail fares might have to rise again. The Treasurer's approach to the question of taxes and charges, like his approach to the state of the economy, lacks frankness. I am sure it must have been cold comfort to Western Australians, faced with all the increases I have just outlined, to read in the morning newspaper of the 22nd September the Treasurer's statement that charges for goods and services supplied by the Government, such as water, electricity and gas, are not taxes.

I do not believe anyone is really interested in knowing whether something is a Government charge or a Government tax. It all adds up to the Government taking more money out of the pockets of the taxpayers or the people. But, in any case, the Premier's claim that the prices of these commodities are not taxes is dishonest.

As we all know, the Government imposes a 3 per cent tax on electricity, gas, water, and Fremantle Port Authority services. It does this by imposing a 3 per cent levy on the revenue of the State Energy Commission, the Metropolitan Water Board, and the Fremantle Port Authority. Every time the charges made by these authorities rise, so does the amount the Government gets from them in tax. The Government has a vested interest in raising charges, because this increases its tax rake-off every time charges go up.

Of course, this form of taxation has additional appeal to the Government, because it is a hidden tax. The Government can raise the tax without having to tell the people it is doing so; and the people do not realise they are paying that 3 per cent tax.

All that the people are really interested in knowing is how much more the Government is going to rip off them, and whether it is called a tax or a charge is merely a matter of semantics.

Before leaving the matter of taxes and charges, I want to deal specifically with water charges for domestic consumers. The Court Government's new pay-for-use water charging system has failed. It is not encouraging water conservation; it is reducing the cost of water, the more water a consumer uses. It is aimed at boosting revenue at the expense of equitably sharing the costs of water supply. It is creating hardship for some domestic consumers, especially large families.

The Opposition has conducted a full investigation, as far as possible, into the old system of charging for water and into the new system. We have been very disturbed at the number of anomalies and the extent of the anomalies which have become apparent in the new scheme.

The principle of a pay-for-use scheme is sound, but only as long as it genuinely encourages consumers to save water and penalises those who are big users. Our investigation has revealed that under the Government's new scheme the more water a consumer uses, the cheaper it becomes. I believe that defeats the whole purpose of a pay-for-use scheme.

Metropolitan Water Board statistics show that the average domestic consumer uses between 300 and 400 kilolitres a year, or 66 000 to 88 000 gallons a year. Under the new scheme, a consumer using 350 kilolitres a year pays 20c a kilolitre in total charges; and a person using 800 kilolitres a year pays only 18c a kilolitre.

Under the Government's new scheme, the consumer using 350 kilolitres faces an annual bill which has increased by 54.9 per cent, but the person using 800 kilolitres a year faces an increase of only 22.9 per cent.

I believe those figures demonstrate starkly that the Government's new system is a very poor water conservation measure. The Government's new scheme needs to be re-thought completely. It has, quite understandably run into considerable public resistance. I believe it is a long time since any Government measure has provoked such a public backlash.

Every ALP member of the State Parliament has received dozens of complaints about it, and I would be surprised if Government members have not received a similar reaction. I understand that the Metropolitan Water Board has logged up to 500 complaints per day on the new pay-for-use scheme.

Yesterday I announced the Opposition proposals for water charging. I believe the pay-for-use principle is sound, but the Government's scheme does not work in a proper manner; nor do I believe it works in a fair manner. I do not want to go into our scheme in detail, but basically it embraces the following principles—

The allowance for domestic users should be increased from 150 kilolitres to 200 kilolitres a year.

Instead of a flat charge of 17c per kilolitre of water used over the basic allowance, there should be a sliding scale for consumption over the basic allowance, so that the more a person uses, the more expensive it becomes; that is, the charge per kilolitres should not be a flat charge, but should increase progressively as usage increases.

All industrial and commercial services should be metered, as it appears at present that many of these consumers are probably using substantially more water than the allowance without paying for it. There is no incentive for them—the really big users of water—to conserve water.

Indeed, there are only about 577 commercial users, which represents about 4 per cent of the total, who have meters connected; in other words, the other 96 per cent are not metered. To continue with the principles I have been enumerating—

The leak detection unit of the Metropolitan Water Board should be upgraded.

More publicity on water conservation should be undertaken.

More work should be done on developing water saving devices and encouraging their use.

Those are some of the ideas behind the philosophy of the scheme which the Opposition has put forward.

While dealing with the revenue side of the Budget, I have to question the Government's priorities in proceeding with the abolition of death duties at a time of financial stringency. I mentioned this in debate, but it was not very well received.

The single biggest reform which was needed in death duty law was to the charges which have been made on estates passing to a surviving spouse. There is now no duty payable on an estate passing to a surviving spouse. I fail to see in the present climate why it has been necessary to proceed further, especially at this time.

Admittedly, the estimated cost to the revenue this year of the further changes proposed from the 1st January will be only \$1.5 million, but this amount would have removed more people from the dole queues and maintained vital services to the whole community which are having to be cut back.

I do not regard removing a tax on a handout from a will to a millionaire's son or daughter as being a higher social priority than giving jobs to thousands of school leavers in the community who cannot find jobs.

Any Government, such as the Court Government, which does give this a higher priority has a perverted sense of priorities and fully justifies the charge that it is a Government of the rich, by the rich, for the rich.

Probably that is not true. In fact, they are probably just a sad little group of would-be social climbers seeking affection and acceptance from people whose peers they would like to be. I wonder what effect the total abolition of death duties will have on health, education, and community welfare in this State. The estimated revenue from this source in this financial year is \$13.3 million. That represents a lot of education, health care, and community welfare.

I wonder what additional taxes the Court Government has in mind to replace the amounts of money which it will lose from death duty. As the Premier has said on many occasions, there are no free lunches. If a tax is taken off one area, a tax must be imposed somewhere else. I am waiting with baited breath to see what tax will replace death duties.

Having a look at the expenditure side of the Budget, there are several significant omissions from the expenditure programme, apart from the lack of a programme to combat unemployment, which I have already mentioned.

The most immediately apparent is the lack of any additional help for pensioners and rural dwellers. These are the two categories of people who were hit hardest by the vicious Budget introduced by the Fraser Government in August. Now that the pensions are to be adjusted annually instead of twice a year, the already straitened circumstances of many pensioners will become even more desperate.

The State Government should have looked at some way to ameliorate this tremendous blow to the old, the sick, and the incapacitated in the community. The concession which would have been most welcome in our community would be the restoration of free bus and rail travel for pensioners which the Government removed so

callously and irresponsibly in its first term of office.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr DAVIES: It is interesting to note in passing that the Fraser Government's back-benchers have already revolted against a number of Budget measures, and more strength to them I say. In a couple of cases they have already been successful and now they are taking on the pension decision. I wish them well in that revolt because I believe the pensions need no less than twice a year or biennial adjustment.

When we look at the revolt by the Government back-benchers in Canberra and contrast it with the attitude of the Court Government's back-benchers, we can be only saddened. The things this Government has done clearly would not have been tolerated by the back-benchers in Canberra. What happened here? Hardly a whimper. One member protested, and when he had an opportunity to do something about the matter by way of a vote, he abstained or absented himself from the Chamber.

This is an indictment of all members and the way they perform. It was a thoroughly disillusioning and dispiriting performance on their part.

Apart from the aged, the old and infirm, rural dwellers have been hard hit by the Fraser Government's Budget with the massive increase in fuel prices and the hike in air navigation charges which will again raise air fares. There is no compensating concession for them in the State Budget. We would think the Government would try to do something for the rural dwellers because of the way they were hit by the Fraser Budget.

A less obvious but just as important an omission from the Budget was the lack of any incentive to regional development and decentralisation. This is something about which we have heard a great deal, but once again nothing positive has been done.

I have already mentioned the problem of high country prices acting as a barrier to regional development. There are enormous advantages and cost savings for this State in encouraging people and industry away from the capital city. There is a clear need for incentives to be provided. At present there is little incentive for business people to move their operations away from the capital city, and there are many powerful economic reasons for them to stay in the city. It is much easier to stay than to go.

Greater regional development will not be fostered in Western Australia while the Government continues its present policy which

can be described generously only as benign neglect.

Regional development does not occur just because the Government appoints some people called regional administrators who have no real power of decision-making anyway, but merely live in and at country centres.

Commerce and industry will be attracted only when there are some advantages to be gained by moving to the country and only when there are some incentives. They are not going to be attracted by bureaucracy.

Despite the statements in the Treasurer's Budget speech about the need to assist voluntary agencies to cope with inflation by increasing their Government grants, a number of the more important ones have been dealt with poorly.

We might mention a few as we go through the Estimates, item by item, but two about which I have had representations and which I want to mention at this stage are the organisations GROW and SPELD. By failing to keep the grants of these two organisations up with inflation, the Government is indulging in false economy. Both organisations do important work in important areas. In the case of GROW it is in mental health, and in the case of SPELD, as most members know, it is in the area of specific learning difficulties, particularly experienced by children.

Both organisations rely a great deal on voluntary effort and no doubt every dollar of Government money is effectively spent—probably more effectively than it would be spent if it were administered by the Government. I am sure we all agree that voluntary effort gets much better value for the dollar than does Government effort.

The more success organisations like these have in their work, the more money the Government will save. The more widespread their activities, the less demand the mentally ill or the people with specific learning difficulties will make on Government resources. By cutting funds to these organisations now, we could well be imposing extra charges on the revenue at a later date. There is no doubt that prevention is a lot cheaper than cure. It is false economy to cut back on these organisations which, although relatively small, are filling a very vital need in the community and doing a tremendous amount of good work. The Government gets at least \$5 for every \$1 put into them and to prevent now is far better than to try to cure in the future.

There is one aspect I note with pleasure, and that is the increased allocation to the Solar Energy Research Institute. Although I do note it

with pleasure, I must say that the allocation of \$600 000 is still very small. If I remember correctly, last year it was something like \$250 000, so the increase in this field is one of the largest increases in the Budget this year.

Then again, it is only a miniscule amount when compared with the thousands of millions of dollars the Premier wants to spend to build a nuclear power station in this State. I am sure it is a pipedream of his.

The need for a nuclear power station in this State has not been demonstrated, particularly in light of the undoubted risks which will be involved. People might read with interest the article in *Time* magazine a fortnight or so ago on nuclear power stations and the changing attitudes to them overseas.

As far as Western Australia is concerned, the economic need has not been demonstrated. We have adequate reserves of cheap Collie coal—and members have heard that said in this House on more than one occasion—to see us through the energy gap which is arising for other nations and is driving those other nations to nuclear power.

Despite this, the Premier wants to press ahead with nuclear power, regardless of the risks or the need, and the only justification he seems to offer—the only reported justification—is that it would be nice for scientists and engineers in Western Australia to have a nuclear power station with which to play. That is probably reducing his attitude to a few words, but that is how it seems to me.

How much better it would be to save ourselves the enormous, unnecessary cost of a nuclear power station and put some real money into solar energy research. Instead of letting our scientists and engineers dabble in nuclear energy, as everyone else in the world has already been doing for many years, give them the money to provide an opportunity for them to make break-throughs in the exciting new fields of solar energy and let them and this State lead the world. There is no doubt we have the potential to lead the world. The work which is being done is already significant, but the scientists will not do very much on the budget which has been provided.

By going all out for nuclear power and disregarding the advantages of solar energy, the Government is lacking in vision and imagination. The Government has heard that nuclear energy is the latest thing and it wants that here, no matter what the need, the cost, or the risks might be.

I have heard it said that the scientists are would-be technological trendies trying to catch up with the trends. The sad thing is, as Western

Australian taxpayers will find out to their cost, that they are already running a couple of trends behind the times and have a lot to catch up.

I have said on more than one occasion that I do not appreciate what is generally referred to as the new federalism. In his Budget speech, the Treasurer made great play of the financial difficulties and the constraints facing the State this year. Quite properly he laid the blame for many of them at the feet of the Fraser Government.

The deal handed out is part of that Fraser Government's package called the new federalism. It has been an unqualified disaster for this State and for all the other States. The financial deal the States have received from the Fraser Government throughout the whole of its life has been disastrous, but we are now concerned with what has happened to our Federal funds for 1978-79, the year we have under review.

This is what has happened to them: General purpose capital funds are down \$13.3 million or 10 per cent in real terms. Specific purpose capital funds are down \$30.9 million or 17.6 per cent in real terms. Total capital funds therefore are down \$44.2 million or 14.1 per cent in real terms. Specific purpose payments for recurrent purposes are down \$3.7 million or 2.3 per cent in real terms. Overall, Commonwealth payments to Western Australia for 1978-79 are down \$29.1 million in real terms.

However it is not only the cuts in money which are concerning us. They in themselves are disastrous enough and place very unreal constraints on the States under the new federalism. What is really concerning me is the way the Fraser Government is changing the rules. It establishes a set of rules and then changes it to suit itself.

In respect of the tax-sharing arrangements, the Fraser Government keeps fiddling with the formula to reduce the total tax pool of which the States get a guaranteed percentage. I am quite sure members will recall that the States are guaranteed a certain amount from a tax-sharing pool, but the Federal Government keeps fiddling with the formula which constitutes this pool.

For example, a loophole in the new federalism arrangements has been exploited by the Fraser Government to reduce funds to the States. Under the arrangements, tax surcharges are not included in the total income tax pool of which the States get a guaranteed percentage. The increase in personal income tax which was imposed in the August Fraser Budget has been described as a surcharge so that there is no requirement for the

Commonwealth to give the States part of the increased collections. The Commonwealth Government can do that as often as it likes. It can say that is the tax and that is where the States get their share. On top of that the Federal Government imposes a surcharge but it keeps that for itself. It states that the surcharge is not part of the pool and therefore the States cannot have a share of it. The Federal Government keeps it all for itself.

So the Fraser Government has changed the rules. What we get is not what we were sold and it is certainly not what we expected. The guarantee given proved to be no guarantee at all.

Not only has the Federal Government changed the rules in regard to rebates of taxation collections, but it has also changed the rules in relation to specific purpose payments. When schemes such as the school dental scheme and the community health programme were introduced, they were on the basis that the Commonwealth would meet 75 per cent of the operating costs.

I think in dental health the Federal Government was going to pick up about 90 per cent of the operating costs. I am not certain of that figure but I know it was to meet all the capital costs and the lion's share of the continuing or operating costs. That agreement reached with the Whitlam Government has been cut down progressively and the Fraser Government has unilaterally reduced its contribution to 50 per cent. It has again changed the rules to suit itself. What we get is not what we were sold. The Fraser Government should be taken before the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs because of the type of deal it is giving us after making a certain commitment.

In the schemes to which I have just referred—the school dental scheme and the community health programme—the Commonwealth built up a demand and then handed the schemes over to the States on the ground of giving the States increased responsibility. It said, "We want you to look after these things yourself. They are your responsibility." The Commonwealth was going to pay for them, though; but having handed them over to the States it gave the States increased responsibility and reduced their financial power.

The Fraser Government cannot be trusted. When it does not like the game it started it changes the rules at half time. It has done that time and time again in regard to agreement upon agreement.

Nowhere are the appalling consequences of this abrogation of Federal responsibility better

demonstrated than in the field of health. The Fraser Government wants to change the rules on hospital cost sharing—again. It has already changed them once and it now wants to change them again. The rules on hospital cost sharing have already been changed to the disadvantage of the people living in the States. The Commonwealth now wants to change that agreement again by refusing to agree to meet the operating costs of new hospital facilities.

We have the Court Government saying that unless the Fraser Government changes its tune the costly extensions to the King Edward Memorial Hospital will remain empty and unused.

Mr Clarko: Has the "blame Fraser" syndrome taken over from the "blame Whitlam" syndrome?

Mr DAVIES: No. A great deal of discussion took place and agreement was reached with Whitlam on these matters. The Fraser Government has broken not only those agreements but also agreements it subsequently made with the States. It is not content with welshing on commitments made by a previous Government, which some people say it is entitled to do anyway, but it has established new agreements and welshed on those. We cannot trust it.

Mr Clarko: There is still a case of "blame Fraser" in your speech—from someone who does not like the "blame Whitlam" syndrome.

Mr McIver: It hurts a bit now.

Mr Clarko: I just want him to be consistent.

Mr DAVIES: I am quite certain I will not blame Whitlam. I know plenty of Liberal members in the country are still blaming Whitlam because they hate to face up to reality. I am just joining the Premier. I would have thought the member for Karrinyup would consider me to be in good company when I join the Premier in criticising the Fraser Government. The Premier does it. He is looked upon as a strength, I suppose, because he does just that. I will have a few words to say about that shortly.

As I said, not only has the Fraser Government abrogated agreements made between the States and the Whitlam Government but it has even broken agreements it subsequently made itself.

In the light of the possibility that the new hospital beds will not be occupied unless the Commonwealth comes to the party, I wonder what the outcome will be. We are currently spending hundreds of millions of dollars on new hospital facilities at Wanneroo, the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre, the Fremantle

Hospital, and Royal Perth Hospital, and under existing conditions we face the distinct possibility that these facilities will lie idle. It is quite apparent that unless Fraser comes to the party the extensions and new facilities will not come into operation. It could mean that the millions of dollars of taxpayers' money which have been invested in hospital facilities will be wasted. What a fiasco that has turned out to be! What a criminal waste!

Indeed, the Federal Minister for Health—and I am pleased to say the State Minister has not taken it up yet—has suggested people are in hospital for too long and we should turn them out quickly. If the Minister has a look at the Royal Perth Hospital's report he will find the hospital has consistently reduced the average stay of patients and is very well aware of the need to turn the bed usage over, but it has reached a fine point where, in its last return, it was able to reduce the average stay only marginally. Yet it is being called upon to reduce the stay still further.

Is the Federal Minister suggesting people stay in hospital when they should be at home? People certainly do not stay longer than necessary in public hospitals, and they never have. I am quite certain they will never stay in public hospitals unless they are genuinely ill.

Dr Dadour: You are wrong again.

Mr DAVIES: The interjection from the member for Subiaco is an indictment of his own profession. He is saying people stay in hospital for too long. In one or two isolated instances for some reason there may be no place to which to send a patient, but if the member for Subiaco looks at the statistics quoted in the annual report of the Royal Perth Hospital—and I imagine the new report will be available at its annual general meeting next Wednesday—he will find that year after year the average stay of patients has been cut down.

At one time I expressed the hope that the Royal Perth Hospital would not have as its sole objective getting patients out of hospital just to improve the statistics. I believe the hospital authorities are much more responsible than that, and I am certain the member for Subiaco did not mean to indict his own profession when he indicated by way of interjection that people stay in hospital for unnecessarily long periods.

The only people who decide how long people stay in hospital, as I recall it, are doctors themselves. The nurses do not discharge patients; the clerks do not discharge them; the gardeners and ambulance drivers do not discharge them. Sometimes patients discharge themselves, but

whether they stay or go is usually the decision of the doctor. So if the member for Subiaco suggests I am wrong in saying we have done very well in regard to length of stay in hospital in Western Australia, he is suggesting people are staying in hospital longer than they should, and that is an indictment of his own profession.

This is the situation we have got ourselves into. King Edward Memorial Hospital is preparing for occupation but the beds we need so badly in that area will not be occupied. What a dreadful deal we have had from the new federalism!

In the long term there is another aspect of the new federalism which gives rise to very great concern for the financial future of this State. When the new federalism arrangements were introduced with the guaranteed share of personal income tax collections replacing the financial assistance grants formula, a fall-back clause was written into them to provide that up to and including the financial year 1979-80 no State would receive less under the new arrangements than it would have received under the former arrangements.

This year, for the first time, the States have had to rely on the fall-back clause to bolster their revenue. Had it not been for that clause Western Australia would have been \$8 million* worse off under the tax-sharing formula. Unless the fall-back clause can be continued in the Commonwealth-State arrangements after 1979-80, the States are likely to be in real trouble. But if the States are to be continually forced back onto the old financial assistance formula to keep funds up, we might as well go back to that arrangement instead of persisting with the new one which has proved so disastrous.

No matter in which area of Federal-State financial relations one looks, the so-called new federalism has been bad news for the States. In the area of capital funds the new federalism is creating unemployment. In the specific purpose area it is putting enormous pressure on State finances and leading to cut-backs in services. In the general revenue area it is not working at all and has frightening consequences for the future when the guaranteed floor grants cut out.

The Commonwealth is to blame for many of the financial problems this State faces at present. But let us apportion the blame properly. The Premier is culpable, too. As I have said before—and I must repeat it—he used to admit proudly that he was one of the authors of the new federalism. He was certainly one of its greatest proponents. He was quoted in the newspapers more often than anyone else as saying what a

wonderful thing it was for the State and the whole of Australia. What has it proved to be?

In other words, the Premier is one of the authors of this State's financial misfortune. Not only was he sold a pup by the Commonwealth but he also helped to give birth to it. Much of the blame is his and it is of no use his squealing about it now. He had plenty of opportunity to back off; he had plenty of warning about what the consequences would be; but he passed up the opportunity and ignored all the warnings. Every Western Australian is now paying the price of his blinkered negligence.

If anyone thinks I am being too hard on the Premier, I invite him to have a look at the record. When every other Premier in Australia was attacking the new federalism and striving tooth and nail to have it changed into a form which would give the States a better deal, the Premier of Western Australia—and he alone—stood shoulder to shoulder with the Prime Minister to defend the scheme. He alone among the State leaders put his ideological commitment to the policies of his Federal colleagues and his personal involvement in drawing up the new federalism before the best interests of Western Australia. He sold out to ideology. He sold out to pride. He sold out to Canberra.

The Premier had many warnings and many signs that the financial juggernaut he had helped to establish would steamroll Western Australia, yet he tied this State to that steamroller and we are now being run over. It is far too late in the day for the Premier to complain about the deal we have been handed, about the way the Fraser Government treats the States, and about the difficulties he now has to face because of a system which he pioneered, authored, and proclaimed he was very proud of. He helped to draw up the policy. He endorsed the principles upon which that policy and the actions are based.

I believe we cannot afford a Premier who makes such disastrous mistakes. Despite the fact that he keeps the State in firm hands, as he claims, and despite the fact that he is a great economic manager, we find ourselves in a situation which is causing hardship throughout the length and breadth of the State because of a deal of which he was proud to be part.

The State Budget in itself is an admission of the failure of the new federalism. It is an indictment of its authors. It is an indictment of their failure to recognise and admit to our difficulties. It is an indictment of the Government's failure to do anything about our problems. It is an indictment of its failure to take

advantage of our opportunities. It is a document full of despair and full of empty hope.

As I said at the commencement of my remarks, the Budget does nothing to hearten us or to show any light at the end of the tunnel; it gives no hope for the future. Yet there is hope for the future in the long term. The Budget does nothing to solve the problems of today—the short-term problems—which we must face if we are going to do anything with this State.

I believe the type of revenue Budget which has been brought down and the dire financial straits in which this State finds itself today can be shot home directly to the Premier and the Government he represents. The Budget, lacking in any initiative as it is, will hasten the demise of this Government. It is regrettable we have to put up with this Government under the normal terms for another 18 months or so. However, I believe people have come to understand that it is a Government which, on its record, cannot be trusted. It does not fulfil its election promises. In fact, its two main policies—to reduce unemployment and inflation—have been completely forgotten. Inflation runs higher in Western Australia than in any other State, and unemployment has risen by 34.7 per cent in the last 12 months. This Budget does nothing about either of those two problems which increasingly are affecting more and more people throughout the length and breadth of this State and increasingly are affecting family life in Western Australia.

The Government deserves to be indicted for its handling of the finances of Western Australia, particularly in the past three years since the Fraser Government came to office. No wonder the average working man is worse off and is feeling the effects of inflation; no wonder it is dearer to live in Western Australia than in any of the other States; no wonder there is more and more gloom and despair around the community when there should be more and more hope.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe) [8.17 p.m.]: I support the Bill and the Budget introduced by the Treasurer. In doing so, I note that we have heard the lead speech for the Opposition from the Leader of the Opposition, who has spoken for well over two hours and in that time produced not one positive suggestion.

Mr H. D. Evans: He has already put out a statement relating to an alternative method of charging for water.

Mr HASSELL: What does that have to do with this? What an admission! In two hours, the Leader of the Opposition has gathered together a

hotch potch of bits and pieces out of the Budget which he has sought to criticise and denigrate without offering us an alternative.

His only suggestion was that the abolition of death duties should not be proceeded with, but should be abandoned. That suggestion came after a tirade about broken promises—which do not exist—on the part of this Government. However, even if they did exist, the Leader of the Opposition's total inconsistency is clear when he suggests we should break our promise to abolish death duties.

Mr Davies: You should have listened. I said the Government chose the wrong time to do it. It had half done it, but this was not a convenient time to complete the operation. Like the rest of your colleagues, you do not listen; you hear only what you want to hear.

Mr HASSELL: I listened very carefully to the Leader of the Opposition, and what he said tonight and in the debate on the death duties Bills was that we should not be abolishing death duties in accordance with the promise we made.

Mr Davies: At that stage.

Mr HASSELL: No, the Leader of the Opposition opposed the abolition; he opposed the relief brought by the total abolition of death duties.

Mr Davies: Because the time was wrong.

Mr HASSELL: That is right; he disagreed with it. Let me return to the point: We have had no positive suggestions or alternatives and no overall analysis of the situation; we have had simply a bag full of bits and pieces put together because there is an obvious admission on the part of the Opposition that the Government has done a first-class job in extremely difficult circumstances.

Mr H. D. Evans: Yes, to overcharge everything you could lay your hands on, beyond recognition.

Mr HASSELL: Let me go on to refer to another aspect; namely, the discovery by the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues of the problems of inflation. I could not help but sit here in wonderment when the Leader of the Opposition spent so much time talking about the problems of inflation, because we had not heard about those problems for years from Labor Parties in Australia. They have been suggesting inflation is unimportant, insignificant and, relatively, not to be regarded because of much greater problems.

However, a gigantic emphasis was given tonight by the Leader of the Opposition to the problems of inflation, and I have worked out the reason. The reason is that the Leader of the Opposition discovered a whole list of statistics he could throw

up which suggested that inflation in Western Australia was worse than it was elsewhere. No doubt because of that discovery he was able to give some dimension to the problems of inflation which has never before characterised the approach adopted by his party.

Mr Davies: You must have been asleep for a long time.

Mr HASSELL: I expected we would hear some positive alternatives about some new taxes which the Opposition would propose to meet the situation of which it is so critical—to do something about employment, and to stop the economic recession. After all, spending more money is the usual solution. However, that one has been avoided; instead, the Leader of the Opposition got on to this inflation theme, coupled with unemployment and the so-called "economic recession".

Let me deal also with the point about unemployment which was raised, dealt with and re-emphasised by the Leader of the Opposition, no credit being given for what has been done.

Mr Davies: From the lowest to the third highest in Australia in 12 months is not a bad effort.

Mr HASSELL: If the Leader of the Opposition puts that interjection in the context of our immigration from the other States and the level of employment which has increased here while it has decreased in other parts of Australia, the real situation can be seen.

Let us return to this issue of unemployment and the crocodile tears which are shed by the Opposition whenever the subject comes up. I refer to the action the State Government has been taking and continues to take to encourage a climate in which real, long-term employment can be created, a situation in which key developmental industries can be established to create and maintain that employment and to increase our standard of living. The cornerstone of that aim has been the policies adopted to reduce inflation which now are working. Of course, the problem suddenly looms large to the Opposition now that those policies are working.

The other aspect of the programmes the Government has embarked upon to reduce unemployment—which is acknowledged and admitted to be real and of concern—has been the establishment of the basic industries which will provide employment. Let us go through them. I refer firstly to the one we have been discussing in this Parliament over the last 18 months; namely, the bauxite mining proposals. They were not opposed by the Opposition but were fiddled with and not supported. The Opposition wanted the

proposals delayed; it wanted more inquiries and discussions and more delays. It gave tacit support to the lunatic fringe out there which wants to oppose anything any Government wants to do. All the employment the Government was working to create was put at risk by the half-hearted, misguided tactics adopted by the Opposition.

Mr H. D. Evans: Let us see the EPA report.

Mr Tonkin: You are a vandal.

Mr HASSELL: These tactics still are continuing by a back door, half-hearted Opposition without the courage to say, "We reject these proposals and the employment they will create" but nevertheless giving tacit support to the troublemakers who are rushing off to Canberra trying to get that Government to renege on its agreement with the State regarding environmental control, trying to get the Commonwealth Government to hold another inquiry to make sure the projects do not get off the ground and the jobs do not come with them.

Mr Harman: Why don't you tell the truth?

Several members interjected.

Mr HASSELL: This is one of the proposals which have come forward which would create the employment about which members opposite lately are so concerned.

Mr H. D. Evans: Show us the EPA report.

Mr Tonkin: You are suppressing the report.

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order.

Mr Tonkin: What about the EPA report?

Mr HASSELL: All members opposite can talk about is the EPA report.

Mr Tonkin: You want to do away with the EPA.

Mr HASSELL: If they had the EPA report they would want a report produced by Canberra, and if they had the report produced by Canberra they would want yet another one.

Let us go on to another aspect relating to employment. What about the development of our uranium deposits and the industry surrounding that resource? We have had 4 565 questions from the member for Rockingham about the dangers of uranium in the way it is mined and used. That is all members opposite can do. They ask negative questions which simply knock and attack everything the Government is trying to do; they use every form of delay to hold up the establishment of industries which will provide the employment about which the Opposition claims to be so concerned.

Let us look at the recent situation in the Northern Territory, where Labor Party activists have stirred up innocent Aboriginal people, in an endeavour to create a problem there so that their policies regarding uranium can be achieved through the back door by abusing the goodwill of the Aboriginal people.

Mr Tonkin: Tell us about South Africa. You are a racist.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cottesloe is entitled to be heard without interjection.

Mr H. D. Evans: Even with this drivel?

The SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the member for Warren kindly to refrain from such remarks. I call the member for Cottesloe.

Mr HASSELL: The other matter relating to employment which is of importance and which was not mentioned in the speech by the Leader of the Opposition is the endeavours of the Treasurer in his various negotiations with the Japanese to maintain the level and volume of our sales of iron ore.

Mr H. D. Evans: I am surprised you mentioned that one.

Mr HASSELL: Did the Treasurer receive any credit for his endeavours to increase employment in this industry? No, not a word was said by the Leader of the Opposition in this regard.

Mr Carr: You are giving the stuff away.

Mr HASSELL: All we heard was attack after attack, nothing but the general approach that if we try to do anything to maintain employment, it is bound to be wrong. It never gets the chance to work.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: The member for Canning shall cease interjecting.

Mr Bateman: That was the only time I spoke.

The SPEAKER: That may be so but it was at the time I was on my feet. I ask members kindly to refrain from interjecting. There have been about four members interjecting simultaneously and if that situation continues I shall take action.

Mr HASSELL: I refer also to the positive action of this Government in relation to its moves to see the North-West Shelf project developed, the gas pipeline built, and other projects started which will create employment both directly and indirectly and so reduce the unemployment about which the Opposition claims such concern but, when it comes to any of the issues, is not worried at all.

We also note in the long speech of the Leader of the Opposition about unemployment his failure to link the issues of inflation and unemployment with the wage pressures which continue and the industrial action which continues to be taken. The simple facts are that the people in the Labor movement who are demanding more and more are doing so at the cost of jobs for their colleagues.

Mr Harman: What is more important to you; inflation or unemployment?

Mr HASSELL: It is high time these connections were recognised.

Mr Davies: Fraser has never had it so good from the industrial movement.

Mr HASSELL: It was particularly noteworthy that the Leader of the Opposition should have referred to the downturn in external trade and the deterioration he alleged in mineral exports in the context of the attitude adopted by the Opposition in relation to the development of those projects. I could hardly believe my ears when he started to talk about the downturn in forestry and the difficulties experienced in that industry when the Opposition, through its policies, and the people who support it and who stage semi-riots outside this House, have done everything they can to make sure those industries do not succeed.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HASSELL: If I can get in a word or two I will refer to some of the positive aspects of the Budget which is the basis of the continuing policies which will result in the solution of the problems about which the Opposition expresses concern. Before doing so I would like to touch on a further matter in relation to the overall issue of the funding of the State.

Some of the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition relate to this matter also. He launched a full-scale attack on what he called the new federalism.

Mr Wilson: What do you call it?

Mr HASSELL: I call it federalism; I do not call it new federalism because I do not believe we have ever promoted it as new federalism. We have a federalism policy and the Opposition has none, nor has it ever had one, because it does not believe in federalism.

When the Leader of the Opposition launches his attacks on the system of federalism which we operate it would be useful if he could tell us what federalism, if any, the Opposition supports. The Opposition has a long history of capitulation to

increased control by Canberra, because that is what the Opposition believes in.

Mr Tonkin: That is a slur on Fisher.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The members for Morley and Maylands have been almost continually interjecting since the member for Cottesloe started his speech. The matter before the House is one which affords members the opportunity to express themselves on virtually any subject at all. I ask those members who have been so vigorous in their interjections to save their comments until they make their own speeches at some other time. The member for Cottesloe has made it quite clear he has no intention of replying to interjections and wishes only to get on with the business of addressing the Chair. He should be given that opportunity.

Mr HASSELL: I would be prepared to answer some interjections but there have been far too many. I refer to page 28 of the Financial Statement, 1978-79, where the revenue of the State and its various sources is set out in summary form. I am particularly interested in the specific purpose grants section under the item headed, "Commonwealth", because it is through the method of specific purpose grants, through the use of the constitutional power to make grants to the States on any terms under section 96 of the Constitution, that the Commonwealth is able to make or break the States.

It is through that power that the philosophical approach adopted by the Australian Labor Party, as part of its platform and in practice under the Whitlam Federal Government, was introduced into vast areas of State responsibility, not only for a Commonwealth element of funding which was the traditional way of Commonwealth involvement in such matters—unfortunate as that position was—but also to introduce a deliberate policy of intervention in the detailed administration so that the Commonwealth could ensure the detailed programmes were carried out in the way the Commonwealth wanted them to be achieved.

Mr Harman: Don't you think that was necessary?

Mr HASSELL: I certainly do not because I believe if the Federation were restructured in relation to its finances, as it should be in a true federalism policy, the States would not be continuously in the position they are now where they have no room to manoeuvre, take initiatives, or implement new policies.

Mr Harman: Don't you agree some States may have been below what was happening in other

States and the Federal Government saw the need to make sure every Australian had the same opportunity?

Mr HASSELL: I agree some States were below others and there were a lot of things which Australians were demanding of government which had not hitherto been presented by government.

Mr Harman: Equality of opportunity.

Mr HASSELL: The member may call it by that highfalutin term but I would not. The issue as I see it is that those things can be achieved through Commonwealth intervention by providing funds—not to control the minute expenditures as has been the growing tendency since World War II, when the Commonwealth achieved effective control of the finances. What I believe our federalism policies will eventually achieve is that the States should return to a situation of financial independence in which they not only have the constitutional powers and responsibilities but also the wherewithal to raise the money to carry them out.

If we restructure the finances of the nation so that is achieved, to my way of thinking that would be a return to federalism. The issues we are discussing now are merely the very beginning of that sort of approach.

Mr Harman: The Liberal Party policy.

Mr HASSELL: I hope it is. I wish we could persuade our colleagues in Canberra to see it that way. My proposals do not necessarily involve an abandonment of the various things that are undertaken.

Mr Harman: That is why you want a double tax in Western Australia.

Mr HASSELL: There is no question of a double tax. What needs to be done is for the Commonwealth Government to transfer, not as specific purpose grants, larger block amounts of revenue which are at the discretion of the States—which is where the discretion should lie—because this is where the constitutional responsibility lies.

Mr Wilson: Mr Fraser does not agree.

Mr HASSELL: I think Mr Fraser supports those policies; he is committed to those policies. They cannot be achieved overnight. We have not sold out to ideology as the Leader of the Opposition suggested because we are not prepared to sell people out in any such approach. Our approach is to achieve those objectives in as practical a way as they can be achieved.

Mr Wilson: He is saying the States must take on more responsibility without giving them the wherewithal.

Mr HASSELL: That is a criticism which I think at this time has validity. That is the point to which I am coming in relation to some of these figures.

Mr Wilson: Federalism is not succeeding.

Mr HASSELL: I do not see the logic in that suggestion.

I shall refer now to the figures on page 28 of the Financial Statement where we can see the specific purpose grants set out for the previous four years and the current financial year. According to my calculations, the specific purpose grants as a percentage of the grand total of the revenue of the State are as follows: In 1974-75, those grants represented 2.92 per cent of the total; in 1975-76, they represented 9.43 per cent of the total; in 1976-77, they represented 12.31 per cent of the total; and in 1977-78, they represented 12.53 per cent of the total. That indicates a continuing increase in the percentage of State total revenues which the specific purpose grants represent, and that is a matter of concern in relation to a federalism policy which seeks to return power, responsibility, and the capacity to fulfil the responsibility in terms of finance to the States.

The situation changes in relation to the Budget for 1978-79 where the percentage falls from 12.53 per cent last year to 11.96 per cent in the new year. Unfortunately, although that might be interpreted as a hopeful sign in the progression of a federalism policy, it is not balanced on the other side with a significant increase in the undirected, uncontrolled funds of the State derived from the Commonwealth.

Therefore, the federalism policy in terms of those moneys in this Budget, has not been seen to be carried out as we would like to see it carried out. The difficulty can be seen when we turn to page 29 of the Financial Statement and look at the list of specific purpose grants. We seem to have an incapacity to persuade the people in Canberra that we should hook off those grants and that system of control and hook on at the same time to a system whereby the State gets the same revenue, or more, without the specific purpose attachment.

It is a matter of concern also to a federalism policy that the percentage of total State revenue provided from Commonwealth sources remains very high. According to my calculations, the figures indicate that in 1974-75 the percentage of total State revenues represented by funds from the Commonwealth was 42.88 per cent. In 1975-76 the percentage was 47.71 per cent, a significant increase. In 1976-77 the percentage

was 50.92 per cent. In 1977-78 the percentage was 52.25 per cent. There was a small decrease in this Budget for the year 1978-79 with a figure of 52.09 per cent.

Mr Harman: Given the inflation rate, what do those figures mean in real terms?

Mr HASSELL: I assume the inflation rate is constant for both the State and Federal Governments; but those are percentage figures comparing the various years. I do not think inflation has anything to do with it.

Mr Harman: Inflation would not be constant from one year to the next.

Mr HASSELL: I agree with the honourable member; but it is constant for both Governments. All I am saying is, of the total State revenues for any of those years, the amounts derived from Commonwealth sources were the percentages I have quoted. I do not think inflation comes into it.

Mr H. D. Evans: Inflation has decreased the value by 17.6 per cent in specific terms this year.

Mr HASSELL: The point I am making is, inflation will not affect those proportions from year to year. It applies overall to the Commonwealth figures and the State figures. One does not need to adjust any values to make that table valid.

Mr Harman: You have not done that then?

Mr HASSELL: Not in the way I have arrived at the figures. Perhaps I have not conveyed the message very well; but I suggest there is no need for that.

The point I am making is, the reality of our situation in this State is that we are very much in the hands of the Commonwealth. Our tax-sharing entitlement is a very substantial proportion of the total Commonwealth revenues which the State receives and the total Commonwealth revenues which the State receives are more than half our total income for the year. Given that situation, given the situation that the Commonwealth controls effectively the loan programmes, that it controls effectively the overseas borrowings, and has the capacity to budget in a deficit way whereas we have no capacity to budget for a deficit, it must be recognised the State Budget is drawn, by whoever is in office, in a straitjacket. There is little room for dramatic initiatives or dramatic changes. That is the area which I seek in the long term, and in a practical way, to have changed, because it was never contemplated by the States when they entered into the Federation that they would be put in the position within 50 years, as has occurred, that they would not be able to control their financial destinies.

Mr Tonkin: Deakin foresaw that though, did he not?

Mr HASSELL: I do not believe the Commonwealth should be allowed to continue to promote the proposition that it has responsibilities in a whole field of governmental activity in relation to all sorts of Government enterprises where there is no mention of those matters in the Constitution and no constitutional change has been effected with the consent of the Australian people through the referendum procedure provided in the Constitution itself.

The changes which have occurred in our Federal system have come about as a result of the financial power of the Commonwealth. That power has been used in a way which, to my mind, is totally inconsistent with the Federal intention and the Federal system. We should implement a change to reverse the situation which now exists and we should return to the States all those matters which belong to them in a constitutional sense. It is only when some real progress is made in that direction that I will be satisfied we really have, at the Federal level, a commitment to federalism; never mind new federalism.

Mr Harman: You would agree that a State Budget is really not an economic tool of management.

Mr HASSELL: I do not consider I am totally qualified to answer that question. All I should like to say is that I have to concede the honourable member's suggestion must be partially right for two reasons. One reason is the stringency of the Federal control to which I have referred and the other reason is the relative minuteness of the State Budget as compared with the Federal Budget.

Mr Tonkin: He is not talking about that. He is talking about economic matters, not political matters.

Mr HASSELL: That is not the conclusion at all. I did not say they were and I will not accept that suggestion.

In referring to the Budget itself, the comment has been made in its introduction by the Treasurer that it has been a tough year in which to budget. It appears from the matters which have been referred to already that that is the case. At the same time it appears to me to be a matter for commendation—a commendation we have not heard from the Opposition—that so many employment programmes have been included in the Budget in these times and such substantial increases in expenditure in vital fields of education and health have been made.

Mr T. H. Jones: What about hospitals?

Mr HASSELL: These programmes and increases in expenditure have been achieved in a situation where we have no growth and no capacity in the State sphere to budget for a deficit. I refer in particular to the allocation of \$4 million for minor works aimed at creating employment.

Mr Davies: That is the same as last year. It does not even allow for inflation.

Mr HASSELL: Members opposite should give due credit for the fact that it is the same as last year bearing in mind that there is a decreased capacity to provide for these matters. Therefore, it is a substantial achievement.

Mr T. H. Jones: It is going backwards.

Mr Harman: I did not think they would have fooled you with that.

Mr HASSELL: There has been a substantial increase in funding for education with the important resulting increase in employment opportunity in that field. A total of 218 additional teachers will be appointed to primary schools, 20 more specialist teachers will be appointed to schools for handicapped children, 120 additional teachers are to be employed in secondary schools, and 69 additional teachers are to be appointed to the technical education division. Those are substantial increases in that area of Government activity at the State level.

Mr Davies: You underspent in those areas last year.

Mr HASSELL: Those increases represent not only the opportunity for employment which is created by an additional number of positions, but they represent also an indication of the commitment to education of the State Government and its belief that there will be a need in our expanding and growing economy, for which provision is being made, for the people who will be employed in those positions.

Mr T. H. Jones: Do you know that some of the education grants have been spent already?

Mr HASSELL: There has been an increase in the area of mental health services.

Mr T. H. Jones: That is what you are trying to pull over people's eyes. Some of the education grants have been spent already.

Mr HASSELL: There has been an increase in the number of trainees from 90 to 130; an increase in the trained nursing staff in psychiatric hospitals; and a provision for staffing a 32-bed hospital at Bull Creek which will be opened in 1979. If we turn to the police and RTA we will see a further 56 officers will be appointed, of which 43 will go to the police and the balance to

the RTA. A further 20 clerical and support staff will be appointed to those two departments. Those matters appear in the revenue Budget which we are discussing. They provide substantial increases in vital areas which the Opposition has claimed to be concerned about for a long time and for which it has given no credit.

Mr T. H. Jones: We are concerned too.

Mr HASSELL: In our present circumstances, the Budget is a commendable document, representative of a Government which has the greatest care and the greatest concern for people, employment, and the continuing needs of the State.

Mr Harman: Do you believe what you are saying?

Mr HASSELL: When it is coupled with the works programme which we will consider, we will see there is the maximum direction towards employment creation.

I suppose the greatest compliment which has been paid to the Budget has been the total failure of the Leader of the Opposition to make one positive suggestion for any alternative.

I support the Bill.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [8.56 p.m.]: I should like to make a few generalised comments on the Budget and Budget strategy and perhaps discuss some of the points raised by the member for Cottesloe. But there are a couple of points in more specific areas I should like to deal with before referring to the Budget.

I should like to start with what I imagine must be the obvious one for today, because I think Tuesday, the 3rd October, 1978, is the day which has reflected very little credit on the Minister for Education and the Government of which he is the front man in that particular area. I watched, as I imagine many of us did, the half-hour programme on "TDT" last night in relation to the particular issue to which I am referring. I watched the programme with a great deal of interest. I felt a number of intelligent comments were made, mostly by the Acting President of the Teachers' Union (Miss N. Harken) and the parents of the children who were in the audience. But I felt the Minister did a very poor job of representing the point of view of the Government.

Sir Charles Court: That was not the public reaction.

Several Government members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: It is hardly surprising to me that the puppets on the back bench opposite should be speaking along those particular lines.

The point which needs to be made is the Government's hope in this particular area is a general shemozzle will develop in which the teachers generally fail to follow the lead of the union representatives.

Mr P. V. Jones: Who said we had hopes like that?

Mr PEARCE: Do we not remember when the deputation from the union came to see the Minister a couple of weeks ago and after getting nowhere with him for the third or fourth time the members of the deputation walked out and announced the plans they had for strike action? The Minister went squealing very quickly to the Press. I am sorry, I will withdraw the word "squealing". He went complaining to the Press that the union had not told him that the plans were so far advanced.

Then I presume the Minister set up a Dorothy Dix question in which the member for Murray asked the Minister whether he believed the teachers were serious on the particular issue and if a referendum had been held whether the strikes would be going on. The Minister again demonstrated his belief that teachers generally were not happy about striking. I accept that is true, but the Minister went on to say that he expected most of the teachers would not strike. In fact, the figures he produced showed a slight—

Mr P. V. Jones: That was not the answer at all. I was asked a question as to whether or not I believed the failure of the union to hold a referendum indicated that perhaps the union was concerned most teachers would be against strike action. My own answer was that one could draw that conclusion, or words to that effect.

Mr PEARCE: I think the attitude of the Minister on that occasion, and on other occasions in the media, has made it plain to us he was, in fact, drawing his conclusions in the hope that the union would back away from this particular issue.

Mr P. V. Jones: Certainly on that aspect. I believe they have some responsibility for the situation.

Mr PEARCE: I said some weeks ago I was very hopeful we would not reach the situation we have reached today because I do not think it is good that for the first time in 50 years teachers should take themselves out on strike.

Mr Watt: Would you encourage people not to strike?

Mr PEARCE: I had discussions with teachers in my electorate, the same as the member for Albany probably did. I did not give advice one way or the other on this particular matter.

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: I said to them, quite clearly, it was up to them to decide what they wanted in this matter—a point of view I subscribe to even now.

I make the point also that there must be something amiss with the current Minister for Education, the Education Department, or with the administration of education generally to lead to the first strike in 50 years. It is not as though the department is dealing with some left-wing militant union; it is dealing with some of the most conservative people in the State. The majority of them would vote for the Government, yet for the first time in 50 years the present Government has provoked the teachers to the point where they have taken themselves out on strike.

Mr P. V. Jones: The union called the strike.

Mr PEARCE: Members opposite do not understand and perhaps that is half the problem. There is no massive difference between the union and the teachers in this State. Considering that it is a non-compulsory union, it has a membership of about 93 per cent.

Mr Shalders: Only 10 per cent are active.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PEARCE: There is no point in the member for Murray, or the Minister, trying to suggest as they did a couple of weeks ago that the membership of the union is not reasonably solidly behind their leaders. That proof is in evidence in the fact that we had 3 500 teachers attend a meeting at the WACA ground. Also, a conservative figure of 3 000 people met outside Parliament House a fortnight ago.

Mr Clarko: Were they all teachers? That is a false figure because amongst those 3 000 people were many who were not teachers.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gosnells.

Mr PEARCE: I think the level of interjections in this place is shameful! The member for Karrinyup is a great one at presenting false figures. Whether the figure was 2 900, or whether one or two wharfies turned up, I have no idea.

Mr Clarko: I thought you were there.

Mr PEARCE: Of course I was. The member for Karrinyup was not present on either occasion.

Mr Clarko: That does not matter. I said you were there and counted, but you are not a teacher at present.

Mr PEARCE: Perhaps the figures are out by 10 per cent. The point is the Minister produced

figures demonstrating that 63 per cent of secondary school teachers in the education system chose to strike today in the group of schools chosen by ballot. He also said that something like 41 per cent of primary school teachers chose to strike. Now, there are more militant teacher organisations in the other States which strike quite regularly but it is still relatively rare for teachers to strike, and for an average of 45 per cent of teachers to go out on strike.

I am not in favour of strikes unless they are absolutely necessary, but the question I ask is: What is there about the education administration in this State, and the Minister, which has brought the first teacher strike in 50 years? The situation is at a level which would never have been contemplated amongst Western Australian school teachers even a few years ago. The member for Murray is fascinated by research into teachers on strike issues and he will be aware, as I am, of referendums on strikes held by teachers on a number of issues. I am the first to agree with the member for Murray, and with the Minister, that only between 25 and 30 per cent voted to have a strike. That is right. So, in fact, the number of people who actually struck is about double the number of people who have, in the past, even voted at a referendum—even to the point of going out on strike.

I would like to come back to the point of intimidation because there is one very interesting figure with regard to the considerable difference between the number of secondary teachers and primary teachers who went out. In the larger secondary schools where the influence of the principal is less strong, 63 per cent of the teachers went out on strike. In the primary schools, the figure was 41 per cent.

Mr Watt: That is not the reason at all.

Mr PEARCE: Nevertheless, there is a large difference which bears some examination.

Mr Clarko: Because the primary school teachers are not as radical as the secondary school teachers.

Mr PEARCE: What is the member for Karrinyup trying to say? That secondary school teachers are better educated? In fact, they are. Why would the member for Karrinyup claim that secondary school teachers are more radical than primary school teachers?

Mr Clarko: I will not interrupt your speech. I am happy to do so, but the Speaker will object, and you will object next week.

Mr PEARCE: I probably will, too. In that case I will ignore the member for Karrinyup hereafter.

He is suggesting that if one studies politics and philosophy, that makes a difference.

Mr Clarko interjected.

Mr PEARCE: Of course, the member for Karrinyup was responsible for educating secondary school students so perhaps he knows.

Mr Jamieson: Until he was hit by the "mace"!

Mr PEARCE: We see that in the primary school situation either the whole staff goes out, or none. That happened in a number of primary schools. So, if there is a question of coercion it seems that coercion was used by principals, or others in a position of authority, to prevent people from taking part in the strike. I am not going into who coerced whom, but I certainly deny that the only reason so many people came out on strike today was that many were coerced by their colleagues. I can instance primary school principals who put pressure on staff not to go out, with some success. There may be cases of solidarity amongst the people who attended the meetings to get people out.

No matter how the figures are juggled, the point that needs to be made most strongly is that many teachers came out on strike today. The most unfortunate thing is that today's strike was only the first of eight, and unless something is done quickly we will have another seven days of strikes. More than 50 per cent of our people will be affected during the next seven strikes, and we will have exactly the same situation as existed today. In some cases there were more teachers than pupils in schools. The education system will be disrupted considerably.

Mr P. V. Jones: Who caused the disruption?

Mr PEARCE: The Minister has.

Sir Charles Court: That is rot. It is a disgrace to the profession.

Mr PEARCE: The Premier is a disgrace.

Sir Charles Court: The more people who go on strike, the more the profession is discredited. I hope you realise that.

Mr PEARCE: The people who struck today were teachers under the predecessors of the present Government. Why did not they strike under the Tonkin Government, or under the Brand Government? Why did they not strike when Frank Wise was the Premier of the State?

Mr Sodeman: You are arguing against yourself.

Mr PEARCE: I am not.

Mr Sodeman: You are saying it is a political strike.

Mr PEARCE: I am not. If I said it was a political strike, I would not be asking why it did

not occur under Premier Brand. When a renowned incompetent National Country Party Minister was in charge of education why was there not a strike? That Minister was part of the Liberal-National Country Party Government, as is the present Minister for Education.

The reason is that in those days the conservative Governments showed more eptitude, if I might coin a word, in dealing with teacher organisations than does the present crowd. The present Government does not have any sensitivity when dealing with the unions generally.

A couple of months ago the Premier said that I know nothing about left-wing unions, and he said that the Government could not possibly be blamed for the confrontation. I cannot believe that. It seems to me there is no reason for a confrontation such as this. Nevertheless, the previous Minister for Labour and Industry and the Premier are always able to smear people involved in industrial disputes, and have claimed that they receive secret radio messages from Russia. They claim that the unions are instructed by the communists. In this case, does the Government see a tie-up with South Korea, North Korea, Peking, or wherever the former Minister dreamed of? No-one can point to those organisations as having any members on the executive of the Teachers' Union.

When one looks around to find who to blame, it seems to me the blame rests on the ineptitude of this Government. I come back to the point that the only way this problem will be solved is by some form of arbitration.

Mr Clarko: That is not what it is all about.

Mr PEARCE: There goes the member for Karrinyup again; the instant expert.

Mr Clarko: The strike was planned before the conference.

Mr PEARCE: That is not true. Why have thousands of dollars been spent by the Minister in misleading the people on the reason for the strike?

Mr Sibson: What about the money spent by the teachers?

Mr PEARCE: That is their money. However, the Minister is making decisions to spend the taxpayers' money.

Mr Sodeman: That is Government spending. The Government has to make a decision.

Mr PEARCE: A number of Teachers' Union conference motions were passed, starting at 117, moving to 169, 170, and others following. They came up in turn. Conference motion 167 preceded conference motion 169, which deals with a

particular dispute on the structure of the school year, not the strike. Conference motion 167 was dealt with before that, and referred to the need for arbitration. So, in fact, the teachers' conference dealt with arbitration before it dealt with the structure of the school year.

Mr Clarko: Do you deny that the decision to call a strike was made earlier?

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: There was no suggestion of a strike when discussing the structure of the school year.

Mr Clarko: What about the meeting of 3000 people?

Mr PEARCE: The member for Karrinyup was not anywhere in sight at that meeting, and it is inaccurate of him to suggest that any motion passed by that meeting had to do with the rolling strike situation we are now facing.

Mr Clarko: Are you denying they talked about strike action on that day?

Mr PEARCE: Yes.

Mr Clarko: And are you denying that the executive talked about the strike before the State conference? Of course they did.

Mr PEARCE: The member is in no position to judge. All I can tell him is that the Teachers' Union conference discussed motion 167 prior to discussing the present issue. If the member were to read the conference journal he would find out that what I am saying is true.

Mr P. V. Jones: The secretary of the union, Mr Lloyd, will disagree with you.

Mr PEARCE: The Minister is not a good quoter; let us be honest.

Mr P. V. Jones: I am trying to help you. The motion referring to arbitration is 167.

Mr PEARCE: I said that.

Mr P. V. Jones: And it deals with arbitration, in the broad sense.

Mr PEARCE: In every sense.

Mr P. V. Jones: Mr Lloyd has advised me that the union discussed the matter and determined it after 169 was discussed; in chronological order not numerical order. It was discussed at a later time, and because it was discussed at a later time the union was subsequently able to come along and discuss arbitration. That is their advice to me.

Mr PEARCE: The union does not order its priorities in either a numerical or a chronological sense.

Mr P. V. Jones: I am just saying that Mr Lloyd and Miss Harken told me it was the other way around.

Mr PEARCE: The Minister is simply confirming what I thought. He has helped me. The arbitration issue was not dragged in at the last minute, but it was dealt with at the same conference that the other matters were dealt with.

Mr Clarko: You were not at the conference, and you just told me not to refer to something I did not really know about.

Mr PEARCE: I am very thankful for the Minister's assistance on that point; he has helped me immeasurably. The point simply is that the Teachers' Union has one attitude on the school year, and the Government has another. There has been an inability on the part of these parties to agree, and even, I believe, to have meaningful discussions on the issue.

I have never accepted the point of view that if the Minister for Education invites people up to see him and then pays no attention to what they say, it can be interpreted as having meaningful discussion.

The only way to solve this problem is by arbitration. I hope the Government is big enough to agree to arbitration. In the Press the Teachers' Union has given quite unequivocal guarantees that if the arbitration decision goes against it, it will abide by that decision. I see no reason to doubt that statement placed in the Press on behalf of the Teachers' Union. If the Teachers' Union departed from that guarantee, having given it so publicly, it would undermine its credibility totally.

I assume that the Minister for Education has used the funds of the taxpayers to insert an advertisement in the Press to the effect that if the arbitration goes the wrong way for the Teachers' Union, the union will continue with the rolling strikes, contrary to its assurances. Why is the Minister able to make these statements at the expense of the taxpayers? I assume that such large advertisements cost a considerable amount of money. The Minister gave the public his own version of how the union will operate. Everyone knows the Minister is not in a position to say how the union will operate, and it seems to me to be very poor form indeed for the Minister to use the taxpayers' money to cause to be printed statements of that type, statements which have been contradicted flatly in advance by the Teachers' Union.

I ask again: Why will not the Government agree to arbitration? We are not asking the Government to agree with the union, we are just asking for the issue to be decided elsewhere, in exactly the same way as the Government asks unions and other organisations to proceed to arbitration.

Mr P. V. Jones: What do you want to go to arbitration? Will you spell it out exactly?

Mr PEARCE: If this matter is not yet clear in the mind of the Minister for Education—

Mr P. V. Jones: I want to know. If you can, will you tell me what you want to go to arbitration?

Mr PEARCE: The issue upon which arbitration is sought is the question of the restructuring of the school year. This is the matter that is in dispute between the Education Department and the Teachers' Union.

Mr P. V. Jones: Which part of that?

Mr Jamieson: The restructuring of the school year.

Mr PEARCE: There is a difference between the educational matters over which the Government has control—according to the Minister—and the industrial issues over which the union and some sort of arbitration has a greater control. The point is that it is a combined area in that sense; there are both educational and industrial connotations in all aspects of the matter. The Government cannot change the educational aspect of the school year without at the same time changing the industrial aspect of the school year.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is fair enough. You want the effects of the proposal to go to arbitration.

Mr PEARCE: I do not want the effects of the proposal to go to arbitration.

Mr P. V. Jones: I have said they can.

Mr PEARCE: I know that, but what I am saying to the Minister is that his understanding of the matter is not very good. If he thinks he can separate out the effects of the proposal from the implementation of the proposal itself, he is incorrect.

Mr P. V. Jones: I have had the executive coming to talk to me, saying that they can separate them.

Mr PEARCE: It is no good saying that the executive agrees with the Minister all the time. If the Executive of the Teachers' Union agreed with the Minister, we would not have these rolling strikes. We have not spent all this time discussing the matter—

Mr Clarko: A mark of 48 per cent is a fail, you know that.

Mr PEARCE: It just goes to show how out of date the member for Karrinyup is with the educational scene.

Mr Clarko: You work on the modern method of black jelly beans for everybody.

Mr PEARCE: I will conclude my remarks on this matter by saying that we have a responsibility to settle this matter rapidly before anybody else is inconvenienced. I hope the parties will get together and the issue will be resolved tomorrow.

Today I asked a question on a totally different subject. My question concerned tow truck operators in the outer metropolitan suburbs. I was approached by a gentleman about this matter, and I asked my questions in a low key way because I am concerned about the possible implications.

About three weeks ago I was in Sydney at the time that a tow truck scandal was raised by a Legislative Council committee investigating organised crime. One of the allegations made was that members of the New South Wales Police Force had collected in excess of \$80 000 from one tow truck operator over a three-year period. This money had been paid as kickbacks by the tow truck operators to members of the Police Force. Where a vehicle was removed from the scene of an accident by a tow truck, the going rate was \$30 kickback to the police.

These were serious charges indeed, and the day after the allegations were made by the committee, four policemen were charged. At the present time I do not know whether these defendants have been brought to court, but I suspect they have not.

When I returned from Sydney I received a telephone call from a gentleman who operates a tow truck service at Kelmscott. He had experienced difficulties with officers of the Road Traffic Authority in regard to towing damaged vehicles from the scene of an accident, particularly when his were the only tow truck vehicles at the site.

I was concerned about this matter in view of what had happened in New South Wales, because any suggestion of corruption, particularly when members of the Police Force may be involved, is a very serious one.

I listened to what this gentleman had to say, and I asked a question in the House. I would like to indicate to the Minister for Police and Traffic—although he is not in the House at present—that I am not at all satisfied with the reply I received to my question. I would like members to listen to the reply, because I believe any suggestion of malpractice should be corrected straightaway, if it can be corrected.

When the problem was first raised with me, it seemed so tenuous that I thought there may be nothing in it, and I hasten to make that comment now. If that is not the case, it is very much incumbent on the Minister for Police and Traffic

to set right any possibility of a misunderstanding. If something is going on, that particular matter should be investigated with full fervour.

I asked the Minister firstly, whether he had received a letter from this gentleman about this matter, and secondly, had his department investigated it. The Minister's reply to both these questions was "Yes". I then asked him the result of the investigation, and this was his revealing reply—

Previous instructions to police, that the nearest operator is to be engaged if the owner of the crashed vehicle is incapable of making a choice, have been reiterated.

That is to say, members of the RTA were told again to carry out the instructions they had been given previously. I am sorry the Minister for Police and Traffic is not in the Chamber because I would have asked him the following question across the Chamber: Does that mean that members of the RTA were deviating from instructions they had been given previously? Maybe that is an unjustified construction to put on the answer, but I do not think so in terms of the words actually used. If that is the case, certainly the House deserves a better explanation than it was given.

I then asked the Minister—

Was a report prepared as a result of these investigations?

The Minister replied, "Yes". The last part of the question was—

If so, will he table the report?

The Minister's reply to this part of the question struck me as being the most disturbing aspect of the whole matter. The Minister said—

No. It was a police investigation, and is confidential.

What is going on? If this man's allegations are totally incorrect and the investigations proved that they are, the easiest way to put the whole matter at rest is to table the report of the investigations and to demonstrate clearly that there is nothing in the allegations. In this way everyone's mind would be set at rest. However, by the Minister's very ambiguous answer to part (3) of the question, and by his refusal to table the document, we are left with the impression that there is a possibility all is not as it should be. Certainly there is a doubt in my mind.

It may be that these allegations, having been raised firstly by the gentleman concerned and now in Parliament, have had the salutary effect of stopping any malpractice. However, there is no

guarantee of that. If it has happened, the Minister has given no indication of it.

Perhaps the Minister will pick up my comments in *Hansard* and he will endeavour to take some further action because certainly I will take the matter further myself.

After that rather lengthy introduction, I would like to turn to the Budget and what it will do for the State. I do not want to spend much time on details on this early occasion, but I would like to make some generalised comments. During the Committee debate I will be able to comment on the details of Budget figures in certain areas.

By and large I would like to point out that the Budget is an unimaginative one and that its effects on the State will be costly. Certainly I concede it is a clever document. In many areas, by carefully disguising the level of Commonwealth input—such as the Commonwealth input for the education capital—it is possible to disguise the fact that an increased Commonwealth allocation hides a decreased State commitment.

During the Committee stage of debate, I will go into the figures of education funding more fully. If members look at these figures they will see that the total is marginally up on last year's total. However, the State input is down considerably. Because the Commonwealth input has been increased, the State input is down by \$4 million or \$5 million. So we see again for the second year running the Government has underspent the allocation for teachers' salaries this time by \$5 million, and at a time when approximately 1 000 teachers are unemployed. This means that 1 000 teachers are either collecting the dole or working in other jobs. Their training—at community expense—is being wasted, and yet in this Budget \$5 million allocated for teachers' salaries has not been spent.

If in fact the Government has a commitment to decrease class sizes—as stated in the Budget—and if it has the tremendous commitment to education that the member for Cottesloe claims it has, why is it leaving \$5 million sitting around doing nothing when it could be spent to help achieve these aims, and to help many of the teachers currently unemployed? Before the member for Karrinyup says anything, I will concede this is better than the situation last year when \$7 million set aside for teachers' salaries was not spent.

Mr Clarko: Do you realise there will be less spent on teachers' salaries because of the strike?

Mr PEARCE: I was coming to that. I am sure the member for Karrinyup is most grateful to the

Teachers' Union for helping the Government to balance its Budget. I will certainly refer to the figures concerned during the Committee debate.

Let us now consider the number of people employed in Government departments last year compared with the number employed this year. This Budget will subtly disemploy people in the public sector. Staff numbers have been reduced in quite a few Government departments. Also, a scheme has been introduced to delay the appointment of replacement staff, and this is intended to save a fair amount of money. If a person dies, leaves, or retires, his replacement will not be appointed for, say, one month, so that for every 12 employees who are replaced, one year's salary is saved.

That may be good budgeting, but it means that for every 12 employees who leave or retire, effectively one person is unemployed. That is disastrous budgeting.

A few weeks ago I referred to the disguised unemployment in the building industry. Because of the significant downturn in this industry, many subcontractors now find they are working only two or three days every week. This means that they are not technically unemployed; they are still working some of the time and they are being paid some money. So while they cannot register for unemployment benefits, nevertheless they are working only part time. If there are 50 000 such people, this means a disguised extra 25 000 unemployed. This shows that we could suddenly find many more thousands of people are out of work than at present.

The Government said that it is doing a great deal to counter the present unemployment problem. I would like someone to point out to me just where this appears in the Budget. Before I start, I concede that there have been some increases in the loan fund, and we will discuss that when we come to it. However, those increases are to do with capital provisions for certain buildings. Certainly they will have some effect on the building industry, but the increases are not substantial in most areas. Again, this is not always a State input at all; it is sometimes a Commonwealth input. It will mean a small increase in the construction rate and in money put aside for the construction of public buildings. However, it will not compensate for the downturn in the building industry which is consequent upon the disastrous financial policies of the Federal Government. These policies have made it almost impossible for many young people to buy their own homes. If they cannot afford to build houses, the industry will be further affected.

This is the same situation that applies with regard to the Teachers' Union. The Minister tries to tell us all is well; but this is the first time this union has been on strike for 50 years. The Government is now telling us that all is well in the employment field. How can it say that?

The Commonwealth Government has a very callous attitude towards unemployment. It says to the people who are unemployed, "You are doing a job for Australia. You may be unemployed, but by being unemployed you are helping to bring the inflation rate down." I am sure that attitude makes unemployed people feel good. The State Government is making no effort to take initiatives which will give jobs to people. That seems to be the greatest task facing Commonwealth and State Governments—the alleviation of the very difficult and significant problems facing the community because of widespread unemployment. We see no imaginative moves to solve this problem.

We hear clichés such as, "If only we could get more development, then jobs will appear." The jobs that are appearing are not appearing as fast as other jobs are disappearing. Where the Government is failing dramatically and drastically is in its inability to confront the "disappearing jobs" syndrome.

A couple of weeks ago in this House my deputy leader moved a motion asking for an inquiry into the effect of technology on employment prospects. The Government was not at all happy about that. It claimed that work was being done, and it had everything in hand. Where in the Budget do we see allocations for this type of investigation? Where in the Budget do we see any initiatives or moves to overcome the problems of people who are losing jobs to technology?

I read an article recently which suggested that 20 000 people in Sydney may lose their jobs as typists when typewriters are replaced by the new word processors. I could not imagine there would be 20 000 people involved in a city the size of Perth, but there may be 4 000 or 5 000. If that is the case, 4 000 or 5 000 typists in Perth may be faced with the prospect of losing their jobs. One would think that the Government would be taking cognisance of this possibility, and doing something about it. We cannot point to anywhere in the Budget to show that money is being allocated to deal with this problem.

In fact, what we have in this Budget is more of the same. It is a balanced Budget, as the Treasurer says. He is good at overbalancing, if you ask me!

One of the ways it is possible to make increases seem large in percentage terms is by

underspending the allocation for the previous year. If \$100 million is allocated for a certain section in one year, and next year it is \$100 million, there is no increase. However, if the original \$100 million allocation is underspent by \$10 million, only \$90 million has been spent. If the same amount is allocated in the next year it can be called a 10 per cent increase on what has been spent in the previous year. There will seem to be an increased allocation because the allocation for the previous year has been underspent.

This is particularly true of the education expenditure in this Budget. I will have more to say about that aspect in the Committee stage.

I am not particularly impressed with this Budget. It is probably not the worst in the history of the world, but it is certainly not the best.

At a time when the community is facing quite different problems from those it has had to face before, particularly in the area of employment and the changing nature of employment in our society, one looks to the Government for initiatives to deal with these changing problems. We do not find any initiatives in this Budget. It is last year's Budget, and the Budget of the year before, and the Budget of the year before that. Some of the figures have been changed, but it is still the same Budget. The Government has had four years' experience in doing that sort of thing.

There is nothing more in this year's Budget. We are still looking for new solutions to new problems. It is not good enough to say that the new problems are the same as the old ones used to be.

We look to the Government for more than this. I am afraid that in this Budget we do not find it.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Shalders.

RIGHTS IN WATER AND IRRIGATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 10th August.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool) [9.35 p.m.]: It is difficult to formulate an argument on this Bill. It was introduced about two months ago, and it has run into a fair amount of flak. The Bill is one that was not as thoroughly researched as it should have been before it came to the Chamber.

As a consequence of there being a lot of complaint about it throughout the length and breadth of the country there are proposals by the Minister to delete certain sections of it, as indicated on the notice paper. It is indeed hard to know exactly what the Government intends to do.

While the Government moves to delete some sections relating to the licensing of water borers, it leaves other sections in. It is difficult to know why, unless the Government gives some other explanation as to what it proposes. These problems do not seem to have been clarified. Members will recall that the ministerial positions have changed since the legislation was introduced. We seem to be seeing Mr MacKinnon saying one thing, and he seems to be conflicting considerably with what was said by the Minister who introduced the legislation into this Chamber.

Basically the Bill aimed in the first place at a new licensing procedure for the taking of groundwater, and the licensing of drillers and operators of drills. It provided for measures for the controlling of dams and the sizes of them. As a matter of fact, the principal part of the Bill is taken up with provisions dealing with dams, and matters appertaining to such. It is rather interesting to note what is called, under the provisions of this legislation, a "referable dam".

It will be recalled that when the Bill was introduced the Minister indicated that there seemed to be certain flaws in the present legislation that did not allow the department to take certain actions that it thought it had a right to take. Indeed, it was pointed out that because of the wording of the Act certain actions the department had taken in connection with the Stonybrook controversy had not turned out well.

The Stonybrook controversy continued for a number of years. It certainly needed some cleaning up. If the Bill has good qualities, they might be in making clear the power of the Minister and those deputed by him in respect of such matters as Stonybrook.

This controversy goes back a long time. When I was Minister, the then member for Dale was having a lot of trouble with his constituents. He chaired a meeting one night, and he really chaired it because my understanding was that the two factions started to fight with chairs. It was a good time to abdicate authority as chairman, to be discreet, and to live to fight another day. The parties finished up in my office as the then Minister. They tried to explain their problems, and they did not seem to be getting very far. I understood that those living on the highlands were taking their water from those living on the lowlands. Thence the war started. That was one of the unusual occasions on which this little-used section of the Act had been brought into operation in an endeavour to give everybody a fair go at what we might refer to as riparian rights. This did not seem to work out as well as had been planned. The scheme succeeded for a time, but

people obtain advice from well-meaning people in the community who give advice based on their understanding of the legislation. Of course, such problems come to the notice of the department. Sorting this problem out might have been a good proposition.

The Minister went on to mention a case where the Minister made it a condition of the licence that the owner of a property permit a meter to be fitted to check the amount of water being pumped. When officers arrived at the property the owner refused to allow them to fit the meter and his licence was then withdrawn. However, the owner objected and the court ruled they had no power to remove the rights which previously had been accorded to that person. That is the salient feature of this Bill.

This legislation will give the Minister power to re-assess what conditions may apply not only in respect of a man taking water from a stream but also in respect of people drawing water from brooks, swamps, artesian or sub-artesian sources, etc. This provision frightens the Opposition. We have seen the Government in action and have learnt to mistrust it on matters such as this. We can see a situation arising before very long where the Government will decide to meter underground water supplies. It will be stated, of course, that it is not intended to charge for the water but simply to know how much underground water is being used. However, it is obvious the Government would not install such meters without imposing some sort of charge to recover the costs involved.

It is true a number of areas presently are exempt from the provisions and regulations appertaining to the taking of water. However, as I mentioned, this legislation will give the Minister power to make regulations to change all that if and when he so desires. For example, the Minister could change such a regulation at the beginning of summer, just as Parliament goes into recess; we would not return until after summer and in the meantime the consumers would be obliged to the new regulations. Of course, with the Government's majority in both Houses of Parliament, it would not give it a great deal to worry about; when the Parliament resumed, it would place the new regulations on the Table of the House within the required 14 days.

So, whether one is a market gardener or a private consumer of water for the garden, one can be affected by the Government of the day deciding under this amending legislation to change the regulations and to place certain conditions on the use of water from certain areas, even though it is taken only from underground sources.

I do not like this suggestion, because it also gives the power to second such authority to various boards. We heard a great deal from my leader earlier tonight about the Metropolitan Water Board. If such a power is granted to that authority, it could proceed to impose charges on metering wells. That would add to the income of the State, although it would be the Metropolitan Water Board which was imposing the charge, because the 3 per cent levy would go into Consolidated Revenue, as has been the case with all the other increases which have taken place under this Government. So, I do not like this provision one little bit and the Opposition is not keen to support it.

Members may have gathered from my remarks that there is not enough in the Bill to be worthy of support at this stage, particularly as the Minister continues the issue by informing us a number of amendments are to be moved during the Committee stage. The Minister should have been prepared to clarify the matter with the Opposition before expecting debate to proceed on this legislation; the Opposition would like to know exactly what are the intentions of the Government. The Government has had a considerable number of discussions with people from both the metropolitan and country areas.

The section the Minister proposes to remove from the Bill by the amendments he has put on the notice paper probably is one of the most worth-while sections of the legislation. It gives the Minister power to make regulations pertaining, for instance, to the procedures, powers, duties and responsibilities of the board of examiners to conduct a course of examination for well drillers and the like. This is something of a consumer protection provision; indeed, at the time a good case was made out by the Minister to insert this provision into the legislation because of the number of complaints made to the board about various drilling operators by people who had reticulation systems installed last summer.

I had a personal experience with one of these fellows who advertised that he was a competent driller. His only drill was a long piece of one-inch pipe with an auger at the end. When he was pulling it out of the hole and had about 30 feet of pipe on the end of it, he touched the electricity wires and nearly killed himself down in the hole he had dug. He did not come back; he left all his gear and went away.

After receiving advice from one of my colleagues as to how to get the job completed, and having been told of the necessary legal moves, I brought in another contractor who seemed to know what he was doing. The first fellow even

had the hide to try to charge me later for the work he had done, but that was not on!

I could have complained to the authorities under this provision, and I am sure many other consumers would have been placed in much the same position, where they employed a driller in good faith and, after finding the first contractor was unable to complete the work, were forced to seek a competent tradesman to finish the job. To that extent, the provision in the Bill is a good one, and the amendment to be moved by the Minister will take the steam out of it. I believe it will negate the original intention of the provision.

There is a fairly strong case to license all drilling operators and organisations associated with drilling. Indeed, the Bill seeks to establish a board of examiners to make sure these people are licensed in the various categories so that the public are able to assess their competence by knowing the sort of licence they carry. The three types of licences are to be the unrestricted licence, which would be carried by a person fully qualified in the art of water drilling; the general licence, awarded to a person who would be entitled to have access to all drilling work except pressure cement work; and, a restricted licence which would have specific conditions applied to it, perhaps in regard to certain areas, depths, bore hole diameters and the like. Of course, it is proposed that the company or body conducting such functions is to be licensed also.

As I mentioned earlier, the matter of dams takes up the greater part of the Bill. There are features in the legislation which one should question. I suggest if country members have not had a good look at it they should do so. It appears to me that under certain circumstances, farmers who put dams along streams near roadways could find themselves in conflict with various Government departments because these dams could finish up as the type referred to as "referable dams".

Whilst the general "referable dam" is listed as a certain size or height, the Bill goes on to indicate that any other dam considered to be in a position to cause problems could also be regarded as a "referable dam", so one would not know exactly what a "referable dam" was until one had a look at the locality in which it was built. For instance, some of the bigger dams that were quite safe in capacity and size in certain geographical situations could be included. There could be others without good foundations, on the side of a hill leading down to a roadway, which could break up and so wash away the road. Therefore, commissioner Aitken would be keen to have that dam labelled a "referable dam". In other words, a

dam built in such manner that it would hold any pressure on it and would not be any danger to other works would be acceptable.

Mr H. D. Evans: Existing dams can be referable.

Mr JAMIESON: Some existing dams have been built by people inexperienced in this work. They have been built by using a machine merely to scoop out soil without putting in sufficient footings or making sure the face is such that it will not start to ease when it becomes waterlogged. This is one of the features that would have to be satisfied if the authorities were not to consider a dam a "referable dam".

That seems to be a very big move into the area of rural pursuits and I am sure many farmers would not yet be fully aware of the ramifications.

Mr H. D. Evans: It was not referred to the Farmers' Union or the shire councils.

Mr JAMIESON: I mentioned earlier that the Government seemed to have delayed bringing this measure up for debate and here again is an example of legislation being brought forward without the Government having fully confronted those people it will mostly affect.

Some people have unusual ideas about their own properties. In *The West Australian* dated the 22nd August, 1978, I read a letter by Mr R. L. Down of Lynton Street, Doubleview. He was hostile because he would be unable to take water from a depth greater than 20 metres. When I saw his letter I thought there was a great doubt as to his entitlement in this regard because the rights of one's fee simple title do not usually go to this depth. The provision of this Bill is to give people the right to go to a depth of 20 metres. Most titles allow people to go to a depth of 40 feet, so Mr Down is not in as secure a position as he thought he was.

Most people have the idea that if one owns a plot one is entitled to go as deep as one likes, but as explained in answers to questions I referred to, it was shown very clearly that not only was that not the case but also any minerals in the ground—and water could well be classed as a mineral—are the property of the State.

People do not actually own the water beneath their property. This is very obvious because the water one might be pumping from the ground could be draining from beneath someone else's block of land. In some places it is very necessary to control this sort of activity. I do not know the position in all States, but in certain parts of South Australia there are strict controls, particularly over market gardeners north of the city, because

if these people used a large pump they could draw water from other people's properties.

This legislation is not well drafted. The Opposition has had a good look at it and we have given it a great deal of thought. While there may be certain features in it, such as the licensing of drillers, which could be agreed to, because of the fears of going along with the regulations when we do not know exactly what they will be, the possibility of new areas being declared, and requiring meters to be put on wells, whether they be household or market garden bore wells, the Opposition cannot support the measure. Even if meters were used only to ascertain the amount of water being drawn from any particular area, we could see it very soon relating to a charge from whichever authority was in control of that particular area.

We suggest it would be undesirable for this Bill to be proceeded with. At this juncture we intend to oppose the legislation unless the Minister can come up with very clear indications of where he is headed before he proceeds with this Bill. We believe the Bill should be withdrawn and work started to overcome the problems inherent in it. I recognise the problems that occurred at Stonybrook and other problems requiring some people to be subjected to certain conditions before they could be granted water rights. However, that is of lesser moment to the concern I have for the people who would not be fully acquainted with the fact that they would now be required to have dams built in such a way that it would be quite uneconomical for them and for those others with wells and bores to be subjected to additional conditions. I oppose the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Laurance.

BILLS (9): ASSENT

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

1. Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Act Amendment Bill.
2. Weights and Measures Act Amendment Bill.
3. State Energy Commission Act Amendment Bill.
4. State Energy Commission (Validation) Bill.
5. Teachers' Registration Act Repeal Bill.
6. Industrial Lands Development Authority Act Amendment Bill.
7. Youth, Sport and Recreation Bill.
8. Acts Amendment (Qualifying Ages Alteration) Bill.

9. Small Claims Tribunals Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

HONEY POOL BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 10.00 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

ROAD

Noranda Avenue

1697. Mr WILSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Is it a fact that about one month ago, officers of the Minister's department were engaged in surveying and pegging out a new section of road in Morley which would appear to represent an intention to alter the course of the eastern end of Noranda Avenue, so that it forms a "T" junction with Hookwood Road?
- (2) In view of recent objections to such alterations by the Main Roads Department and the Minister for Town Planning, can the Minister explain the reason for officers of his department being engaged in the exercise referred to in part (1) of the question?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Officers of my department were engaged in surveying and pegging a new section of road in Morley whereby it was intended to alter the course of the eastern end of Wotzko Road so that it forms a "T" junction with Hookwood Street.
- (2) This work was undertaken at the request of the Shire of Bayswater. My department has no record of any recent objection from the Main Roads Department or the Minister for Town Planning. Approval for the extension of Wotzko Road—formerly Gordon Road—to connect in a "T" junction with Hookwood Street was received on the 9th December, 1977, from the Town Planning Board.

MINING

Uranium: Crushing and Treatment Plant

1700. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Did Western Mining Corporation request and receive permission to operate a pilot uranium crushing and treating plant at its Kwinana site in 1973?
- (2) If so, what were the specified details regarding quantities to be processed at Kwinana and any other conditions applied by the Government?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) The Western Mining Corporation informed the Radiological Council in 1973 that it had built a facility at its Kwinana nickel refinery for tests of uranium ore processing. Officers of the council inspected the plant and advised on the safe transport, crushing and handling of the uranium ore.
- (2) Some 50 tonnes of Yeelirrie ore was treated in a small-scale test facility designed to provide information for the construction of a pilot plant. It is not practicable to give extensive details of the conditions set by the Government to protect workers and the environment from radiation exposure. It is sufficient to note that in all cases personal radiation levels were below detectable limits of one mill-rontgens over a four-week exposure period. No equipment or building contamination occurred and radon levels were below the detectable level of 0.002 working levels.

WOODMAN POINT

Use of Land

1719. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

- (1) What are the approximate areas of the following sections of Woodman Point—
 - (a) explosives reserve;
 - (b) quarantine station;
 - (c) naval stores facility;
 - (d) that part formerly an oil drilling rig construction site?
- (2) Who holds title to each section?
- (3) What is the approximate current commercial value of each site?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

(1) and (2)—

- (a) The explosives Reserve 24305 is about 113 hectares and is vested in the Minister for Mines.
 - (b) The quarantine station is freehold in the name of the Commonwealth of Australia. Certificate of Title 1216/175 and comprises about 53 hectares.
 - (c) The Naval stores facility is freehold in the name of the Commonwealth of Australia. Certificates of Title 1198/479 and 1276/85 and comprises about 59 hectares.
 - (d) The oil drilling rig construction site is within area (c).
- (3) This is not within the province or knowledge of Lands Department.

NATIONAL ESTATE

Register: Entries

1733. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

- (1) On what dates did the State Government nominate the following areas for entry on the register of the National Estate:
 - (a) Stirling Range National Park;
 - (b) Rudall River Area (now National Park);
 - (c) Cape Range National Park;
 - (d) Prince Regent River Nature Reserve;
 - (e) Fitzgerald River National Park;
 - (f) Drysdale River National Park;
 - (g) Windjana Gorge National Park;
 - (h) Hamelin Pool area?
- (2) If any of the above sites have been entered on the register of the National Estate, on what dates were nominations approved by the Australian Heritage Commission?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) (a) to (h) All these places were nominated on the 28th February, 1977.

- (2) The nominations of all places referred to in part (1) of the question were approved on the 18th March, 1977, by the Australian Heritage Commission. All except the Fitzgerald River National Park were entered in the register on the 21st March, 1978.

NATIONAL ESTATE

Register: Criteria

1736. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

What are the criteria applicable in determining acceptance of nominated sites to be entered on the register of the National Estate?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Any place included in the register by the Australian Heritage Commission is considered by that body to be a component of the natural or cultural environment of Australia that has aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance, or other special value for future generations, as well as for the present community.

NATIONAL ESTATE

Register: Scott National Park

1737. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

- (1) On what date did the State Government nominate the Scott National Park for entry on the register of the National Estate?
- (2) Did the area nominated include the following:
 - (a) reserve No. 25856;
 - (b) the hatched area in fig. 2-1 (described as Crown land) in the Environmental Protection Authority's report of 9th July, 1976 on conservation reserves for Western Australia?
- (3) What are the boundaries of this site that has been entered on the register of the National Estate by the Australian Heritage Commission?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) The 28th February, 1977.
- (2) (a) and (b) No.
- (3) The Department of Conservation and Environment has detailed maps of all the conservation reserves listed in the Environmental Protection Authority's report of the 9th July, 1976, and these maps can be inspected at the department's offices in BP House, 1 Mount Street, Perth.

NATIONAL ESTATE

Register: Cape Range National Park and Hamelin Pool

1738. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

Did the areas nominated by the State Government for entry on the register of the National Estate include the following:

- (a) Cape Range National Park—the hatched area in fig 9-8 (described as “proposed reserves”) in the Environmental Protection Authority's report of 9th December, 1975 on conservation reserves for Western Australia;
- (b) Hamelin Pool area—
 - (i) reserve No. A.30885;
 - (ii) the hatched area in fig 9-4 (described as “proposed aquatic reserve”) in the Environmental Protection Authority's report of 9th December, 1975 on conservation reserves for Western Australia?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (a) Yes;
- (b) (i) and (ii) Yes.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Apple Concentrate Plant

1753. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

Referring to his answer to question 1685 of Wednesday, 20th September, 1978, will he indicate the names of all those firms/individuals which have indicated

an interest in establishing an apple concentrate plant in this State?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

It is not in the interests of the individuals or firms to disclose the information sought.

Details will be published should agreement to proceed with a plant be reached.

*Includes \$53 720 area co-ordinators' salaries which will be recovered from Commonwealth.

In addition, it is proposed that a sum of approximately \$150 000 will be made available for capital works.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN: PREMIER

Picture in "Time" Magazine

1754. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Has any decision yet been made on whether his picture will be used on a simulated copy of *Time* magazine?
- (2) If "No" when does he expect a decision to be made?

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

- (1) and (2) Yes, as part of a montage featuring a number of Western Australian activities.

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Funds

1755. Mr DAVIES, to the Deputy Premier:

Will he provide details of how the State contribution to the State Emergency Service will be expended during the next financial year?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

	\$	\$
Salaries		202 900*
Maintenance of equipment	3 500	
Vehicle running	27 000	
Travelling expenses	21 500	
Training schools and courses	8 000	
Emergencies	1 500	
Printing and stationery	6 500	
Telecommunications	22 000	
Radio equipment	47 000	
Insurance	4 000	
State headquarters operating expenses ...	11 000	
Sundries	6 000	
Area co-ordinators	5 000	
		<hr/> 163 000
Total		<hr/> 365 900*

EDUCATION

Pre-primary: Thornlie School

1756. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is there an increased demand for a pre-school centre at the Thornlie primary school?
- (2) Is it a fact there are over 100 pre-primary school children waiting to attend such a centre if provided?
- (3) If "Yes" will he advise when the Thornlie primary school can expect to have this needed centre?
- (4) If "No" would he give his full reasons?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Recent local and Education Department planning surveys have confirmed the need for additional pre-primary places in Thornlie in 1979.
- (2) The number of pre-primary age children for whom additional places will be required will become known later this term when new enrolments for 1979 at the existing pre-primary and pre-school centres in the Thornlie district have been completed. It is anticipated that this number will be less than 100.
- (3) On the basis of information already obtained from the planning surveys a single-unit transportable pre-primary centre has been approved for the Thornlie district in 1979. The new centre will be located at the Yale primary school.
- (4) Not applicable.

1757. *This question was postponed.*

COMMUNITY WELFARE

GROW WA

1758. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Adverting to my question 1438 of 1978 concerning the voluntary organisation GROW WA, has an assessment of that organisation's financial position been carried out?
- (2) Does the reduction in grants to GROW WA from \$5 000 last financial year to nil this financial year in the miscellaneous services of the Consolidated Revenue Fund estimates indicate that the Government does not intend to fund this organisation in the current financial year?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), why?
- (4) How much was GROW WA seeking in grants from the State Government?

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

- (1) The assessment is currently being undertaken by the Treasury.
- (2) No. The application was received too late for it to be considered and an amount provided in the Budget.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) No amount was specified in the application.

EDUCATION

Technical College: Carlisle

1759. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Have funds been provided in the State Budget to extend staff accommodation at Carlisle Technical College?
- (2) If so, how much?
- (3) What extensions will be made in the current financial year?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) No.

HEALTH: DENTAL THERAPY CENTRE

Upper Swan School

1760. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Adverting to question 253 of 4th April, 1978, will he reaffirm that Upper Swan primary schools will be served by a mobile dental therapy unit later this year?
- (2) Can he indicate the date on which the service is to start?
- (3) What other schools will be serviced by this unit?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Tenders are being called for mobile dental units for delivery in December, 1978. Because of delay, the Upper Swan primary school will not be serviced this year.
- (2) It is anticipated that a mobile service to include the Upper Swan primary school will commence in February, 1979.
- (3) Other schools to be serviced will be—
Koonamia primary school,
Herne Hill primary school,
West Swan primary school,
Caversham primary school,
Bullsbrook primary school.

The development programme depends upon delivery of units and availability of staff at anticipated times.

EDUCATION

Non-Government School: St Mark's College

1761. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

Adverting to his answer to my question 1443 of Tuesday, 5th September, 1978, and his advice that St Mark's College would receive a letter concerning funding later that week, can he advise when the letter will be received by that body and when I will receive a copy?

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

A reply was posted to St Mark's College on Friday, the 29th September, and a copy has since been sent to the member.

STAMP DUTY

Fire Brigades Levy

1762. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Is it a fact that stamp duty is payable on that portion of building insurance premium rates that form part of the fire brigade levy?
- (2) If so, what rationale applies to the fact that the levy should incorporate stamp duty?

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

- (1) and (2) The Stamp Act provides for duty to be charged on the gross premium payable on each policy of insurance.

The gross premium charged by the insurance companies would therefore presumably include their proportion of the fire brigade levy.

SECURITY INDUSTRY

Assistance and Security Pty. Ltd.

1763. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Adverting to my question 1747 of 1978, is it always the case that the certificate of incorporation for limited companies is dated on the day upon which the relevant documents are lodged with the Corporate Affairs Office?
- (2) If not, what date, other than the lodgment date, is fixed as the date of incorporation, and why?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) If a defect is discovered in the documents for incorporation after they have been lodged for registration and the registration fee paid the date of incorporation is then fixed as the date upon which such defect is rectified.

ABATTOIR: MIDLAND JUNCTION

Superannuation Scheme Entitlements

1764. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Further to my question 1550 of 1978, would he table a copy of the trust deed governing the superannuation scheme operated by the Midland Abattoir?

Mr OLD replied:

No. The trust deed is confidential to the members of the scheme, the trustees, and the Western Australian Meat Commission.

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

Great Eastern Highway-Helena Street-Johnson Street Intersection

1765. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How many accidents have occurred at the intersection of Great Eastern Highway, Helena Street and Johnson Street, Guildford, in the years 1976, 1977 and 1978?
- (2) Has this accident rate been exceeded at any intersections within the townsite of Guildford, and if so, what were the intersections concerned and what was the number of accidents that so occurred?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) 1976—6 damage only;
1977—4 injury, 17 damage only;
1978—to 28th September, 1978—14 damage only.
- (2) (a) James Street-Meadow Street:
1976—1 injury, 14 damage only;
1977—6 injury, 32 damage only;
1978 to 28th September, 1978—3 injury, 20 damage only;
- (b) James Street-Johnson Street:
1976—12 damage only;
1977—2 injury, 13 damage only;
1978 to 28th September, 1978—3 injury, 13 damage only.

RAILWAY BUS SERVICES

Reduction

1766. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Government considering or has it already made a decision to lease buses or trains to supplement the suburban services?
- (2) If so, will he provide full details?
- (3) In consideration of economy is it being proposed to reduce the weekend services of rail and bus services?
- (4) If so, would he advise details?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) A decision to lease 45 buses under a lease-purchase arrangement has been made.
In regard to rail cars, the proposal is still under consideration.
- (3) and (4) A tentative proposal has been received and I am waiting on a firm proposal.

RAILWAYS

Alcoa Input and Output

1767. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

What was the total cost of rail cartage for Alcoa input and output for the last three years?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

Because of the existence of so many joint and common costs in rail operations, it is quite impracticable to record costs of haulage of individual commodities or groups of commodities. Therefore, this information is not available.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Number

1768. Mr HODGE, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) How many appointments to the Commission of the Peace have been made for each of the past five years?
- (2) How many appointments to the Commission of the Peace have been made from residents of the following areas during each of the past five years:

Albany
Attadale
Bunbury
Carnarvon
Como
Dianella
Mt. Lawley
Willagee
O'Connor

Melville

Hilton

Bicton?

- (3) How many Justices of the Peace currently reside in the following areas?

Hilton

Willagee

O'Connor

Melville

Bicton

Nedlands

Como

South Perth

Dianella

Mt. Lawley

City Beach?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

(1)

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	Till 27th September, 1978
	88	109	160	102	122	102

(2)

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	Till 27th September, 1978
Albany.....	1		2	1	1	5
Attadale.....	1	2		4	1	
Bunbury.....	1		5		1	
Carnarvon.....		4	4			
Como.....	2		2		1	1
Dianella.....		1	2	2	1	3
Mt Lawley.....	1	3	1	2	2	1
Willagee.....	1				1	
O'Connor.....						
Melville.....	1					
Hilton.....						
Bicton.....						

(3)

Hilton.....	3
Willagee.....	2
O'Connor.....	
Melville.....	15
Bicton.....	12
Nedlands.....	60
Como.....	43
South Perth.....	35
Dianella.....	41
Mt Lawley.....	17
City Beach.....	33

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Family Support Services Scheme

1769. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Is it a fact that when the Western Australian family support services scheme was announced it was stated that the first grants would be announced by the end of March?

- (2) Have any grants made under the abovementioned scheme been announced yet?
- (3) If "Yes" what is the fate of the application made by the City of Melville and on what date was the announcement made and by whom?
- (4) If (2) is "No" what is the reason for the long delay and when is it anticipated that an announcement will be forthcoming?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) Over 100 applications were received. Each required investigation, assessment and recommendation. Recommendations were forwarded to the Minister for Social Security for consideration on the 18th July. It is anticipated that an announcement is imminent.

COMMUNITY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

Homemakers

1770. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Does the Department for Community Welfare employ persons as homemakers on a part-time basis?
- (2) Whilst so employed on a part-time basis as homemakers, are such persons denied the opportunity to work elsewhere on a part-time basis?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. Homemakers are paid on an hourly basis for a maximum of 30 hours per fortnight. The hours worked by homemakers will vary according to the work available. Some homemakers do hold other part-time positions. Several of these are paid instructors in the adult Aboriginal education programme.

It is preferable however, that people employed as homemakers are available on a flexible basis, and at times suitable to client families. This often means that a homemaker needs to be available for a few hours both morning and afternoon during the course of a week. As new client families require assistance the working hours may again change.

Consequently the department prefers to give homemaker positions to people whose working hours are not regularly restricted during the course of a week. However, the personal criterion in homemaker selection is the personal suitability of the applicant for this type of work.

ELECTORAL ROLL

Kimberley

1771. Mr DAVIES, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Is it correct that there have been objections to the Electoral Department by citizens to electors enrolled for Kimberley?
- (2) If so, how many?
- (3) How many voters in Kimberley have been struck off the roll in Kimberley under section 48 of the Electoral Act as a result of—
 - (a) objections by citizens to the Electoral Department;
 - (b) the department acting on its own initiative?
- (4) What are the reasons for the Electoral Department lodging objections to 311 voters in Kimberley under section 48 of the Electoral Act?
- (5) If a citizen gives an objection to the department asking it to remove another elector's name from the roll, what action does the department take to ensure that evidence given is accurate?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) As far as can be ascertained no objections under section 48 have been lodged by citizens to electors enrolled for Kimberley district.

Advices have been received since or about the period of the Kimberley by-election, indicating that certain electors no longer retained qualifications for enrolment on the Kimberley roll.

On the 15th and 16th December, 1977, a list was lodged by the Hon. C. J. Jamieson, MLA, naming 310 electors. On about the 14th April, 1978, a list was lodged by the Hon. K. A. Ridge, MLA, naming 46 electors.

- (3) (a) See (1) and (2) above.

(b) 311 from the date of the Kimberley by-election to 13th September, 1978.

(4) **Advices from the Commonwealth Electoral Office:**

Letters despatched by Sheriff's office regarding jury service and returned unclaimed to Sheriff's office;

Marriage advices received from the office of the Registrar General; and

Objections as a result of lists supplied as detailed in (1) and (2) above.

(5) **As far as can be ascertained no citizen enrolled on the same roll in recent years has lodged an objection asking the department to remove another elector's name from the roll. If he did so, then action would be taken in accordance with section 48.**

Where advices have been received alleging that an elector no longer retains qualifications for enrolment on a particular roll, the Electoral Department takes the following action—

(1) by letter;

(2) if no reply is received or the letter is returned unclaimed, action is instituted by the department under section 48.

ROAD

Packsaddle Plains

1772. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it correct that the road to the Packsaddle Plains farming area near Kununurra, which serves as an access road and is owned by the Public Works Department, has been closed?
- (2) If so, why?
- (3) What other options are available to the farmers involved?
- (4) Has the State Government received representations urging them to let the existing road stay open?
- (5) Is it the Government's intention to do so?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) King Locations 444, 445, 446, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481 and 482 were made available for lease on the basis that neither the Government nor the local authority would be responsible for providing additional service to the land. Jabiru Road, which serves these lots, has not been constructed. During the dry season access along the road reserve is possible but during the wet season this is not so. Access during wet seasons via the lightly constructed track built by the Public Works Department to maintain and service irrigation channels was available initially, but this track had to be closed to the landholders because of the severe damage caused to the track by their vehicles.
- (3) Possible arrangements under which Jabiru Road can be constructed to a suitable standard at the expense of the landholders are at present being explored.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) The possibility of allowing access for the coming wet season only, and for light vehicles only, is also under consideration. Permission to use this track would however, be dependent upon firm undertakings by the landholders such as will ensure the construction of Jabiru Road as soon as weather permits following the wet season.

HOUSING

Kununurra

1773. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Housing:

Will he ask the State Housing Commission to have further talks with the East Kimberley Shire and Kununurra residents before it proceeds with a proposed cluster housing settlement, in view of the concern over the proposal?

Mr RIDGE replied:

An officer of the State Housing Commission had some discussion with the shire on this matter last week and since then I have made personal contact with the shire clerk and shire president.

As there is no serviced land presently available in Kununurra for traditional detached housing I have already

arranged for further consultation in an effort to allay the council's concern over the cluster housing development which has been well received in centres such as Carnarvon, Hedland and Broome.

ENERGY: ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Pensioners

1774. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Did he receive a petition this year from pensioners in regard to electricity charges?
- (2) If so, how many people signed?
- (3) What was the wording of the petition?
- (4) Is it in a form to be tabled in the House?
- (5) If so, will he table it?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) 3 586.

(3) Petition

to the Minister for Fuel and Energy, Mr Mensaros

Sir, Electricity Charges are too high!! We, the undersigned, being pensioners and others who consider that the present rates of charges for domestic gas and electricity are a burden on all of those on low incomes, call on you to grant a rebate of 25% per unit to help maintain our standard of living.

We call on the Minister to remove the unwarranted \$15 non-returnable meter fee charged since the 1st July, 1977, and restore the returnable deposit system; as operated previously.

We call for the removal of the fixed charge of \$6.00.

- (4) and (5) No.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Youth Training Programme

1775. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

In view of the comments in the Treasury paper *The Western Australian Economy* 1977-78 in respect of the special youth employment training programme that "the scheme is proving popular and the

number of youths trained under it last year was markedly higher than in 1976-1977", can he explain—

- (1) why the Federal Government has decided to reduce its allocation to the Western Australian Government from \$353 888 last financial year to \$289 000 (estimated this financial year)?
- (2) why the State Government has reduced its allocation for the special youth employment training programme from \$14 033 last financial year to \$5 500 this financial year?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2)—

The comments in the Treasury paper *The Western Australian Economy* 1977-78 referred to the special youth employment training programme as it applied in its entirety to Western Australia and not specifically to the 500 young people who commenced training in the State Government sector in 1977-78.

The \$35 388 and \$289 000 constitute receipts and anticipated receipts from the Commonwealth for 1977-78 and 1978-79 respectively, for subsidies under this programme for those initially employed in the two intakes by the State Government during 1977-78. These sums are matched by State expenditure.

The \$14 033 and the \$5 500 is the difference between the Commonwealth's subsidy and the total wages paid by two State instrumentalities and which is recouped from Treasury.

For the remainder employed under the scheme, the difference between the Commonwealth subsidy and departmental salary expenditures is met from the funds of each department or instrumentality.

The placements in Government departments and instrumentalities for the six month training course took place in January through to June, 1978, and whilst many of the initial trainees have completed their training, others will not finish until December.

The matter of further intakes is currently subject to review.

Of the 500 intake by the State Government, 74 have already been found full time employment in the Government.

50 per cent of the fees for private members are paid to a Government officer where the activities are extraneous to his or her position.

- (2) The current fees were adjusted with effect from 1st July, 1977, and are currently being reviewed.

GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Members' Fees

1776. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) What is the current fee paid to members of Government committees, boards, etc., at the present time?
- (2) When was the fee last adjusted?

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

- (1) The fees for members of Government committees, boards, etc. are determined under the following categories:

Existing rates—

Category A (Annual rates for chairman and members)—

- (i) Major boards, committees, etc:
Chairman \$3 750 pa, members \$1 875 pa;
- (ii) Secondary boards, committees, etc:
Chairman \$2 250 pa, members \$1 125 pa.

Category B (Annual rates for chairman, meeting fees for members)—

- (i) Major boards: Chairman \$3 750 pa, members \$54 per full day meeting, \$36 per half day meeting;
- (ii) Secondary boards, committees etc:
Chairman \$2 250 pa, members \$54 per full day meeting, \$36 per half day meeting.

Category C (Boards, committees etc not under the above categories. Standard meeting fee applicable): Chairman \$72 per full day meeting, \$48 per half day meeting; members \$54 per full day meeting, \$36 per half day meeting.

Category D (Boards, committees, etc. not fitting within A, B or C categories).

A special fee is determined for each board, committee, etc.

Note: No fee is paid to a Government officer where the activities of the board or committee on which the officer serves are directly related to the duties of his or her position; and

ELECTORAL ROLL

Kimberley

1777. Mr DAVIES, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Will he table a sample of letters which have been sent to Kimberley electors who have been deleted from the roll under sections 48 and 156 of the Electoral Act?
- (2) Will he outline what reasons apply for striking people from the electoral roll as a result of marriage?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) The following letter and forms are tabled—
 - (a) Copy of the letter forwarded on receipt of lists supplied referred to in the reply to parts (1) and (2) of question 1771.
 - (b) Form No. 12—Registrar's Objection to Enrolment (section 48).
 - (c) Form No. 40—Notification to elector who appears to have failed to vote (section 156).
 - (d) notification to elector who appears to have failed to vote—final notice (non-statutory form).
 - (e) Notification of removal of name from roll in accordance with the provisions of section 156 of the Electoral Act (non-statutory form).
- (2) (a) Where a person changes her surname by marriage and her former surname is disclosed on the new claim card.
- (b) By notice received from the Registrar General in accordance with section 56.

The papers were tabled (see paper No. 393).

ELECTORAL ROLL*Kimberley*

1778. Mr DAVIES, to the Chief Secretary:

Will he explain the apparent discrepancy between his answer to part (1) of my question 1531 of 1978, in which he said that 229 people had been sent letters challenging their right to be enrolled for Kimberley and the answer to part (1) of my question 1580 of 1978 in which he said 397 persons had been struck off the roll for failure to reply to notices regarding non-voting at an election?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

There is no discrepancy between the answers to part (1) of question 1531 of 1978 and part (1) of question 1580 of 1978.

229 people were sent letters challenging their right to be enrolled for Kimberley as a result of the lists lodged by the Hon. C. J. Jamieson, MLA and the Hon. K. A. Ridge, MLA.

397 persons were struck off the Kimberley roll for failure to reply to notices regarding non-voting at the Kimberley by-election held on 17th December, 1977. This procedure is mandatory under the provisions of section 156 subsection (15) of the Electoral Act.

HEALTH: DRUG*Marihuana*

1779. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Does the Government have any intention of legalising the use of marihuana or similar drugs?
- (2) Does the Government have any intention of liberalising the law in respect of the use of marihuana or similar drugs?
- (3) Is the Government satisfied that sufficient action is being taken to warn people of the hazards involved in using addictive drugs?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) No.
- (3) Yes.

HEALTH: CHIROPRACTIC*Television Programme*

1780. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that Chiropractors Registration Board Rule 10C (3) (b) prohibits any registered chiropractor from taking part in any radio or television programme concerning chiropractic except with the written consent of the board and subject to any conditions imposed by the board?
- (2) Was written permission obtained from the board by Mr R. Scott, a registered chiropractor, before he appeared on the television programme *This Day Tonight* on Channel Two on Wednesday, 28th June, 1978, to discuss chiropractic?
- (3) If "Yes" at what time and on what date did the board meet to consider this matter and did they impose any conditions on their approval?
- (4) If conditions were imposed, what were they?
- (5) If written approval was not given to Mr Scott, what action is planned over this apparent breach of the board's rules?
- (6) Is it a fact that Mr R. Scott is a member of the Chiropractors Registration Board?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. Due to shortage of time a meeting of the board was not convened, but verbal permission was obtained by Mr R. Scott from all other available members of the Chiropractors Board for him to appear on the programme as the President of the Australian Chiropractors Association and as representing that federal organisation.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) No conditions were verbally imposed.
- (5) At the next regular meeting of the board following the television broadcast, a transcript of that part of the programme concerned was tabled and reviewed by all board members, who accepted the

comments made by Mr Scott in his presidential capacity and took no further action.

(6) Yes.

APPRENTICES

Forwood Down

1781. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Did he have talks with Forwood Down before they laid off 12 first year apprentices last week?
- (2) If not, has he had talks with Forwood Down since then on this matter?
- (3) In light of statements by the Minister for Works that the State Government is already giving preference in contracts to firms employing apprentices, can he tell the House what preference has been given to Forwood Down?
- (4) What action does he propose to take to prevent further lay-offs of apprentices at Forwood Down elsewhere?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) Senior officers of the Department of Labour and Industry had discussions with the Management of Forwood Down at the time the stand-down of apprentices was contemplated.
- (3) The existing scheme relating to preference in a contract granted by the Public Works Department is based on the proportion of apprentices to tradesmen employed by the builder and his sub-contractors, the maximum of 3 per cent being awarded when a specific ratio is fulfilled but on a reduced scale when the ratio is lower. This scheme is currently under examination.
- (4) In shaping the State capital works programme for 1978-79 the Government considerably augmented the General Loan Fund in an attempt to stimulate the industry and to give priority to increasing job availability.

The matter is also currently being considered by the Western Australian Industrial Training Advisory Council and the Government.

TRAFFIC

Tow Truck Operators

1782. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Did he receive a letter from Mr A. R. J. Shord of Kelmscott in which allegations were made of preferential treatment by the Road Traffic Authority in favour of certain tow truck operators?
- (2) Has his department investigated these allegations?
- (3) If so, what was the result of these investigations?
- (4) Was a report prepared as a result of these investigations?
- (5) If so, will he table the report?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.
- (3) Previous instructions to police, that the nearest operator is to be engaged if the owner of the crashed vehicle is incapable of making a choice, have been reiterated.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) No. It was a police investigation and is confidential.

SECURITY INDUSTRY: ASSISTANCE AND SECURITY CORPORATION

Flour Miller's Dispute: Trucks and Staff

1783. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Will he give the House details of the transport and staff supplied by Assistance and Security Corporation for which the Government paid \$1 815?
- (2) Who owned the transport used by Assistance and Security Corporation if, as he has said in answer to a question in the House, the transport was not owned by Assistance and Security Corporation?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Assistance and Security Corporation was not consulted when arrangements were made for the provision of vehicles and drivers.

Payment for these was made by a cheque made payable to Assistance and Security Corporation.

Five trucks, together with drivers, were used and each truck was in use for approximately six hours, but I would point out that the arrangement was such that they would be available until a total of 300 tonnes of flour was moved. They were on a standby basis for a much longer period which makes the hours of the actual operation rather irrelevant.

- (2) At the time an undertaking was given that this information would not be divulged. I am not prepared to break this undertaking.

ENERGY: ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Power Lines: Radiation/Ionisation

1784. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is he aware of any recent reports with respect to possible health hazards to nearby residents associated with radiation/ionisation from high tension overhead power lines?
- (2) If "Yes", would he advise the source?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) The subject of possible health hazards arising from high tension overhead power lines has been extensively studied in recent years in connection with the ultra high voltages of 500kV, 750kV and above, being proposed by overseas power systems. The State Energy Commission has kept up to date with these reports but there is no interest shown overseas on power lines of any of the voltages in use within Western Australia.
- (2) The sources of information are too numerous to mention. See (1).

HOUSING: FUNDING

State: Terminating Building Societies and Builders

1785. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Have all the Government funds for lower interest housing loans for the current financial year now been released to terminating building societies and builders?
- (2) If "No" how much remains to be released and when will it be made available?
- (3) With reference to the last allocation of such funds—
 - (a) how much was made available through terminating building societies;
 - (b) how much was made available through builders;
 - (c) how many applicants have been assisted to date;
 - (d) how much of the funds allocated remain unexpended;
 - (e) what other measures are proposed by the Government to assist people with weekly earnings below the June 1978 average of \$213.90 to obtain housing finance at manageable repayment rates?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) \$500 000 was allocated to the Rural Housing Authority and \$500 000 is held in reserve for allocation later this year.
- (3) (a) \$9 750 000 was allocated to terminating building societies from which 50 per cent was for applicants approaching the societies direct and the other 50 per cent for applicants referred by the State Housing Commission.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) All loans to private applicants have been allotted, and the State Housing Commission has commenced to refer applicants. Altogether approximately 400 families throughout the State will be assisted.
- (d) No payments have been made to date. Payments will be made on completed houses as mortgage

documentation is completed, and on houses to be erected as construction progresses.

- (e) Confidential financial negotiations are in process, which will not be disclosed until finalised.

HOUSING

Rental: Government Programme

1786. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:
Can he give details of the number, bedroom size, type and location of new rental units to be built for the State Housing Commission this financial year?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- Subiaco—64.—16 x 3 br. town houses; 26 x 2 br. apartments; 12 x bedsitting rooms; 10 x 1 br. pensioner apartments.
Carlisle—8.—6 x bedsitting rooms and 2 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Armada—4.—3 x bedsitting rooms and 1 x 1 br. unit (pensioner).
Belmont—4.—4 x bedsitting rooms (pensioners).
Joondanna—11.—8 x bedsitting rooms and 3 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Osborne Park—4.—4 x bedsitting rooms (pensioners).
East Fremantle—3.—1 x bedsitting rooms and 2 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Area to be determined—11.—11 x pensioner units (subject to land availability).
Albany—2.—2 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Bedroom sizes subject to availability of suitable land.
Bunbury—2.—2 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Bedroom sizes subject to availability of suitable land.
Busselton—2.—2 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Bedroom sizes subject to availability of suitable land.
Collie—4.—4 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Bedroom sizes subject to availability of suitable land.
Esperance—6.—6 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Bedroom sizes subject to availability of suitable land.
Geraldton—2.—2 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Bedroom sizes subject to availability of suitable land.

Katanning—4.—4 x 1 br. (pensioners).
Bedroom sizes subject to availability of suitable land.

Northam—2.—2 x 1 br. duplex units.

Derby—18.—12 x 3 br. single detached houses; 6 x 2 br. town houses.

Broome—15.—7 x 3 br. single detached houses; 2 x 4 br. single detached houses; 4 x 2 br. town houses; and 2 x 2 br. duplex.

Halls Creek—4.—2 x 3 br. single detached houses; 2 x 2 br. duplex.

Wickham—25.—13 x 3 br. single detached houses; 12 x 2 br. duplex.

South Hedland—72.—2 x 4 br. single detached houses; 3 x 3 br. single detached houses; 2 x 2 br. duplex; 36 x 2 br. cluster; 29 x 3 br. cluster.

Karratha—72.—4 x 4 br. single detached houses; 39 x 3 br. single detached houses; 29 x 2 br. town houses.

Roebourne—6.—4 x 3 br. single detached houses; 2 x 2 br. duplex.

Kununurra—20.—10 x br. cluster; 10 x 2 br. cluster.

HOUSING

Government Programme

1787. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:
Can he say what State Housing Commission projects will be financed by the additional funds released as a result of the alternative leasing proposal for the new regional office for the Commission at Mirrabooka?

Mr RIDGE replied:

No final decision has been made. At the appropriate time a public announcement will be made.

HOUSING AND BUILDING INDUSTRY

Government Programme

1788. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:
(1) Has the Liberal Party of New South Wales recently announced a policy to boost finance for new housing by guaranteeing investments in permanent building societies and granting trustees status for such investments?

- (2) (a) Has the Western Australian Government considered implementing similar moves in this State;
 (b) if not, why not?
- (3) Can he give up-to-date details of the Government's proposals to stimulate the building industry in Western Australia?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) From press reports it is understood this is so.
- (2) (a) and (b) Short term public funds are not available to the State Government to meet liquidity calls of permanent building societies in time of need. The Western Australian Trustees Act was amended in 1952 to effect trustee status for permanent building societies.
- (3) A public statement will not be made until confidential financial negotiations have been completed.

HOUSING: RENTAL

Rents: Policy

1789. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is it the ultimate policy of the Government to increase State Housing Commission rents until they achieve market value?
- (2) If "No" can he say what is the long term policy of State Housing Commission rents in terms of the new Commonwealth-State Housing agreement?
- (3) If there is no such long term policy can it be assumed that rents will be raised each October under the newly negotiated agreement?
- (4) Is it now policy to limit rent increases to \$5 per week?
- (5) If "Yes" to (4)—
- (a) when was this policy adopted; and
- (b) over what period is such policy to be adhered to?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The 1978 Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement requires that, as far as practicable, rents will be reviewed annually and adjusted according to

movements of open market rentals and that the State will have regard to relating rents to the rentals in the open market. These requirements do not make it mandatory for the State to rigidly follow open market rentals.

These requirements do not substantially alter the policy adopted three years ago to adjust rents once in each financial year in line with movements in outgoings on rental account, and with the aim of containing losses on rental account, so as to bring the total operation close to a financial balance.

- (3) Prudent financial management would dictate the need for an adjustment each financial year whether or not the housing agreement contained any provision regarding rent adjustments.
- (4) and (5) No. For 1978-79 any increase in excess of \$5 per week is being phased in on the basis of \$5 per week on the 2nd October and the balance six months later.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

EDUCATION: TEACHERS

Industrial Dispute: Number Involved

1. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

In light of Press reports indicating that more than half the teachers involved with schools that were called out on strike today did in fact strike, is the Minister in a position to give figures of the number of teachers who did strike and of those who reported for work?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I am very glad the member asked this question. I wonder how he arrived at the figure of more than half the teachers having answered the call to strike.

Mr Pearce: I read the report in the paper.

Mr P. V. JONES: It would appear that something like 52 per cent of all teachers in the 67 schools affected did not strike. Thirty-three of the schools operated absolutely normally without any changes to their curriculum. Nineteen schools were completely staffed. There was only one school where the teachers went out *en masse*, and that was the Victoria Park Primary School.

In primary schools, 59 per cent of all staff were in attendance; that is, 522 teachers attended and 384 did not. In secondary schools, 37 per cent of all staff attended; that is, 156 teachers attended and 261 did not. This demonstrates that a little more than half the teachers called upon by the union to strike showed where their first loyalty lies, and that is with the education system and the Government.

"THE SECRET STATE: AUSTRALIA'S SPY INDUSTRY"

Dr Skertchly's Report

2. Dr TROY, to the Premier:

My question arises out of an undertaking given by the Premier in reply to a question I asked on the 20th September concerning a report by Dr Skertchly. Could the Premier now supply the information I requested?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

In answer to questions by the honourable member and the Leader of the Opposition, I did undertake to make the necessary research. I must confess I had a complete answer prepared for both questions but I have not brought it to the Chamber with me. From memory, the honourable member wanted to know whether the report had been circulated amongst the police and the Leader of the Opposition wanted to know whether I had sent copies of the report to other Premiers. I make it clear that the Government does not in any way associate itself with the report. I think I made it clear at the time that it was first made public by Dr Skertchly himself. As far as I can ascertain there has been no authorised circulation of the report to anyone so far as the Government is concerned, be it the police or other Premiers. As to how far Dr Skertchly circulated the report I cannot say accurately because I gather he felt some urge to distribute copies of the report. We know he used copies of the report to support applications he made for positions in two other States. However, that is his doing and it was not authorised by the Government and the Government was in no way associated with his actions.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RATES: REVENUE

Mining Tenements

3. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Local Government:

In view of the fact that certain goldfields local authorities have claimed that rate revenue from mining tenements could be substantially reduced in the event that the Mining Bill presently before Parliament becomes law, has the Minister investigated the claims and/or taken any action to have the Bill or the Local Government Act suitably amended?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

I have not been made aware of the local authorities' claims mentioned by the member and he should place the question on the notice paper in order to receive a considered reply.

HOUSING

Warnbro

4. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

I preface my question by indicating the Premier has had 1½ weeks' notice of this question. In view of the fact that my constituents in the Warnbro area are approaching me with regard to cracks appearing in their homes, apparently as a result of the continuing explosions from high explosive projectiles, can the Premier inform me who will be responsible for making good any such damage to date and any such damage in the future? Will it be the State Government or the Australian Government?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

It is a fact that the member did leave a question of this nature on my desk last week, but I thought in view of the fact that it was not on the notice paper he had abandoned the question; therefore I did not follow it up. However, I will now do so.

EDUCATION: TEACHERS

Industrial Dispute: Punishment

5. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Education:

Did the Minister recently announce that it was not his or the Government's intention to punish in any way the teachers who have gone or may in future go on strike?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I do not know quite what the member for Mt Hawthorn refers to when he uses the word "punish". I have indicated there will be a loss of a day's pay for teachers who did not attend schools today. No other punitive or regulatory action will be taken.

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