

WATER SUPPLIES

Storage

36. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Which water supply dams and reservoirs supply the Perth metropolitan area?
- (2) What quantity of water was held in each of these at the end of February in each of the following years—
 - (a) 1975;
 - (b) 1976; and
 - (c) 1977?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) South Dandalup, Serpentine, Serpentine Pipehead, Churchmans, Victoria and Canning.

(2)	February 1975 (million Cubic metres)	February 1976 (million Cubic metres)	February 1977 (million Cubic metres)
South Dandalup.....	111.435	114.846	86.788
Serpentine.....	137.221	115.114	75.470
Serpentine Pipehead.....	3.523	3.644	3.644
Churchmans.....	1.056	1.218	.820
Victoria.....	.207	.359	.402
Canning.....	67.374	50.205	21.373

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

WATER SUPPLIES

Grassmere Basin: Drilling

The Hon. T. KNIGHT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) When will the Water Supply Department commence drilling in the Grassmere Basin to supplement the water supply for Albany and Mt. Barker?
- (2) What quantity of water will be expected from the bore field in that area per day?
- (3) As this area is a permanent potato growing area and used for market gardens, will the department—
 - (a) guarantee the bores will not affect the upper level water table of the valley;
 - (b) cease pumping if the pumping of the lower level water drops the table in the upper strata;
 - (c) could the department supply water from the bores for agricultural purposes; and

- (d) agree to a reasonable compensation for any loss incurred by farmers due to the loss of water for their activities?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) The water potential of the Grassmere basin is still under investigation. The proposed drilling programme to be undertaken this year involves the drilling of 3 to 4 exploratory holes. The purpose of these holes is to determine if the extraction of water from the deeper aquifer will affect the upper water level. There are no proposals to drill production bores for the Albany and Mount Barker water supply at this stage.
- (2) Answered by (1) above.
- (3) (a) to (d) The department is aware of the importance of the area to the potato growers. The needs of the growers will be kept in mind if recommendations for future development are put forward. It is not appropriate at present to give guarantees such as set out in the question.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 3rd August, 1977

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) took the Chair at 4:30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

BILLS (4): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Building Societies Act Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Minister for Housing), and read a first time.
2. Construction Safety Act Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Grayden (Minister for Labour and Industry), and read a first time.
3. Physiotherapists Act Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Neil (Chief Secretary), and read a first time.
4. Coal Mine Workers (Pensions) Act Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Mensaros

(Minister for Mines), and read a first time.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Council Personnel

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees elected by that House.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 28th July, on the following motion by Mr Hassell—

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

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

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool—Leader of the Opposition) [5.29 p.m.]: In giving attention to His Excellency's Speech on opening day, one has to deal first with the portion concerning members who have retired and those who have passed from our midst since the Parliament last met. I want to deal briefly with a few of those people.

The late Honourable Jack Heitman was not very closely associated with us in this Chamber. The late Honourable Lionel Francis Kelly was known to the older members of this Parliament. He served as a Minister for some six years and I think everyone found him to be a good, friendly type of person.

Alfred George Reynolds was even a bit before the time of the old stalwarts who are here now. However, he had a place in this Parliament representing a timber milling area for a short period and he also was a jovial kind of fellow.

Finally, I refer to the late Kenneth Wathen Dunn. It is not often that close friendships are formed between members on opposite sides of the Parliament. Some such friendships have occurred in the past and will probably occur in the future; but Ken Dunn was a very good friend to those who knew him and he was willing to be associated with all kinds of things, including fisticuffs if he thought that was necessary to defend his friends.

I well remember a visit to the north-west when a plot about which I knew was laid that at Port Hedland I would be pushed fully clothed into the

swimming pool around which we were having a get-together with the local authority if I spoke at length in replying to the welcome by the local authority. Ken was not on the scene and did not know of the joke. As a result, when he saw me go into the pool he was prepared to take off his coat and do battle with a few people who he thought had done me wrong. However, we calmed him down very quickly and told him the situation was not as bad as it looked. That is the kind of fellow Ken Dunn was.

I regret Ken's passing. He was a good type of person who liked his football and his football club, and he died suddenly. He had a very unfortunate life and an exacting one with his young son, and I am sure his wife and son miss him.

Mr Davies: He was so much opposed to violence in football.

Mr JAMIESON: Yes. I think he even wanted to legislate in that respect but he found it very difficult to do so.

Before this debate closes hundreds of thousands of words will probably be spoken, and I am only adding to them; but this is part of the system. We will probably find that never before have we had a Governor's Speech in which there was so little to reply to. The programme outlined in the Speech seems to be an indictment of self-satisfaction—the Government has done what it wants to do, it does not want to do anything else, it is bereft of ideas, so it will leave things as they are and tackle matters as they arise.

The programme completely ignores the crisis of high unemployment, to which I referred earlier in this session, and the sluggish economic recovery. These matters are most important in the life of the people of this State. The programme outlined in the Governor's Speech substitutes glib slogans for substance and concentrates on administrative trivia. Various little things will be done, such as introducing amendments to make members behave themselves, and so on. There is a vague suggestion that the Government will pursue vigorously the commitment to education but no reference is made to the difficulty of the task in view of the financial position arising from the reduction in new Federal funds.

Bland references are made to improving health care but again there is no suggestion how this will be done in the light of the problem relating to funds which confronts us. Although the Premier suggested during the course of an earlier debate that the Government will be able to overcome the problem, it would have been interesting for us to have some indication in the Governor's Speech that it could be overcome.

Predictably, no reference at all is made to what will probably be the most important legislation to come before the House this session; that is, the legislation to impose double taxation, State income tax, or whatever one likes to call it, when the State Government will have the right to levy tax or give a bonus to the taxpayers of the State. No taxpayer would ever imagine in his wildest dreams that a benevolent Government will give him a bonus, and I doubt it will ever come to pass. It could be quite an embarrassing subject for the Premier. He quickly runs away from it and says, "This is part of the deal and we must go along with it."

The most appalling omission from the Speech is any suggestion about what is to be done to find employment for the 25 000-odd Western Australians who are now unemployed. The Premier is inclined to say, "Again this is part of the deal; we must straighten up the economy", but, even if it is "old hat" or old-fashioned—and I have often heard him say in this House that a bit of old-fashioned common sense is needed—I would say a bit of old-fashioned philosophy is needed to overcome the problems which beset us in regard to the great number of unemployed we now have with us.

The Speech contains an expression of regret about unemployment but contains no plan to do anything about it; and a programme which lacks such a plan is, in my opinion, sadly deficient. It must be one of the most threadbare programmes ever presented at the beginning of a Parliament. This is not merely the beginning of a session. In the last session of a Parliament a Government's programme often becomes a little threadbare and some window-dressing takes place. This is often done by both sides when in Government and I am not criticising that. However, the beginning of a Parliament is usually more exciting and exacting. The Government has been in office for three years and seems to have run out of ideas and steam. It still has plenty of hot air to dissipate to the community but ideas seem to have fled from it.

It seems it will be left to the Opposition to do the work in Parliament this year and be responsible for trying to highlight the State's problems; and we will be doing that. Within the very restrictive limits in this House, we intend to bring forward a certain amount of legislation—possibly 17 Bills. We realise there is limited time for private members' Bills, as there has always been, but we will endeavour to ensure each of the Bills has a reasonable airing so that members have an opportunity to vote on it and make their position clear.

The Bills will deal with matters affecting the

rights of individuals. They will bring up to date laws which have been allowed to become out of date. They will propose positive action to protect the environment. They will do something about introducing a truly democratic parliamentary system into Western Australia with the proposed proportional representation scheme about which we have heard in past Parliaments. They will tackle the real issues and problems instead of the imaginary ones.

One of the biggest issues facing the nation is whether uranium is to be mined and exported from Australia. It is a life and death issue which is of enormous importance to Australia and the world and in which the public have not only a right but also a duty to take some interest and make up their minds. It is an issue on which public debate is of the greatest importance.

Nuclear technology is a very complex subject and scarcely a member here knows much about it. Some of the matters concerned with it are very difficult for the ordinary person to grasp, and the task is made more difficult because of division of opinion on the subject among those who can be regarded as experts in the field. This always leads people into confusion and if we can get a good line on it there will be less confusion.

However, it is important for the public to find out about the issues and make up their minds before any action is taken, and reasonable time should be allowed for this because the people require a great deal of information to enable them to form their opinions and I would like to see them entering into the debate. A reasonable time has not yet elapsed.

Of course, the Government and the Premier seem to be doing everything possible to expedite the mining and export of uranium, and the Premier's answers even tonight were not clear. It appears the Government of this State is trying to railroad the Federal Government into making an early decision. The Court Government does not seem to want discussion or debate on the matter but is prepared to go ahead with the mining. The Premier seems to have made up his mind on the matter; therefore everybody else has to fall into line. Even though this is perhaps the most important issue the Parliament of this State will ever deal with, the Premier does not want public discussion and debate on it, and in addition he is working as hard as he can to ensure public discussion and debate do not take place. In a moment I will demonstrate that this is a fact.

The Premier is trying to silence and discredit everybody whose opinion is different from his own, and he is doing so in a rather nasty and

vicious way. He believes anybody who opposes the mining and export of uranium is not genuine and must have a reason for his opposition. He says people who oppose the mining and export of uranium and those who merely want a moratorium on the development of uranium deposits are trying to subvert the national economy. He says those people are friends of Moscow; he says they are communists. This is his usual cry. He has had the label on that can changed so often.

Mr Bryce: If anything was "old hat" it was that theory.

Mr JAMIESON: At first the unionist's hat was on the can; then it had another label. Now it has the uranium label and he is trying to sell his tin of jam with this label on it. He is completely intolerant of people who have another point of view, as will be appreciated by those who have been in this Chamber for some years.

Mr Davies: He let the member for Maylands speak last night.

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, but he has not yet allowed any of the members on the Government side to take off their coats.

Let us look at what the Premier said about the highly qualified scientists who believe there should be a moratorium on the mining of uranium. Let us look at what he said about the long-established and well-respected environmental groups who have a view on this subject which is different from his. Let us look at what he says about the respectable community groups who oppose his views. Let us look at what he says about the concerned ordinary citizens who have a different view from his.

On the ABC on the 26th July the Premier was asked whether he thought an early decision should be made on the mining and export of uranium. He replied—

I believe it should be made quickly because there's been far too much nonsense and talk going on now and it just allows the lobbyists opposed to nuclear energy just to appear to gain more credibility. But I repeat something I said before I went away—that noise is not numbers when it comes to these issues and it's the job of Government to identify the real will of the people; the real mood of the people; the desire of the people and my own considered judgment after weighing up all the facts and making my own enquiries is that the people want the Government to get on with the job of governing and one of those jobs is to get uranium mined and exported with proper safeguards.

There is no suggestion that there is anything wrong with the pro-nuclear lobby! Of course, those people do not talk nonsense and do not attract the reproach which the Premier seems to direct at the anti-nuclear lobby. The Premier said that it is the job of the Government to identify the real will of the people. I do not agree with that. How is he doing it, anyway?

Members will recall he said also that it is his own considered judgment, which he made after weighing up the facts and making his own inquiries—and we are not told what those inquiries were or with whom he made them—that the people want the Government to get on with the job of governing. We would like to know what facts he weighed. What weight had the arguments of scientists and experts in nuclear technology? Did their opinions count at all? Those people are very concerned about the problem of waste, along with many other matters.

This is what the Premier had to say on the ABC "AM" programme on the 3rd May last year after scientists had expressed concern about nuclear waste—

Look I don't know who says these things and I don't know why people bother to publish them. There is always someone around, particularly in the opposition as its constituted at the present time, trying to scare people, trying to strike fear into their minds instead of looking at the thing in a sensible way . . .

When a group of eminent Australian physicists raised some of the problems associated with nuclear development last year, what did the Premier say? He said, and this is important—

What I am annoyed about is that some of these people who should have more sense and should be starting to talk to the Government about how we could step up our research to this question of uranium development, have joined the stop everything brigade and are trying to strike fear into the hearts and minds of people unfairly, quite improperly and they have distorted the whole situation and I don't give them many marks at all.

He also said—

It is not true that we joined forces to oppose the proposals, what we did was issue a very carefully worded statement at a press conference which we warned the public about many aspects of this problem. There had been very little discussion in W.A. at all prior to this, its been a very intense debate world wide, as you know.

He said further—

Well we were very disappointed in his reaction, we thought we were doing a public service by raising many of the problems that have been unresolved in the world, pointing to many of the difficulties.

He made that comment in answer to Professor M. J. Buckingham, who is an eminent authority on this matter.

It is now more than a year since the physicists issued their first statement, and since then some publicity has been given to the issue, but it has not been the subject of the sort of debate we would like to see.

What do the physicists say about this matter now? Not long ago they issued another statement. I certainly would not weary you, Sir, by reading the whole of it, but it states in part—

A year ago physicists from the Universities and the Institute of Technology in Western Australia drew attention to hazards in the handling of radioactive waste. Some people incorrectly inferred that these physicists were opposed to uranium mining. Many of them give qualified support to nuclear power. Others are opposed, but all believe that major decisions require proper understanding of the social and technical factors involved. There still remain important questions on which there is not this understanding, and we believe that the debate so far is inadequate.

They commented further—

There is a tendency to treat opinions opposite to ones own on this issue as being necessarily less worthy. Debate along such lines is futile. The relevant facts should be clearly expounded so that they are properly understood, and only then should judgements be made.

That shows their opinion is still much the same as it was previously. For the information of members, I point out that the people associated with that statement were B. Mainsbridge, Professor of Physics, Murdoch University; R. E. Rand, Professor of Physics, University of Western Australia; J. R. de Laeter, Dean of Applied Sciences, WA Institute of Technology; P. Jennings, Murdoch University; M. J. Buckingham, Professor of Theoretical Physics, University of Western Australia; W. L. Walker, Head of Physics Department, WA Institute of Technology; and E. N. Maslen, Reader in Physics, and Director, Crystallography Centre, University of Western Australia. They seem to be rather prominent people in the community, and they are still of the opinion that we have not yet

reached the stage where we can safely decide whether the mining of uranium is justified.

However, further than that, I would like you, Sir, to know the views of what one might regard as a more respectable community group which does not normally deal in party political matters. I refer to the Women's Service Guilds of Western Australia. Recently I received a very interesting letter from the guilds; I say it is interesting because for the first time I came across someone who appears to appreciate the difference between fission generators and fusion generators. The difference between the two seems to be most difficult to get across to people. Whilst I am not too sure that the ladies in this group are right in respect of the time factor to which they refer—and I will deal with that shortly—I feel they are on the right track. In part, the letter states—

Considering these facts from the non-party political approach, which has been the basis of our work since 1909, we urge that the Australian Government representing the people of Australia accept the responsibility of halting the mining and sale of uranium for the next five years.

In an earlier part of their letter, which was addressed to the Prime Minister, these women dealt with the possibility of fusion generators being available within seven years. I do not know that that will come about.

I have asked pro-nuclear lobbyists who have come to see me just when the fusion generator will be available, and they tell me it will be available in about 10 years' time. They say it is in action at the moment, but difficulties are being experienced in its operation, as compared with the fission generator. We must consider deeply the desirability of selling our uranium, otherwise we may run out of time before the other kind of generator is developed. As the ladies said in their letter to the Prime Minister—

There are two systems of releasing atomic energy, fission and fusion. The process of gaining new energy by fission, releases as a by-product deadly radio-active substance. This can accumulate to such an extent that it can endanger human life on the planet.

That is the worry of those ladies, and it is also the worry of many other people. The other type of process is that of releasing atomic energy by fusion, which is a tiny demonstration of the exact process going on in the sun where excessive heat converts hydrogen into helium, releasing solar energy in the process. Fusion generation, of course, requires tremendous heat to set it off, and

that is its main problem at this stage of development.

However, once it is developed we will not have the problem of residue that we have in respect of the uranium type generator. Of course, apart from the common uranium type generator being used at the moment, there is the suggestion that a better type will be used. All the scientists of the world should be working towards perfecting a fusion generator so that we will know where we are going and will be sure that we are doing the least amount of damage possible; because once the damage is done it cannot be undone.

I would like to quote from a letter I received recently from an ordinary citizen, Mr L. S. Went, of Pepler Avenue, Salter Point. He is the type of person whom the Premier from places such as New York likes to refer to as "Joe Blow". I quote as follows—

I believe that the uranium debate is of utmost importance to every man, woman and child in Australia and that every person (of voting age, at least) is entitled to voice his/her opinion in this matter.

Thus, it follows, that I think a referendum should be held in regard to uranium mining in Australia.

I do not believe that a handful of people (despite the fact that we, the public, have voted them to represent us in both State and Federal governments) should alone be responsible for this awesome decision.

I belong to no political party, I am not an expert on this subject, I am not a member of any conservation group, but I do believe that this question should be put to the Australian people for a decision.

That is the sort of thing that is worrying the minds of the people of Australia, and for that reason I think we should take a great deal of care and not hasten into any development of uranium mining.

I do not know how the Premier has formed his impression that the public wants uranium mined and exported. The impression I get is that more and more people every day are becoming opposed to this. However, more importantly, I receive the impression that many people cannot make up their minds at this time. They know it is a vitally important issue, but they are not sure what to think and they want more time to decide.

My feelings on this are backed up by the last Gallup poll I saw on the matter, which was published last month. This showed that between June, 1975, and June, 1977, there was a drop of

12 per cent in the number of people who wanted uranium developed. There was an increase of 8 per cent in those who did not want it developed, and an increase of 4 per cent in those who were undecided.

The poll figures for the month of June in the years 1975, 1976, and 1977 were as follows—

	1975 June	1976 June	1977 June
	%	%	%
Develop uranium	62	58	50
Leave in the ground	25	29	33
Undecided	13	13	17
	100	100	100

So there is evidence that concern is being felt in the community and that people have not settled down. It is indeed very dangerous for Governments to act hastily in matters that are irreversible at a later stage. It behoves us to take great care in this matter and not to hasten too quickly. The figures still show a good majority for those who want uranium developed, but the important thing is that there is a strong trend away from development. This shows clearly that people are still making up their minds, and that more time is needed for public debate on the matter so that they may make up their minds clearly in respect of what they want done.

The remarkable thing is that this trend away from development has occurred despite massive amounts being spent on costly Press and video-media advertising by the pro-uranium lobby. These advertisements have appeared quite often, but I doubt whether anyone can recall seeing an anti-uranium advertisement. The others are well made and expensive, but despite all this the trends of the population's views on this matter are the other way.

The anti-uranium lobby does not seem to have vast financial resources available to it. It does not have the Premier's public relations machine to push out all the publications that he is able to do from time to time. As I said, the pro-uranium case is being presented much more loudly but there is still a trend away from uranium mining which makes me think it is time we took a spell from determining what should be done at this stage.

I say again, I think it is more those who have uranium claims pegged—which will not be worth anything in a few years' time—who are pressing to sell the uranium, than those who are advocating developing it for other reasons. It is in

this context that I suggest we do not do anything at this stage. It is probably because of this strong anti-uranium trend that the Premier wants a decision made now. He is frightened the more debate there is the majority might go the other way. That is why he is not prepared to develop a case but instead vilifies the anti-uranium lobby and the uranium moratorium movement. Perhaps that is why he calls them communists and friends of Moscow.

Unfortunately we have come to expect that sort of thing from the Premier. Before he makes that type of statement he ought to remember a quote that a former Minister for Lands (Sir Stewart Bovell) used to use from *Othello*, which was—

He who steals my purse steals trash, but he that filches my good name makes me poor indeed.

During the election campaign we had the Premier doing that very thing when referring to me and it does not behove the Premier to indulge in that sort of conduct. He said that if I were Premier I would have to appoint a Minister for vice. He made this fatuous claim because I was proposing many social reforms on behalf of the ALP, in addition to those relating to homosexuality, prostitution, and gambling. I will have my moral standards examined by any court in the world and matched against the Premier's morals on any matter.

Sir Charles Court: That was nothing to do with your personal standards.

Mr JAMIESON: Yes it was. The Premier said I was the sort of person who would need a Minister for vice, but we will see who needs such a Minister in a minute. The Premier cannot get away with that.

Sir Charles Court: It was because of the things you wanted to legalise.

Mr JAMIESON: Look at all the things that are illegal and what this Government is not doing about them. The name of a person is important. I do not go around saying that sort of thing about the Premier. I might say them in the Chamber where a member can reply, but not outside. I do not indulge in that sort of terminology and tripe. Such remarks are despicable and the Premier knows it.

Sir Charles Court: If you want to legalise all this sort of thing, that is what you must expect.

Mr B. T. Burke: You allowed the law to be broken.

Mr JAMIESON: My standards can be examined by any court. The Premier's standards

are not so good. My standards can be examined by any court, except the Premier's own "Court"!

I am talking about moral issues, whether sexual, financial, or general. They will stand the test against him any time. He is too fond of getting up and making statements about how dignified he is and how he will look after this State. I will have him know I will blow my bags when necessary as far as this State is concerned. I was born within a few kilometres of here and I owe no allegiance to any place except to this State.

I realise at the same time I am an Australian citizen. It is most important that we realise this; that we cannot get on, one without the other. If we were not a Federation now we would not get to be one with Premiers like ours and the one in Queensland. They are too individualistic and want to go their own way. They are interested only in their own welfare and feelings and not the nation's. It is of no use the Premier making nonsensical statements and making insulting remarks to the public—pushing them out from the "sausage machine"—and then, as soon as someone attacks him, saying "This is gutter politics and it is despicable." This is the way he carries on.

Mr B. T. Burke: He is low in dignity.

Mr JAMIESON: His dignity has long since gone. If he is going to indulge in that sort of nonsense and try to ruin a person's character and besmirch him in his electorate, and if the people behind the Premier want to do this also they will have to justify their conscience. There is only one essential difference between the Premier and myself—I have a conscience and I can live with mine.

Sir Charles Court: Anybody who boasts about his conscience is suspect.

Mr JAMIESON: If the Government does not have a conscience it can change its mind and make statements without believing in them, knowing they are untrue. We were prepared to face up squarely to the society's interests we mentioned. We told the people this, which is a very great contrast to the stand taken by the Premier and his Government. They are guilty of the most blatant hypocrisy in this matter. The Premier says he will have nothing to do with homosexuality, prostitution, and the legalising of gambling, yet he knows the law is being flouted every day of the week and does nothing about it. He is not prepared to remove the illegality from these practices and he is not prepared to stamp them out. Who is it then, in need of a Minister for vice? When there is vice there are illegal

practices, therefore the Premier needs a Minister for vice.

Let no-one be in doubt that prostitution, abortion, homosexuality, and gambling are all flourishing in Perth. I do not think anyone would say they are not. Personally I do not have any objection to these practices but I know many people do. However, I think everybody in the community would object to a multitude of illegal practices continually being conducted, causing the Police Force and others trying to uphold the law to be brought into disrepute. The Government's attitude is, "Do not disturb them and do not rock the boat." The Government closes a few of these establishments and then lets them open again at a convenient time, such as after an election. If that is not vice I do not know what is. It ill behoves the Government to sit back and take no action. A practice is either legal or illegal. If something is to be legalised the Government should go ahead and introduce legislation.

Whatever my personal feelings might be on these matters, or what those of the Premier may be, the point is they are all illegal, but they are all flourishing. The Premier refuses to legalise them and stamp them out. They are considered to be vice only because they are illegal. It is the Premier who needs a Minister for vice—it is not my line of action at all. I do not want to be a great purist and I do not want to claim a pedestal to stand on as does the Premier. Anyway, I do not like heights and I might fall and break my neck. If he chooses to do so he must run a perfect Government, which he does not. His blatant hypocrisy and refusal to face up to reality is a shocking indictment and an abdication of responsibility. The Premier is making an ass of the law and law enforcement agencies and bringing them into disrepute. He is making them a laughing stock.

The public will be asking how the young people are expected to have respect for law and order and the Premier often has words to say about this. If the Government is allowing these practices to take place, youngsters are going to ask why should they obey the law when it is not being enforced and why should they not be able to get away with what they are doing. If that is the attitude the Premier wants to adopt he should be honest enough to tell the public.

Sir Charles Court: The public knew our attitude before the last election.

Mr JAMIESON: The Premier said he would enforce the law and he espoused this many times.

Sir Charles Court: That was a big issue during

the last election and the people made their decision.

Mr JAMIESON: Never mind that. Tell us what you did about it and what you are doing now.

Mr Tonkin: The Government is conniving with law practices.

Mr JAMIESON: The Liberal Party and the Premier like to show themselves as great upholders of the law, but look at their performance in this field. They should be, and they are, in disgrace. The Minister for Labour and Industry says the Opposition's attitude to law and order will be an issue during this session of Parliament. We have nothing whatever to hide on this issue. We will relish a debate with the Minister for Labour and Industry on that or any other matter in whatever state of euphoria the Minister is in when the debate occurs.

Mr Tonkin: That is a new description of him.

Mr JAMIESON: We do not bury our heads in the sand. We do not tacitly condone the law being brought into disrepute by ignoring it the way the Premier and his Government do. This is the salient feature and it is high time the Press started to do something about it.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr JAMIESON: I submit that the present Government has no real respect for law and order. It has respect only for the laws it desires to respect when it suits it. Other laws the Government does not respect at all.

How can the Government talk about law and order when the then Minister for Police, shortly after he was appointed, drew an illegal raffle? It is a pea-and-thimble trick to fall for that. It is wrong for a Minister to know that the law is being flouted and then participate in that flouting, particularly when his Government is supposed to be all in favour of law and order being maintained.

The same Minister, still as Minister for Police, said last year that a limit might have to be imposed on the number of illegal casinos in operation. It makes the term "law and order" seem stupid. The casinos were closed during the election because it appeared that they would be somewhat of an embarrassment to the Government, but within five days of the election—and a close check was kept on this aspect—they were open again. No doubt if you cared to come down with me tonight, Mr Speaker, I could take you to open casinos. However, I know that you and I respect law and order and we would not be likely to enter those places. I am not

one who places himself on a pedestal because I have a regard for my neck and I would be frightened that I might fall off and break it.

The Premier ought to be careful about whom he calls names and whose good name he tries to blacken. The situation could turn against him. Time and time again his Government has demonstrated it is interested only in certain problems. It buries its head in the sand and hopes the others will go away. I have news for the Government, in case it does not already know. Those problems will not go away. The Government must face them and do something about them. I have pointed out before that these issues exist, but the Government refuses to acknowledge their existence. As long as the Government will not face up to them and enforce the law or change it, it will be responsible for the law and the law enforcement agencies being held in contempt; and this should not be the position.

The Government's record on law and order issues is not good. As a matter of fact, it is appalling. It knows these problems exist, but it is not prepared to do anything about them. This was only one of the election issues; there were many more.

One of the first problems arose on the day the election date was announced. The confusion which occurred at the Electoral Office was evident from an article in the Press indicating that chaos existed as the crowds rushed to enrol. I think a period of only 24 hours was available in which people could enrol once the announcement of the election date had been made. This caused all sorts of problems, but the Premier said it was not the Government's fault. His attitude on this occasion was the same attitude he adopts on all sorts of issues like abortion. He states that people should think of these things before they occur. That is not a very sound philosophy.

When they change their address many people do not think about the electoral roll until an election is imminent. We know the law regarding enrolment; he does not have to tell the people about it. I have dealt with other laws his Government does not respect and is not prepared to uphold. Therefore it is of no use the Premier giving the people a lecture and saying that the situation was not the fault of the Government because the people should have ensured their names were on the roll. This is not the position. Our own candidate for Kimberley was involved in a heavy enrolment drive and if he himself had not flown 400 enrolment cards down from the Kimberley the people involved would have had no chance of having their names placed on the electoral roll between the time the election date

was announced and the time enrolments closed. The time allowed was not sufficient.

No logical reason exists for the Government to delay indicating when an election will be held. I hope that before the elections which are due to be held probably some time in March, 1980, an announcement will be made to allow sufficient time to enable people to ensure they are enrolled. It is not good enough for the Premier to state that people should ensure they are enrolled and that it is not the Government's fault if they are not. The headline of the article referred to the chaos which occurred as the crowds rushed to enrol. The article, which indicated that the department experienced extreme difficulty in handling the enrolments, reads—

Not our fault, says Premier

The Premier, Sir Charles Court, yesterday replied to allegations that people did not have enough time to enrol for the February 19 State election.

Criticism of the Government over the last minute enrolment rush was unfair, he said . . .

Sir Charles said yesterday that it was a citizen's duty and responsibility to ensure that he or she was properly enrolled at all times for State and Federal elections . . .

Electors had been well aware that the calling of an election was imminent.

That article was in *The West Australian* of the 8th January, 1977.

Everyone is aware of the information in that article. What the Premier has forgotten is that the election announcement was made shortly after the Christmas break during which time people are inclined to put off many things in order that they might enjoy the festive season.

By the 8th January many people are just beginning to pick up the threads of every-day living. Some are still on holidays and they would find it very difficult to enrol if they had not already done so. The situation was that anyone not in the metropolitan area at the time was barred from enrolling because even if a person placed his enrolment card in the post the morning after the announcement was made it would not have arrived in time at the Electoral Office.

There is no reason the Government should not give ample notice of an election and thus enable people to enrol in an orderly manner and obviate the necessity for the electoral counters to be rushed at the last minute.

I want to deal with another matter I raised during the course of the election campaign; that

is, the use of public servants to prepare election material. This is not a new procedure and I am not suggesting that when the Labor Party has been in office it has not had some advantage because of the information it had at its disposal. What I object to is the flagrant breach of the system which occurred when a Minister issued an instruction from his department naming specific doubtful electorates in regard to which information was required. If the Premier and his Ministers are so stupid as to do this kind of thing, they deserve criticism. Of course, a political party is able to accumulate advantageous information when it is in office but Mr Baxter, on the instruction of the Premier, sent a telex to various sections of his department, and it fell to him to do so. The telex listed 14 electorates with which reports were to deal. A covering note by Sir Charles Court stated, according to a Press report—

that a fairly constant flow of new releases would need to be maintained to all country electorates during the election campaign.

It had said: "I suggest that these releases be held wherever possible to coincide with visits which I or other ministers will be making from time to time."

"In this context we should look well ahead and arrange for a series of statements based on future projects and circumstance which the Government believes will be of the utmost value to the electorates mentioned."

There is nothing wrong with a Government doing certain things as a result of the advantage it has because of its being in office. But I object to the direction given in regard to these certain electorates.

What did the Premier reply as a result of my complaint about this matter? It is very interesting. He said—

"On suggesting that the Court government cares nothing for the ethics of government I suggest that Mr Jamieson should have a good long look at himself in the nearest mirror."

Another snide remark. He stated that I should have a look in the mirror. There is no evidence of my ever having done anything like this. I gathered material from my department as I went along, certainly. I would have been silly had I not done so, but I did not sent out any instruction, nor would I. To continue—

"The Opposition Leader must be getting pretty desperate when he resorts to this kind of mud-slinging."

I doubt very much whether what I did could be

referred to as mud slinging. It was criticism of a system being adopted by the Government. I do not know whether the Premier chose the expression "mud slinging" or whether it was the expression adopted by the medal holders in the Premier's department. The Premier must accept responsibility for it. It is quite strange that the Premier is able to come up with expressions like "mud slinging", "gutter politics", and so on when a mild rebuke is made as the result of instructions issued by the Government.

Earlier this session I dealt with letters to the Prime Minister which were leaked. No-one has ever been able to indicate where the leak occurred, but certainly it resulted in a good publicity ploy at the time. It was stated in the Press on the 31st January that the Premier was angered. The article reads—

Sir Charles said it was sad that Mr Fraser's idealistic public utterances about a new federalism had not been reflected by events "other than your new and praiseworthy approach to revenue sharing."

Many other words were used in the article complaining about the release of the information. This situation should be examined fully instead of half-cocked complaints being made. The suggestion at the time in the market place at Perth was that the release was well known even before it reached Canberra. That situation should be watched.

Another matter about which I complained during the election campaign was the opportune release of the December quarter CPI figures. This information was given at a reasonable time before that occasion, and has been given at a reasonable time since. However, on that occasion it was conveniently delayed until the Tuesday after the election.

I do not see it as making a great difference to the election but it looked like a ploy for the purpose of aiding the Government because we knew—and it so proved—the figure for that quarter would be fairly high. We are entitled to complain and I think a better explanation should have been forthcoming. Premier Court, having friends at court in the Federal sphere, undoubtedly could have helped to delay the publication of the figure on that occasion.

Then, on the day after the election, we had some of the most remarkable Press publicity about landslides. The Premier spoke repeatedly about a record majority and I think ultimately his research officers looked into the matter and the Premier found it was not worth proceeding with because on other occasions there had been bigger

majorities. It is true it was a record conservative majority but that is all that can be said of it. It certainly did not appear to me to be a landslide. It was undoubtedly a disappointment to us that we did not do better but when there are four additional seats in the House and we come back with the same number as we went out with it is not a landslide and that claim of the Government was not in accordance with fact.

So far I have dealt with a variety of matters demonstrating some of the many failures of the Court Government. They also demonstrate that the Court Government will stop at nothing in pursuit of its goals, no matter how dubious those goals may be; and sometimes they are very dubious. However, there is one matter concerning which it would be a great relief to the people of this State if the Government did stop at nothing, and of course I am referring to increases in charges and taxes and other massive increases which have been inflicted by the present Government.

The Court Government makes great claims to being a Government which knows how to manage the economy. It is one of the Government's proudest boasts that its members are competent economic managers. Nothing could be further from the truth. Last night I spoke about the appalling state of the Australian and Western Australian economies. Back came the Premier with the old stuff that is always on—he has not heard anything new. We have heard that record so often in this Chamber that it has worn almost as thin as the "corn can" which he has been kicking around.

I have pointed out that while the Tonkin Government was in office Western Australia had the lowest inflation rate of all the States of Australia—4 per cent below the national average over its whole period in office. Since the Court Government took office Western Australia has had the highest inflation rate in Australia—6 per cent above the national average. These great economic managers! These wonders of finance! These people who know how to do it all!

The latest increases in Government charges are a damning admission by the Government that it has no claims to being a good economic manager. Indeed, its repeated clichés about responsible economic management are a tired, sick joke in the light of actual performance. While the Premier talks about what a responsible economic manager he is, at the same time he is imposing vicious increases in Government charges. The increases are so great that they far exceed the overall inflation rate during the period in which they have been imposed, supposedly to make up the

leeway in excess wages, etc., about which the Premier often speaks. And, of course, the increases are a major factor in giving Western Australia the worst inflation record in the nation.

What excuse does the Premier offer for these increases? The Court Government and the Fraser Government are trying to condition the people into accepting the sinister fallacy that our economic condition is a result of what the Premier describes as "unrealistic wage increases". I clearly indicated last night that wages had been left behind by spiralling costs. There has actually been a fall in the buying power of wages, yet we are told in the next sentence we need to buy goods and get the economy going. Since the Court Government took office prices in Australia have risen by 55 per cent.

Let us look at some of the increases which have been inflicted since the Court Government took office: metropolitan water rates 60.3 per cent; excess water 143.11 per cent; country water rates south of the 26th parallel 92.27 per cent and north of the 26th parallel 99.81 per cent; sewerage rates 83.3 per cent; electricity charges 84.82 per cent plus a 200 per cent increase in the quarterly fixed charge, which is a sizeable increase; gas charges 60.93 per cent; State Government abattoir slaughtering fees for local markets 93.3 per cent, for export markets 72 per cent; Public Health Department meat inspection fees an average of 270 per cent; State Shipping Service freights up to 60.5 per cent, varying according to cargo styles; country rail freights 62.15 per cent; metropolitan rail and bus fares by up to 60.3 per cent; motor vehicle licence fees 114.5 per cent plus another \$4 recording fee; driver's licence 132.4 per cent; State Housing Commission metropolitan rents by up to 80 per cent plus an annual management fee of \$60 which has been levied on all State Housing Commission purchase contracts made before the 1st January, 1974; and State Government hospital charges 100 per cent.

What a record! It is a record rise in prices since the colony was established. At no other stage in the economic history of the State has there been a similar level of increases in Government charges.

Mr Young: What would your increases have been over the period in respect of those matters?

Mr JAMIESON: They would have been more realistic and in accordance with the inflation rate; not just a hit and miss type of calculation which has provided a Budget excess of approximately \$20 million.

Mr Young: In that case, have you made an

estimate of what your deficits would have amounted to over those three years?

Mr JAMIESON: We would not have had a deficit. It must be related to another matter. These increases are self-inflationary and it would be hard to make an adjustment unless the adjustment were made back to zero and the first increases had not been imposed. The repetitive nature of the increases suggests there has not been good housekeeping. Having been a Minister for three years, I am aware of the number of time increases were proposed and the arguments which followed; but the increases were kept down to a minimum because we realised they were inflationary. Perhaps that is why we had an inflation rate 4 per cent less than the national average during our term of office. But despite what the member for Scarborough said on the hustings about the Government being bankrupt during our term of office and the Treasury being in such a bad way, when the present Premier took office he found it was not in such a bad way after all.

Mr Young: I can tell you that if you did that while you were in government, to balance it you also cleaned out a reserve fund which had been in existence for years, virtually untouched.

Mr Bertram: We also cleared up 10 years' arrears of legislation.

Mr JAMIESON: We cleared up many matters, including the \$5 million deficit which was left us by the Brand Government and about which Premier Brand was advised the day before the election. That document has been quoted *ad nauseam* in this House. So do not talk to me about what was left to incoming Governments.

Mr Young: You cleared out the reserves by not taking the responsibility to increase charges.

Mr JAMIESON: We increased them where necessary but unnecessary increases further inflate the economy, which the honourable member is so keen to remind me to run along with, and I remind him that his party never gets out in front to give the lead.

Mr Young: I did not say that.

Mr JAMIESON: What was said in the honourable member's pamphlets is very close to it.

Mr Young: What is contained in my pamphlets can be seen in the verbatim report in *Hansard*.

Mr JAMIESON: It is a better effort than that of the Deputy Premier. When he wrote the political notes he took licence and said, "Let it rip."

The facts are that between May, 1974, and this

year the average weekly wage rates under Federal awards have increased by 59 per cent. It is difficult to obtain the local figure at this stage. The Federal figure exposes the monstrous fallacy of the Premier's persistent statements that increases in Government charges have not kept pace with the constant and high wage demands. In some cases increases in Government charges have been more than double the wage increase. The increases have had a severe impact on the life style of Western Australians. They have reduced the standard of living of all Western Australians and have particularly affected those on fixed incomes.

In January this year Western Australia's electricity charges for the average household were the highest in Australia. We had already researched that matter before the election. The latest increase should ensure that we continue to enjoy this dubious distinction. In respect of electricity charges, the consumer in this State pays twice because in its last term of office the present Government imposed the 3 per cent surcharge on the State Energy Commission's revenue; thus the Government receives an increase in taxation every time the electricity tariffs are increased. It is a great move—to index taxation which brings in more money without having to tell the people about it.

Most people do not realise the full effect of the recently announced increases in electricity charges. For example, there is to be a nonrefundable charge of \$15 every time an account is transferred from one residence to another. Previously there was a \$10 deposit which was refunded when a service was terminated. The Government has not made any statement about the position of the hundreds of thousands of people who have already paid the \$10 deposit. Will they continue to have this money refunded? Does the Government intend in good faith to repay the deposit when a service is terminated or will it be forfeited to the SEC? No indication has been given. Will it be a further rip-off? The Government has already had the benefit of these moneys because no doubt they have been invested by the SEC for the purpose of bringing in a return while they are held in a suspense account. All these increases add to the cost of living of Western Australians and reduce their standard of living.

The concession on electricity charges for pensioners whose consumption is less than 630 units a quarter must be a joke. Pensioners have to rely on electricity for heating and warmth more than most others in the community. As one pensioner pointed out in a letter to *The West*

Australian in late July, to keep below 630 units a pensioner would have to sit in the dark and drink cold water because to boil a kettle would increase consumption; he pointed out that in order to keep below the level to remain eligible for the concession television is out of the question, and so are washing machines and refrigerators.

The increase in electricity charges is another savage blow to country people at a time when many rural areas are already in a parlous condition. Many farmers are now questioning whether they should have kept their own private generators instead of switching to the SEC system. The increases which have been made in electricity charges are a damning indictment of the policies of previous Liberal-Country Party Governments of this State. The taxpayers now must pay for the error made by the present Premier of this State when he was the Minister for Industrial Development and induced the Government to switch to oil rather than to retain coal-fired production.

I am clearly aware, and I know some other people are clearly aware of the negotiations that occurred in those days. We were succeeding in getting somewhere because the Hon. Arthur Watts and the Hon. Arthur Griffith, as he then was, were inclined to listen to our proposition, but the then Minister for Industrial Development—the present Premier—had a persuasive way and he had the ear of the Premier. We reached the stage where Collie appeared to be doomed to closure because the present Premier wanted to teach the miners a lesson, just as he is always wanting to teach workers a lesson today. The mistake made on that occasion is costing the State more and more in respect of the cost of electricity generation.

The Premier is getting money from the Commonwealth to allow the conversion of the Kwinana power station. Of course, this should never have been necessary, and it would not have been necessary had the present and previous members for Collie been listened to, or had the negotiating committees been listened to in those days. We put forward a suggestion that indigenous fuel from both deep and open-cut mines should be maintained as the principal fuel; but, no, BP was making an attractive give-away because it found it was impossible to sell furnace oil at that time. It was costly for BP to transport the oil out of the State, and so the company was prepared virtually to give it away to the Government. Therefore it became temporarily attractive to use oil. This demonstrates the shocking judgment of the Administration of the day.

Had the Government of the day exercised some foresight this situation would never have occurred. I am not indulging in hindsight now because at the time we frequently told the then Minister that the conversion should not occur. Had the Brand Government at that time not flown in the face of the world trend by deciding to use imported crude oil instead of Collie coal, Western Australia surely would not be faced with these problems at the moment.

The cost per unit of electricity generated now at the oil-burning Kwinana station is higher than the cost in the old coal-burning stations that were not as efficient as the Kwinana station. Kwinana is more efficient because the passage of time has enabled more modern equipment to be used there. The consumers of electricity are now paying for the bungle of the Liberal Government of that day.

The impact of increased electricity charges flows through the whole economy, driving up prices of consumer goods, making it hard for business houses to employ more people and thereby help to overcome unemployment, and making Western Australia an unattractive place in which to invest.

What about motor vehicle licences? This is a matter at which we could take a close look because increases in this area have affected very greatly the economy of all sections of the State. Since the Court Government took office motor vehicle licence fees have increased by 114.5 per cent; drivers' licence fees have increased by 132.4 per cent; and, in addition, as I mentioned before, there is a further \$4 recording fee. The reason given for these massive hikes is that Western Australia has to raise funds in order to get federal road funds.

What has really happened? Despite the huge imposts on motorists, Western Australia has got probably the worst road funds deal it has ever had from the Federal Government. I would say it is the worst deal because the need for road funds is greater now than it has been for many years. This is a result of the so-called new federalism policy of which the Premier, as I have pointed out, was an architect and one of its greatest supporters.

Our road funds have increased by a meagre 3.26 per cent, whereas New South Wales received an increase of 12 per cent. Subsequently the Fraser Government agreed to reduce the matching funds Western Australia would have to provide to receive the Federal money, but our licence fees increased by a further 30 per cent, anyway. So it would appear the Government is determined to ensure the Consolidated Revenue Fund shall continue to show a surplus. There was

no risk that we would have been unable to finance any of the election promises that we made.

Again, rural areas will feel an additional pinch. Rural concessions have been maintained, but many farmers need to own several vehicles instead of the one or two vehicles a metropolitan family may require. As a result, of course, they face the full impost in respect of the second and other vehicles. In the metropolitan area many families who have two vehicles have two incomes. As a result, the farmers' outlay on licence fees is much higher than is the case with city families, and the latest increase will hit them hard.

Pensioners also suffer badly as a result of the increase in motor vehicle licence fees. The Labor Party has been trying for a long time to interest the Government in providing more concessions for pensioners, and particularly in respect of vehicle licences. A committee of inquiry presented a report to the previous Government that something should be done in this regard, but that met with a negative response.

The former Minister for Community Welfare (the Hon. N. E. Baxter) once said that only affluent pensioners drove cars. This still seems to be the attitude of the Government. I have never heard of an affluent pensioner. I suppose there may be some affluent pensioners now, especially those who are not subject to the prohibitions of the means test, but I feel most of those probably would be past the stage of driving cars.

The increases in water charges will be like the increases in electricity charges; they will have an effect throughout the whole economy. Not only will they directly increase the cost of living, but they will drive up the prices of other goods, reduce the capacity of industry to expand its work force, and make businessmen wary of investing in this State.

While on this subject I would like to say that something should have been done in respect of our water supplies much earlier than has been the case. It is unpopular in an election year to take action to limit water supplies. However, when I was the Minister we had to discuss this matter at great length, and I felt obliged to apply restrictions that were necessary to ensure proper and ample supplies of water, and the Government of which I was a member was not ashamed to take that action.

Similar action should have been taken earlier by the present Government, because we had a bad winter last year. Action should have been taken last year, despite the fact that it was an election year. However, I am afraid that, like it has done

in respect of many other things, the Government ran away from the problem.

Country water charges are up by 30 per cent, making a total increase of more than 90 per cent. Excess water rates have increased recently by 15 per cent, making a total of 143 per cent since the Court Government took office. So much for the Government's commitment to decentralisation.

One of the great inducements to decentralisation is reasonably cheap water and electricity charges; but it appears this Government is determined that all measures which normally would be taken to assist decentralisation are to be abandoned and that people are to be dissuaded from decentralising and encouraged to centralise in the city. If decentralisation is going to work, people have to be attracted to country centres; and that will not happen while the gap between the cost of living in the metropolitan and country areas continues to widen. It is becoming more and more expensive to live in country areas. Goods are becoming more expensive in country areas because of freight and other factors, and it is vital that the Government should play an active role in equalising the cost of those essential items that come within its control.

The recent 17.5 per cent increase in country rail freights is staggering. I realise the railway system does not pay, and it is time the Government forgot about trying to make it pay, because it will just not succeed. The railway system is a service, and it must remain as such.

Together with the increases in country rail and Westrail bus fares of 15 per cent, and increases in country domestic water, the total increases will have a serious and damaging effect on Western Australia's rural economy and on the rural population at large. The rural population is falling, and has been for a number of years. We should be trying to get people to go to the country. However, we must remember the position of pensioners who live in the country. They are on fixed incomes, and they are being forced to gravitate to the metropolitan area.

The effect of the hike in rail freights is that primary producers will be caught both ways. It will cost more to get their goods to the country, and more to send them back to the market for which they are producing them. The whole cost increase structure can be seen as another nail in the coffin of decentralisation. As some farmers have pointed out, power is the biggest single expense on their farms, especially for dairymen. Together with increases in water, rail freights, and passenger rail fares, it will be impossible for farmers to absorb the increases when they are

already facing such a hard year. Indeed, some of them are in a bad way.

The Premier ought to list the increases for discussion at the Rural and Allied Industries Conference. I have no doubt that would generate quite a deal of discussion, and it might cause his ears to run a little hot.

Westrail freights have increased by 62 per cent since the Court Government came into office, and country train and railway bus fares have increased by 35.13 per cent. The total effect of the increases in charges for electricity, gas, water, rail freights, country rail and bus fares, motor vehicle licence fees, and drivers' licence fees is that the Government will raise an extra \$61 million this financial year.

There is no point in the Premier simply blaming the increases on inadequate funding from the Fraser Government. The Premier was an architect and the strongest supporter of new federalism, and he has no-one to blame but himself when the effects are proving as disastrous as we predicted earlier on.

When the latest round of increases in Government charges was announced, the reaction was hostile. Businessmen, farmers and consumers alike protested. A meeting of the 800-member Garage and Service Station Owners Association decided substantial increases in all their prices and charges would be necessary. The Executive Director of the Confederation of WA Industry (Basil Atkinson) described the increases as disastrous. The Executive Director of the Farmers Union (Mr Dillman) said—

It shows a great disregard for the incredible inflation that has affected country and rural people over the past few years.

In other words, Mr Speaker, the increases the Court Government has imposed in charges have been huge; they have been far greater than the inflation rate or the increases in wage rates. They are reducing our standard of living. They are hitting the business community hard. They are hitting the country people hardest of all. Because of all these facts, the Government deserves the strongest possible censure for its total failure as an economic manager.

Amendment to Motion

I therefore move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion—

However, we regret to inform Your Excellency that your Government, during its current term of office and its previous term of office, has imposed

intolerable increases in an unprecedented number of Government charges, most of which have been far greater than the rate of inflation and, therefore, have themselves been inflationary and that this heavy burden has:

- (i) reduced the standard of living of West Australians, particularly of those who have the lowest incomes and those living in the country areas of the State;
- (ii) increased the prices of goods and services provided by the non-Government sector; and
- (iii) reduced the capacity of industry and commerce to expand and assist economic recovery, with a consequent impact on employment.

Mr H. D. EVANS: Mr Speaker, I formally second the amendment.

Time Limit on Speeches

The SPEAKER: Before I state the question, I inform members that in accordance with established practice, all speakers in the debate on the amendment to the Address-in-Reply motion will be limited to 45 minutes, and no right of reply is available to the mover. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

MR TONKIN (Morley) [8.18 p.m.]: In speaking to the amendment, I wish to say that the Opposition is very concerned at the increases in charges which have been the hallmark of this Government since the time it took office in 1974. We are concerned because this Government seems to have a philosophy of being the friend of the strong, simply because they are strong and because they can reciprocate.

This philosophy seems to be summed up by Kerry Packer's comment, "Every man for himself and let the devil take the hindmost." The hindmost in our society are the pensioners; the hindmost in our society are the children of Tresillian. When we talk about the children of Tresillian, we are not speaking only of the casualties there of the inhumane policy of this Government; we also see one such casualty languishing here on the back benches of the Liberal Party. I refer, of course, to the member for Scarborough who is the victim of malice and who will continue to languish on those back benches for many a day while the present Premier has his way.

The hindmost are those who do not have a vote. In the past, Liberal Governments have conscripted people and sent them off to Vietnam for the precise reason that they did not have political power; because they did not have a vote. The hindmost in our society are the school children who do not have a vote and who, now that the gimmicks of the 1974 election campaign about transferring children to high school at the age of 11 have been forgotten, once again are being badly treated by our education system.

The Australian Labor Party rejects this philosophy of allowing the devil to take the hindmost. We are proud that we care in a constructive, concrete and positive way for those in our community who need protection. We reject this law of the jungle, which is the mark of the beast, which is the mark of fascism. So, clearly there is a very wide gap between the attitudes of the Liberal Party and of the Labor Party on these matters.

Mr Laurance: Long may it be thus.

Mr TONKIN: I second the comment of the newly promoted member for Gascoyne; no doubt there are good reasons for his recent promotion. Long may the people of Australia have a choice between the philosophy of "Let the devil take the hindmost" and our philosophy, which is one of civilisation and of compassion and which rejects the law of the jungle.

Mr Laurance: Totalitarianism.

Mr TONKIN: I do not know whether the member for Gascoyne is trying to prove he can still say a word in excess of four syllables at this late stage of the evening, but I very much question whether he understands the true purport of that word. If ever we had totalitarianism it is in this State, where we have control by one man, where Parliament is reduced to being a rubber stamp for an all-powerful Executive and where the back-benchers on the Government side to their shame refuse to take part in the proceedings of this Parliament, refuse to question the practices adopted by the Executive and refuse to see to it that this Parliament discharges its responsibilities in a proper manner.

Mr Bryce: The member for Gascoyne is under instructions from his leader to repeat that word as often as he can.

Mr TONKIN: To get on with my remarks, and to ignore those who make their speeches sitting down and who are not permitted by their leader to make a speech on these subjects, I point out that another group of people who have been badly treated by this Government in accordance with its policy of "Let the devil take the hindmost" are

the pensioners, who had taken away from them the privilege of free transport which was given to them by the Tonkin Government.

Mr Sodeman: They lost nothing. In the Pilbara they—

Mr TONKIN: The Premier had the gall to say that nothing had been taken away, and I hear his acolyte on the backbench mouthing that same fatuous comment. I will let members judge for themselves. Would it not be fair to say that a person who one day could board a bus without having to pay a levy and the next day was required to pay a fee for the same journey had had something taken away from him? I will leave the people of Western Australia to judge.

Mr Tubby: They did!

Mr TONKIN: We reject the callous treatment of the pensioner group in our community.

I turn now to the question of water charges. Recently there has been a suggestion that there should be payment only for the water actually used. Why this has had to wait upon a water crisis escapes me. I cannot understand why there should be this refusal to look at new ideas until we are in a crisis situation. We have had a situation where people have not had the incentive to save water up to a certain point because in fact they were not being charged for that water.

When the State gets into difficulties in regard to its water supply it is only then that new measures are considered. These difficulties should never have arisen, because the time to institute water rationing was during last summer. However, this Government chose to gamble with the future of Perth. It gambled with the health and well-being of the citizens of Perth simply because an election was due and it did not wish to introduce water rationing at that time. The Government decided to gamble on rain this winter simply because an election was due, and it has lost that gamble.

The Opposition rejects that philosophy at all costs. We believe a Government should accept its responsibilities to the community. If a Government is worthy of its salt it will accept its responsibilities, however unpopular they may be. It should have said, "We cannot be sure there will be adequate rains next winter, therefore we are imposing water rationing provisions."

We remember back to the days of the Tonkin Government, which was in great budgetary difficulties; that was during a period of inflation. I remind members that to varying degrees we have been in a state of inflation in the western world ever since the 16th century. However, in spite of those difficulties and the state of inflation, the

Tonkin Government actually reduced the cost of water for country dwellers. That was the mark of that Government's concern for those in the country who had to meet the various costs imposed upon them due to their isolation.

We see a very different situation in respect of those people today. Let us consider the cost of water in the various capital cities of Australia. In the period since January, 1974, to December, 1976, the cost of water in Perth has increased by 111.1 per cent. Let us compare that increase with the other capital cities. After all, their rate of inflation was similar to that of Perth, although not as high. Perth's rate of inflation was higher than the other capital cities because of the mismanagement of the present Premier, in spite of his promise that inflation could be beaten on a State-by-State basis. Remember, the increase in charges for 100 000 gallons of water in Perth was 111.1 per cent. Over the same period, the increase in Adelaide was 41.9 per cent, in Melbourne it was 32.5 per cent, in Sydney it was 42.9 per cent, in Brisbane it was 44.4 per cent and in Hobart it was 40 per cent.

Mr O'Neil: What were the rates applying before those increases?

Mr TONKIN: So we see that since the advent of this Government there have been savage increases which of course have reduced the standard of living of Western Australians because they have had to pay more for their water and therefore have less disposable income.

Mr Sodeman: How did Mr Whitlam affect our standard of living?

Mr TONKIN: Let us look at what the Whitlam Government did for Western Australia and for our standard of living. In the field of sewerage, the Whitlam Government was the first Commonwealth Government in history to make money available for sewerage works in Western Australia. Perth was a sewerage slum. Even in the 1960s when we were supposed to be the State on the move, going through a great boom, no money was provided for sewerage works. This is particularly serious for Perth because of its water problem. When the Whitlam Government came to power it provided massive amounts of money to try to overcome the great backlog in sewerage works.

Perth was the worst sewered capital in Australia. The Whitlam Government did not succeed in overcoming the great backlog because it was in power for only three years. However, the amount of money it supplied was enormous.

Perth's problem in this regard is serious because the effluent from our septic systems

leaches into our underground water supplies. Effluent is leaching into the Gnangara mound and the Jandakot underground water. We are told that these areas will supply an enormous amount of water for Perth. It is estimated that in 1990, one-third of Perth's water will come from the Gnangara mound. If there is seepage from septic effluent into that mound, the water will be contaminated and not fit for human consumption. So, this is a particularly serious problem. Unlike other capital cities which have a different rainfall and a different topography, Perth will have to depend more and more on groundwater rather than on catchment areas.

Mr O'Neil: How much of the Commonwealth money went for sewerage in the area you are talking about? Do you not know the Commonwealth funds were spent only on backlog works? The area you are talking about is deep sewered, so it does not have this problem of leaching.

Mr TONKIN: There was not enough money or time to catch up with the entire backlog and proceed to new works and projects. I am saying that we had a huge backlog because of the mismanagement in the 1960s. Money provided by the Whitlam Government could have been used for the Gnangara mound area.

Mr O'Neil: It could not. It was for backlog sewerage.

Mr TONKIN: Of course we cannot expect—

The SPEAKER: Order! Would the member for Morley please resume his seat. It is not fair on the *Hansard* staff to have half a dozen people interjecting while the member on his feet is continuing to address his remarks to the Chair. I ask members to co-operate. Interjections coming one at a time are fair enough but otherwise it is unfair on the reporters.

Mr TONKIN: It is also rather unfair on the member for Morley.

Sir Charles Court: We have to make the point that the Commonwealth money has nothing to do with the area you are talking of.

Mr TONKIN: Nonsense. If the money had not been needed for the backlog it would have been available for the area I speak of. Surely one does not need to be even a third-rate economist to agree with that point. In the three years of the Whitlam Government one cannot have expected to catch up with over 30 or 40 years of neglect. If that programme had been continued it would have caught up with the backlog and have been able to help the area of which I am speaking.

This is the legacy of many years of neglect and

relates to the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. We find that the average sewerage bill has increased by 92 per cent. I know we have been in a period of great inflation but not to the extent of an inflation rate of 92 per cent. So we see here that the sewerage inflation, if I may use that term, is outstripping the general inflation rate at a gallop.

When we compare figures we find Sydney and Melbourne have about the same level of sewerage charges as does Perth, and it is important to remember, because of their very size, that the sewerage problems of those cities are much more serious, and the cost per unit must be greater than the cost per unit in Perth. However, we find those three cities in the same league. The figure for Sydney is \$87.61 on an estimated net annual value of \$683. The figure for Melbourne is \$84 and for Perth \$82.64.

Perth has no right to be there because it does not have the problem of the giant cities of Sydney and Melbourne. Brisbane has a figure of \$52.5; Canberra \$42.8; Hobart \$33.47; Adelaide, which I suppose in size is most comparable to Perth, is \$31.42. The Adelaide figure is considerably less than half the Perth figure. So we see that the sewerage rates are very high in Perth compared to the rest of Australia.

This is historically consistent because we saw a tremendous neglect of sewerage matters by the Brand Government in the 1960s. We now see this high impost in the 1970s by the Court Government, so we will continue to languish as Australia's dirtiest and least sewered city because of high costs. This is a crime because Perth is in other ways Australia's loveliest city and we should not allow this present problem to remain.

When we come to the question of electricity we find we have the highest cost of the capital cities. In this State we do not have an energy conservation programme. This Government has been silent on this point. We have seen initiatives from President Carter on the utilisation of the world's resources which the Opposition applauds. We have been encouraged greatly by President Carter's response to the energy crisis. He has come up against powerful lobbies, not the least of which are the motor vehicle and oil lobbies. Despite this he is showing tremendous courage and is attempting to develop an energy conservation programme.

The energy conservation programmes of this Government are nonexistent. The increase in charges should be seen in the context of the saturation of funds for the State Electricity Commission. As we know, with the increase in

population, there is a tremendously accelerated demand for the use of energy. This is a problem facing western society. This is why this Government should have an energy conservation policy. If we are not going to worry about the conservation of energy, and allow our energy need growth to exceed our population growth, we need to provide proper capital for this development. This has not been provided and as a consequence, in addition to the 3 per cent levy which has been imposed by this Government as well as what occurred before, the commission must find money which should properly come from loan funds. The situation is that the charges have to be the highest in Australia to make up for the rapacious 3 per cent levy imposed by this Government.

The State Electricity Commission is no longer a service to the public but in fact is a taxing agent by the deliberate policy of this Government. It has never occurred before. It was not found by previous Governments to be necessary. So we have a 3 per cent levy, an inadequate servicing of the capital needs, and no conservation policy. Those three points add up quite indisputably and quite inescapably to the highest electricity charges in Australia.

Under this Government there has been an increase of 60 per cent per quarter based on 1 200 kilowatt hours, which is an average figure for a family of four with the usual appliances. The comparison has been made between the various States and when we look at the costs we find a 66 per cent increase, with Perth at the top of the league. This is one league table no-one would want to head. For 1 200 kilowatt hours the figure for Perth is \$48; Melbourne \$47.45; Sydney \$37.61; Brisbane \$36.76, about three-quarters of what it is in Perth; Hobart \$36.71; Adelaide \$36.23; Canberra \$29.25. So we see Perth at the top and the Opposition suggests it is because of those three neglects we have mentioned—the lack of a conservation policy; the lack of sufficient loan funds for capital equipment; and the 3 per cent levy which becomes a means of raising revenue for the Government, which is not the commission's function.

I repeat the Premier's promise that inflation could be reduced State by State; I do not believe that was a sincere promise because of his intelligence, know-how, and experience. He made a lot of people believe that because, when a man of his stature says such a thing, it appears to be possible to the ordinary citizen who is not necessarily an economist. They decided to give him a go and tossed out the Tonkin Government. The Premier said he would beat inflation State by State but in fact it has become worse. I do not

know how so many members on the Government side—who are not permitted to make speeches, but just giggle and make fatuous comments—can be pleased with this record. I would be ashamed to be sitting on the Government benches when nothing has been done about that promise.

Mr Skidmore: As long as one did not have a conscience one could not be ashamed.

Mr TONKIN: Why is the Royal Commission into petrol prices being ignored? Why does not the Government accept the advice of the commission, a commission held in respect by the Fraser Government, which says that the retailing industry of petroleum products can be rationalised. The price can be reduced to the consumer. This is possible and should be done nationally, but if the Fraser Government is tardy in acting in this way why do not we act alone? The Premier says he does not believe in centralism but believes in the Federal system.

If we believe in the Federal system, which means power for the States, why does not he go it alone and be a pathfinder and make a trail for the rest of Australia to follow for the rationalisation of petrol prices? It shows a high degree of centralism when people who continually prate about Federalism say—when it is suggested they blaze a trail and be a leader in this country—“No, we want uniformity.”

Why do we have a Federal system and not a unitary system? If one believes in a Federal system one believes a State has the right to go its own way. If the Premier is sincere in his belief in the Federal system why does he not lead the way with respect to the rationalisation of the retail trade in petrol? People in the country have to pay tremendously high prices, much higher than prices paid in Perth. Perth has suffered more than any other city, but in the country it is even worse.

Last night the Premier mouthed the pious platitudes of decentralisation. One of the factors in decentralisation is cost pressure. If he is sincere about decentralisation we need a policy to see to it that the country areas are not unduly disadvantaged by price differentials. It is within the capacity of the present State Government to take concrete action with respect to prices. It has the power to do so if it wishes. We would like to see the Premier use this power. He has the numbers in this Parliament and we have found that whatever the Premier brings to Parliament, such as the fuel and energy Bill which some people thought was fascist legislation, is passed by this House and then passed very meekly by the other place. So he obviously has the power and if he wants a piece of legislation all he has to do is

to dream it up in his cosy bed at night and it will be passed. His will is law. He has power over prices. Constitutionally the Parliament of Western Australia has this power whereas the Commonwealth Parliament does not. If he is sincere about decentralisation let us see him exercise this power in favour of the country areas so that they do not suffer under the grievous price disadvantage they suffer at present.

In other words, what we are saying is that talk is cheap, but we expect action from the Government. It has to be remembered that there is a conservative Government in this State, and it has the kind of power that we in the Australian Labor Party did not have. We have never been in power in this State; we have always had to contend with a conservative Opposition in the Legislative Council. The Premier does not have that handicap; his will is law.

Someone behind the Premier bleated the word “totalitarianism”. I wonder whether that person knows what it means. The Premier's word is law and he can, if he wishes, see that the excessive price differential between Perth and country areas is reduced in order to take the pressure away from those forces which inhibit decentralisation. We are not saying it is easy to decentralise; it is very difficult in a country with the economic and geographic problems of Western Australia. However, we are saying it should be tried, but it has never been tried in this State. It could be tried, and one of the factors is the question of price differential.

Finally, I would like to support my leader in his remarks about the Press. We noticed that when the Tonkin Government increased charges, to a much lesser extent than this Government has increased charges, the Press screamed. The Press has been most quiescent, acquiescent, and silent on this matter, and it is clear the Premier is getting an easy ride from the Press in this State.

Sir Charles Court: You could have fooled me.

Mr TONKIN: I wonder what it feels like. We have never had the experience of knowing we could get away with things and have the Press right behind us. If we had been on the Government benches during the last Parliament, and had acted in the same way as certain members the Press would have screamed about the brawling, drunken Government. But no; because we have a conservative Government there is no mention of it in the Press.

Having played sport—perhaps Z-grade—not like the member for Whitford, a brilliant ex-sportsman—I never have enjoyed winning a game knowing that my opponent had his hands tied

behind his back. I never have enjoyed winning an election knowing that the electoral laws were not dinkum. I would never have enjoyed winning an election knowing the Press was not fair and honest in its assessments.

MR B. T. BURKE (Balcatta) [8.49 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, you would know that sometimes in the past my comments have provoked angry reactions from members of the Government.

Mr Bertram: Why?

Mr B. T. BURKE: I have always wondered and puzzled over the sometimes inexplicable reaction of the Government, but I wish now to draw to the attention of the House that such actions and reactions will not be tolerated any longer, because quite simply now that the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal has been conferred upon me, and knowing your great love of tradition and the homage you have towards your worthless companions, perhaps you, sir, will realise that I am now a man of substance.

Mr Speaker, we enter the second triennium of the reign of St. Vitus, with drum majors all dancing to tune out of key.

We have had a front bench power; we have a back bench power, and now we are copping the back stalls. Is it unfortunate that one of those relegated to the back stalls way over there is the good member for Subiaco? It has been rumoured far and wide that the reason for his relegation is quite simple; he refused to believe that everything the Premier said—whether or not it was said during his sleep—was absolutely right.

We are sure that is the sentiment expressed about the Premier of this State because he made so many contradictory statements that not all of them can be right.

In supporting the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, I would like firstly to say that a vivid picture can be painted about this Government's purpose today—a slight jar on the scenery, because, as I said, the drum majors were dancing to the tune off key. Perhaps I was remiss earlier in not saying one of the drum majors was in fact a sergeant-major—the Minister for Immigration.

As you know, Mr Speaker, and as I know, he is all mouth; one puts something into his mind and it comes out screaming in attack. We all know, too, that is part of his play, because that is what the Premier needs.

And then we look at the Minister for Education and we see he is not a drum major either; he is simply a toy soldier instructed to direct his actions

towards disgraceful cuts in the education budget. Like a toy soldier he is now in trouble.

With regard to the question of the increases in charges as they have affected water consumers in this State, this Government has not only doubled the taxation system—it has not only plunged us into the horrors of the DTs—but has implemented a system of treble taxation. I propose to demonstrate that clearly tonight for the enlightenment of all members of the Government including the gray faces of the mouths that do not speak.

The fact is that this Government, under the Premier's direction, has first of all devised a turnover tax that embarrasses the Metropolitan Water Board, and has directed extra money to the Government coffers. No-one can deny that; we all know it is the truth.

In addition, under the present Government we have seen charges increased in our taxing instrumentalities where the charges are not designed simply to pay for the cost of the services they provide, but also to raise revenue. This has brought about a very serious situation which I believe is not the DTs, but the TTs—treble taxation.

Metropolitan water rates have been increased three times since the Court Government came to office. In fact, the increase has been 60.3 per cent. I know the Tonkin Government was roundly criticised for increasing water rates on one occasion. The Premier knows very well that excess water charges have increased by 60.3 per cent in four separate increases. We have seen that the Premier has directed that the charges for excess water be increased four times during his brief period of office. The price of excess water has increased on four occasions, until now it is 2½ times the rate applicable when this Government took office.

Where are we being led? I am concerned with these free enterprise methods which are being reflected by the Government parties. They seem to restrict the supply of water, and allow the supply graph to intersect at a higher price. That is what happens. The Government has managed to ensure, as a result of political decisions, that water restrictions have been introduced when we have reached a desperate and dangerous position with respect to supplies which are available to the people of this State. Of course, the Government has done so knowing that free enterprise motives restrict the supply, and push up the price. The restricted supplies have driven up the price, so who is manufacturing the demand?

As was so ably indicated by the previous

speaker, the member for Morley, sewerage rates have been increased three times, and the total of the increase is in the order of 84 per cent. I took strong exception to some of the interjections directed at the member for Morley while he was speaking. Is the increase in sewerage rates an accident? Of course it is not; it is part of a deliberate conservative regressive policy, and it is increasing unemployment in the State. It is not meant to ensure that the many ills which are created by doing these precise things are cured.

That is the situation, but we hear the Premier raving and talking about investment leading to recovery. What is he talking about? Nobody has any desire to invest when manufacturing industries are not operating at capacity. So where does the recovery come in when we talk about a situation in which the main parties, as far as the investment side is concerned, are operating below capacity? Unfortunately, the planning of the Government leads down many strange lanes.

We know this Government has a substantial interest north of the 26th parallel, and it always talks about northern development. That is why water rates have been doubled for people living north of the 26th parallel. That is how we come to be known as the State on the move—the people move south.

When we talk about the area south of the 26th parallel, we know the Government's interests are clearly shown because water rates south of the 26th parallel have increased by 92 per cent in country areas. The rates have been increased by 100 per cent north of the 26th parallel, the area in which the Premier has a special interest.

Charges are being imposed on the community by devious means; for example, the Premier well knows that plans are under way to shift children from the Tresillian Hostel to a new hostel in North Beach Road. To illustrate the fact I will pause to allow the Premier to deny that it is planned to move the children from Tresillian. No comment!

There is a quiet deafening silence from the Premier. *Hansard* can record the fact, and the record will show clearly for the Premier's friends in Nedlands, and for my friends in Balcatta. Those people will see that the Premier has not denied the plan to shift the children.

Sir Charles Court: What about the amendment? That is old hat.

Mr Young: That occurred a long time ago.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The member for Scarborough, like a falling star, has lost his black car, and he now chips in to say that it occurred many months ago.

Mr Young: It occurred on the 21st July, 1976.

Mr B. T. BURKE: To shift the children from Tresillian is an added charge on the electorate. The foolishness of the Government's motive is illustrated in the attempt to protect electoral interests, taking into account the shaky hold which the Premier has on the seat of Nedlands. He has been driven, by one or two people who live close to Tresillian, to shift the children to a hostel in North Beach Road.

Mr Clarko: It is within my electorate.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Everything that the member for Karrinyup says could be put in his ear and there would still be room for his finger. North Beach Road is in my electorate and I would welcome the children from Tresillian into my electorate if that is where they wanted to stay.

Mr Clarko: You are quite wrong; they will not be in your electorate.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I did not say they would be in my electorate; I said they would be shifted to a hostel in North Beach Road. If they wanted to live in my electorate they would be welcome.

Mr Clarko: It is not only regarding your electoral boundaries that you are ignorant.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I think I told the member last year that his verbosity would enable him to play the role of the whole 40 thieves in "Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves".

In any case, let me say this: Why should we allow children to be manipulated in this way, institutions to be closed down at a time prior to others being constructed while still there languishes in Princess Margaret Hospital children with no homes to which to go? I know that will not be acceptable to you, Mr Speaker. It is not acceptable to me, it is not acceptable to the Opposition, but it is acceptable to the opaque faces which sit behind the Premier—the mirror men who reflect the sometimes ugly expression on his face.

Mr Young: You know that the parents accepted this on the 21st July last year.

Mr B. T. BURKE: We know that the member for Scarborough has a particular conscience about Tresillian.

Mr Young: You have been using it ever since; using the children as pawns in your dirty game.

Mr B. T. BURKE: We know that the member for Scarborough has a particular conscience about Tresillian because we all saw what he did. The honourable member realised that he was going nowhere fast as Secretary to the Cabinet and he realised also that his seat was a marginal one. He then took the politically pragmatic course to do

publicly what he did. What a sham and what a disgrace.

Mr Young: You are a charlatan and a liar.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The member for Scarborough should apologise, not to me but to the whole House.

Sir Charles Court: You are a disgrace to the place.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I do not know why I should ask the honourable member to withdraw anything other than himself because that is the only withdrawal that is acceptable to me.

Mr Young: It is true.

Point of Order

Mr BRYCE: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, whether the member for Balga finds it offensive or not, I think the Parliament would find it offensive when any member from either side of the House insists that someone else is a liar. That is unparliamentary language and I suggest that the word should be withdrawn.

Mr O'Connor: You are too late—it has to be done at the time.

Mr BRYCE: It was done at the time.

The SPEAKER: I concur with the sentiments of the member for Ascot that the word "liar" is an unparliamentary term. In fact, I did not hear it and if I had I would have asked for it to be withdrawn without being prompted by a member of the House. If the word was used by a member of the House, I would ask him to withdraw it.

Mr YOUNG: I did say it: I said the member for Balga is a charlatan and a liar. I meant it, and I withdraw it.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

The SPEAKER: I would ask the member for Balga to address his comments to the Chair and to ignore the interjections.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Yes, Sir, I am very happy to do that.

Point of Order

Mr TONKIN: Surely the withdrawal has to be unconditional. It is not enough for a member to say, "I meant it and I will withdraw it." That is making a mockery of the House.

Mr Sodeman: What did you do last session?

The SPEAKER: The withdrawal was made although it was not made entirely as I would like it to have been made. However, it was made and I ask the member for Balga to continue.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr B. T. BURKE: Firstly, I would like to

correct everyone's ideas. I am the member for Balcatta.

Mr Clarko: Clearly you do not know your boundaries very well yet.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I know the honourable member's limits very well.

Mr Clarko: You are wide enough!

Mr B. T. BURKE: I am not interested in a withdrawal from the member for Scarborough; that withdrawal will be effected very appropriately at the next election. What I am interested in doing is to continue to confront this Government—and if the member for Scarborough chooses to be continually confronted with the truth, then that is what I am in the business of trying to do. He knows, as well as I know, the dishonesty of the stand that he took.

Mr Young: There are now 55 members of this Chamber, including yourself, who know you are not speaking the truth; there were only 51 in the last Parliament who knew you didn't tell the truth.

Mr Skidmore: There are only 54.

Mr O'Connor: We do not include you!

Mr B. T. BURKE: Mr Speaker, can you ascertain whether the member for Scarborough has finished speaking?

What I am saying is that unless we continue to confront the Government then we are going to have a situation in which the Premier is aided and abetted by people who, like the member for Scarborough, do not know what they have said, do not understand what they have heard, and cannot add up the difference, and who support him continually in his harsh, aggressive, repressive, and regressive policies. Quite clearly that has happened because the taxes and charges imposed on the State by the Premier have been taxes and charges that fit neatly into his traditional or classical concept of the jigsaw of economics. Someone has to suffer and the Government's policy is to make those who suffer the least powerful, the least able to defend themselves, and the most in need of protection. The people who are to suffer the most will be the children of Tresillian. As we move through the scale it will be the unemployed, the handicapped, the normal children, the aged persons—in fact, Mr Speaker, this takes in the whole spectrum of the people who do not enjoy special privilege.

We find that these people will be the target of the Government's regressive economic policies, and so I say that these charges, which resulted in a Budget surplus and was not expected by the Premier according to his utterances, and not

expected by the public, came about quite simply because these taxes and charges did two things. They imposed a charge for a service and they imposed a tax as an economic fiscal weapon to make sure that this Government's regressive policy was implemented.

Let us talk about drainage rates. We know that drainage rates have been increased by 33 1/3 per cent during the life of the present Government. In the metropolitan area, the latest increase for water rates, which applied from July of this year added another 15 per cent to the excess water bill. The ironical factor about this latest increase is that because of the Government's dastardly performance in deciding, on political grounds, not to implement water restrictions during last summer when they were needed and when they would have been most effective, the Government will not gain as much as it would have hoped to gain from this latest increase.

Quite clearly this was a desperate move by a desperate Government. The Government realised that in its political naivety it made a mistake when it decided to increase water rates. It felt to have imposed rationing or restrictions would have had a deleterious electoral effect. So it would have had, but at the same time the Government made a wrong decision; it made a decision that cannot be justified. Every indication is that to cover the costs of the Government's expenditure in the area of water supplies during the remainder of this financial year it will be necessary to increase rates again. There can be no doubt about that, but what I expect will happen is that we will see a repeat performance, at great cost to the management and to the people of this State, of the Premier's exhibition in attempting to sack 300 water supply workers.

We heard all that the Premier said about that matter. He told us that these workers—some of whom had worked for the board for 20 years, who had families of up to 10 and who received low wages—could not be employed. We saw what happened.

The Premier backed down so fast when it came to the crunch that the 300 workers retained their jobs, although quite generously and quite lovingly through the commitment of their fellow workers who agreed to take one week's leave without pay. It was left to these fellow workers to show compassion when the Government was attempting to use the axe.

In November of this year we will see a repeat performance. Already the Premier has laid the framework of the structure he is going to build, and I suggest that the structure will be the

gallows because returning from the Premiers' conference he said, "We will not receive sufficient moneys to carry on in this vital area." At a time when the State is so seriously short of water as to allow us to say that never before during the history of the State have the supplies been so low the Premier is proposing that we should cut back on the provision of water and sewerage facilities, cut back on the staff that is used to develop water supplies and to ensure adequate storage, cut back and put people out of their jobs, make families unhappy, simply because he instructed the Minister during last summer that restrictions should not be imposed because an election was in the offing.

Already we have heard the Premier refuse to deny that the children of Tresillian are in the process of being moved. I would like now to give the Premier the chance to deny that in all probability employees of the Metropolitan Water Board will again face retrenchments, stand downs, or unpaid holiday periods.

Sir Charles Court: We will let you write your own speech—you have made a fool of yourself to date and you might as well carry on.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I address my remarks through the Chair, Mr Speaker, and I can say simply that it is not a surprise that the Premier has again refused to deny that he intends to retrench Metropolitan Water Board workers. He has had ample opportunity; I paused for one minute and he did not give the denial necessary to give these workers—

Mr Rushton: It would be impossible for you to pause for one minute.

Mr B. T. BURKE: —the reassurance that should be provided. Perhaps the Premier would like another opportunity to tell the public he will not deliberately take from the workers the jobs they cherish.

Sir Charles Court: While you are pausing I just want to tell you that one of the basic principles of law is that silence is not consent. Ask your mate alongside you.

Mr Bertram: Very often it is.

Sir Charles Court: So we do not need to answer your question at all.

Mr Sodeman: The member for Ascot refused to answer a question on the basis that he would not have extended time.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Jamieson: You should be given time!

Mr B. T. BURKE: The receipt by myself of the Queen's jubilee medal has made no difference to the Government. It is still hell bent on its chosen

course even if some members need a hurricane lamp to guide them. In the back of the Premier's mind is the fear that someone may read *Hansard* and observe his refusal to answer when confronted with these questions. Now he has told us that silence is not consent—well silence is certainly not dissent. All we can take from the Premier's silence is that he has not the courage—

Sir Charles Court: When it comes to courage, my boy, we are that far ahead that it makes you look stupid.

Mr B. T. BURKE: —and he has not the gumption to stand up to tell the public that while these massive charges are being imposed he intends to retrench water supply workers and he intends to shift the Tresillian children at great expense to the State. Furthermore, he is prepared to see these Metropolitan Water Board employees retrenched at a time in this State's history when we have the lowest supply of water ever within our dams.

When the Tonkin Government left office in 1974 our water rates were the lowest in the Commonwealth. Our water rates were then the envy of other cities within the nation. Quite clearly the massive increases have changed that perception by the other States of our position. Although, as the Deputy Premier interjected, our rates are by no means the highest, our comparative performance is certainly the worst because during times of so much economic turmoil we have been forced to increase our rates to a much greater extent than have the other States.

So while I agree with the Deputy Premier that our charges are not the highest in the land, certainly our performance with respect to the increase in those charges is the worst.

Touching back again the question of sewerage, after the last Premiers' Conference we learnt that there would be a slight decrease in the amount of money made available by the Australian Government for sewerage work in this State. The "slight" fall was from \$9.3 million to nothing, and the Premier, apart from saying that he did not think it was much, apart from saying it seemed a significant drop—which did show he was thinking because \$9.3 million to nothing is a significant drop—has said nothing. And yet we have had constantly raised before us the ugly spectre—as the Government calls it—of the Whitlam Government. Now what are we to do? The only thing for which the Whitlam Government has not been blamed so far is the Reichstag, and that is simply because it was not in office at that time! However, had it been in office prior to that time,

not only would it have been blamed for the second world war and for Reichstag, but also for the bubonic plague.

The Premier had an ideal opportunity to say to his colleagues, "We will not accept a decrease of \$9.3 million because we do not believe that with such an attitude towards our State funding in terms of sewerage we can maintain a viable work force to ensure the security—in terms of water supplies—of our State in the future." So I am again pausing now to allow the Premier to tell us that he is most unhappy or that he is happy with the decision by the Federal Government to decrease our sewerage funds by that amount. Once again the Premier chooses to say nothing.

Sir Charles Court: It is pleasant when you stop.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Quite clearly the Premier cannot be happy with what has taken place, but at the same time he cannot bring himself to criticise those paragons of liberalism with whom he associates himself in the Eastern States and particularly in Canberra.

The major thing the Opposition wants to say is that we do not accept that it is reasonable, responsible or appropriate, at a time when we are the worst sewered State in the Commonwealth, to have a decrease of this magnitude. The Premier chooses not to commit himself on this point. I think that if one asked him the time, he would say nothing.

There are other matters on which I should like to touch briefly. They include the increase in country rail and bus fares. This is another area in which the Government has shown particular interest, particularly in the Northam area. So, the Government has increased country rail and bus fares by 25 per cent. I suppose the Government would say that its interest is minimal.

Another matter which I know you will find amusing, Mr Speaker, is the fact that the Government has adopted the attitude that country State Housing Commission rents shall not rise and outstrip those of the metropolitan area. I think the Minister for Housing would agree with that remark. It has been proposed that in future there will be some sort of parity between country and metropolitan rents.

Accepting that, what happened? The Government is not slow; what it did was to leave country rents high and increase metropolitan rents. So, metropolitan and country rents are at a parity now, both at an absurdly high level. I suppose that is one way of tackling the problem. The State Housing Commission can now tell country people that although their rents are

reasonably high, they are no higher than those being paid by their metropolitan counterparts.

Mr Sodeman: Total distortion once again; there is no truth in that at all.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I have also been reliably informed that Cabinet has before it a proposal to increase State Housing Commission rentals by \$8 a week.

Mr O'Connor: It has not.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I am informed that Cabinet has before it a proposal to increase State Housing Commission rentals by a substantial amount. Does that suit the Minister better? Certainly, it is true; the Minister and I both know the commission has set out to increase metropolitan rentals, and that proposal now is being considered by the Government.

Mr O'Connor: Your informant in the State Housing Commission has not informed you accurately.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I thank the Minister; we will see what happens. Woe betide the Minister should there be an increase after he has told the House there will not be an increase.

Mr O'Connor: The Minister did not say there will be no increase in rents.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Already I have had a visit from an 84-year-old man on this subject. He is not a productive member of society. He is one of those people who, I suppose, the extremists who adhere to fascist policies on some sides of the political spectrum would say is not much good to society any more. Others would say he is just putting his legs up and enjoying his retirement and being a non-productive member of the community, and that he should be back on the lathe at the Midland Workshops, despite the fact that he is 84 years of age.

This person, who has the good Irish name of O'Brien, came to see me with a letter he received yesterday from the commission. He told me he had recently enjoyed a rise in his pension and that, furthermore, the State Housing Commission now was going to enjoy a rise in rent. Therefore, it imposed an increase of \$1.60 a week on a pensioner, simply because his pension had been increased. Mr Speaker, I know that will not be acceptable or appropriate in your mind; neither is it acceptable to me, and I join with you in condemning the Government because of that.

Continuing to demonstrate its concern for country areas and showing great concern, interest and care for those people who are disadvantaged by distance, the Government increased country rail freights by 17.5 per cent. The Premier, with

the funny logic he applies to bus journeys which cost something now but which previously were free, and then says that nothing has been taken away from the pensioners travelling on buses, no doubt would say, "Yes, we have increased freight rates by 17.5 per cent, but we would have increased them by 110 per cent, therefore there is a saving."

That is the sort of funny logic which explains the irrational actions of the Government when it imposes these increases. It has increased the electricity tariff and fixed charge to the State Energy Commission's rural customers. What is going to be done about this? How long can we expect people in Port Hedland to pay such enormous bills for using essential items such as air-conditioners?

I know the member for Pilbara will support me when I say that the State Energy Commission should implement as a deliberate policy a much lower rate for those units which are used by air-conditioners above the 26th parallel. The member for Pilbara nods his head; I can see he agrees with that proposition. I agree with it; it would be a worth-while concession for an essential item.

Mr Sodeman: What a great big galah you are making of yourself.

Mr Bryce: The member for Pilbara does not agree with you. It seems he is not interested in his constituents having cheaper electricity.

Mr B. T. BURKE: As the holder of the Queen's jubilee medal, I ask the member for Pilbara whether he agrees or disagrees that units of electricity consumed by air-conditioners north of the 26th parallel should be subject to a concessional rate.

Mr Sodeman: I would agree with any responsible policy aimed at reducing electricity charges throughout the State for people who have special requirements.

Mr B. T. BURKE: We see that the member for Pilbara has not yet accepted the fact that his electorate does not have black topped roads. They were promised, too.

Mr Sodeman: We are getting them.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Of course, with typical logic the Government will say, "We do not need to build them because we failed to build the university up there, so where is there to drive?" It is quite clear that the member for Pilbara is in danger of being relegated to the back stalls because he is starting to answer questions posed by the Opposition and to convey some sort of mild disagreement with the Premier.

Mr Sodeman: Where is the Labor candidate for the Pilbara, if he is so interested in that area?

Mr Bryce: How long did the member for Pilbara live in the Pilbara after he was elected to represent the area?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Sodeman: All I hear is silence from the member for Balcatta.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Pilbara to allow the member for Balcatta to continue his speech.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You are assured of my co-operation at all times.

Mr Grayden: What we want to know is how much longer you have to speak.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Minister for Labour and Industry is not asking me outside again? The Minister continually talks about law and order. He says, "I believe in law and order. I believe in it strongly. If you disagree with me, step outside!"

Mr Grayden: I believe you are a gutless wonder, surrounded by a bunch of—

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Minister knows what will happen next; we will make him Minister for Police.

Mr Grayden: You are a gutless wonder!

Mr B. T. BURKE: I hope *Hansard* is recording the remarks of the Minister for Labour and Industry. I do not think anyone in this Chamber would deny that I have guts. The sergeant-major is interjecting again.

Another area in which the Government has shown interest by virtue of its actions is in the provision of roads in rural areas. We see that State funds for rural roads were reduced from \$3.569 million in 1976-77 to \$2.274 million in 1977-78. That is only a mild reduction of \$1.29 million, and no doubt the Government would contend it is similar to the situation where pensioners once did not have to pay anything but now are required to pay fares. Of course nothing has been taken from them; it is just that the drivers are making money on the side by charging them fares!

In addition, we see there has been a complete lack of criticism by this Government or by its coalition partners, the "Spring Onion Putsch" or by the ersatz Liberal Party, headed by Don Chipp, of these dangerous cut-backs by the Commonwealth Government. All they are saying under their breath is, "They are making it hard for us to win the next election." They are making it hard, all right; in fact, they are making it impossible. This Government could not be

returned in a thunderstorm, although its life is only six months at this stage.

I know that these salutary lessons handed to members of the Government are not palatable to them. I had hoped in view of the recent honour bestowed upon me that it would become a much more acceptable thing for the Government to accept the truth. It seems that is not to be. At the same time, I know I can rely upon you, Mr Speaker, because of the impartiality you have shown in only those few occasions you have sat in your Chair since Parliament resumed. I will be looking for that protection, Mr Speaker, because I can see that already the pugilistic prowess of the Minister for Labour and Industry is beginning to bubble to the surface. It is now reaching the stage where, quite frankly, I fear for the physical well-being of people on this side of the House—simply because there is a back door where he can come in behind us.

Mr Sodeman: You should worry about your mental well-being after that load of rubbish.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Mr Speaker, surely the member for Pilbara is not the same face that was here last year. It cannot be possible! How can the people of the Pilbara continue to tolerate him?

Mr Sodeman: You took a trip up there and they took one look at you as the alternative.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Before the last election the campaign slogan was "Turn on the lights and keep the State in firm hands." This was vividly reflected in the Pilbara, because what they said about the member for Pilbara was, "Half bright, half right."

With those remarks, stressing that these increased charges are not truly charges but are instruments of taxation used by this Government; stressing that this policy of increasing charges in the manner I have illustrated is part of a deliberate economic package to ensure that the weight of any increased costs is borne on the shoulders of those people weakest and least able to bear them, I support wholeheartedly the comments of the Leader of the Opposition and the amendment he moved. I hope there will be members on the other side of the House who will suddenly be true to their consciences and support the amendment.

MR T. H. JONES (Collie) [9.27 p.m.]: I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment moved so ably by my leader tonight. Members who have already spoken to the amendment have clearly spelt out the increased charges which have been imposed during the short time in office of the Court Government.

I do not propose to repeat what has already

been said. I think it would be generally accepted that during my time in this House I have paid special attention to the provision of electricity supplies. As secretary of the Miners' Union for some 17 years, I also paid close attention to these policies because they were allied to the great coalmining industry in Western Australia. So it will be seen that I have had an interest extending over some 26 years in the policy decisions brought down by the State Electricity Commission, as it then was, by the present State Energy Commission and by successive Governments.

These policies have exercised not only my mind but also the minds of other members of the Opposition, members of many organisations throughout Western Australia and particularly people engaged in the coalmining industry in this State. The policy decisions which have been carried out by successive Liberal-Country Party coalition Governments in this State have spelt out clearly one point; and there is only one word which can describe it, namely, mismanagement. No-one can say otherwise.

In the time available, and for the sake of the record the Opposition intends to clarify the situation. The increased electricity charges now are causing concern to every Western Australian. Householders and people in manufacturing industry alike have expressed their dismay at the increased charges which have been applied over the last three or four years.

It will be readily seen that I am going to devote the greater part of my time to the policies of mismanagement introduced by the Liberal Government for no reason at all. As my leader indicated during his remarks, it was clearly spelled out to successive Liberal Governments that they were going along the wrong path and implementing policies that would prove to be harmful to this State. The large increases in electricity charges clearly spell out that what the Opposition said at the time was correct to a "T". We are now in the situation that the Government had no alternative but to increase charges by 83 per cent during its term of office.

Let us look closely at the policies which have brought about the problems facing this Government. The matter goes back over many years. It all comes back to the shortsightedness of successive Liberal Governments. Without going fully into the matter, it commenced around the 1960s when the Liberal-Country Party coalition Government had an agreement with the BP company that if it came to Western Australia and built a refinery an oil-fired power station would be built in Western Australia. This agreement contained an obnoxious clause whereby the

company would not be required to pay wharfage charges for services in the Fremantle Port area. Over the years this has had the impact of giving the oil combines a greater benefit with regard to power generation policies than the coalmining industry in Western Australia.

I understand that about six years ago—and I am open to correction—a question asked in this House indicated that if the BP company at Kwinana had been paying wharfage charges the State would have received about \$90 million. This was one of the shortcomings of the Brand Government. It was sucked in by this great combine and it allowed this agreement to find its way onto the Statute book of this Parliament.

That is not the whole story. Whilst this agreement gave the oil industry a benefit over the coal industry, for years there has been the problem that the oil combines knew the price of coal but the coalmining companies did not know the price of oil. It is only since I asked a question in Parliament this week that we have found out that the price of oil is about \$70 or \$80 a tonne. This was a secret for years—a secret which disrupted the coalmining industry because it was unfair competition. The Brand Government entered into an agreement which said that the price of oil could not be disclosed. Any fair-minded member on the other side of the House would agree with me that this is the type of competition that the coalmining industry in Western Australia could not match. However, for the sake of the State, this position has now been rectified and at least we now know what the State Energy Commission is paying for oil.

The biggest blue was made in 1965. I shall not go right through the story because members have heard it all before, but for the sake of the record I say that the doubling of the size of Kwinana in 1965 because it was said that the Muja power station at Collie could not be extended as there was no coal was opposed strongly. Sir Crawford Nalder said at that time that Collie would be finished in 1985 and that the Collie coalmining industry would be out of action. Irrespective of the pleas of the late Percy Payne, one of the great statesmen of the south-west who unfortunately passed away last week, irrespective of the pleas of his south-west development organisation, and irrespective of the pleas of the mining union, nothing was done. Mr J. Jukes, who was then the manager of the State Electricity Commission, said that Muja could not be extended because there was insufficient water in the Wellington Dam, but he did nothing to try to locate alternative supplies. We now know that there was ample water in the disused mines in the Collie

district. Investigation will reveal that bores were put down in the old mines, and that the supply of water from those bores is not being used. This is where the problem started. The Brand Government would do nothing about initiating a boring programme although we in the coalmining industry were confident there was more coal at Collie than the Government knew about.

It was not until the Tonkin Government came to office that a boring programme was initiated in conjunction with Westcoal and the Peabody Coal Company of America. Members know the story. The proven and extractable reserves of coal at Collie are now about 390 million tonnes. Now there is no problem in extending the Muja power house. Previously the Government would take no notice of anybody, as my leader correctly and directly said tonight.

When I first became a member of this House in 1968 I moved a motion requesting greater utilisation of Collie coal. In moving that motion I traversed the policies being implemented in other parts of the world with respect to the production of power. One of the major themes of my speech at that time, on the 9th October, 1968, was the policy that America was implementing. Even then America saw the problems ahead with fuel oil and announced the construction of one of the biggest power houses ever to be built, the Mohave power project, which involved a \$590 million agreement. This programme provided for power to be taken 200 miles from Mohave to San Clemente by wire. In that speech I referred not only to America but also to Germany, England, and all parts of the world.

It was clear in 1968 that we would run out of oil supplies and that at one time or another the world would be dependent on coal as its main source of energy. Has not the story rung true and clear! This is precisely the situation in which the world finds itself today. Within a short time very limited amounts of oil will be available and this is worrying people concerned with energy around the world. This is why an energy seminar was recently held in New York to consider the alternatives facing the world, not so far as the general usage of petroleum products was concerned but mainly to ascertain how we are going to overcome the problems concerning electricity supplies in the future.

Unfortunately the Government of the day criticised my action in moving that motion in this House and did not place any reliance on it. What did I do? In 1970 investigations which I made revealed that all was not well within the State Electricity Commission. The policies it was following were wrong. After speaking for three

hours in this House to a motion which I moved calling for a Royal Commission into the State Electricity Commission on the 7th October, 1970, I proved that the Government was still going the wrong way. I asked whether the Government was telling the State Electricity Commission what to do or whether the State Electricity Commission was telling the Government what to do because it was abundantly evident that we were still adopting the wrong course so far as power generation was concerned.

The speech I made in this House on the 7th October, 1970, spelled out the world scene a little clearer. I cited the amount of coal that was being used throughout the world as compared with the amount of oil. For the benefit of members who were not here on that occasion I shall briefly restate the figures. At that time Germany was using 33.6 million metric tonnes of coal compared with 6.9 million tonnes of oil a year for power generation. Belgium was using 6.2 million tonnes of coal as compared with 3.2 million tonnes of oil. France was using 19.9 million tonnes of coal compared with 4.2 million tonnes of oil. Holland was using 4.7 million tonnes of coal and no oil. The United Kingdom was using 76 million tonnes of coal and no oil. Most importantly, the United States of America was using 264 million tonnes of coal compared with three million tonnes of oil.

Surely the world scene of power generation which I traversed in my call for a Royal Commission should have prompted somebody to do something. Unfortunately nothing happened. We went along our happy trail and extended the Kwinana oil burning station a few miles down the road. Now we are in this unhappy mess and the State cannot get out of the trouble that it brought upon itself. The then Government brought the trouble upon itself by its inefficiencies and its failure to meet up with the situation and look at the world scene which showed a much better policy than was implemented in this State.

Unfortunately we still went in the wrong direction. As I mentioned a moment ago, it was not until the Tonkin Government knuckled down to the situation that we knew how much coal was in this State. I am making a call to the Government now for additional boring programmes to be instituted at Collie. The programme introduced by the Tonkin Government in conjunction with the Peabody Coal Company and Westcoal has shown that the proven reserves, which were formerly thought to be limited to 100 million tonnes, are about 390 million tonnes. I think the State Energy Commission in conjunction with the State Government should now be looking at a boring

programme and a reappraisal of the situation in Collie because, as men associated with the coalmining industry know, the bores which were put down many years ago have been proved to be inefficient. The reborings done by the Peabody Coal Company some years ago has proved this point.

If we were to continue explaining this situation we would see why it has been necessary to increase power costs in Western Australia. Last night in the House I asked some questions about this matter but unfortunately the answers were handed in and members will not have heard what the true picture is.

Let us consider the relative power costs in Western Australia today. At the old East Perth station, which was worn out and closed down because of its inefficiency but was reopened, it cost 2.914c to produce one kilowatt hour during the last 12 months. At South Fremantle it cost 1.871c per kilowatt hour. At Bunbury the cost was 1.405c per kilowatt hour. At Muja, in Collie, the cost is .994c per kilowatt hour and at Kwinana 3.275c per kilowatt hour. Does this not clearly spell out what I have been trying to tell this Government for years? It clearly spells out that there has been mismanagement.

If the Muja station had been extended we would not be putting up our production costs which at Muja are about one-third of what they are at the Kwinana oil burning station.

There is another matter to be considered with regard to costs. Surely the larger units installed at Kwinana allow for greater efficiency than the 60 megawatt units which are installed at Muja. In all it will be seen that the chickens have certainly come home to roost. Unfortunately the Court Government carried on with the policy and said that Kwinana would be all right. It tried to have a shot at miners, and would not extend Muja. It put up all all sorts of excuses, would not initiate a boring programme, and now we are paying the penalty.

The pensioners and the low wage earners are paying the penalty because in the last three years power charges have been increased by 83 per cent which does not take into account the 3 per cent surcharge which has also been implemented.

This is where the Government fell down. Who will answer for it? I would like the Premier or somebody else to say why this was done and why the Government permitted it to be done. Due to the mismanagement, we now find the people of Western Australia are being forced to pay excessive prices for power.

A number of reasons have been put forward as

to why the Government had no alternative but to increase its power costs. An article in *The West Australian* on the 24th May stated that the State Energy Commission may face a loss of some \$5 million, and it went on to say—

But in that period the commission has been forced to absorb crushing cost increases.

Its fuel bill for 1976-77 could reach a staggering \$50 million—nearly \$12 million more than in 1975-76.

The increase is due mainly to the high cost of imported crude oil and also reflects the expense of transporting Collie coal for burning in the small capacity power stations at East Perth and South Fremantle.

We said this would happen. This situation was projected clearly not only by myself but also by the Collie mining unions over many years.

The high cost of transporting coal was mentioned. It would not have been necessary to involve this additional cost if the extensions had been made in the right place—that is, Muja—instead of at Kwinana. We cannot allow the Government to get away with that proposition because fuel represents a minute proportion of the overall operating costs of the State Energy Commission. The answer to a question I asked today reveals that the total fuel cost represents only 31 per cent of the overall operating costs of the commission. The Government says this is one of the main reasons and I wonder what are the other reasons. We cannot wholly blame the cost of fuel oil when it amounts to 31 per cent of the total operational costs.

It is obvious that had the Government looked into the situation we would not be in the mess we are in today. Members are probably wondering what are the relative costs of burning coal and oil. I understand the cost of coal now supplied to the State Energy Commission is approximately \$14 a tonne. It takes 2.8 tonnes of coal to equal the heating value of a tonne of oil. If coal had been preferred to oil as a fuel, the cost would have been \$30 a tonne, compared with \$80 a tonne for oil, resulting in a saving of \$50 a tonne on the fuel bill, which is a massive saving. In view of the fact that these insane policies have been implemented, is it any wonder the Government has no alternative but to increase the cost of power?

I have previously dealt with the power scene but I do not think the Government has an answer. It was fooled into a policy which was not being implemented in any other part of the world. If any member on the other side of the House can tell me that the Brand-Court Government's policy was introduced in any other part of the world, I

would like to hear it. It may have been implemented where there was no coal available. It certainly has not been implemented in any other State of Australia, in Britain, or in Europe; and Germany, one of the foremost industrial countries, is looking ahead some 200 years in relation to coal. My visit to Germany two years ago indicated to me that Germany is relying on coal for power generation.

I would like the Premier to tell me where is the new consortium about which we heard so much? There was to be a new concept for the production of power in Western Australia. Where are all the overseas monopolies which were so ready and willing to come into Western Australia so that the Muja power station could be extended? We have not heard of them. In a special article in the *Collie Mail* on the 24th March the Government announced that it hoped the co-operative would be set up by the 1st July. Where is the co-operative now?

I am also concerned at the Government's further delay in proceeding with the extensions to the Muja power station at Collie. During the term of the Tonkin Labor Government a decision was made to add two new units to the Muja power station to assist the overall economics of power generation in this State. What did the Court Government do? It deferred the project for 12 months when it came to office. When the Tonkin Labor Government decided to extend the Muja power station the total cost of the installation of two additional units was \$87 million. The answer to a question I asked of the Minister for Fuel and Energy this afternoon reveals that the cost has now risen to \$146 million, an increase of \$59 million. Is it any wonder the price of electricity has risen in Western Australia? If this is not mismanagement, what is it?

In a recent report the Government said it would have to speed up the extensions at Muja; but unfortunately the damage has been done. Deferment of the plan to install two more 200-megawatt units at the Muja power station has cost the State an additional \$59 million. If that sum of \$59 million were available to the State Treasury, it would not be necessary to increase power charges to such an extent.

We do not know anything about the consortium and the Premier would not answer questions in relation to it. It was to be set up by the 1st July. We heard a great deal about it when it was originally mooted but we have heard nothing since.

Mr Jamieson: I think I frightened Bechtel.

Mr T. H. JONES: I have here a copy of a telex which was sent on the 17th January this year by the commission to all its staff in power stations in Western Australia and which mentions "the need to press ahead as quickly as possible" with the Muja extensions. It states further that we must speed up in getting the consortium under way so that Muja can go ahead. The 1st July has passed and I see no reference in the newspapers to the wonderful consortium, and I strongly opposed arrangements under which the State Energy Commission would buy power from private enterprise and place us in the hands of overseas monopolies. This is a dangerous situation to say the least, and of course no consortium would have been necessary had the Court Government gone on with the Tonkin planning because we would have been looking for only \$87 million instead of \$146 million.

Mr Jamieson: Even less than that had the Premier listened to us in the 1960s.

Mr T. H. JONES: I traversed the 1960s and mentioned the Royal Commission. Had the Premier followed the advice of the Opposition he would not have been in this mess.

Mr Jamieson: It is the taxpayers' money, though. He is not a bit concerned. Down the drain it goes and down the drain we will get some more.

Mr T. H. JONES: Surely any Premier should be concerned at an additional cost of \$59 million.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Would the honourable member address the Chair?

Mr T. H. JONES: It is a fair question, no matter what the colour of the Premier. If any other member of this House were Premier, would he not be concerned that the deferment of a programme had incurred an additional cost of \$59 million? If he would not be concerned, he should not occupy the position of Premier or even be a member of Parliament. This is a factual situation which cannot be denied. When we count up all these costs we find out why we are in this hopeless mess, which obviously spells out mismanagement by successive Liberal Governments.

But it does not end there. Unfortunately, when the Kwinana power station was under construction and in the planning stages no dual-fired units were installed in it. The power stations at South Fremantle, East Perth, and Bunbury have convertible units so that if coal is not available they can be converted within 24 hours to burn oil fuel. This was not even considered at Kwinana. It was to use oil and oil alone. Some units at Kwinana are now being converted to burn coal at a cost of \$38 million—another considerable cost which could have been avoided

had the prior planning been undertaken when it was decided to build the Kwinana power station.

It is obvious the Liberal Government was not interested in coal. It merely wanted to crush the Collie mining unions, and the Premier cannot deny it. The Government dealt the unions blow after blow over many years, and now "King Coal" has come into its own.

My leader and I did not have mixed views about what would happen. In a Press statement we made in *The West Australian* on the 14th January we predicted that the Government would have no alternative but to increase its charges for electricity, as it is now doing. I am concerned about the effect on pensioners. Other members have mentioned the increased licence fees. I handled a Bill under which licence fees were increased by 66 per cent some years ago. I pleaded with the Government for some alleviation for pensioners but nothing happened.

Pensioners are in the same situation again. Another increase has been imposed and the pensioner has to meet it just as the working man does. This is an injustice to pensioners. While we may have the capacity through our arbitration and wage fixing system to meet some of the additional charges, the pensioner with his miserable \$1 a week increase is not in a position to meet them. I hope somewhere along the line sanity will prevail and some consideration will be given to the underprivileged people in our community.

The situation is being felt in the south-west. A letter in the following terms, from the manager of a fruit packing enterprise at Donnybrook, was published in the *South Western Times* of the 28th July—

THE Times (July 5) reported a statement by Sir Charles Court that "country people pay only for the water they use". That would be contrary to fact.

He went on to mention the new charges that would apply, and then he said—

The new charges for water, rail freight and power surely must be the death-knell of any hopes country towns have of attracting industry away from the city.

Of course, that is the situation. We hear the word "decentralisation" used so often. What chance does Mr G. W. Fortescue, the gentleman who wrote that letter, have? He makes other references with which I will not weary the House tonight. That letter is indicative of the feeling generated in the south-west as a result of increased charges. For those reasons, I have much

pleasure in supporting the amendment moved by my leader.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [10.01 p.m.]: The amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition was predictable. There were one or two subjects that he was leading up to, and we were left in a state of expectancy as to what the amendment would be.

Mr H. D. Evans: You said that last night.

Sir CHARLES COURT: However, the amendment was eventually moved on the matter of charges. Before I deal with the amendment, I want to make a very brief reference to the speech of the member for Balcatta. If the Leader of the Opposition is pleased with the speech made by that member tonight, I would be bitterly disappointed.

Mr Jamieson: I let my people make speeches which have a bit of authority; not like your people.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member concerned has a glib tongue and a clever turn of phrase, but I am quite certain that to him nothing is sacred and I deplore his attack on the member for Scarborough, one of the most capable and one of the most conscientious members in this House. The member for Scarborough is a man of great principle, and yet he was treated with great cynicism by the member for Balcatta. If we leave his speech at that level and treat it with the contempt it deserves, we will be doing it more than justice.

Mr Jamieson: On election day I was not sure who was standing for the Scarborough electorate; you or the member for Scarborough.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to refer to the attempt to amend the Address-in-Reply. Somehow or other members opposite do not seem to have the message that there was an election on the 19th February at which time the Opposition made great play in an extravagant fashion of all the things its members are bleating about tonight.

Mr Jamieson: No, these are further charges.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The public made their decision on that occasion.

Mr Jamieson: We have another election coming up.

Sir CHARLES COURT: They made a very clear and decisive decision. I want to remind members opposite that we as a Government made our stewardship very clear to the electorate. We did not cover up anything at all.

Mr T. H. Jones: Only a few charges.

Mr Jamieson: Now you are joking.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We made it very clear why the Government had followed the taxation and charges policies it had imposed; we made it very clear that we had sought to be a responsible Government with responsible housekeeping policies, and we also made it clear that we intended to continue in that fashion. The people accepted the policy that we had followed, were following then, and intended to follow; and they returned us to Government. We did not promise them that things would be easy.

I point out to members opposite that it was a question of the people deciding whether they wanted responsibility as distinct from irresponsibility.

Mr Jamieson: Mention one irresponsible promise that we made. Just mention one or your whole argument goes.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am dealing with our policy—the one we put before the people.

Mr Jamieson: You said “irresponsibility”. Now mention one irresponsible promise.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the Leader of the Opposition will just remain silent for a moment, I will answer his question. Prior to the election the Opposition made great play about the fact that the Government should be prepared to have a bit of a deficit. What is a “bit of a deficit”? The public decided that people who would say that sort of thing in the face of the national situation and in the face of the crisis we were facing at the national level should not be the Government. They were prepared to say that a Government led by a Premier and Treasurer who was prepared to balance the books and to be responsible, and even to make increased charges to ensure the accounts were kept in order, should be returned to office.

Mr Jamieson: You won on one thing alone, and that was the 100 000 jobs. It was a very cunning thing. That is the only thing that made you win.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I remind the Leader of the Opposition that the greatest emphasis during the campaign was on responsible housekeeping.

Mr Jamieson: It was on the 100 000 jobs that have not materialised.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The housekeeping responsibility was the theme with which we started the campaign, and it was the theme with which we ended the campaign. I can almost remember by heart the speeches I made, and so can my colleagues.

Mr Jamieson: Yes, I know the ones you made by heart; I heard some of them.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I would like also to

remind members opposite that Governments are elected to govern. Governments must have money to govern, and it is an irresponsible Government that shirks its responsibility in this field. There have been Governments which have been tossed out because they have allowed things to grind to a halt through not being prepared to govern and to raise the necessary revenue in the right manner. When we are dealing with the funds of the State, we must deal with them in several compartments. On the one hand we must deal with the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and on the other hand we must deal with the Loan Fund; on top of that, we have statutory authorities, and trading concerns such as the State Energy Commission, the Metropolitan Water Board, and others. We have to be very careful when we are raising revenue; we must make up our minds whether we will raise it in the field of general revenue taxation, or whether we will obtain it from charges in other fields, or whether we will raise it in other special ways. For instance, we must decide whether we will raise additional money by increasing motor vehicle licences. When we raise money in that way it cannot be put into general revenue as somebody opposite suggested tonight. That money is not a general revenue tax; it is raised for a particular purpose.

I also remind members opposite that the great upsurge in charges occurred during the time when the Whitlam Government was in office.

Mr Jamieson: What a record! Haven't you got a better gramophone?

Sir CHARLES COURT: It was Whitlam who said “the user must pay”.

Mr Jamieson: You are very old.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It was the Whitlam Government, and not without good cause, that said “the user must pay”.

Mr Jamieson: Nonsense.

Mr Bryce: When will you grow up and stand on your own two feet?

Sir CHARLES COURT: This became the war cry of the Whitlam Government every time we went to a Premiers' Conference: “the user must pay”. We came away on several occasions with that cry ringing in our ears. We could not make that Government see reason, even though we pleaded with it, to ease its financial policies so that we would not have to make the user pay to the full extent. We did this for the reasons advanced by members opposite tonight: because of the impact on the cost of living and the inflationary spiral.

Not only I, but every other Premier, pleaded

with the Federal Government to try to obtain some relief, and we have all done the same thing with the present Commonwealth Government. However, at that time the cry was, "the user must pay."

We followed an in-between course. We did our best to absorb as much of the shock as we possibly could, but we did have to look for more money to remain solvent.

There is a great difference between facilities such as the Metropolitan Water Board, the State Energy Commission and that type of trading concern, and the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the State from which a great deal of heavy expenditure is made from money that is raised by way of taxation imposed upon the people of the State and by way of tax reimbursements from the Commonwealth in one form or other; and now, of course, in the form of tax sharing.

So I make the point that the State Government has followed this course deliberately and responsibly. I also remind members opposite again—because they apparently did not take any notice last night—that the policies we have followed in respect of our Consolidated Revenue Fund have enabled us to maintain a very strong works programme in the area in which it is needed, and they will be instrumental in enabling us to maintain a reasonably solid works programme in the present financial year.

However, members opposite cannot have it both ways. They want us to cut down on some of these charges and on some of the revenue, and yet they want us to spend more. They usually say the one thing in one breath and the other thing in the next breath. They want us to cut down on charges on the one hand and to raise expenditure on the other hand. If that is their policy, let them say so rather than move stupid amendments like this one, because we will then be able to identify the people responsible for those we will have to sack in the next few weeks if we follow such a policy.

If this is the policy members opposite want to follow, and if we accepted it—which we would not—we would have to work out how many hundreds of people would have to be put off the Government pay-roll.

The Government has acted responsibly in its housekeeping, in its fund-raising, and in its charging.

Mr Jamieson: And it has acted irresponsibly in promising 100 000 jobs in 18 months.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the Leader of the Opposition wants to become involved in that, I point out to him that it is written in our policy that a term of seven years is involved.

Mr Jamieson: Your Minister said on your behalf that it would be 18 months.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is written in our policy—

Mr Jamieson: I am telling you what your Minister said on your behalf.

Sir CHARLES COURT: That is all very well, but I am telling the Leader of the Opposition that it is in the document and there is a very simple explanation of how it will be done. It involves some 26 000 skilled tradesmen for a start.

Mr Jamieson: In how many different jobs? It is repetitive. You are counting the same men over and over again.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The Leader of the Opposition has not the capacity to envisage how these things develop.

Mr Jamieson: Yes he has. He has been to the firms concerned, and he has found the jobs are repeated.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The Leader of the Opposition has no regard for what has happened over the past 17 years, nor has he regard for the projects contemplated in the next seven years.

Mr Jamieson: Nonsense.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Members opposite object when people interject in their speeches, but they want continually to interrupt my speech.

Mr Jamieson: Why don't you talk sense for a change? You are getting too old.

Sir CHARLES COURT: As far as I am concerned, the House will be told the story. There will be 100 000 jobs created over a seven-year period.

Mr Jamieson: This will bring you right out on your raft.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the Leader of the Opposition keeps quiet for a moment he will learn. Bear in mind he had unlimited time, whereas I have not.

Mr Bryce: I would be happy to move for an extension of time for you.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not want an extension of time; not from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, anyhow. I just want members opposite to listen and to be sensible for a moment. The Leader of the Opposition should realise there are projects which I believe will get off the ground and will create this employment. When that happens members of the Opposition will be very dispirited and very disappointed. They will be disappointed just as they were in the 1960s when they talked of "pie in the sky" and "scraps of paper". When the projects got off the ground at

that time, who was disappointed? Members opposite!

Mr Jamieson: It is better to be born lucky than to be born rich; and you were born both lucky and rich.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The Government has been responsible, and makes no apologies for its housekeeping. This Government has been able in these times not only to present balanced Budgets but also to come up with a surplus and so have money to put into special projects. Surely that is deserving of commendation.

Mr Grayden: Hear, hear!

Sir CHARLES COURT: In spite of the bleats from members opposite and the gloom and despair they claim and talk about time after time, I cannot find anyone in the community to support that claim, for the reason that we have the best managed economy in the whole of Australia.

A member: New South Wales claims that.

Several members interjected.

Sir CHARLES COURT: New South Wales has the worst economy in Australia and admits it.

Mr Bryce: It took a Liberal Party in New South Wales to do it.

Sir CHARLES COURT: What is more, it is getting worse under a Labour Government. We do not have to apologise or blame anyone. We just get on with the job. The member for Morley made great play about sewerage.

Mr Skidmore: So he should.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to remind the member for Morley that what he was talking about was completely off beam because the national sewerage programme is related to sewerage backlog work. If there is no backlog work there will be no special money. The Federal Government would not put a single dollar into the area he was talking about. He wants to get his facts right and realise the backlog sewerage he was talking about is an entirely different thing to the type of deep sewerage associated with areas with underground aquifers. Deep sewerage would be a prerequisite and does not have any relevance at all and I am surprised he brought it up.

I do not intend to dwell any further on the amendment. The Leader of the Opposition covered many points. He seems to be worried about his conscience these days.

Mr Jamieson: At least I have one.

Sir CHARLES COURT: He has been here long enough to know that every person in this Parliament in the time he and I have been here who has paraded his conscience is the one least to

be trusted. They do not get very far and they soon get found out.

Mr Jamieson: You have set yourself up on a higher pedestal than anyone else.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I never parade my conscience around this place.

Mr B. T. Burke: I think you are making an unwarranted attack on the member for Scarborough.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I repeat: the Government has a responsible and well-managed Treasury which can go into 1977-78 strong, and able to create a works programme which will be a reasonable one, in spite of difficulties and cut-backs at the Federal level, because we do care and we are responsible.

We are prepared to govern and raise money that will allow us to govern, and there will be hundreds of people in employment this year when we bring down our works budget because of the policies followed by this Government. I reject the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition.

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren) [10.18 p.m.]: The speech of the Premier this evening was predictable, as it has been on virtually every occasion he has risen when replying to matters raised by the Leader of the Opposition. I think that his homily on economic management falls astray. His tenor seems to be that economic recovery will be through private investment but this has just not been the case in overseas countries where recovery has occurred. It is just not true. It can be demonstrated by comparisons with comparable countries in Western Europe and the United States. They are looking for a consumer demand recovery and that is the only way we will get out of it, but it cannot be done with the present level of unemployment.

In deprecating the need for increased Government spending, the Premier conveniently overlooks several crucial points. If finances are made available to public industry employment for people, then in the first instance it is increasing the purchasing power of that section of the community for consumer goods and this in itself has a self-generating tendency in industry. As industry at the moment has an overcapacity, it is a prerequisite to any economic improvement to remedy this position.

In addition, the Government derives considerable refund by way of taxation and in several experiments in the UK, as an example, it has been shown that the outlay for certain employment projects has been more than recouped through the taxation accrued to the Government. In this case, however, the taxation

benefit goes to the taxation levelling authority which in our case is the Federal Government. The Federal Government's policies are just aggravating the position.

I was reading tonight that the Federal Government is looking at the question of providing employment, albeit in a small way, by putting up an amount of \$120 million. At least it is a start and it looks as though the Fraser Government has finally realised that this is necessary before we see an upswing in the national economy. The new federalism which has been foisted on this State just is not going to improve the situation at all. The stimulation to the economy is going to come only through the employment of those 500 000 people who are unemployed.

Taxation reform is part and parcel of the whole objective. At the present moment there are indications there will a change of emphasis in taxation, though anything in the way of a reasonable reform does not appear to be in the minds of those controlling us in Canberra under the new federalism. With the Fraser Government committed in the way it is to the policies it has enunciated, it will be difficult for the true effect of an upturn through employment to be felt, and the taxation benefits that will be derived will go to the Federal Government. They will not assist the States at all.

I seem to recall the Premier saying, in effect, both in this Chamber and outside, "Give us someone in Canberra we can work with. We would be all right without the Whitlam Government in our hair." There is no such excuse now; no such impediment, as the Whitlam Government is no longer there to blame. The Premier now has someone far worse in Canberra. The Premier is far worse off than under the Whitlam Government and so is this State. The casting of the blame still goes on. The Government still will not accept its responsibilities that it acknowledged before the 1974 election and then very conveniently forgot. The failure of this Government is colossal.

I go back to the way the Premier seems to justify the fact that by imposing a charge on services it is the equivalent of levying a tax. It is not. When one raises revenue from a specific area, be it the railways, abattoir charges, or water supplies, one is levying an impost on sections of the community in such a way as to be immoral when compared to fair and equitable taxation.

Sir Charles Court: Are you saying that when you make a service charge on water supplies, railways, electricity, and shipping, it is a tax?

Mr H. D. EVANS: Most certainly it is on State ships. If the Government is showing a profit on State shipping or Westrail, it inevitably makes that profit from that section of the community which can least afford it—the country people—and which should not be treated in that way. That is what the present level of charging is doing.

Sir Charles Court: Are you against the policy that is followed by other State Governments of making the metropolitan sewerage and water supplies break even?

Mr H. D. EVANS: When one talks about metropolitan water supplies, sewerage, and drainage, one is looking at loan funds, but when one gets to the railways and State shipping it certainly does take the form of a tax. Why should the people in the country be charged a disproportionate percentage of these services?

Sir Charles Court: How much loss is enough?

Mr H. D. EVANS: It is not a question of how much loss is enough.

Mr Jamieson: How many casinos are enough?

Mr H. D. EVANS: Let us look at abattoir charges and I will quote from a letter from a former Minister for Agriculture and give his views on those charges. Before getting to that I would like to refer to the problems mentioned in the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I make reference to one portion which reads—

- (i) reduced the standard of living of West Australians, particularly of those who have the lowest incomes and those living in the country areas of the State;
- (ii) increased the prices of goods and services provided by the non-Government sector; and
- (iii) reduced the capacity of industry and commerce to expand and assist economic recovery, with a consequent impact on employment.

I will make reference to one aspect of this in connection with prices as they apply at present, particularly on the importation of meat from the Eastern States, how it is affecting Western Australia, and precisely what has been done about it by the present Government. There has been a rip-off from the housewives of this State.

The importation of cattle, while it is unfortunate, can be condoned and defended when we have a shortage of cattle suitable for killing. There is idleness in the abattoirs which is responsible for unemployment and an increase in costs because of the throughput at the abattoirs.

This is fair enough if cattle are introduced from other States. Nobody argues with that.

Mr Stephens: What about the introduction of liver fluke?

Mr H. D. EVANS: The question of liver fluke is rather remote and I have every confidence in the Department of Agriculture and the Public Health Department. The importation of cattle is essential if the requirements of the State are to be met and the abattoirs are to be maintained at a maximum level. However, what happens when need is replaced by greed? Difficulties are confronted and this is precisely what has occurred. Carcase meat and broken meat have been introduced to Western Australia in quantity. I am unsure of the total amount of meat coming in but I received advice from the Minister for Health tonight—14 pages of it—which represents the importation over the last eight weeks. It is fairly considerable.

I have done several calculations as rapidly as I was able to do in the time available. In eight weeks 9 869 beef bodies have been imported as have over 19 000 lambs; 21 000 cartons of broken meat; and 9 466 cartons of pet meat, rabbits, and lamb cuts; 2 400 frozen pork middles; and two loads of miscellaneous beef. These loads are in freezer trucks of 18 to 22 tons, so a considerable amount of meat has been imported into Western Australia.

The information available to me indicates that it is produced in Sydney and Melbourne for about 73c a kilo, far less than is the case in Western Australia. A truck operator who did some costing on bringing an 18-ton freezer from Sydney containing meat purchased at that level suggests that the cost of transport would be about 20c a kilo. So the price realised in Western Australia is about 105c. The farmer members opposite know the prices in the saleyards in Western Australia and they know the housewife is being robbed of about 20c a kilo at least. If the housewife gained some benefit, it would be reasonable and perhaps even fair.

Because such large quantities of carcase and broken meat are being imported, the local abattoirs are being prevented from working to full capacity. If the importations were in live form, it would not be so bad; but they are not. The imports are in carcase and broken form and so employment is being denied people in this State.

Members opposite are the first to complain when industrial action affects industry, but when retailers, wholesalers, and processors are making profits at these levels, at the expense of the housewife who is not even getting the benefit of

the differentiation, it is a different story. Members opposite are then mute. They are not prepared to say a word. They have not done a thing about the matter.

The Minister for Agriculture expressed concern about the matter and he appealed to the meat trade. He appealed to the tigers to lay off the lamb. However if a dollar is involved, the business firms will make it. It is as simple as that and the Minister will get nowhere merely by appealing. Following his appeal the situation was even worse than it was in the previous week. The Minister may just as well have saved his breath.

The Government has done nothing to bring about an equality of prices in the metropolitan and country areas. Some prices justification legislation was introduced by the member for Maylands in 1973 when he was a Minister, but the fate of the Bill is well known. It did not survive another place, as was the fate of 24 other Bills introduced by the Tonkin Government. If the measure had been passed it would have had some application at this time not only in connection with the rip-off from broken meats from the Eastern States, but also in other ways.

The member for Geraldton sought a commission into the disparity of prices paid by country dwellers compared with those paid by metropolitan residents. The Government amended the motion providing for a Royal Commission and instead appointed a convenient inquiry to be carried out by the Consumer Affairs Bureau. Some time before Christmas the bureau submitted an interim report which consisted of a statement concerning a meeting held, and involved about two pages. And there the matter rests. Had the Minister been here I would have been tempted to ask him to indicate by interjection when we could expect the report proper.

Mr McPharlin: How many pages did you say the report comprised?

Mr H. D. EVANS: Two pages.

Mr McPharlin: It was more than that. It was at least a dozen pages.

Mr H. D. EVANS: Would the honourable member agree that it contained no recommendations or substantial suggestions?

Mr McPharlin: It was only an interim report.

Mr H. D. EVANS: Yes, and it was virtually valueless because it contained nothing in the way of a direction to the Government, or even a suggestion which, prior to the election, could have been of value to the people because they could have cast their votes with another factor in mind;

that is, the disparity of prices in various areas. This would have been an effective weapon in an election campaign. However, I have indicated where the matter rests.

I might add that the most glaring example we have had in a long time in this State of the housewife being literally and metaphorically butchered, is still with us.

Predictably the member for Collie touched on the subject of electricity. The Leader of the Opposition likewise referred to the stupidity of the Government's electricity generation policies. I will not recanvass them because I could not do it half as well as my colleagues. Suffice to say the mismanagement of the electricity generation policies of Western Australia has been equalled only by the policies in connection with abattoirs.

Mr Jamieson: The Premier did not make any statement about that when he was on his feet.

Mr H. D. EVANS: Oh no. He vilified the member for Balcatta, as we could have predicted, but he did not mention the member for Collie.

The service abattoirs of this State, as of any State, are of the utmost importance to the primary producer. The degree of importance is not realised frequently by those who have not been closely associated with their operations.

The fees imposed are a direct burden on the farmer, not the consumer. For instance, the killing charges are passed straight back to the farmer. The farmer knows this, but can do nothing about it. He can grit his teeth and stamp his feet about it, but he has no recourse under the present system. The charges are not passed onto the consumer; the middleman sees to that. In the first place, the charge is bad enough; but when that charge is increased, the situation becomes even worse. The present fees are at a level which should never have been reached in this State and this has occurred because of the impotence and inability of the present Government to operate the affairs of the State in a businesslike manner. We will never know how the Government managed to create the illusion that it operates in a businesslike manner.

I interpolate to say that on the 20th July, 1972, the then Leader of the Country Party, who was the Minister, made several remarks about the increase of abattoir fees.

His words are worth recalling. I shall not go to the extent of reading them in depth but shall mention a line here and there. He started off by pointing out that farmers will be sadly disillusioned. That set the tone of his approach. He continued—

These charges are added to a long list of increased costs and taxes that the Government has applied since it has been in office and it displays a complete lack of understanding and appreciation of the problems facing rural industries.

Mr McPharlin: That is when you were in Government?

Mr H. D. EVANS: That is what he said when the Tonkin Government raised abattoir charges after some considerable time. When the change of Government occurred in May the increases were rescinded. Some weeks afterwards they were reimposed—and were they ever reimposed from then on! During the currency of this present Government, State abattoir charges have been raised by 93.3 per cent for local killing and by 72 per cent for exports. The increase in wages and inflation has been nowhere near that amount. The increase to which the former Minister was referring was about one-third of that level and on taking office this Government increased the charges threefold.

If that was a heinous thing during the term of the Tonkin Government, surely it is three times as heinous during the currency of the Court Government. The former Minister has been silent ever since; there has not been one criticism of the effects of abattoir charges, even though the increase has been threefold. I find that there is still no reply. I wonder why that could be.

Sir Charles Court: Are you going to mention the very heavy amount of assistance that the Government has given abattoirs to keep costs down?

Mr H. D. EVANS: We had the same problem. We met the same difficulties.

Mr McPharlin: For what reason did you increase charges?

Sir Charles Court: You never made any allowance to the abattoirs for the standing charge that they are going to get every year to acknowledge the service part of their abattoirs.

Mr H. D. EVANS: We met the losses of the abattoirs at a far higher level than the present Government had previously done or has done since. We inherited this problem. The loss sustained by Midland Junction is about \$800 000. This came out as assistance being offered by the Government to the abattoir industry. I see that in the Premier's speech he said that the Government agreed to defer payment of debt charges totalling \$600 000 for six months and that after that time the matter would be reviewed. Has the Midland Junction Abattoir received assistance of \$600 000 or just a deferment without further examination?

My reading of the speech differs from my interpretation of reports in the Press.

Sir Charles Court: They receive assistance in two ways. One is assistance with their losses and the other is the standing charge they get to accept part of their financial costs to acknowledge the portion of the abattoirs that is a service as distinct from a commercial organisation. On top of that the Government has given them a deferment of this interest to meet their liquidity problem. That is on top of what we normally give.

Mr H. D. EVANS: This \$600 000 is assured by way of assistance?

Sir Charles Court: Do not misinterpret. You read what is there. This is in addition to normal loss sharing and is in addition to the normal financial assistance. This is a deferment until the end of the year when it will be reconsidered but it is in addition to all the assistance that they get now.

Mr H. D. EVANS: The people of Western Australia are stuck with this impost through the sheer stupidity and lack of ability of that Government. I shall recapitulate why this is so and how it came about.

Sir Charles Court: You are talking about a Government before our Government, are you not?

Mr H. D. EVANS: I am going back to 1966 when there were three deputations to the then Minister for Industrial Development, who is now the Premier, to the then Minister for Agriculture, and to the then Premier. It was put to them that there was a great need for another abattoir in Western Australia. These deputations were ignored and so in order to do something an inquiry by Messrs. Towns and Austen, who were abattoir authorities from Victoria, was called for. The two main recommendations of the Towns and Austen report were that a new abattoir should be built by the forthcoming season, which there was just enough time to do, and that Midland Junction should not be expanded.

What happened? There followed an increase in the size of Midland involving a commitment of millions of dollars to make Midland a size which it is impossible to manage. No private concern would even look at an abattoir of that size. This was done directly against the advice of the pastoralists and directly against the advice of Towns and Austen, the experts the Government hired. As a consequence of that the sheer throughput required to maintain the Midland Junction Abattoir as a viable economic proposition is almost impossible to maintain throughout the year. This is a consequence of the stupidity of planning. The prices that have been

charged at Midland have become the pattern throughout the State. If one talks to abattoir owners in country areas they are delighted with the killing charges they receive from the Lamb Marketing Board and the killing charges they are able to levy for every animal that comes their way. They are making a bundle. This is purely a gift from the incompetence of the previous Government.

Mr McPharlin: You are making derogatory remarks about the management of the abattoirs.

Mr Skidmore: That would not be a sin. I have been making them for about five years.

Mr H. D. EVANS: I seem to recall having been instrumental in the appointment of the manager of Midland who is an outstanding man. He has achieved more with Midland than anybody thought possible. But even the good Lord himself could not make Midland into a paying proposition. Abattoirs just do not operate in that way. It all comes back to the stupidity of the planning by the Liberal-Country Party coalition Government when it tried really to do something for the abattoir industry at that time.

What did it do? It made a first-class mess which we are still paying for and which we will continue to pay for in the distant future. Not only did it do that but also at the time it allowed the drought to catch up with it, the Government cost the growers of this State tens of millions of dollars. That is the track record of this wonderful and business-headed Government which is known for its acumen!

When the present Minister for Agriculture terms the Midland Junction Abattoir a success it is difficult to say upon what he makes that judgment. Is it the fact that only an additional \$600 000 is to be paid out this year although it will be a considerable sum for eternity? Part of the problem is the increase in electricity and water charges. It is not only the service abattoirs which have to stand these charges but also every other abattoir in the State; and every farmer in the State will be involved in paying the increased charges.

I come back to the point that the Tonkin Government did raise abattoir fees modestly, but insignificantly in comparison with the experts opposite. To reinforce the question of the plight of farmers and how they fit into the economic situation, I would like to take a minute to refer to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics' predictions, and its index of prices received and its index of prices paid by farmers. On the index of prices received by farmers, and taking the average of three years ended June, 1963, as 100, it can be

seen that the total of all products for 1974-75—remembering the base year is the 1963 average—was 160; that is for 1974-75. In December, 1976, the figure was 188. That is the increase of price rise by farmers plus 28 on the index.

An examination of the rest of the economy during that time is rather disappointing. Prices paid went from 219 in the same base year to 284, which is an increase of 65. During that time prices paid to farmers increased by 65. Prices received by farmers averaged an increase of 28, but it is significant that when the figure for livestock, cattle in particular, is taken the figure for 1974-75 is 104, whereas for 1976 it is 100.

That is one of the explanatory reasons for the prediction that something like 7 000 beef farmers will go out of business. That is the sort of prospect we are facing under the years of the Liberal-National Country Party coalition.

How some members opposite can go back to country electorates without blushing, I will never know. I think it would probably be repetitive for me to refer in detail to increased electricity, water, and freight rate charges. Sufficient has been said about those matters tonight to make it perfectly clear what the impact will be, not just throughout the State but particularly in country areas. I leave that with a deep sigh of regret. It is on the conscience of those in Opposition to do something about the matter.

On the question of the new federalism, I touched briefly on this subject when I commenced my reply to the Premier. The Premier has been forced to increase charges to the extent he has; he has been forced to use public utilities as a taxation device purely to offset the deleterious effects of the new federalism.

MR CARR (Geraldton) [10.54 p.m.]: The Premier said earlier he was opposed to the expression of Whitlam that the user should pay. One would expect the Premier to be disinclined to pursue that policy himself.

Sir Charles Court: I did not say that at all; you did not listen.

Mr CARR: It seems this Government has been keen to implement the policy of making the user pay and, in particular, making the country user pay more than his fair share.

Sir Charles Court: This Government does not.

Mr CARR: I have joined in this debate in order to make a few comments in defence of country people. I will concentrate my remarks on the first part of the amendment which states that the Government—

- (i) reduced the standard of living of West Australians, particularly of those who have the lowest incomes and those living in the country areas of the State;

Since the last election there has been an extraordinary increase in taxes and charges, hitting directly at people who can least afford to pay them. I again refer to the country people of this State.

Country Westrail train and bus fares have been forced up by 15 per cent, making a total of 62 per cent since this Government came to office. In the meantime, while that 15 per cent increase was imposed, metropolitan train and bus fares have remained stable. Not only do the country people face higher charges by way of fares, but they have to travel in outmoded forms of transport. The trains are of a poor standard, and other services have been cut back, particularly to Albany and Bunbury. I believe members representing those areas will express their concern at a later stage. The staff on the *Prospector* service has been reduced also. Of course, the people of Geraldton have had their train service completely removed.

So much for this Government providing better services. Communication is quite a problem for country people, and the present method of communication is unacceptable to those people.

Mr H. D. Evans: Shame.

Mr CARR: Country rail freights have increased by 17½ per cent, making a total increase of 62 per cent since this Government came to office just 3½ years ago. The increase in country rail freights has had a double impact. It has increased the cost of commodities sent to country people, and it has increased the price of the goods which rural producers send to the metropolitan area.

It seems to me the primary producers are being hit at a time when they can least afford increases in charges. As everyone is aware, the return from primary products is being eroded, and that erosion has been compounded by a second year of drought in the northern area and a year of drought in the southern area.

People living in those areas cannot afford to pay increased charges; the weakest in the community are being hit. Milk prices were increased in Geraldton by 2c a carton, whereas at the same time the increase in Perth was 1c. So much for the claim of equalisation between metropolitan and country people.

I suggested at the time when the increase in the price of milk took place there should be an equalisation policy throughout the State. It may not be possible to equalise prices of all goods;

obviously there are other factors to take into account, but surely it is in the interests of the people of this State that the basic requirements of everyday living should be subject to some sort of equalisation policy so that essential items do not cost any more in the country than they do in the city.

Mr H. D. Evans: They do it with imported meat; the price is equalised.

Mr CARR: It seems to me the harshest of the increases in taxes and charges has applied to water supplies. Charges in the country were increased recently by 30 per cent on an average, whereas in the metropolitan area they were increased by only 15 per cent. The total increase in the country areas has been 92 per cent under this Government.

The true difference in costs, with regard to water charges, can be seen in a comparison of charges for excess water. It is difficult to compare directly the charges between the metropolitan area and the country areas because there is a different system of charging.

The country areas are on a maximum rate of \$25, and the consumer pays for all water used, whereas in the metropolitan area the consumer pays a rate which can be higher than that applicable in country areas—it can be between \$60 and \$100. However, for that rate the metropolitan consumer receives a quantity of free water.

Mr O'Neil: That is rubbish. The rate is set. It is rebate water, and not free water.

Mr CARR: Once the metropolitan consumer has used his allowance of water, the excess rate applies—which is now 16.44c per kilolitre. The highest price city people pay for any water they use is 16.44c a kilolitre, no matter how much excess water they use, compared with the country situation where for the first 500 kilolitres people pay 8.5c a kilolitre and for the next 500 kilolitres they pay 17c a kilolitre. So after using 500 kilolitres of water country people are already paying more per kilolitre than the excess water rate in Perth. The country rate then goes up to 34c and 47c a kilolitre. So 16.44c is the highest rate per kilolitre paid in the metropolitan area, compared with almost three times as much—47c per kilolitre—in country areas.

Sir Charles Court: Do you think the Government should increase the loss on water?

Mr CARR: The Premier has already made his speech. It was a very poor performance and I do not intend to give him another chance.

Sir Charles Court: I am asking you what level of loss we should incur on country water supplies.

Mr CARR: The Premier has had his chance.

I turn to electricity. The fixed charges and the tariff increase in the country areas as well as in the metropolitan area will cause a heavy burden on businesses and consumers in the regional centres of the State.

Sir Charles Court: Put forward a constructive proposition as to where the money is to come from when we are still going to incur a loss of \$21 million.

Mr H. D. Evans: Talk to Mr Fraser. You have friends in Canberra to work that.

Mr CARR: The charges and rates we have just looked at could perhaps be considered to be isolated.

Sir Charles Court interjected.

Mr CARR: Is it just one small item of Government policy to impose these charges on country people? No.

Mr Jamieson interjected.

Mr CARR: Let us look at the wider concept of how the Government is treating country people. Last night I mentioned the Government had failed to do anything about decentralisation.

Sir Charles Court interjected.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Premier, the member for Warren, and the Leader of the Opposition to desist from interjecting and allow the member for Geraldton to make his speech.

Mr CARR: I will repeat the point I was trying to make when that furore was breaking out. These increased taxes and charges are not just isolated events. They need to be seen in the context of the whole attitude of the Government towards country people. They need to be seen in conjunction with two factors I mentioned last night and some others.

I mentioned the failure of the Government to do anything about a growth centre policy to encourage people to live in parts of the State other than Perth. I mentioned last night the failure of the Government with regard to road funds and the manner in which the Government was taking funds which would have gone to country shire councils for local rural roads and reallocating those funds to metropolitan freeways so that the country people were losing out in that regard. I also mentioned last night that it transpired at yesterday's conference of the Country Shire Councils' Association that the 30 per cent increase in motor vehicle licence fees was not needed this year. It might be needed next year

but the Premier hit the people one year earlier so that it would be further away from the next election.

In addition, I refer to transport services in country areas and particularly the Mullewa-Meekatharra railway line. The Government seems to have decided to close the line but is not game to say so. It has made equivocating statements to try to cover up the situation. *The Geraldton Guardian* of the 28th July carried a statement by the Minister for Transport which will put the whole matter in context. The article reads—

"It is clear to me and to most people who live in the area that this railway line is well and truly in the twilight of its life," Mr Wordsworth said.

The Government is not prepared to say it will close the line and to hell with the people who live in the Murchison; but the Railways Department has already decided to move the gantry for railway containers to Wubin and is looking at alternative transport after the line is closed. The article went on to say—

"The people of the Murchison, apart from a few politically motivated ALP supporters, realise that eventual closure of the line is inevitable", Mr Wordsworth said.

I wonder whether they do. A lengthy letter written by five people from Meekatharra appeared in last Saturday's issue of *The West Australian* and I wonder whether they were all "politically motivated ALP supporters". I will read out their names to see whether any members on the back benches on the Government side recognise them. They are C. R. Atkins, W. Brown, J. Lloyd, T. McMahon, and T. Burrows. Are they all "politically motivated ALP supporters"? And did they say they regarded the closure of the line as inevitable? They said—

Sir—The Minister for Transport, Mr Wordsworth, has indicated that the people of the Murchison are resigned to the closure of the Mullewa to Meekatharra railway line (reported July 22). Nothing could be further from the truth. . .

Since the development of the Pilbara in the 1960s the line has never been under threat because of lack of freight; it is under threat purely because of the failure of Westrail to maintain it properly.

Before I leave this subject I will refer to the meeting which took place when the Premier visited Meekatharra in 1976 and promised the local people the line would remain open until at least 1979. What is Mr Wordsworth's answer to that? It is mentioned in the same letter—

When Mr Wordsworth was asked (public meeting, Meekatharra, July 15) why the Premier's promise of 1976 appeared to be forgotten, he replied that he too could promise that the railway would remain open for three years but that it was unlikely that any trains would run on it.

Is that the kind of promise the Premier makes? Is that the way he treats country people?

Mr McIver: He has only ever ridden on the railway at the zoo.

Mr Jamieson: That was when Arthur Griffith used to run it.

Mr CARR: To put these charges on country people in context I will refer again to the Rural Affairs Inquiry. In 1975 I moved in this House that a Royal Commission be established to inquire into all matters relating to goods and services, the cost of living, and the quality of living in the country areas of the State. The Government downgraded it to a consumer affairs inquiry, calling it a Rural Affairs Inquiry. Members of the committee of inquiry had a few meetings last year and on the 21st October the Minister for Consumer Affairs promised the report of the inquiry would be produced to Parliament before the end of the year so that members of all parties would have an opportunity to study it prior to the election.

We received the briefest of interim reports which carried no substantial information at all. The main report has still not come before Parliament. I am pleased the Minister for Consumer Affairs has resumed his seat. Perhaps he can indicate when, if ever, we will see the report of the Rural Affairs Inquiry.

Mr Grayden: The summary report carries all the necessary information.

Mr CARR: I am staggered that the Minister could make such a statement. Does he really suggest to the Parliament that the brief couple of pages of notes as to where the inquiry met is the total report, with no recommendations whatsoever? Is he seriously suggesting the Government has treated this matter so lightly? I knew the Government was not taking it very seriously but if the document presented last year is the final report—

Mr Grayden: You are welcome to look at the transcript of all the proceedings which took place.

Mr CARR: That shows how much concern the Government has for the people who live in the country areas of this State. That is an absolute insult to the country people, and it is disgraceful that the members representing country people

who sit on the Government back benches should be prepared to cop that, if that is what the Government is serving them.

Mr Grayden: In the meantime you can look at the complete transcript.

Mr CARR: The Minister overwhelms me with his generosity.

Mr Grayden: How many members of the Labor Party gave evidence? One only—yourself. Were there any others?

Mr CARR: Does that lessen the importance of it?

Mr Grayden: Dozens of members on this side of the House gave evidence but only one on the Opposition side.

Mr Tonkin: The Minister is bringing politics into it now.

Mr CARR: I would like to relate some of the promises that were made at the last election. I am going to read two brief extracts from the Liberal Party statement at the last election.

Mr Tonkin: You are introducing politics into the debate now!

Mr CARR: The first extract on page 42 reads—

We are applying the principle of equalisation as widely as possible in the provision of Government services, and will extend this programme.

What absolute rubbish the Government's actions are making of that promise. I wonder what the people in the Murchison think about that.

Let us have a look at another extract from page 43 of the Liberal Party policy document. It reads as follows—

It is our policy in transport to move ahead of the demand if possible, so that we can be in the position to assist rather than hinder development in the regions.

I wonder what the people in the Murchison think about that statement on the transport policy. They must be disgusted with this Government. I wonder what they think about the policy of moving ahead of demand, pulling up the railway line, or just leaving it open and not running trains on it. Black top roads in the Pilbara are in a similar category. This Government has attacked the country people in this State on a wide front—a very broad front indeed.

The Premier has somehow or other earned himself a reputation as a decentralist. I am saying he is an armchair decentralist. He is very good at sitting and talking about decentralisation without doing anything about it.

The Premier's one claim to being a great decentralist is that he developed the Pilbara; however, the Pilbara would have been developed earlier but for one thing and I take members' attention back prior to 1959 when there was a Labor Government in office in Western Australia and a Liberal Government in Canberra under Prime Minister Menzies. We had as Premier Mr A. R. G. Hawke and as Minister for Industrial Development, Mr J. T. Tonkin. We had John Tonkin touring the world seeking out markets for Western Australian iron ore, but we could not sell it. Why? The Liberal Federal Government would not grant an export licence because Robert Menzies said he did not think we had enough iron ore for our own needs.

Mr Laurance: You would have left it in the ground. That is your policy.

Mr CARR: We wanted to get it out prior to 1959.

Mr Laurance: Your policy is to leave it in the ground.

Mr CARR: I do not know whether Prime Minister Menzies was either unaware of the resources or just playing politics.

Several members interjected.

Mr CARR: I refer to that subject for one reason and that is to bring out the point that the Premier's reputation as a decentralist hangs by that one very tenuous thread; as I said, he is an armchair decentralist and it is about time, for the sake of the people in this State, that he got off his great fat armchair and did something for them.

These opinions have been expressed by me. I wonder if they are the only opinions expressed about the performance of this Government with regard to country areas, and I assure members that they are not. I am going to quote to the House a number of comments which appear in *The Geraldton Guardian* from prominent people in Geraldton. They disagree with the Premier so I guess they will be branded as radical left-wingers or communists sitting by their little hot lines to Moscow. However, let us look at these extracts and see just how the country community has reacted to these taxes and charges. In *The Geraldton Guardian* of the 29th June, 1977, the following comments appeared—

The differences between metropolitan and country charges for water, power and rail announced by the State Government have upset the Geraldton community.

The new costs have been described as "staggering, discriminatory and anti-decentralisation."

Mr Mensaros: What is the difference in power charges?

Mr CARR: The extract continues—

The newly formed Geraldton Business Association believes price rises here are inevitable because of the higher charges announced. "We will see another example of costs being handed down," said an association spokesman.

He said the Government's policy of decentralisation "certainly took a battering."

To continue—

"A properly planned price freeze must have some merit and must be looked at," the spokesman said.

Geraldton Retail Traders Association president, Mr Bert Carter said that, on the surface of the rises, the first reaction was that country people were being hit hard.

Mr Carter went on to say that the country consumer pays the freight for what is sent up to him, and he also pays the freight for goods sent to the metropolitan area. I am sure all country people would agree with that. A further example is—

Geraldton Chamber of Commerce secretary Mr Kerry Thompson questioned the Government's decentralisation policy.

"If the Government is genuine in its decentralisation policy why was not a flat rate struck for water?"

Further on Mr Thompson says—

"It seems that because we live in the bush we have to pay more than the next bloke."

Mr Mensaros: You did not answer my question. What is the difference in power charges? You said there was a difference in power charges. It is the first time in history that the same power charges have applied in both the city and the country.

Several members interjected.

Mr CARR: I cannot hear the Minister's question above the din of interjections. It is difficult enough for the *Hansard* reporters to hear me without having to contend with all these interjections.

It was not only civic leaders in the commercial field who recognised the way this Government was hitting at country people. I am sure everyone in this Chamber is well aware that the newspapers in this country are not supporters of the Labor Party—

Mr Clarko: It depends when. What about in 1972?

Mr CARR: The following extract appears in *The Geraldton Guardian* of the 27th July, 1977, in the editorial under the heading, "The price of country air". It reads—

Country dwellers are experiencing increasing difficulty in reconciling State Government policy on decentralisation with its record of higher charges and diminishing services.

From the country point of view some increases have been less than equitable.

The editorial then mentioned a number of increases, particularly increases that I have already mentioned, and it went on—

The State Government may have good and cogent budgetary reasons why it draws such a firm line around country areas, separating the treatments meted out to the two groups of population.

But those reasons are yet to be communicated in a fashion understood and acceptable to the country sector.

The editorial continues, after referring to regional administrators, as follows—

That is commendable but the administrators' function, welcome though it may be, does not ease the steadily increasing financial burden of living in the country.

Many choices in goods and services are denied to the individuals who choose to live in the country.

It seems more than a pity that they are also called upon to pay over the odds as a penalty for that choice.

Lastly I give members one further example of how country people have reacted to these charges. I refer to an extract in *The Geraldton Guardian* of the 30th June, 1977, under the heading, "Protest, urges mayor". It reads as follows—

Just another nail in the coffin of decentralisation—this is how Geraldton Mayor Lyle Harris (pictured), regards the State Government's latest higher charges for electricity, water and rail services.

He told the council meeting last night the strongest protest should be made against the increased charges.

Mr Harris urged councillors and the public to make this protest to Premier Sir Charles Court and Members of Parliament.

He said the majority of people living in the country were there because they choose to live away from the city.

Some increases in charges was inevitable.

But the scale of the latest increases for power, water and rail freights and fares was untenable.

The mayor's comments came during his announcements at the beginning of last night's council meeting.

Later Cr Reg Fox moved that the council write to Premier Court, protesting at the latest increased charges on country people.

He said the council's disappointment at these charges which were detrimental to all country residents should be stressed.

His motion was carried unanimously.

Throughout the whole episode of the Government's attack on the country people, nothing has been more infuriating to these people than the deafening silence from Government back-benchers of this Parliament. It seems to me that because the country areas provide the Government with such a large number of members in this House, country people are entitled to expect some sort of return from their representatives. We have an electoral system that gives the Government every seat it can from these country people, but do the members represent the country people? It seems not.

To my mind it is absolutely disgraceful that we should have so many people representing the country areas of this State who do so little about them and who say so little on this particular subject. It seems to me that country people do not need more members of Parliament as has been said so many times in our electoral distribution type debates, but rather they need members of Parliament who will come to this House and stand up to say that the country people will not accept any more of what this anti-decentralisation Government is handing out.

Mr Bertram: They would be kicked out of the Ministry.

Mr CARR: I would have expected something from one half of the members of the Country Party. I would expect very little from the other half of its members because I know they are totally involved with the Liberal Party. However, I would have thought that the member for Stirling, the member for Merredin, and the member for Mt. Marshall would have been jumping up and down and having a strong say on this issue on behalf of the country people.

Mr Stephens: We act—not talk.

Mr CARR: I hope that the member for Mt. Marshall will rise to his feet to say a few things on behalf of the country people. To enable him to do that I will close by saying the country people

are not prepared to accept the treatment they have been handed by this anti-decentralisation Government and I for one will do all I can to help the country people say all they can against this anti-decentralisation Government.

MR SKIDMORE (Swan) [11.22 p.m.]: I wish to join the debate on the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, and in particular the paragraph referring to the reduced standard of living of Western Australians and particularly of those who have the lowest income.

I am not unmindful of the fact that the member for Warren touched on the question of abattoirs and he referred to the Midland Junction Abattoir. I make no secret of the fact that over the three years I have been here I have criticised the board of management of that abattoir for its incompetence. The board of management has allowed itself to be dictated to by the Government, whether consciously or unconsciously I do not know. I say simply that the board has allowed itself to be lulled into a sense of false security in the belief that if one puts one's head into the sand like an ostrich, someone else will not kick one in the backside just because one is not looking. However, it seems to me that many people have been looking at the backside of the board of management with its head in the sand and that backside will be kicked very hard when it is realised how the board has fallen short in looking after its workers.

Recently over 170 employees of the Midland Junction Abattoir were dismissed. As the member for Geraldton so eloquently stated, one would have expected Country Party members to rise to their feet to say, "What is going on? Why are we in difficulties? Why is not the Midland Junction Abattoir becoming a progressive abattoir? Why is it not sustaining the work force?" The answer to these queries is that the abattoir is inefficient.

A letter appeared in the Press on the 8th November, 1971, and it set out the fundamental basic requirements of any Government-run instrumentality in order that the instrumentality could operate in the best interests of the primary producer. Mr Nalder was the Minister for Agriculture at the time and the letter states—

About four years ago, at a meeting in Pastoral House, attended by representatives of organisations concerned with the production, selling and slaughtering of livestock, a decision was reached that there was an urgent need to plan for increased killing facilities to prevent an over-supply situation developing in the future.

The strongest pressure was then applied to

Mr Nalder then the Minister responsible to provide funds to build another abattoir.

It soon became apparent that Mr Nalder was not prepared to take any action and when an approach to Mr Court, in his capacity as Minister for Industrial Development, produced no results—

That is not surprising—he has not produced any results since he became the Premier. To continue—

—the Premier, Sir David Brand, was approached by correspondence and deputation.

Again there was no result. Eventually a “committee of experts” was appointed to investigate and advise.

The result—a complete endorsement of what had been placed before the Ministers some two years before, including the advice that a new abattoir was required, not an extension of Midland.

What happened at the Midland Junction Abattoir was a disaster. The board decided to go ahead and extend one section of the abattoir to the detriment of the other. It said, “We can increase the import through the front door, but we will not worry about getting rid of the effluent and the by-products out the back door.”

The board did not worry about the freezer or chiller capacity and whether or not these facilities could handle the increased amount of the kill. The result was complete inefficiency. The employees worked in cramped conditions and were unable to compete on an equitable basis with other abattoirs, and so the abattoir was doomed.

There is no question but that the inefficiency of the abattoir was the reason behind its failure to absorb the work force, and that is exactly what the Opposition is saying. We are saying that the Government of the day failed to realise there was a problem, and it failed to realise the situation in regard to outmoded machinery. I imagine that some of the compressors still operating at the Midland Junction Abattoir have been there for 30 years. They are completely outdated. The board knows nothing about modern concepts of refrigeration and it is still struggling along in the faint hope it will achieve its required objective without an adequate chilling or freezing plant.

The plant is totally inadequate, and yet the Premier has accused the work force of being nonproductive, of failing to produce the goods required to lift this country out of its economic disaster. How much is the Premier asking the work force to absorb? How much blame is he

laying on the work force? Does he want the work force to accept all the responsibility for the failure of the Government to understand that other matters affect the economy of this country as well as the work force?

We know we are told always that it is the work force, the trade union movement, the fellow on the end of the shovel, the fellow who fixes the fuse or who runs the refrigeration plant, who are responsible for the whole damn trouble in this country. It is these people who are responsible for our economic disaster. We are expected to believe that our troubles have nothing to do with increased charges. I imagine that abattoirs, like other instrumentalities, have to meet these increasing charges which are galloping way ahead of inflation. Some of these charges have risen not by 10 or 15 per cent but by up to 130 per cent. It is not difficult to see why the abattoir is in trouble and it is not difficult to see why we have a recession at Midland when we bear in mind the escalation in all charges.

The other great tragedy at the Midland Junction Abattoir was the installation of the plant which was supposed to take care of the effluent. It is a tragedy that it took nearly \$500 000 of the taxpayers' money to make good a mistake of management when the abattoir was allowed to increase its kill without considering the treatment of its offal and effluent. Even today I am not convinced that the abattoir has overcome its problems in respect of that matter.

We have been very fortunate, and I say this with due humility, that because of drought conditions in country areas the kill has not been going through, but it should be remembered that in times of stress in the country the abattoir has not been able to handle the load when many farmers have brought their stock to be slaughtered. Had the Government of the day been prepared to consider the matter in a fair-minded way it would have acted on the advice tendered to it. I understand a committee was set up and a report submitted which recommended that the logical thing was to provide a new abattoir.

I have heard the Premier saying time and time again that the cause of our trouble is the workers who keep saying they want more money, and when they get more money prices are increased. That is a bit of a laugh, because when it has been said that workers will receive a 2.5 per cent increase following an increase in the Consumer Price Index, they end up receiving only 1.8 per cent. In those circumstances one would expect that in the next quarter there would be an 0.7 per cent decrease in the cost of living.

I would hazard a guess that if we considered the escalation of the cost to consumers of the CPI, it would increase by more, notwithstanding the 0.7 per cent taken away from workers.

The argument is always that workers should increase their productivity. Has anybody ever bothered to consider the productivity of management in an endeavour to ascertain what encouragement could be given to management to increase its capacity to produce the goods required by the community?

Has anybody ever bothered to say to the employer of labour, "Look, we are on a beautiful boat ride to Heaven; there is no end to the number of dollars we can find at the end of the rainbow provided you increase productivity"? Has anyone ever told employers they can get money to improve their plant so that it may be better utilised by the work force? Have manufacturers been told that they will be given taxation relief?

This Government does not do that. It pays lip service to the matter because it glibly says it will do things but does nothing. It offers no incentive to employers to improve the productivity of their workers.

It allows workers to continue to work with outdated, outmoded, and inefficient machinery, yet it is always the worker who is at fault for not increasing productivity. He is expected to produce the level of productivity from a worn-out, outmoded, or inefficient piece of machinery which could reasonably have been expected from that piece of machinery five years ago when it was in good condition.

The Premier is prepared to say the situation is the fault of the work force. I do not subscribe to that at all.

Let us consider wage indexation. When the workers of this country accepted wage indexation on the recommendation of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, it was a package deal to the effect that if the cost of living increased by 3 per cent the workers would be entitled to receive an increase of 3 per cent. At no time since wage indexation was brought in have the workers ever received 3 per cent. At no time have they received the total cost-of-living increase. Yet the Premier and members opposite slate workers and say they did not accept wage indexation. They did accept it, but their entitlement was whittled away.

I do not intend to make suggestions tonight, although I could stand here and give suggestions in respect of the Consumer Price Index since the introduction of wage indexation. However, I would say it is within my knowledge that in respect of the low-income worker, the middle-

income worker, and the high-income worker, the amount of loss to workers has ranged between \$5 and \$25 a week.

Mr O'Neil: I am enjoying this, but I think it is a little away from the amendment before the Chair.

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister has challenged me, and I am pleased he has raised the matter because it shows his inability to accept the argument I am putting forward. I understand that we are discussing the ability of the low-income worker to survive, and I think that includes his wage packet. I am sure he does not earn interest from shares held in BHP or Mt. Newman, nor has he his own business on the side; so he cannot afford luxuries that the Minister can afford.

The SPEAKER: I take the point.

Mr SKIDMORE: Thank you, Sir; I hope the Minister takes the point, too. What is involved in this issue is the argument put forward by the Premier, and that argument is as weak as the proverbial—I will not use the appropriate term in this place. It is inherent in the thinking of the Deputy Premier that the matter of wages is not involved with the matter of workers or their ability to compete in the economic jungle in this country.

Mr O'Neil: I am sorry I added 15 minutes to your speech.

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister did not; I do not need him or anybody else to extend my speech to 45 minutes.

Mr O'Neil: We know that well.

Mr SKIDMORE: Probably I talk rubbish in the opinion of the Minister, and I think he talks rubbish. The totality of the situation is that the people will judge us in the end. He may sit there and categorise workers as being no concern of his—and that is exactly what he said.

Mr O'Neil: You could have fooled me.

Mr SKIDMORE: *Hansard* will record what the Minister said, and I understood him to mean that he is not concerned with the workers, because he asked what this has to do with the amendment. In other words, he implied the welfare of the worker has nothing to do with the debate.

Mr O'Neil: I simply said your speech was very interesting but I could not see the relevance to the amendment before the Chair.

Mr Jamieson: Don't interrupt a good speech.

Mr O'Neil: I am helping him.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Swan.

Mr SKIDMORE: Thank you, Sir. The principle of wage indexation was accepted by the

workers, and one would imagine that when a worker accepts an agreement it still takes two to make a deal. That is the name of the game.

The workers said, "We will accept it as long as there is total wage indexation." But the first people to welsh on the deal were the Commonwealth and State Governments. They went into the local Industrial Commissions in an effort to deny the worker full indexation. They were prepared to see the worker take a \$6 a week cut over a three-month period and not compensate him for that loss on the grounds that it would increase costs for the next three months.

But that argument does not hold water when one considers what happened during a 15-month period in the 1950s. At that time, the basic wage was frozen and, over 15 months, the cost of living increased by about 7 per cent. Why should it be any different in the late 1970s? Is there any great difference between the capabilities of the workers then and those of today?

This Government time and time again fails to realise that it is cheating and being dishonest by adopting these practices. It is deliberately misleading the people of Western Australia and, indeed, itself. It is attempting to foist all the blame for increasing prices onto the working people in our community which probably includes almost every worker in Western Australia. That may exclude politicians, because I noted a recent comment in a newspaper that politicians have a hibernation period. I certainly do not hibernate.

Mr Jamieson: If you were to hibernate, this is the right time to do it.

Mr SKIDMORE: If my leader is suggesting that at 18 minutes to midnight on this illustrious day I am taking too much time, I express my regrets.

Mr Jamieson: I am not saying that at all; I am simply getting the terminology correct. Hibernation occurs in the winter.

Mr SKIDMORE: I take the point of the Leader of the Opposition; it reminds me of a remark about brown bears made at one time by the Minister for Labour and Industry. However, I will not proceed with that because I am sure it is well known by members on his side.

Mr O'Connor: You might find difficulty in relating the matter of brown bears to the amendment before the Chair.

Mr SKIDMORE: That is the second time I have been accused of not making my remarks relevant to the amendment.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for

Swan to ignore the interjections and to proceed with his speech.

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not mind the interjections, Mr Speaker. It is delightful to see Ministers putting both feet in. I hope one day they will not be able to take them out again, and then they will be in trouble. The Minister for Works thinks that because he has suddenly read the Standing Orders he is an expert on the subject. He appears to have access to a copy of *Hansard* which has not yet been issued. Since I have been speaking, he has been conspicuous by his absence. I advise the Minister to be sure of his ground before challenging me on economic questions.

The Premier recently visited Japan in order, I understand, to instil business and Government leaders in that country with confidence in Western Australian products. Before the Premier went to Japan, he claimed to have many projects in the pipeline, that extendable pipeline of his! If it were ever decided to bring water from the Ord River to the metropolitan area, I am sure the Premier's pipeline would do the job because it keeps getting longer and longer. Unfortunately, nothing ever comes out the end of it.

Let us examine what Japanese economists are saying about their own economy. Let us see whether they can afford to buy additional imports from Australia. It is suggested by the Premier that Japan is a great rapacious nation just waiting to buy everything we produce and it is only the withholding of labour by trade unions and falling productivity which is causing them any concern. The newspaper article which refers to this matter states—

The Japanese public generally places more trust in the Government's economic forecasts than in those of banks, 'think tanks' and other private organisations.

That article does not mention Premiers from the State of Western Australia. However, I well recall Federal Ministers speaking in derogatory terms about State Premiers travelling overseas to seek markets which were rightfully the responsibility of the Federal Government to pursue. The article goes on to refer to the financial problems in Japan. Japan, like all nations in the western world, faces unemployment and galloping inflation. It simply is not on for the Premier, after a visit to Japan, to say that Japan can afford to buy all we can produce, and that it is simply the unsettled industrial scene here which is causing that country concern.

I should like to return to that point later, when I ask the Minister for Labour and Industry about

the projects he has in the pipeline to overcome unemployment in this State. The article continued—

In contrast, the Government foresees a slowdown in exports, a 6 per cent increase for financial year 1977 in comparison with the 1.3 per cent jump recorded in financial year 1976.

So, Japan is going to have a slowdown in its exports. I notice the Minister for Mines smiling away in his place.

Mr Mensaros: You said that exports would increase by 6 per cent in 1977, compared with a 1.3 per cent increase in 1976, and referred to it as a slowdown. It is laughable. Read it again, and think about it.

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister is such an economic wizard that he can solve all the economic problems of the State in five minutes by laughing in his seat. The Minister should make the effort to get up from his backside and do something about these problems.

If a country decreases its exports by 6 per cent obviously there would be less funds available to purchase imports. One does not need to be a financial wizard to work that out. The article continues—

The underlying belief is that world economy and trade will continue to stagnate for some time.

In this connection, the 24-nation OECD predicted in December that the average economic growth of its member nations would slide 1.25 per cent this year from the 5 per cent high in 1976.

What they are saying is that there will be a decline of 5 per cent in 1977. Has that occurred? Of course it has. In fact it is running at slightly more than 5 per cent. We have only to look at Japan's refusal to buy additional Australian beef to understand the hard bargaining which is taking place in Japan. For the Premier to say he has the panacea for all our economic ills is laughable. He raises the old bogey of the trade unions and claims the workers are not producing the goods. However, his claim that productivity has decreased is a myth.

The work force out there in 1977 is little different from the work force which was out there in 1927 and which was faced with a similar disastrous situation involving the direction in which we were going, the falling value of wages, and the inability of people to survive on the wage packet. In addition, in the 1930s if one wanted to live one could have a fortnight on and six weeks

off and then one moved out of the tent and went and lived in a paddock. The member for Mt. Marshall will recall the tents along the railway lines during the depression years and the fact that a worker had to get out of the tent to make room for another guy and had to wait six weeks to get back in if he were lucky. We are faced with a parallel situation today. Fortunately our country has progressed a little in its methods of looking after people. It is better able to ride the present economic disaster, which is international. But that situation has not been brought about by the efforts of this Premier because he seems to accept the fact that we have so many people unemployed and there is nothing to worry about.

I led a deputation to the Minister for Labour and Industry of 25 electricians who were unemployed. They were top-class electricians and they sought jobs. I do not wish to denigrate other people who are out of work; I simply say that they were the type of worker who had an expertise to offer in their particular trade. We said to the Minister, "We are not here to bitch about the fact that we are unemployed, although that is bad enough, because we understand that the CBH job had to come to an end."

Mr Coyne: Were you the spokesman?

Mr SKIDMORE: Strange though it may seem to the member for Murchison-Eyre, I was not. If the honourable member asks the Minister he will tell him. I went along because I am a humane person and because I was interested in the fact that they were unemployed and were seeking jobs. We had been assured by the Press that if we approached the Minister for Labour and Industry he would listen to us, would give us some hope, and would endeavour to find employment.

What were the results when we got there? The Minister said to us, "Look, if you people can come to us with a code of ethics which will ensure that there will be no industrial disputation now and forever, we will proceed with many projects that will employ many people".

Mr Coyne: That is where you got your early training.

Mr SKIDMORE: I did not know that I needed any.

Mr Coyne: I think you might.

Mr SKIDMORE: At times one should ignore interjections because they are absolutely stupid. I try to be fair to people and try to listen to them, but the member for Murchison-Eyre believes that if he can put himself in the Simpson Desert and talk to himself it is just like talking to the House.

The Minister concerned said to those assembled

that day that many jobs and projects were in the pipeline but were being withheld and would not go ahead because the trade union movement would not agree to a code of ethics. When I asked the Minister today which projects are being held up because of the supposed failure of the TLC to agree to a code of ethics with the Government, the answer was, "The law court building". That is one building, one project, that is going to absorb 100 000 men!

Honourable members might say to me, "What has that to do with the amendment?" We say it has a lot to do with it because 100 000 men employed would be 100 000 off the dole who would have much more money to put back into the economy of Western Australia, which must in turn produce the goods needed to feed them and to provide for their wants.

When I asked whether the funds were available the answer was, "Yes". I understand they have been provided by the Commonwealth Government, not by this State Government. If I am wrong I hope the Minister will tell me so. The State Government at this stage has not provided one damn thing for the workers of this State.

Mr Grayden: It is a \$20 million project.

Mr SKIDMORE: But the State has not provided any of the finance.

Mr O'Connor: Who told you that?

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not know, but can the Minister tell me different?

Sir Charles Court: It is part of our works programme.

Mr SKIDMORE: If I am wrong I will be happy to say that the State is providing the whole of the \$20 million.

Mr H. D. Evans: What other projects?

Mr SKIDMORE: That is right. How many will it employ? I have been told that it is anticipated that employment on the site will progressively involve 200 tradesmen. If ever there was a damn lie it is in that statement. At no stage would there be 200 tradesmen employed on a \$20 million site at any given time. There may be a totality of 200 tradesmen employed over the period of the whole project. In essence it is a lie to try to fool us that there will be 200 tradesmen employed by the time the contract is under way. During the first three months of that project I imagine there would not be a tradesman employed on the site other than half a dozen electricians who would be tubing the concrete foundations.

Mr Grayden interjected.

Mr SKIDMORE: I have decided upon a new philosophy this session. Because I am not getting

any sense out of the Minister for Labour and Industry I am going to ignore his interjections because they are useless. I am a reasonable man, I am prepared to listen to the argument, and I am prepared to be guided by people who are sensible, but when the Minister comes up with a reply that is obviously false concerning the number of tradesmen to be involved, which has got to do with the welfare of workers in this State—

Mr O'Connor: I think the people who gave the information would know a lot more than you do.

Mr SKIDMORE: Does the Minister think so?

Mr O'Connor: I am sure they would.

Mr SKIDMORE: Does the Minister believe that the 20 years I have served on high-rise buildings in Western Australia would not give me any knowledge—

Mr O'Connor: I did not say you would not have any knowledge.

Mr SKIDMORE: Is the Minister saying that I have not contacted the Building Workers Industrial Union to ascertain how many workers would be employed on a project of that magnitude? The Minister is saying that all the Wizards of Oz are in the Department of Labour and Industry and that the worker who puts his hands to the tools and has experience of the services concerned, does not know how many people will be employed. What a lot of garbage!

Mr O'Connor: You do not even know which department you got the information from.

Mr SKIDMORE: I would not want to know because it is patently lies.

Point of Order

Mr O'CONNOR: I ask for a withdrawal. That information was given by me to the House and I request a withdrawal.

Mr Jamieson: Now he knows who gave it.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Member for Swan to withdraw.

Mr SKIDMORE: I withdraw very reluctantly because the House will recall that what I said was that the information given was patently lies.

The SPEAKER: The member for Swan has withdrawn. I ask him to drop the matter at that point and continue his speech.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr SKIDMORE: Having touched on a rather raw nerve of people who are conscious of their responsibilities I would then say that the answers given to me have been substantiated by the Minister for Works because at that time the Minister for Labour and Industry was unable to

make any contribution to the 25 electricians seeking work. The only thing he was concerned with was the code of ethics. I had a look at this code of ethics.

Mr Grayden: You did not even bother to ring me. You just produced 25 electricians. I spent 2½ hours with them.

Mr SKIDMORE: Bully for the Minister! These workers have been out of work for 2½ months and the Minister could not afford to give them 2½ hours! If we had prepared the Minister and told him we would be bringing 25 unemployed people, the answer would have been precisely the same.

Mr Grayden: I would have welcomed it.

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister welcomed this with open arms. He said that it was terrific because at long last people were telling him their problems. They said they did not want promises, but work. He told them that if they could get their union to produce a code of ethics the men would be given work because the Government would go ahead with projects—in the plural, not the singular. When I asked what projects were involved, the Minister told me that one was involved.

Mr Grayden: You did not ask me, but the Minister for Works.

Mr SKIDMORE: When I asked the Minister for Labour and Industry what projects were involved, the answer was given by the Minister for Works, and the answer was one project. That is what the Minister for Labour and Industry was referring to. So much for the Government's efforts to ensure that the work force—the people on low wages—are looked after in this State.

It is about time the people in this State realised the true situation; that is, that the work force is being held to ransom because of the economic ills of this country.

Let us consider the situation of our engineering firms, and even our own instrumentalities such as Westrail. Let members have a look at the antiquated equipment with which the employees are working while at the same time trying to make the instrumentality pay. Yet, all the time the people are saying that the productivity capacity of the workers is falling. Those workers are using machines which should have been written off 20 to 30 years ago because they are worn out. There are lathes there which no-one can use. I am not sure of my Biblical history, but I am sure the machines are so old that if the Ark had sailing masts these machines would have turned them. In this situation it is hardly fair to blame the workers.

The same situation applies in any industry. I know of a cartage contractor who has trucks which are six and seven years old. They are being worked flat-out, but the contractor is unable to replace them because of the cost involved. The workers use the trucks knowing full well that they will break down and knowing full well their capacity to discharge certain tonnages of sand by the end of the day, but they are never sure their trucks will last the day. They work the guts out of the trucks and themselves because the employer cannot replace the equipment. The Government gives no incentive for him to do so. Nevertheless the worker gets the blame because of a lack of productivity.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr SKIDMORE: The amendment seeks merely to indicate that we are concerned that there has been only lip service on the question of inflation in this country and that over the months the Premier has mouthed words in this place in regard to his efforts to create jobs for 100 000 people. The only information I could ascertain was in regard to 300 people who will be employed for three years. I assume there will be 100 more jobs created a year for the next three years in these great projects which are supposed to provide 100 000 jobs. We were promised that in 18 months there would be 100 000 jobs.

Mr Grayden: I will give you a list if you ask me.

Mr SKIDMORE: That is strange because I addressed my question to the Minister for Labour and Industry. I have a copy of the question I submitted, but the question was answered by the Minister for Works, yet the Minister for Labour and Industry has just said that if I refer the question to him he will tell me the projects in the pipeline. Who is kidding whom? He is being dishonest.

Mr Grayden: You ask the question again and rephrase it and you will get the answer.

Mr SKIDMORE: I have in my hand question No. 43. The paper reads—

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Notice of Question for Wednesday, 3rd August, 1977.

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

When the answer was called for the Minister for Works said he would answer the question because it came within his ministerial jurisdiction. Yet now the Minister for Labour and Industry tells me that if I had asked him the question he would

have told me the answer. The Minister is a person who trifles with the truth.

Point of Order

Mr GRAYDEN: On a point of order, I ask that that statement be withdrawn.

The SPEAKER: The member for Swan will resume his seat. The Minister has taken exception to the words used by the member for Swan and I ask him to withdraw them.

Mr SKIDMORE: I withdraw them with a great degree of thought.

Mr Grayden: Don't qualify it.

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not intend to.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Swan has only a couple of minutes remaining. Will he please address his remarks to the Chair and ignore the interjections?

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr SKIDMORE: What you say is quite true, Mr Speaker. One should ignore interjections.

In the couple of minutes available to me I want to say that I asked the Minister about the jobs available in this State, and yet he has just told me that if I asked him he would have told me.

Mr Grayden: You asked what jobs were being held up and you got the answer. If you want to know the jobs available, ask me.

Mr SKIDMORE: Although I appreciate the assistance given me, I feel sure I do not need it. However, I am a reasonable man and I am prepared to listen.

I conclude by saying that the duplicity of the Government is evident. The Opposition has endeavoured to sheet home the responsibility where it belongs. The Government has refused to accept the fact that people are suffering because they are endeavouring to exist on dole money. I am well aware of the situation because my office was within about 20-odd feet of the office of the employment service in Midland. Streams of people visited the employment office and then came to me complaining about their inability to obtain work. Yet this Government has done nothing. It has indicated to me that the projects it has planned and for which it has finance available will mean that only 200 more people will be employed. I merely say that this will not help all the others for whom the Government cannot find employment.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member's time has expired.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—18

Mr Barnett	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Bertram	Mr McIver
Mr Bryce	Mr Pearce
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr J. Tonkin
Mr Grill	Dr Troy
Mr Hodge	Mr Wilson
Mr Jamieson	Mr Bateman

(Teller)

Noes—28

Mr Blaikie	Mr McPharlin
Mr Clarko	Mr Mensaros
Sir Charles Court	Mr Nanovich
Mr Cowan	Mr O'Connor
Mr Coyne	Mr O'Neil
Mr Crane	Mr Rushton
Dr Dadour	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grayden	Mr Spriggs
Mr Grewar	Mr Stephens
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Watt
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Williams
Mr Laurance	Mr Young
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Shalders

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr T. D. Evans	Mrs Craig
Mr Davies	Mr Old
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr Ridge
Mr Harman	Mr Sibson

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate Resumed

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr McPharlin.

House adjourned at 12.14 a.m. (Thursday)

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

32. *This question was postponed.*

TRANSPORT

Southern Western Australian Transport Study

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

(1) Would the Minister advise—

- (a) At what stage the Southern Western Australian Transport Study has reached; and
- (b) when is it anticipated that the study will be completed?

- (2) (a) To what degree has the Federal Government contributed to the study with finance so far; and
- (b) will further funds be made available from this source?

- (3) Have the figures, supplied to me by the former Minister on Tuesday, 3rd August, 1976, varied, having regard for present inflationary trends?

- (4) If so, would the Minister supply the amended figures?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) The study team has completed the model runs of three of the five policies which were extensively discussed with interested parties in the second interaction phase. It expects to complete another one about the end of August. The model run of a fifth policy will follow immediately.
- (b) I expect to have the report of the co-directors early in November.
- (2) (a) The total cost of the study to 30th June, 1977 was \$435 976 to which the Commonwealth contributed \$270 325.
- (b) As far as we know at the moment, yes, on a two-thirds basis during fiscal 77-78.
- (3) Yes. They have also varied because the study will take six months longer to complete than expected.
- (4) The total cost of the study is now estimated to be about \$627 976, of which the Commonwealth contribution is expected to be \$398 325. This figure has been compiled on the same basis as the figure in the answer given on 3rd August, 1976.

TRANSPORT

Reports

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

- (1) Would the Minister advise how many reports have been prepared on transport in Western Australia, including the Wayne report and the present Southern Western Australian Transport Study?
- (2) What total cost was involved in the preparation of each individual report?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The answer desired by the member will take some time to prepare. I will supply the information as soon as possible.

ROAD TRANSPORT

Perishable Goods

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

- (1) Would the Minister advise if consideration is being given to allow road transport to carry perishable goods which are now carried by Westrail's refrigerated vans to country centres?

- (2) If "Yes" why?

- (3) Would the Minister advise the total tonnes of wool and chaff carried by Westrail ex York and Northam from 1974 to 30th June 1977 inclusive?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A working party of Transport Commission and Westrail officers is currently preparing a report on the movement of perishable commodities to country centres to ascertain whether or not the present methods are the most efficient and economic.
- (3) Total tonnage of wool forwarded was—

	Northam	York
1974-75	748	1 308
1975-76	745	958
1976-77	700	789

Statistics concerning chaff are not segregated by Westrail and this information will take some little time to obtain. I will forward it to the member when available.

OFFICES OF PREMIER AND DEPUTY PREMIER

Renovating and Refurbishing

36. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Works:
- What was the total cost involved in renovating and refurbishing the Premier's and Deputy Premier's offices, as stated in *The West Australian* of 25th April, 1977?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

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

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

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

COMMUNITY RECREATION

York Shire

37. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Recreation:
When will the \$70 000 allocated to the York Shire Council for community recreation purposes be forthcoming?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Providing the conditions of the grant are observed, grant monies will be made available as progress payments within 28 days of the receipt, in the office of the Community Recreation Council, of an architect/consultant's certificate indicating the value of the work satisfactorily completed on the project.

RAILWAYS

"N"-Class Locomotives

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

Further to my question of Wednesday, 4th August, 1976, re "N"-class diesel locomotives, would the Minister advise what has caused the apparent delay, as the locomotives were to have gone into service between December 1976 and July 1977?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Work on the contract has been further delayed due to difficulties experienced by the contractor with union unrest.

The first locomotive is expected to undergo acceptance trials within the next two weeks, with progressive delivery of the other 10 locomotives over the ensuing six months.

RAILWAYS

Parcels Office

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

- (1) Is the Government considering discontinuing the parcels office at Roe Street, Perth?
- (2) If "Yes" what provision will be available for Perth business firms to despatch parcels by rail?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The planned development of the city station area will necessitate removal of the Roe Street parcels depot and the Commissioner of Railways has made certain recommendations to the Minister for Transport in this regard.

The matter is still under examination and the requirements of business firms will be fully considered when a decision regarding facilities is made.

RAILWAYS

Divers

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

- (1) Does Westrail still employ divers?
- (2) If "No" when were their services terminated?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The need to employ divers ceased on 28th June, 1971, when the only diver was transferred to another position within Westrail. Diving work, where necessary, is now performed for Westrail by the Fremantle Port Authority.

41. *This question was withdrawn.*

WOOL

Rail Freight

42. Mr GREWAR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Could the Minister advise if the buyer or Westrail bears the freight cost in wool sold in Albany but railed to Fremantle for shipment?
- (2) How much wool was involved in the last financial year?
- (3) What percentage of wool sold in Albany does this represent?
- (4) What is the railage cost per bale?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Westrail does not bear the freight costs. The customer is billed by Westrail in accordance with the contract of carriage.
This may or may not be the buyer. Depending on circumstances, it could be the owner or the shipping company.
- (2) Westrail records do not disclose what tonnages of wool are forwarded from Albany to Fremantle for shipment, but the total wool railed from Albany to the Fremantle/Robb Jetty area in 1976-77 was 33 792 tonnes.
- (3) Westrail does not possess this information.

- (4) The gazetted rate for wool freighted Albany to Fremantle is \$5.30 per bale. Special contract rates exist for dumped wool. As with all contract rates, these are confidential.

GOVERNMENT PROJECTS

Delays

43. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:
- (1) What projects are being held up because of the supposed failure of the TLC to enter into a code of ethics with the Government?
 - (2) (a) Are funds available for all of the projects mentioned above;
(b) if so, what is the cost of each of the projects?
 - (3) How many workers are anticipated to be employed on the aforementioned projects?
 - (4) Are any other projects being planned that will alleviate the present unemployment position?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

I have the answer to this question; as I think it should have been directed to me.

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Works.

Mr O'CONNOR: The answer is as follows:

- (1) The Law Court Building.
- (2) (a) Yes.
(b) In the order of \$20 million.
- (3) It is anticipated that employment on site will progressively rise to approximately 200 tradesmen. In addition, the requirement of materials and components for the building will create employment in factories and plants within the State.
- (4) The capital works programme is being framed at present with due regard to the unemployment problem.

SHEARERS' AWARD

Registration of Employers

44. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:
- (1) Further to his letter sent to me on 6th July, 1977, is he now able to give an assurance that the request that the registration of employers under the AWU shearers' award is to be implemented?
 - (2) If not, why not?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) The matter is still being considered and no decision has yet been made.

DRAINAGE

Blackadder Creek Scheme

45. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) (a) Are funds still available for the purpose of upgrading the Blackadder Creek drainage scheme in the Midland area;
(b) If so, what are the funds available?
- (2) Have the shires involved settled their differences of opinion with the authorities involved in undertaking the work involved?
- (3) If the shires have not settled their differences, could he take steps to undertake the work and thus alleviate the drainage conditions that exist in the Swan View/Midvale areas?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) The capital Works programme of the Water Board is not approved as yet.
- (2) Blackadder and Woodbridge Creeks have been constituted as metropolitan main drains.
- (3) The Water Board has made tentative provision for improvements to the Swan View section of the system and it is currently investigating the Midvale area.

VANDALISM

Police Patrols

46. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Police:

In view of the possibly ever increasing vandalism taking place in the community today, could he give an assurance that adequate police patrols will be provided for the shires of Swan, Mundaring, and Kalamunda and the Town of Bassendean, with a view to the apprehension of the culprits involved?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

Police patrols and attention to all matters of complaint are performed according to the availability of staff.

An additional patrol of the Lockridge-Bassendean area was instituted on 1st March, 1976, to counter such offences as vandalism, and this patrol will be maintained.

The district officer at Midland, who is

responsible for policing of the Shires of Swan, Mundaring and Kalamunda and the Town of Bassendean, deploys uniformed and plain clothes patrols and inquiry staff throughout his district according to requirements, which include reports of vandalism.

Additional allocations of personnel to any district are based on established workload priorities.

VANDALISM

Recompense to Shires

47. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Local Government:

In view of the possibly ever increasing vandalism to public property coming under the jurisdiction of local shires, would he advise as to what relief could be extended to recompense the shires for losses sustained because of this vandalism?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

I believe that shires and other municipal councils would fully understand that they carry the responsibility for maintaining their own property.

Local government gives full attention to the prevention of vandalism with appropriate assistance from the Police Department and other State Government agencies.

BRIDGES

Swan River: Guildford

48. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) (a) Is it intended to construct another bridge adjacent to the existing road traffic bridge at Guildford over the Swan River to provide four lanes of traffic over the river;
- (b) have plans been prepared for the development of such bridge; and
- (c) if so, what is the estimated cost?
- (2) If it is intended to construct the bridge as mentioned (1) (a), when will the work commence and when is it anticipated that the work will be finalised?
- (3) Are there any firm proposals in hand to divert the existing Guildford Road along Brook Street, crossing the Swan River to the south of the existing traffic-bridge?

- (4) Have any of the local authorities involved in the question of the possible provision of such bridges advised the department of their approval or rejection of the schemes suggested?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) Yes, subject to local authority approval.
- (b) Preliminary plans have been prepared.
- (c) \$800 000 at today's cost excluding approach works.
- (2) No timetable has been set.
- (3) No.
- (4) No.

COUNTRY ROAD TRANSPORT SERVICES

Permits

49. Mr CRANE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Why have Country Road Transport Services, who were issued a monthly permit/temporary licence from 25th June, 1977, to 24th July, 1977, been told on re-applying they can only be granted a weekly licence?
- (2) Is the Minister aware of the possible inconvenience and additional cost in time and money this causes the company?
- (3) Is it Government policy to contain costs and assist businesses to do likewise?
- (4) In the interest of reducing costs to both Government and businesses, would the Minister instruct the Transport Commission to revert to monthly permits?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The operator trading as Country Road Transport Services had been issued with a monthly temporary licence from 25th June, 1977 to 24th July, 1977. Unfortunately, due to a clerical error on re-applying, he was advised that only weekly temporary licences would be granted. This error has been corrected and in future, licences will be issued on a monthly basis.
- (2) to (4) Answered by (1).

HOUSING

Rental and Purchase Accommodation

50. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) (a) What was the number of housing units completed by the State Housing Commission for each year from the beginning of the Commission's operations until 1976-77; and
(b) what is the number of units projected for 1977-78?
- (2) What were the numbers of—
(a) two and three bedroom apartments;
(b) duplexes; and
(c) town houses,
built for rental accommodation by the State Housing Commission in each of the years 1969-70 to 1975-76?
- (3) What were the numbers of three and four bedroom houses built for rental accommodation by the State Housing Commission in each of the years 1969-70 to 1975-76?
- (4) What have been the number of applicants listed for priority assistance on an emergent basis by the State Housing Commission for each of the years 1973-74 to 1976-77?
- (5) What is the number of applicants currently listed—
(a) for priority assistance on an emergent basis;
(b) on a needs basis;
(c) on a wait-turn basis by the State Housing Commission for—
(i) two bedroom apartment accommodation;
(ii) three bedroom apartment accommodation;
(iii) two bedroom duplex accommodation;
(iv) three bedroom townhouse accommodation;
(v) three bedroom duplex accommodation;
(vi) three bedroom houses;
(vii) four bedroom houses?
- (6) If the State Housing Commission construction figures are the lowest since 1946-47, what effect is this reduction having on the current waiting list for purchase homes?
- (7) (a) Is the Government considering across the board increases in rents for State Housing Commission tenants in the order of 30 per cent;
(b) if not, then what is the order of increases likely to be proposed; and
(c) from what date?

- (8) For each of the last five years to 30th June, 1977, what were the cash balances and the carry-over amount respectively for:

- (a) the State Housing Commission account;
- (b) the Commonwealth/State 1973 Housing Agreement account;
- (c) the Aboriginal Housing Trust Fund;
- (d) the Home Builders' account?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (8) The information sought by the honourable member will require some time to obtain, and he will be advised by correspondence in due course.

HOUSING

Low Cost Funds

51. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

In view of the Government's action in raising limits on maximum loans and permissible values of house and land transactions financed by terminating building societies, and in view of the large number of people who have been waiting for a Government announcement on low cost home builders' funds throughout the months of June and July when announcements have been made in previous years—

- (1) Can he say why no announcement has been made so far this year?
- (2) What assurances can he offer to Parliament and the public about an announcement within a given time?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The State has not yet been advised by the Commonwealth Government of the amount of welfare housing funds to be advanced to the State for 1977-78.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Koondoola

52. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Can he say if the State Housing Commission has placed a ban on the sale of land for domestic purposes in the suburb of Koondoola?
- (2) If the answer is "Yes" can he say why?

- (3) What assurances can be given in regard to any ban being lifted in view of the large number of people in the category of eligible applicants awaiting the release of available building blocks?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) No ban has been placed on the sale of the land, and the State Housing Commission is preparing for a land release in Koondoola to private individuals and project developers wishing to build houses with their own finance.

It is proposed to release 35 allotments in Koondoola and 30 allotments in Girrawheen under the usual conditions of sale applicable to these schemes.

- (3) The above will complete the release of land under this scheme. The remainder of some 60 vacant allotments will be utilised for the commission building programme.

HOUSING

Girrawheen and Koondoola

53. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

In view of the large number of people listed for purchase assistance by the State Housing Commission, stretching back to August, 1973, and the number of completed new homes in the Girrawheen and Koondoola area which are remaining unoccupied, what action is he prepared to take to help speed up the allocation of homes as they are completed?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Of the 97 houses available for purchase at Girrawheen and Koondoola, 89 have been sold and 50 of the purchasers have completed the necessary financial and legal arrangements with their lending authorities, and keys have been made available. Offers of the remaining 8 houses have been made to applicants who have also been directed to Terminating Building Societies.

HOUSING

Emergency Accommodation

54. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is he aware of the build-up of families listed for emergency accommodation, especially four bedroom accommodation, by the State Housing Commission?

- (2) What action does the Government propose to take to alleviate this situation, which necessitates a growing number of families with five and more children living under conditions in which the health, welfare and maintenance of the family unit is possibly at risk?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes, but of these only 23 families are so listed for four-bedroom accommodation.
(2) These families will be housed from the turnover of four-bedroom houses in existing stocks and in new houses to be constructed.

EDUCATION

Materials

55. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is he aware of the concern among school principals and staff about the quality of some materials being supplied to schools (I instance duplicating machines and associated materials)?
(2) Will he investigate the situation to make sure that cost-saving measures and spending cuts are not leading to the issue of substandard materials?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) I am not aware of complaints about the standard of equipment and materials supplied to schools. Problems with duplicators are generally found to result from unskilled operation. On two recent occasions faulty stencils and ink were received without any prior indication of a change in quality, but when detected, were replaced at the manufacturer's cost. Every effort is made to ensure quality control is maintained.
(2) There have been no cost saving measures instituted, but with such items as duplicating paper there is a choice of varying grades of paper from bond to newsprint. The principal is free to order the desired type.

WAIT

Chiropody Treatment

56. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Can he confirm that a charge of \$2 per visit has recently been instituted for all patients, including pensioners, attending the physiotherapy department of the Western Australian Institute of Technology for chiropody treatment?
- (2) What is the reason for the introduction of this across-the-board fee in view of the fact that the primary function of this department is that of a teaching institution?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) A charge of \$2.00 per visit may be levied on clients attending the two Chiropody Clinics. One of the clinics is located at the McNess Centre in Pier St., City, and a charge to assist in the administrative overheads has always been in existence. The second service clinic was established in the WAIT Department of Physiotherapy to accommodate the clinical teaching requirements of the chiropody section. A charge has been introduced there in accordance with the practice at the McNess Centre.

While WAIT's primary function is that of a teaching institution, it has been necessary, because of the lack of clinics, to establish a health service in co-operation with the profession, in this case in order to meet the education and training responsibilities.

The charge of \$2.00 covers all visits associated with a particular chiropody problem. It is not a fee for service, but is applied towards the office costs of keeping patient records. No charge is made for simple appliances which may be necessary in the treatment. The fee is waived in cases of hardship.

EDUCATION

School Councils

57. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:
When does the Government intend to introduce legislation to amend the Education Act to allow school councils to act as properly authorised bodies on behalf of local schools?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The Government intends to make a full investigation of the implications of school councils before introducing legislation.

UNEMPLOYMENT

School Leavers

58. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Can he give the number of school leavers and others in the 15 to 19 year old age group currently registered as seeking employment?
- (2) Has any attempt been made to estimate the number of young people who are unemployed and have not registered?
- (3) (a) How do these figures compare with the situation of a year ago;
(b) what is the Government's estimate of the number of young people who will be leaving school to start work at the end of 1977?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Number of school leavers 1 303
Others under 19 years 4 683
- (2) It is not possible to positively ascertain the number of young people who are unemployed and have not registered.
- (3) (a) Number of school leavers registered as unemployed as at June 30, 1976—1 076
Number of other persons under 19 years registered as unemployed as at June 30, 1976—4 302
(b) It is not possible to give a precise figure. The Department of Employment and Industrial Relations estimates that of the 21 000 (approximately) students who will leave school at the end of 1977, some 70 per cent (14 700) will not go on to further full time study. Of these, some 95 per cent of males and 92 per cent of females will join the workforce.

Source: Verbal advice from the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations.

59. *This question was postponed until Tuesday, the 9th August.*

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Women's Shelters

60. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

In view of the fact that the five shelters for women operating in the metropolitan area are turning away possibly 250 women and children a month, and in

view of forecast cuts in Federal funding for shelters, what priority does the State Government give to the maintenance of the existing shelters and the provision of State funds for the development of additional shelters?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

It would not be possible to indicate what priority or level of funding will be given to shelters until the Commonwealth Government makes a decision in regard to the Bailey Task Force Report on Co-ordination in Welfare and Health.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Representations to Federal Government

61. Mr JAMIESON, to the Premier:

- (1) In view of his Government's support for the State School Teachers Union in its efforts to prevent damaging cuts in Federal expenditure commitments for education, as expressed in a letter to the union dated 8th August, 1975, has he supported the union this year in its campaign for increased Federal funding, by making representations to the Federal Government?
- (2) If so, will he table any correspondence?
- (3) If "No" to (1), why not?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) to (3) The Minister for Education, on behalf of the State Government, has made personal representations to the Federal Minister for Education in relation to the proposed funding guide lines. These discussions took place in Sydney on 20th and 21st June, and in Perth on 7th July.

The Minister also discussed funding and related matters with the Teachers' Union on 25th July.

TERTIARY EDUCATION

Building Projects

62. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has he or his department received a telegram from the secretary of the Advanced Education Commission, Professor Karmel, asking that no further construction contracts be entered into pending the outcome of a review of all tertiary education building programmes in Australia?

- (2) Is he also aware of a report in the *Australian Financial Review* of 23rd June, 1977, by the general secretary of the federation of staff associations of Australian Colleges of Advanced Education, Mr McMahon, that more than \$95 million worth of building projects throughout Australia have come to a halt and more than \$2.7 million of these projects are in Western Australia?
- (3) Is the report correct?
- (4) If "Yes" to (4), which are the programmes in Western Australia?
- (5) Has the review been completed?
- (6) If "Yes" to (5), what were the results?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I draw the attention of the Leader of the Opposition to part (1) of his question. Professor Karmel is not the secretary of the Advanced Education Commission but in fact is the Chairman of the Tertiary Education Commission. Similarly, the question applies only to colleges of advanced education and I have answered it in that form, although the honourable member may in fact be referring to the total number of tertiary institutions. My answer is as follows—

- (1) Senator Carrick sent a telex to me on 3 June, 1977, asking for my co-operation in ensuring that no further contracts for approved major building projects for higher education were entered into pending the outcome of a review by the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Information on the Australia wide position is not available to verify the accuracy of the claim. In Western Australia, there are four major building projects under review. The funds provided in the Commonwealth-State Grants (Advanced Education Assistance) Act, 1976, for expenditure in 1977 on these projects totalled \$1.784 million.
- (4) The projects are—
Churchlands Teachers' College
Business Studies Building
Western Australian Institute of Technology
Health Sciences Building
Extension to Therapy Building,
Shenton Park
Applied Sciences Building

- (5) No.
- (6) Not applicable.

NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Federal Funds

63. Mr JAMIESON, to the Premier:

Does his Government support the Federal Government's decision to increase funds to level one private schools?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Financial assistance for the independent school system has been continuously supported by all Federal and State Governments, recognising that the independent school system currently caters for approximately 20 per cent of all primary and secondary students in Australia

The apportionment of funding made available through the Schools Commission is the subject of a review to be available to the Federal Minister by the end of August, and has been discussed with the Federal Minister as outlined in the answer to Question 61 on today's Notice Paper.

PENSIONERS

Rate Subsidies

64. Mr JAMIESON, to the Premier:

- (1) When does the Government policy of a 25 per cent subsidy for pensioners on water, sewerage and local government rates take effect?
- (2) Has his Government informed local government bodies throughout the State of how the new policy will operate?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) 1st July, 1977.
- (2) Yes.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Private Industry Job Training

65. Mr JAMIESON, to the Premier:

When, and by what method, does he intend to approach the Australian Government seeking its financial support for joint job training in private industry to relieve unemployment?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I wrote to the Prime Minister immediately following the Conference

with the Trades and Labor Council last Friday.

I intend to seek to discuss the matter with my State Premier colleagues next Friday, in the hope of concerted action from all States to the Prime Minister on this matter.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Make-up Payments

66. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

Where a worker has been granted a "make-up" on wages due to a disability sustained at work, in addition to wages, what other payments under award conditions are included in the "make-up"?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

So called "make-up" pay is not statutory but arises out of industrial agreements and the payments are dependent on the terms of the agreement in each case.

STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Fuel Costs

67. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

In the overall operations of the State Energy Commission, what percentage does fuel costs amount to?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

Total fuel costs represent 31 per cent of the Commission's cost of operations for the last financial year.

ELECTRICITY CHARGES

Increases and Pensioner Concessions

68. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Will he advise the increased charges in electricity imposed since the Court Government first came into office?
- (2) Will he also advise dates when the increases were imposed?
- (3) Will he also advise the concessions which have been introduced for pensioners?
- (4) (a) How do pensioners qualify for the benefit;
- (b) what will the benefit mean in savings to the average pensioner in Western Australia;

- (c) what was the average amount paid by pensioners in Western Australia for electricity charges before the concessions were introduced;
- (d) is he aware of any concessions which apply in other States?
- (5) If answer to (4) (d) is "Yes" will he please supply a copy of the schemes operating in other States?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) and (2) 1st August 1974 Electricity tariffs increased by average of 17%
13th January 1975 Electricity tariffs increased by average of 25%
1st July 1975 Electricity tariffs increased by average of 12.5%
1st July 1977 Electricity tariffs increased by average of 20%
- (3) Eligible pensioners using less than 420 kWh per quarter receive a rebate of \$2.10 per quarter. For consumptions above 420 kWh per quarter the rebate will reduce in steps of 10c for each additional 10 kWh's consumed to become zero at a consumption of 630 kWh per quarter.
- (4) (a) By submitting at an S.E.C. office or remitting through the mail their Pensioner Health Benefit Card (PMS2).
- (b) Cannot be determined in figures, however, for the pensioners using small amounts of electricity it will result in a lesser percentile tariff increase and bring their percentage increase in line with that of the consumer of average amounts of electricity.
- (c) No records available.
- (d) No. Tariffs published by other electricity authorities in Australia do not record pensioner concessions. Recent Press statements indicate that some concession to pensioners is in the process of introduction in Tasmania.
- (5) Not applicable.

POWER STATIONS

Muja and Kwinana

69. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:
Last year he notified me of the planning for

the extensions to the Muja generating station at Colлие:

- (1) Is there any change in the scheduled manpower to be employed at the station?
- (2) What is the new estimated capital cost for the installation of the additional units at Muja?
- (3) When is it anticipated that the new units will come onto load?
- (4) What is the anticipated additional coal that will be used when the units come onto load?
- (5) What is the estimated capital cost of converting the first units at Kwinana from oil to coal?
- (6) When is it now anticipated that the units will commence to burn coal at Kwinana?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) No. The estimates of manpower given in reply to the question raised by the honourable member on the 12th November 1975 are still substantially correct.
- (2) \$146 million which includes allowance for increased costs due to inflation. The cost for transmission lines and switchyards necessary to connect the new units to the metropolitan load centre will be additional to the above amount.
- (3) The first unit is scheduled to first come onto load at the end of June 1980 and the second unit a year later.
- (4) The coal to be used in fueling the two new units at Muja is estimated to be 400 000 tonnes for 1980-81 rising to a maximum of 1 200 000 tonnes for 1982-83 and each 12 months period thereafter.
- (5) \$33 million which includes allowance for increased costs due to inflation.
- (6) The first unit to be converted is scheduled to commence burning coal February-March 1978 and the second unit to be converted is scheduled to commence burning coal March-April 1979.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Locations, Courses, and Teachers

70. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Would he indicate the district high schools currently offering upper school courses for years 11 and 12 students?
- (2) In which year was each implemented?
- (3) How many pupils are currently enrolled in years 11 and 12 at each school?
- (4) How many teachers are specifically allocated to years 11 and 12 at each of the schools?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Morawa District High School
Wyalkatchem District High School
- (2) Morawa District High School 1974
(Year 11) 1975 (Year 12)
Wyalkatchem District High School
1974 (Year 11) 1975 (Year 12)
- (3) Enrolments as at 1st March, 1977:

	Year 11	Year 12
Morawa District High School	28	10
Wyalkatchem District High School	25	5

- (4) Of the total number of secondary teachers the equivalent of 4.5 teachers at Morawa and 3 teachers at Wyalkatchem are involved in upper school teaching, but no teachers are appointed for that purpose alone.

71. *This question was postponed.*

72. *This question was postponed.*

PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Thornlie

73. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the Government have any plans to add a pre-primary section to the Yale Road Primary School?
- (2) Does the Government have any other plans for the construction of pre-primary or pre-school facilities in Thornlie?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Not in the 1977-78 building programme.
- (2) Not under the 1977-78 building programme.

PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS

Transfer to Education Department

74. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will the superannuation rights of pre-school teachers attached to the Pre-School Board be preserved when they are transferred to the Education Department?
- (2) Will the one year probationary period to be undertaken by such teachers affect the continuance of their superannuation payments and entitlements?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

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

STUDENT GUILDS

Complaints

75. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will he give details of specific complaints made to the Government about the present structure of student guilds in this State, including the number of individuals making these complaints?
- (2) Will he table the correspondence in which any such complaints are contained?
- (3) Will he table the file dealing with such complaints?
- (4) If he will not table the correspondence or the file, why not?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (4) Apart from general comments, the structure of student guilds in this State has not, to my knowledge, been the subject of correspondence with the State Government. In any case, communication with the Government on this and related matters is confidential.

76. *This question was postponed.*

SEWERAGE

Thornlie

77. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

Will he give details of the effect of the abandonment of the national sewerage programme on the sewerage works planned for the Thornlie area?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Details are unavailable as the capital works programme of the Water Board is not approved as yet.

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES

Position during Changeover

78. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

In the interim period between the proposed dissolution of the W.A. Pre-School Board and the setting up of a permanent body who will be—

- (a) responsible for providing services for children four years and under;
- (b) responsible for funding advisory services to this group for whom places will be available in pre-school centres?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (a) The Education Department.
- (b) The Education Department.

PRE-PRIMARY CENTRES

Admission of Four-year-olds

79. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will Education Department pre-school centres admit four-year-olds in areas where there are not enough five-year-olds?
- (2) If "Yes" will the Education Department take full responsibility for the teacher?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) In general, yes. Local committees already decide whether four-year-olds from within the area and/or five-year-olds from outside the area will attend, and this practice will continue.
- (2) Yes.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Support for Pre-school Centres

80. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it a fact that the proposed early childhood branch within the Education Department will not provide support services for community-based pre-school centres? (That is, those centres that choose to remain outside the Education Department.)
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If "Yes" what support services are envisaged?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) No; the assumption is incorrect.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Centres will continue to be staffed as at present with advisory and in-service facilities maintained.

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES

Teachers: Employment

81. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

Who will employ teachers in pre-school

centres that wish to remain outside the Education Department?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The Minister for Education.

ROADS

Federal Financial Assistance

82. Mr JAMIESON, to the Premier:

- (1) Does he intend to correspond with the Federal Minister for Transport, Mr Nixon, and/or the Prime Minister, protesting at Mr Nixon's recent attempt to create the impression that Western Australia had not fared badly in this year's road fund allocations?
- (2) If so, when, and will he table a copy of the letter?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) I have already done so.
- (2) No, as the letter was written on a personal Prime Minister/Premier basis.

PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Teachers' Salaries

83. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Was it correctly reported in *The West Australian* that the States will receive the same sum as last financial year in next month's budget for pre-school teachers' salaries?
- (2) Is it also correct that Western Australia's allocation will be \$5 229 000 this financial year compared to \$5 324 000 last financial year, thus being a direct reduction of \$95 000 and an effective cut of over 16 per cent taking Western Australia's inflation rate into account?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), has he ascertained from Senator Guilfoyle why Western Australia's allocation was reduced?
- (4) If "No" to (2), does he intend to find out why Western Australia's allocation was reduced?
- (5) Will a reduction in Western Australia's allocation for pre-school teachers' salaries result in less pre-school teachers being employed in Western Australia this financial year?
- (6) If "Yes" to (5), how many less teachers will be employed?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The information sought by the honourable member is detailed and will take some time to collate. I will advise him by correspondence in due course.

RAILWAYS

"N"-class Locomotives

84. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Have "N"-class locomotives been purchased for use on the Manjimup-Bunbury line?
- (2) What was the cost of purchase of each locomotive?
- (3) Have any of these locomotives been modified, and if so, what was the nature of and reason for such modifications?
- (4) What was the cost of any modifications to each locomotive?
- (5) When is it anticipated "N"-class locomotives will be in service in the south-west?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) 11 "N"-class locomotives are currently under construction for general narrow gauge main line use, including the Manjimup-Bunbury line.
The first locomotive is expected to undergo acceptance trials within the next two weeks with progressive delivery of the remaining 10 locomotives over the ensuing six months.
- (2) The contract price is \$438 980 per locomotive plus cost escalation.
- (3) and (4) The contractor is obligated to supply locomotives to an agreed specification. Details of modifications made by the company during course of manufacture are not readily available but the cost would be to the contractor's account.
- (5) At this stage, it is not known when the "N"-class locomotives will be used in the south-west.

POLICE AND RTA

Personnel and Expenditure

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

- (1) What has been the number of police officers in the Western Australian police force in each of the past five financial years?
- (2) What has been the number of officers in the Road Traffic Authority in each financial year since its inception?
- (3) What has been the expenditure of the Western Australian police force in each of the past five financial years?
- (4) What has been the expenditure of the Road Traffic Authority in each financial year since its inception?
- (5) How many new recruits does the Western Australian police force intend seeking in the present financial year, and in each of the next two financial years?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2).

	Police	Road Traffic Authority
30/6/73	1 807	
30/6/74	1 984	
30/6/75	1 790	389
30/6/76	1 782	503
30/6/77	1 851	494
(3) 1972-73	\$15 631	481
1973-74	\$16 855	503
1974-75	\$26 184	236
1975-76	\$27 157	657
1976-77	\$31 761	818
(4) 1974-75—one month, June		
1975	\$706	351
1975-76	\$12 523	619
1976-77	\$14 952	625
(5) 1977-78 . . . 199, including 60 in the Road Traffic Authority.		

Requests for the years 1978-79 and 1979-80 will be based on demands for police services existing at the time, taking into account any increase in population and extra duties.

ROAD TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

Offices and Patrol Hours

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

- (1) (a) In what towns in the lower south-west, south of and including Bunbury, are Road Traffic Authority offices located;
- (b) how many officers are attached to each office?

- (2) What was the average number of hours each week in 1977 that a Road Traffic Authority officer has been on patrol duties in each of the following townsites:

- (a) Donnybrook;
- (b) Balingup;
- (c) Greenbushes;
- (d) Bridgetown;
- (e) Nannup?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) (a) and (b)

Bunbury.....	11 Patrol	7 civil servants
Busselton.....	4 Patrol	1 civil servant
Boyup Brook.....	1 Patrol	
Donnybrook.....	1 Patrol	
Manjimup.....	4 Patrol	1 civil servant
Margaret River.....	1	
Bridgetown.....	1	

- (2) (a) Donnybrook49.27 hours
 (d) Bridgetown.....41.26 hours
 (e) Boyup Brook40.17 hours
 (b), (c) and (f)

These towns are patrolled at various times by rotating shifts from Bunbury and nearby offices. The average weekly patrol from Bunbury is 330.36 hours.

BRIDGETOWN HOSPITAL

Old Building

87. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Will the Education Department be given the use of the Bridgetown hospital as a youth camp or some other purpose when the new hospital comes into use later this year?
- (2) If "No" to what purpose does the Government intend to put the old Bridgetown hospital?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The Education Department has advised that it does not wish to assume control of the old Bridgetown Hospital when it becomes vacant.
- (2) No decision has been made.

ELECTRICITY CHARGES

Pensioner Concessions

88. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) What is the level of concession which is available to pensioners on electricity charges under the terms of his recent announcement (21st July, 1977)?
- (2) What are the criteria required to establish eligibility for such concession?

- (3) How many pensioners is it estimated will be eligible for such concession, assuming they each use the minimum amount of power required?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) The level of rebate varies according to the amount of electricity consumed each quarter as per the following table:

Amount of Electricity Used per Quarter	Rebate Applicable
Nil-429 kWh	\$2.10
430-439	\$2.00
440-449	\$1.90
450-459	\$1.80
460-469	\$1.70
470-479	\$1.60
480-489	\$1.50
490-499	\$1.40
500-509	\$1.30
510-519	\$1.20
520-529	\$1.10
530-539	\$1.00
540-549	\$0.90
550-559	\$0.80
560-569	\$0.70
570-579	\$0.60
580-589	\$0.50
590-599	\$0.40
600-609	\$0.30
610-619	\$0.20
620-629	\$0.10
630 and upwards	Nil

- (2) All pensioners holding a current pensioner health benefit card (PMS2) issued by the Department of Social Security and who are direct customers of the commission or subsidiary customers in multiple residential buildings such as flats, are eligible.
- (3) The Department of Social Security advise that 93 000 pensioners in Western Australia hold a pensioner health benefit card and it is anticipated that approximately half of this number could be eligible in line with (2) above.

ELECTRICITY CHARGES

Pensioner Concessions

89. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Do pensioners living in the Bridgetown State Energy Commission district have to present their pensioner card at the Bridgetown State Energy Commission office in order to establish their entitlement to a rebate?
- (2) If "Yes"—

- (a) are those pensioners living in outlying towns such as Northcliffe, Pemberton, Manjimup and others being subjected to possibly unwarranted inconvenience and cost with this procedure;

- (b) will he arrange that pensioners can submit their card to establish rebate entitlement by post, or by quoting details to the office by telephone?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) and (2) Eligible pensioners may apply for the rebate either in person, or by mail to any commission office. In all cases pensioner health benefit cards must be sighted.

Appropriate publicity is being arranged to advise all eligible pensioners of the procedure.

WATER SUPPLIES

Dam on Harvey River

90. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is the report in *The West Australian* newspaper of 4th June, 1977, which quotes him as stating a new dam will be built on the Harvey River at the cost of \$10 million, to be completed in five years, factually correct?
- (2) If "Yes"—
- where will the proposed dam be located;
 - what will be its capacity;
 - to what use will the water in this dam be put?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No.
(2) Answered by (1).

WATER SUPPLIES

Purity

91. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

- Did the Department of Primary Industry contact his department regarding the report published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 30th July, 1977, regarding Perth's water as being unfit for human consumption?
- Is there any truth in the report?
- How is the purity of the water supply monitored?
- Could a unilateral decision taken by the Department of Primary Industries adversely affect export meat-fish markets; and
 - if so, in what way?
- What action has been taken to ensure a continuing "dialogue" between the States and Commonwealth departments?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- No.
- No.
- Regular sampling of all water supply sources and distribution points. Sampling procedures are conjointly conducted by the Metropolitan Water Board and the Public Health Department.
- Yes;
 - restrictions in accordance with Commonwealth Regulations.
- A "dialogue" usually exists for all matters of common interest.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Purchase of Schooner

92. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Education:

With respect to the announced purchase by the Education Department of a 16-metre schooner:

- When was application made to the Schools Commission for funds for this purchase?
- On what date was notification received that funds would be made available?
- Was any particular school associated with the recommendation that the vessel be purchased?
- What schools have already made use of the vessel prior to its purchase?
- Where will the vessel be moored?
- From where will staff (crew) be obtained?
- Will any school be able to utilise the vessel or only those from certain institutions?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- Moves were initiated late in 1976 for an innovations grant through the Schools Commission.
- Notification of the availability of funds occurred late in June, 1977.
- No.
- The vessel was made available (without cost) by its previous owners at Education Department Adventure Camps during the last 10 years. These camps are conducted each January at Point Peron for high school students.
- The vessel will be moored at the Small Boat Harbour, Fremantle.

- (6) The positions of master and sailing master of the vessel were advertised publicly in July of this year. Appointments to these positions are in the hands of a selection committee comprising personnel of Harbour and Light Department, Education Department and experienced yachtsmen.
- (7) In general terms, there are no planned restrictions upon the use of the vessel. It is envisaged that there will be access for the community through Community Recreation Council, that independent schools will also have opportunities to be part of the programme. However, its overall control will be in the hands of the Education Department.

SEWERAGE

Metropolitan Area

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

What is the percentage of dwellings in the metropolitan area which are served by sewerage schemes?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Approximately 55 per cent.

POLICE AND RTA

Ownership of Motor-cycles

94. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Is he aware that there are motor-cycles being driven by uniformed personnel labelled "Police" on the windshield and bearing Road Traffic Authority licence plates?
- (2) If so, do they belong to the police force, Road Traffic Authority, or both?
- (3) Could they not be clearly marked as belonging to one force or the other?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The vehicles belong to the Road Traffic Authority.
- (3) There is only one Police force.

HOUSING

Hawker Siddeley Site in Victoria Park

95. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has the State Housing Commission purchased, resumed, or negotiated for part of the Hawker Siddeley site bounded by Beatty Avenue, Miller Street and the railway line in Victoria Park?

- (2) If so, what is the—

- (a) area;
- (b) cost;
- (c) proposed use?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The commission has completed negotiations for the purchase of part of the Hawker Siddeley site in Beatty Avenue, Victoria Park.
- (2) (a) 3.1 hectares
(b) \$386 341.9
(c) Subject to approval of the local authority to rezoning, the commission proposes to utilise the land for housing.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG AUTHORITY

Annual Report

96. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

When is it anticipated the annual report of the Alcohol and Drug Authority for the year ended 30th June, 1976, will be tabled?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

On Tuesday, the 9th August, 1977.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PROJECTS

Australian Ownership

97. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

In the light of his undertaking before the 1974 State election that his Government's objective would be "majority Australian ownership in all major W.A. projects by 1980", will he explain to the Parliament—

- (a) what actions his Government had taken to give effect to this commitment; and
- (b) what proportion of the Western Australian economy is currently owned by Australian interests?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

As indicated in the answer I gave to the honourable member's question without notice yesterday, he omits some important words from the Liberal Party 1974-77 Liberal Policy document, and these are—

"Wherever Australians are willing or able to contribute the funds."

These are important words because there are some projects in which Australians have shown a great reluctance to invest and, in such cases, even the Whitlam Government was prepared to take a different view than in other cases.

The Minister for Industrial Development and myself have energetically pursued the objective of increasing Australian equity and, in fact, have been successful in a number of cases, with others still being actively negotiated.

In all cases of major projects the principals have been acquainted with our policy objective.

It is, however, a fact that is emerging that the success of our objective will, in the final analysis, be governed very substantially by the capacity and willingness of Australian investors to accept the degree of risk and the rates of return on the investments involved.

No statistics are compiled by the State Government to provide the answer to part (b) of the honourable member's question, as it is an all-embracing question relating to the Western Australian economy and not specifically to particular major projects.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

IMPORTS

Carcase and Broken Meats

1. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Health:

What has been the amount of carcase and broken meat which has been imported into Western Australia each week over the past four months?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

I have the information provided by the Minister for Health but it is 14 foolscap pages in length. I suggest that the answer might be tabled rather than handed in.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 153).

URANIUM

Yeelirrie Deposits

2. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

Has the Premier indicated in any way at any time that Western Mining Corporation could proceed with its Yeelirrie development plans in view of any emerging national policy on the mining and export of uranium?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I thank the member for Rockingham for some notice of the question. The import of the honourable member's question is not understood but the facts in respect of Yeelirrie and Western Mining Corporation are—

- (1) The Government favours uranium mining and export with proper safeguards.
- (2) We are anxious to see the Yeelirrie deposits developed as soon as practicable following a decision at the Commonwealth level about mining and export of uranium, assuming that the decision favours mining and export of uranium.
- (3) No decision has been communicated to us in any way by the Commonwealth Government in respect of mining and export of uranium.

Mr Barnett: There is nothing sneaky about the question.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Are you back to your old level?

Mr Davies: He made a perfectly ordinary statement. He was being honest with you. You are the one that is snapping quickly.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Apparently the honourable member did not hear what he said.

Mr Barnett: Only you didn't. I said that there is nothing sneaky about the question. I want a straightout answer, "Yes" or "No".

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member used the word "sneaky" and that is not said in this place. He is up to his old tricks and he is not going to get away with it here.

Mr Barnett: I don't mumble like you.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Does the member want an answer or not?

Mr Barnett: Carry on.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Currently it is proposed that if the Yeelirrie

development proceeds there will firstly be a pilot plant at Kalgoorlie, and after that has been operated the operation will be developed and undertaken at Yeelirrie.

If the honourable member had meant his question to be in respect of any other aspect of the matter I suggest he rephrase it and advise me what other points he desires answered.

Mr Barnett: I just want the question answered.

URANIUM

Mining and Export

3. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

I should like to address to the Premier a question without notice relating to the mining and export of uranium. It is obvious that the Government has given a great deal of consideration to this subject. In the light of his statement that his Government is in favour of the mining and exporting of uranium from Western Australia as long as appropriate safeguards are provided, and in light of the fact that obviously a lot of consideration has been given to the matter, will the Premier indicate to the House what he considers adequate safeguards to be?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I could dismiss the honourable member's question as being a frivolous one because he would surely be a person of more intellect than to expect any Premier, any Minister, or any person to answer without notice a question of this kind. He also well knows—

Mr Bryce: How much homework have you done on the subject?

Sir CHARLES COURT:—that the Federal Government is being very cautious about this whole question. We agree with its attitude. He should also know, if he studies the matter as he should in his public position, that the safeguards the Federal Government is contemplating will, if anything, be more severe than some of those imposed in other countries. However, the Government will not agree to mining or export of uranium until the safeguards have been agreed between us, the Commonwealth,

and the parties concerned; and I believe that is as far as we should have or need to go at the present time.

SERVICE PENSIONERS

Concessions

4. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Premier:

I was hoping the answer to this question would have been given in answers provided previously today, but, unfortunately, this was not the case. I refer to an advertisement in the *Sunday Independent* in which mention was made of concessions to service pensioners. As there is a number of types of service pensioners, could he tell us exactly which service pensioners will be granted a concession or will have their rates waived?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I have not seen the article to which the honourable member refers and if he wants a considered answer to the question I suggest he puts it on the notice paper.

RAILWAYS

Meekatharra-Mullewa Line

5. Mr McIVER, to the Premier:

The answer to question 71 which I asked today has been postponed. Could the Premier advise me when it is likely the question will be answered?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I naturally have to get the information from another Minister, but I should imagine it would be answered tomorrow.

AMERICA'S CUP

Promotion Rights

6. Mr HARMAN, to the Premier:

Is the Premier in a position to answer a question I asked twice previously regarding the promotion rights arising from the participation of *Australia* in the America's Cup?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

As promised, I have checked with the Department of Tourism about the contractual documents in respect of this matter. It is considered that the documents are of such a nature that they should be treated as confidential commercial documents and, in all the circumstances, I agree with this.

However, if the honourable member desires to inspect the documents at the Department of Tourism, I shall be only too pleased to arrange an appointment which is mutually convenient, on the normal conditions of confidentiality. If he wants to discuss the matter with me privately I will tell him in a way which will convince him why the documents should remain confidential.

URANIUM

Mining and Export

7. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

As a very brief preamble, I indicate that no question which concerns safeguards relating to the mining and export of uranium can be regarded as frivolous by people who have a serious interest in the matter. I ask the Premier to indicate whether his Government does have its own policy in respect of what it considers to be adequate safeguards in connection with this matter or whether he simply is not prepared to make that information available to the Parliament?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

First of all let me say that the question of safeguards for the mining, export, and processing of uranium is never frivolous, but some of the questions about it are and can be.

With regard to policy, the Government does have a policy, but I am not prepared to stand here and try to enunciate the safeguards, and neither would anyone else in the Chamber with any sense try to stipulate now what will be the safeguards which will be finally agreed and imposed. Suffice to say that we have a policy not to agree to uranium mining, processing, or export unless we are satisfied with the safeguards finally determined. It is most unlikely that the State Government would insist on safeguards additional to those on which the Commonwealth will insist because the Commonwealth Government has made it quite clear, not only to us, but also to people from overseas with whom it has discussed this matter, that the safeguards will be tough. Therefore it will be a matter of sensible consultation.

URANIUM

Mining and Export

8. Mr TONKIN, to the Premier:

I appreciate his inability to indicate the safeguards which would be provided because it is a very technical subject. Would the Premier be prepared in due course to table a paper indicating the safeguards which this State insists upon, bearing in mind that agreement has been reached between this Government and the Fraser Government that environmental safeguards are mainly the prerogative of the State Government? In this way this Parliament, which is a sovereign Parliament, and has a right to know about these matters, will be able to judge for itself whether the safeguards are adequate. Further, would the paper contain any indication of the reasons for departures from the safeguards indicated in the two Fox reports?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

No undertaking will be given at this stage to table such a document because it would be foolish to do so, as the honourable member would appreciate, especially when the final form the safeguards will take and the conditions which will be imposed are going through a considerable degree of evolution. So the request is not reasonable and I will not accede to it.

POLICE AND RTA

Ownership of Motorcycles

9. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

With regard to question 94, I was trying to ascertain whether policemen or RTA officers are riding motorcycles which are labelled "RTA" at one end and "Police" at the other end. I already know that there is only one Police Force. I want to tell the Minister there is only one RTA, so we are quits on that point. To which force or authority do the people riding the bikes belong?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

All the persons who ride those motorcycles are members of the Western Australian Police Force. It so happens that the number plates of all vehicles owned by the RTA bear the letters "RTA". Even though the vehicles may be driven by the office boys, they have an RTA plate. We are making arrangements for the RTA plates to be

removed from all vehicles other than those driven by policemen.

POLICE AND RTA

Ownership of Motorcycles

10. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

Are there policemen on road patrol driving motorcycles and RTA officers on road patrol driving motorcycles; that is, two authorities doing the same work?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

They are all members of the Western Australian Police Force. They wear the police uniform and they have a badge on their shoulder indicating this. In fact, in country areas, general duty policemen, if we can call them that, often operate in lieu of those normally assigned for road traffic patrol work. They are completely interchangeable and do the same work.

The SPEAKER: I will take one more question.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PROJECTS

Australian Ownership

11. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

In answer to question 97 he indicated that the Government does not keep statistical information regarding the percentage ownership of our Western Australian economy by Australian interests. Can he indicate to me whether or not the State Government keeps statistical information with respect to

major projects, and can he give some indication as to how he distinguishes between major and ordinary projects?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Concerning some projects—I instance Hamersley, Newman, and North-West Shelf gas—it is a fairly simple matter to determine the proportion of Australian ownership, and there is no need for statistical returns in respect of them because they are usually well known to the Government, officers, and the Ministers, and are forever under review; but when talking about the economy, that is an entirely different thing altogether.

Mr Bryce: I accepted the point you made about the economy. I was asking for information about the projects.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition could almost give that information himself, but it is a fact that we keep each individual project under review because that is the basis on which negotiations are undertaken and on which the companies were advised when we formulated the policy which is still in force, to try to achieve the desired situation by 1980. For this purpose a number of detailed negotiations have taken place and others are still taking place to see how best this can be achieved provided—and I emphasise this—Australians are able and willing to take up their share of the investments.