

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 25th March, 1975

The **PRESIDENT** (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

MEAT INDUSTRY INQUIRY

Report: Tabling

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.35 p.m.]: In seeking leave to table the report of the meat industry inquiry, I would like to emphasise that the report is still under consideration by the Government.

The report was tabled (see paper No. 95).

QUESTIONS (13): ON NOTICE

1. DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS

Comparison of Expenditure

The Hon. **LYLA ELLIOTT**, to the Minister for Education:

Further to my question of the 18th March, 1975, seeking information on why the State Government had not spent more of Australian School Commission grants, and the Minister's reply of the same date—

- (1) Can the Minister advise why the State's expenditure on disadvantaged schools was so much less than the majority of other States as at the 31st December, 1974, as shown in the following figures:—

Building Projects:—

SA	.....	90%
Tas.	.....	58%
NSW	.....	42%
Qld.	.....	32%
WA	.....	17%
Vic.	.....	5%

Recurrent Grants

NSW	.....	38%
Vic.	.....	38%
Qld.	.....	31%
SA	.....	32%
WA	.....	22%
Tas.	.....	14%

- (2) Is the Minister aware that concern was expressed by the Schools Commission in its report on Programme Administration of December, 1974, at the direction and pace of the capital aspects of the disadvantaged schools programme in some States?

The Hon. **G. C. MacKINNON** replied:

- (1) and (2) The figures quoted have obviously been derived from the statement tabled in Federal Parliament on Wednesday, 20th November, 1974.

The question asked refers to "The States Expenditure". It is to be pointed out, however, that the figures supplied by the Hon. Minister for Education, Mr K. E. Beazley, are on quite a different basis and the tables clearly indicate that they are for "Advances requested up to 18th November 1974".

It is not only a case that the figures are for advances requested as opposed to works committed or undertaken, but it is also evident that the figures were at mid November. It is therefore unfortunate and quite misleading that the figures are now being used in quite a different context.

I would also like to quote the actual words of a letter which Mr Beazley wrote to me on 29th November, 1974:—

"You will appreciate that the information I tabled was purely factual and that I seek to draw no conclusions nor to make any inferences between the rate of Australian Government advances and the building programs of State departments."

2.

TRAFFIC

Aerial Checks

The Hon. **H. W. GAYFER**, to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Transport:

In the matter of aerial police traffic checks—

- (1) Would the Minister care to make a statement to the House surrounding the operational activities of these aircraft in the fields of—
- (a) the number of aircraft currently in use;
 - (b) the type of aircraft; and
 - (c) the method used to measure and apprehend, say, a suspected speeding motorist?
- (2) Has any doubt ever been expressed in the department of the complete accuracy of motorists apprehended for speeding from information relayed from a moving aircraft?

The Hon. **N. E. BAXTER** replied:

- (1) (a) One (1) only.
- (b) Prior to 19th February, 1975, Cessna 182 Fixed Wing Aircraft. Since 19th February, 1975, Cessna 172 Fixed Wing Aircraft.

- (c) (1) A measured distance broken into 500 metre segments and marked accordingly with road paving paint by way of lines is located on a road-way by a licensed surveyor.
- (2) Stop watches certified by the Government Astronomer are used by the Air Observers to calculate the time taken for a vehicle to pass between any of the segments marked on the roadway.
- (3) Charts prepared and certified by an Officer of the Western Australian Institute of Traffic Technology provide instant determination of elapsed time in relation to distance travelled.
- (4) In practice, the stop watch is activated when the front or rear of a vehicle crosses a line and stopped when the front of the vehicle or rear (as the case may be) crosses a line at the end of the check. The check may be made for any distance within the marked area, i.e. $\frac{1}{2}$ km, 1 km and so on.
- (5) After a check, communication by radio is made to ground support advising the colour, type and position of the vehicle. The offending vehicle is kept in constant view by the Air Observer until it is actually apprehended by the ground support, who confirms the vehicle stopped is the one checked from the air. The registered number and make of the vehicle is transmitted to the Air Observer to enable him to complete the necessary form.
- (2) No doubts have been expressed in the Department as to the accuracy of this method of detecting speeding

vehicles. In addition, representatives of the Magistracy and W.A. Law Society have observed this method of detection both from the air and ground and no doubts have been expressed.

3.

PRISONS

Escapees: Description

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Police:

What are the criteria used by the police when describing an escaped prisoner from country detention centres as "dangerous" when the Department of Corrections does not always share this description?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

When police officers are required to trace and apprehend an escaped prisoner, an examination is made of reports and evidence in respect of offences which he has committed. If these indicate that he may cause injury to the public or police in his endeavours to avoid apprehension or is likely to commit further crimes of violence he is classified as dangerous.

4.

HOUSING

Flats: Construction and Occupancy

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Justice representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is it the intention of the State Housing Commission to continue with the construction of blocks of flats in—
 - (a) the metropolitan area; and
 - (b) country areas?
- (2) If so, is it the intention of the State Housing Commission to construct flats in Alexander Road, Padbury?
- (3) What is the average tenancy duration of SHC flats in—
 - (a) Girrawheen;
 - (b) Balga; and
 - (c) Medina?
- (4) How many SHC flats are currently occupied in—
 - (a) Girrawheen;
 - (b) Balga; and
 - (c) Medina?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) Yes. In appropriate localities.
- (2) No. The Commission does not own land in this locality.
- (3) This information is not available.

- (4) (a) 156 (includes 131 bedsitter units).
- (b) 405 (includes 86 bedsitter units)
- (c) 25.

5. BUSHFIRES

Privately-owned Machinery: Use

The Hon. T. KNIGHT, to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Lands:

When privately owned machinery and labour is used to control a bush fire breaking out on Crown Land and endangering private adjoining properties because Main Roads or local government machinery is unavailable due to other demands, can the Government compensate these private land-owners for time and plant used?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

Government assistance for fire suppression could be offered to local authorities depending upon policy and individual circumstances. Section 36 (g) of the Bush Fires Act authorises local authorities to expend any portion of their ordinary revenue in paying the fire fighting costs of private land holders. Reimbursement of land holders by the Government has not been contemplated.

6. ABORIGINES

Housing: Fitzroy Crossing

The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Minister for Justice representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has an investigation been carried out recently by State and/or Commonwealth departments, or by consultants on their behalf, into the housing and associated needs of the Aboriginal community at Fitzroy Crossing?
- (2) If so, what are the broad findings in respect to—
 - (a) location;
 - (b) housing form and design;
 - (c) tribal groupings;
 - (d) social and vocational training; and
 - (e) employment?
- (3) Who carried out the investigation?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) As part of the now standard approach in the planning for non-urban Aboriginal housing, the State Housing Commission, with the knowledge and concurrence of the Aboriginal Affairs Co-ordinating Committee, recently engaged

a consultant to undertake a sociological and anthropological study of the Aboriginal community at Fitzroy Crossing. The aim of the study is to provide the basic information required to decide the form and location for housing.

- (2) The consultant's report has not yet been received.
- (3) Dr E. Kollig (an anthropologist of the University of Dunedin).

7.

SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAMMES

Expenditure

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the estimated total cost of buildings already in the course of construction for which no claim has yet been made for Australian Schools Commission grants under the following headings—
 - (a) general buildings;
 - (b) disadvantaged schools;
 - (c) special schools; and
 - (d) libraries?
- (2) What percentage of the total allocation to this State for these programmes, does the Minister expect to have been claimed by June of this year?
- (3) What projects have been planned to ensure that the total amount will be spent by the end of 1975?
- (4) Which schools are involved, and what are the works undertaken or planned for the biennium 1974 and 1975 under the programmes listed in (1)?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) to (4) There is ample evidence that major works are being undertaken under the Schools Commission Grants in schools widely spread throughout this State. The Education Department has committed fully the grants available in all Schools Commission programmes. The essential task is to improve the conditions for students and this is being done to the satisfaction of Parents' and Citizens' Associations.

The matter as to whether claims are being made to the Schools Commission is purely a matter of accountancy and bears no relationship to the programme of building which is under way.

To provide the detail requested would require what is regarded as unwarranted expenditure of considerable time by officers of three separate Departments to the impairment of the efficiency of those Departments.

8. SWIMMING POOLS

Number Registered

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Justice representing the Minister for Local Government:

How many swimming pools at residences have been registered in each of the councils in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

The amendment to the by-laws to provide for registration of swimming pools is in course of preparation. No registration therefore has yet been effected.

9. PRE-PRIMARY CENTRES

Commonwealth Grant

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Education:

Would the Minister advise the House in what manner the \$900 000 obtained from the Australian Government for pre-primary centres is to be spent giving details of amounts allocated to specific centres?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied: Funds for the building of the following pre-primary centres have been received from the Australian Government:—

Winterfold
Bentley
Spearwood
Girrawheen
North Lake
Beaconsfield
Queens Park
Koondoola
Southwell
Jarrahdale
East Carnarvon
Nulsen

The allocations are \$86 000 for each double unit centre, and \$17 000 for the reduced unit at Jarrahdale. The allocation of funds also covers the construction of pre-primary health centres, the purchase of equipment and other associated costs.

10. FIRE PREVENTION

Sprinkler System

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Education representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) What are the present requirements under the Fire Brigades Act for the provision of sprinkler systems in buildings in Western Australia?

- (2) (a) Has any success been achieved in the prevention of fires by the use of sprinkler systems; and
(b) if so, when and where?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) The Fire Brigades Act, 1942-1971 makes no specific reference to the provision of sprinklers in premises. Uniform Building By-laws, 1974 require sprinklers in high rise premises in excess of 42 metres in height and Table 19.2 of these By-Laws specifies sprinklers for certain classes of premises with floor areas ranging from 2 000-5 500 square metres.

- (2) (a) Yes.

- (b) (1) List of W.A. experiences for the year 1974 is as set out hereunder—

Premises; Date of Fire; Time; Damage.

Nabisco, Harvest Road, Fremantle; 6/2/74; 1153; building nil, contents minor.

Joyce Bros., Forsyth Street, O'Connor; 13/2/74; 1103; building nil, contents minor.

W.A. Plywoods, Pilbara Street, Kewdale; 2/2/74; 1254; building nil, contents minor.

Namco Industries, Welshpool Road, Welshpool; 2/2/74; 0436; building nil, contents minor.

David Jones, St. George's Tce., Perth; —; 1740; building nil, contents minor.

Wesply, Somersby Street, Kewdale; 29/5/74; 0428; building nil, contents minor.

Kambalda, Shopping Centre; 19/5/74;—; severe to unsprinklered buildings. Sprinklered: Building nil, contents minor.

Wesply, Somersby Street, Kewdale; 22/6/74; 0923; building nil, contents minor.

Supa Furn, Scarborough Beach Road, Osborne Park; 3/7/74; 0659; building nil, contents minor.

Wesply, Somersby Street, Kewdale; 17/8/74; 0818; building nil, contents minor.

Charles Moore & Co. Ltd.; 13/9/74; 0440; building minor, contents minor.

- (ii) Information published by Australian Fire Protection Association shows comparison between losses in selected occupancy risks of sprinklered and unsprinklered buildings, viz.—

1973:—

Sprinklered Risks

No. of fires 66; estimated loss \$71 370.

Unsprinklered Risks

No. of fires 36; estimated loss \$10 241 000.

11.

HOUSING

Koongamia: Sewerage

The Hon. **LYLA ELLIOTT**, to the Minister for Justice representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many State Housing Commission houses have been connected to the sewerage system at Koongamia?
- (2) If none, what plans does the Commission have to commence this project?

The Hon. **N. McNEILL** replied:

- (1) Two Commission rental dwellings at Koongamia are currently being connected to the sewerage system.
- (2) The connection of 146 rental homes to the sewerage system will be done over a two-year programme and tenders have already been called for the connection of 18 houses.

12.

STEPHENSON AVENUE

Construction

The Hon. **R. F. CLAUGHTON**, to the Minister for Justice representing the Minister for Local Government:

Will the Government approach the City of Stirling with the view of commencing construction, as soon as possible in the next financial year, of Stephenson Avenue, south of Scarborough Beach Road?

The Hon. **N. McNEILL** replied:

No. However, funds have been provided this financial year through the Inner Metropolitan Councils' Urban Road Fund for the upgrading of Pearson Street.

13.

CANNING VALE PRISON

Progress and Cost

The Hon. **R. H. C. STUBBS**, to the Minister for Justice representing the Minister for Works:

- (1) What progress has been made in the construction of the prison at Canning Vale?

- (2) Is the construction up to date with the original planned programme?
- (3) What expenditure has there been to date on all aspects of the construction of the prison?

- (4) (a) When is it anticipated that construction will be completed; and

- (b) at what estimated cost?

The Hon. **N. McNEILL** replied:

- (1) Earthworks to the site are 90% complete. Water supply main has been extended to the site entrance and the gatehouse structure is 50% complete.

- (2) No.

- (3) \$226 000.

- (4) (a) An examination is presently being carried out by Treasury in conjunction with the Department of Corrections and the Public Works Department with a view to determining a construction programme, and completion date for the Long Stay Maximum Security Unit, consistent with the availability of funds.

- (b) \$16 million.

PRAYER REVISED FORM

Suspension of Standing Order No. 15

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.54 p.m.]: I move—

That Standing Order No. 15 be suspended to allow the motion entitled "Prayer—Revised Form" to be dealt with before the Address-in-Reply.

Point of Order

The Hon. **R. THOMPSON**: I want to make an observation.

The **PRESIDENT**: I have a motion before the Chair which has not been dispensed with. If the Leader of the Opposition is raising a point of order I will hear him, otherwise I must first dispense with the motion.

The Hon. **R. THOMPSON**: In order to be heard then, I must raise a point of order. Firstly, the motion to be moved by Mr Heitman to alter the prayer is not of sufficient interest—nor is it formal business—as set out in Standing Order 15, to warrant the suspension of that Standing Order. I do not wish to be finicky about the matter, but I believe that this prayer is not of sufficient importance at this stage to warrant this motion. Standing Orders should be suspended only for a matter of urgency, and I would like your ruling on that point.

President's Ruling

The PRESIDENT: Standing Order 15 reads—

Except as provided by these Standing Orders or by leave of the Council, no business beyond what is of a formal character shall be entered upon before the Address-in-Reply has been adopted.

The operative words are, "by leave of the Council". The motion is before the Chair. If the Council grants leave for it to be dealt with before the Address-in-Reply then that is its prerogative. Although I cannot detail such occasions, I feel sure that motions of a similar nature have been put to the Chair prior to this occasion. For instance, the Leader of the House may have had Standing Orders suspended to enable a Supply Bill to be dealt with before the Address-in-Reply. However, I consider the motion is in order. If members disagree with it, that will put an end to the matter.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I accept your point.

The PRESIDENT: Is this a further point of order?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: When we deal with the Supply Bill it is not usual for an Address-in-Reply debate to be before the House and the motion on such an occasion normally involves the setting aside of so much of the Standing Orders as is necessary to enable the Supply Bill to be passed through all its stages in any one sitting of the House. I think you may be confused on that point.

I do not believe this motion is of sufficient magnitude to warrant Standing Orders being suspended to enable it to be dealt with. I trust the House will take this into consideration. We can set dangerous precedents and this could be one of them.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think the honourable member has raised a point of order at all. In this case, the question of whether leave is granted is in the hands of the House and the urgency of the matter can be debated by the Leader of the Opposition when the motion is being put, not on a point of order. I regard the motion moved by the Minister to be within the scope of Standing Order 15, the operative words being, "by leave of the Council".

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Standing Order 426 reads—

In cases which in the opinion of the President are of urgent necessity, a Standing Order of the Council, may be suspended on motion duly made and seconded, without notice, provided that such motion be agreed to by an absolute majority of the whole of the number of Members.

I think this is the Standing Order the Leader of the Opposition should have acted upon. It would be left to the President to decide whether the matter was of sufficient importance to warrant the suspension of Standing Orders.

The PRESIDENT: With respect, I disagree with the Minister. Standing Order 426 deals with a motion without notice. Notice of this motion was given.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is right.

Debate Resumed

Question put and passed.

Motion

THE HON. J. HEITMAN (Upper West)
[5.01 p.m.]: I move—

That a revised form of Prayer, as contained in the Appendix to this motion, be adopted by the Council.

Appendix

ALMIGHTY GOD, CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE, GIVER OF LIFE, WHO HAST ORDAINED THAT MAN SHOULD LIVE AS A SOCIAL BEING, SEEKING THE FULFILMENT OF HIS OWN TRUE PURPOSE WITHIN THE SOCIETY AND SANCTIONS OF HIS FELLOW MAN; BLESS THIS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL NOW ASSEMBLED TO DELIBERATE UPON AFFAIRS AFFECTING THE WELL BEING AND GOOD ORDER OF SOCIETY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA, THAT ALL MEMBERS GIVE HONOUR, WISDOM AND INTEGRITY TO THE ROLE FOR WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN CHOSEN, AND THE DECISIONS AND DECORUM OF THIS COUNCIL BE ALWAYS TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF THY GLORY, THE HONOUR OF HER MAJESTY AND THE CONTINUED BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS STATE;

WE MAKE OUR PRAYER IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.

OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE THY NAME; THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN, GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD, AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THOSE THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US. AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION; BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL; FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.

Mr President, a great deal needs to be explained. You asked the Standing Orders Committee to give consideration to a new form of prayer. Two suggested forms of prayer were received from the Liturgy Committee and I combined them into the prayer in the appendix to my motion, which appears on the notice paper. I have also circulated copies of the prayer which is said at the present time so that members would have an opportunity to look at both forms.

Standing Order 53 begins with these words—

The President shall take the Chair and read prayers . . .

The Standing Order does not say what prayer shall be read, but I take it the President could read only the Lord's Prayer or any other prayer as far as the Standing Order is concerned.

The Clerks have had a look at the history, or lack of history, in regard to prayers in the House, and it appears that a form of prayer for the Legislative Council was prepared by the Reverend J. B. Wittenoom, MA, who was the Colonial Chaplain in 1840. The original Minutes of the Colony under the governorship of Captain James Stirling make no reference to prayers being read between the years 1832 and 1834. Prayers were apparently read from 1840 until the present day, although somewhere through the years the form was altered from the original.

In 1890 the Standing Orders of the Legislative Council were adopted; they were developed in the main from the Standing Orders of the South Australian legislature. No reference to prayers appears in these Standing Orders. However, despite the lack of direction, prayers were read in the House.

In 1907 the Standing Orders Committee undertook a complete revision of the Standing Orders. Even though no printed version of the revised Standing Orders is available, it is assumed that the Standing Order relating to the reading of prayers was inserted at that time, as this particular provision was included in the 1914 Standing Orders reprint.

There is no printed record of the form of prayer being altered, and therefore, because the present version is different from the original, it is assumed that at some stage a Presiding Officer exercised his prerogative and altered the prayer to suit his particular fancy.

It is interesting to note that in the early volumes of minutes and *Hansard* there are recorded several days when apparently no prayers were read. This could be either an omission on the part of the Clerks and *Hansard* at the time, or alternatively a token protest for some obscure reason by the Presiding Officer of the day.

It therefore appears that although prayers have been read in the House for just on 70 years, it is still open to the Presiding Officer of the day to read a prayer which is more or less of his own choice. Having given members a copy of the prayer which is at present used and the prayer which has been prepared by the Liturgy Committee, it is open to members of the House to decide which version they prefer. The Standing Orders Committee recommends the new form of prayer.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [5.06 p.m.]: I think in part the comments of Mr Heitman have some relevance to the point of order which was raised by the Leader of the Opposition. In my view, it was not appropriate to raise the point at the time, but Mr Heitman has indicated that the matter of the prayer has been given deep consideration by the Standing Orders Committee. In view of that fact, the Standing Orders Committee wishes the matter to be considered by the House as early as possible, in order that in the event of the adoption of the suggested new form of prayer it can be used in this Chamber. I believe that in those circumstances the matter has a degree of urgency and it is being appropriately dealt with in order that the new prayer may be introduced as soon as possible. I do not think it would have been proper for me to make that observation when the point of order was raised, because it would have anticipated the remarks Mr Heitman has made.

Mr Heitman gave a brief history of the form of prayer which has been used in the House for a number of years. He also made an observation about the lack of history in relation to it. It may be considered inappropriate to devote a great deal of time to the matter. However, I think it is important because, after all, this Chamber is historically of great significance in the traditions of the State.

The practice of reading a prayer has been incorporated in the Standing Orders, but that in itself is not a precedent for the reading of prayers or anything of a similar nature in a legislative chamber. As Mr Heitman observed, a form of prayer was originally prepared by the Colonial Chaplain in 1840. Within the precincts of Parliament House there are a number of documents which are of tremendous historical value and importance. Among them are the minutes to which reference was made, a copy of which I have in my hand.

It is worthy of note that prayers were not read on all occasions but we do not know the reason for it. It is also of interest to record the fact that the original handwritten prayer prepared by the Reverend J. B. Wittenoom is still available to us and in good condition. With it is a newspaper cutting from the *Daily News* of Wednesday, the 15th March, 1922, under

the heading "A dip into the past". Under a subheading "The Church" reference is made to material which had at that time been made available to the Parliamentary Library. It says—

In connection with the Church it may be added that there was found between the leaves of the volume a small paper-covered manuscript bearing the title of "Form of Prayer used at the Legislative Council, Western Australia, compiled by the Rev. J. B. Wittenoon, M.A., Colonial Chaplain, 1840." With it was a printed copy as revised in 1869, but the revisors had contented themselves with altering "imperfect addresses" to "petitions" as having, perhaps, a more parliamentary sound.

I mention this simply because of the interest in the documentation of the origin of the form of prayer which is at present in use and has been in use for a considerable time.

Sir Charles Latham, who was President of the Legislative Council from the 7th August, 1958 to the 21st May, 1960, presented to this House an extremely valuable volume which contains in printed form the original sermons delivered to the House of Lords. The first of the sermons, set out in the opening pages of the volume, was delivered by Simeon Ash, Minister in London and a Member of the Assembly of Divines, on the 26th February, 1644, being the day of the monthly public fast. It may well be that has a bearing on the origin of the reading of prayers, although I do not claim it to be so. Therefore, for more than 300 years at least there has been a form of prayer, which was originally delivered as a sermon. It is as well to place that fact on record on this occasion when the form of prayer in this Chamber is under consideration.

I appreciate the attention which has been given to this matter by the Standing Orders Committee. It is clear that in their consideration of the matter members of the Standing Orders Committee have given some thought to updating the terminology used to bring it into line with the present-day manner of speech. I therefore think the suggested new prayer is deserving of some consideration, but I must confess that I have no great enthusiasm for the change. It is not the words themselves that are important but the reverence and sincerity with which the prayer is accepted by the House when being read by the Presiding Officer. Perhaps the wording of the proposed new prayer is more suitable than that of the prayer which is at present read, but on balance I would prefer to retain the present prayer. This is a question which should properly be determined on personal choice and conscience.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. F. Cloughton.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FIFTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 20th March, on the following motion by the Hon. I. G. Pratt—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency—

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

THE HON. G. E. MASTERS (West) [5.15 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion moved by the Hon. Ian Pratt on the 13th March, expressing our appreciation for the manner in which His Excellency the Governor opened this second session of the 28th Parliament.

I was a little surprised at some of the criticism that was voiced by the Opposition of what I thought was a very well balanced and even address. There were certain comments made at the bottom of page 3 of His Excellency's Speech that "following the December 24 cyclone, Western Australians responded immediately and with their usual spontaneous generosity."

I am quite sure we all appreciate and recognise that everyone rose to the occasion and gave what help might have been necessary. We have heard from Mr Cooley that the unions responded equally as well, and we are certainly very pleased and proud that the people generally should volunteer their services in a disaster like this.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: They always do.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Mr Cooley knows what I mean and I am quite sure he agrees with me on this point.

On page 4 of His Excellency's Speech there is comment in appreciation of certain of the efforts made by the Federal Government. In the third paragraph of the Speech on page 4 we find the following—

Unemployment relief funds from the Commonwealth Government are welcomed . . .

This is a sign of our appreciation of what the Federal Government has done in this direction to help overcome some of the unemployment about which we are all so very worried. However, there is little doubt that this is only a short-term measure, and we all recognise this to be the case. Nevertheless we are giving credit where

credit is due and we are all happy with the situation and the funds being made available by the Commonwealth for this purpose.

The following paragraph on page 4 states, "The financial positions of the Australian States remain most unsatisfactory." I am quite sure that we all agree on this; there can be no argument about it whatever. The Speech of His Excellency continues and says, "The Government of Western Australia believes that under whatever Federal Government, a new approach to Commonwealth/State financial arrangements is essential to survival of the Federal system."

I do not think any one of us will disagree with that. We are not happy with Commonwealth-State relations at the moment and if the situation persists and the Commonwealth Government continues with its attitude I am quite sure we will resist it.

In paragraph 6 of His Excellency's Speech on page 4 he says, "Following the State Government's undertaking to improve Commonwealth/State relations and to resist centralisation of power in Canberra, it is proposed to join with some other States in the establishment of a States' Secretariat."

I believe this to be absolutely essential. We, as a State, are blamed for not co-operating and I do not think this is at all true. We are extending all the co-operation we can, but there are many instances when we do not get support from the Commonwealth Government. The reason, of course, is quite clear, because there is little doubt that the Commonwealth Government is trying to destroy the State Governments wherever this is possible. I am sure members will agree with me when I say we should fight this trend.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It is only in your mind that this is happening.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Any action that is taken by the State Government in this direction is taken only to protect the rights and interests of the State of Western Australia. On page 5 of His Excellency's Speech we find comments concerning the visit by Sir Charles Court to Great Britain. At that time there was also a visit by Gough Whitlam to Europe and Britain generally. I had the opportunity of being in London at the time and although I have heard comments made that the visit of Sir Charles Court did not do any good, I must say that his visit enjoyed a great deal of coverage in the Press.

Although Mr Whitlam made a visit at about the same time he did not go first to Great Britain and I feel this is a mistake he made. He went to Europe before visiting Britain and there were some adverse comments made about that

aspect. I believe Mr Whitlam should have gone first to Britain to show his esteem for the Queen of Australia whom we all recognise.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Britain is in Europe now.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is the point I was about to make. While I was in London the question was raised in the Parliament there of a referendum to decide whether or not Britain should remain in the common market. The matter is of course very finely balanced but I believe Britain will eventually decide to stay in the EEC.

It is a pity Mr Whitlam did not go to Britain first, because had he done so he could possibly have swayed a few votes in the right direction. I know the people of Britain perhaps better than most members in this House and I feel that while some of the people there want to stay in the common market others would prefer to trade with Australia and New Zealand. Accordingly I feel the first thing Mr Whitlam should have done was to visit London. This would certainly have given him a better image and it would have avoided any comment that what he did was not quite the right thing.

On page 5 of His Excellency's Speech we find the following paragraph—

Despite economic conditions, and the present Commonwealth Government policies, international interest in major Western Australian industrial and resource development and research was found to be extremely keen.

We are aware of this and we realise the reason for it. It is simply that those who are interested in development recognise the fact that our present Government under the leadership of Sir Charles Court has proved its ability and over a period of 10 years has brought unparalleled prosperity to the State. The Government has promoted industrial prosperity and has given a lead in this direction; a lead which has not been given by the Labor Government. Although we are convinced and certain that the Government under Sir Charles Court will continue to take action in this direction we did, however, make one mistake when we talked about putting things right. We said that we could put things right in a few months. We did not realise, however, that because of the great damage that was done by a previous Labor Government it would now take us about 12 months to put things right.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What a joke.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: From all the comments in the Press there are indications of a renewed vigour in the State and this indicates that we are going forward in our endeavours.

On page 8 of His Excellency's Speech we find the following paragraph—

It is hoped that standardisation of traffic control by the newly established Road Traffic Authority will accelerate the decline in road accidents . . .

I am sure we are all concerned with the tremendous carnage and the destruction that is taking place on our roads, and we all appreciate the misery that this has caused.

I believe the public will support the co-ordination of our fragmented traffic and inspection force, and I was surprised to hear a previous Minister criticise this action on a number of occasions. These men are dedicated to their jobs and now that they are to form a separate force they will help control traffic and reduce the accident rate.

The main cause for concern in my own particular province—and I am sure everyone in this State shares my concern—is the unprecedented rate of unemployment. Even though we have seen a small fall in this direction I am sure it is not good enough for either the members of the Labor Party or for Government members. I believe the injection of Commonwealth money has done a great deal towards reducing unemployment and there is little doubt that the high-labour-content works being promoted have alleviated the situation to some small extent.

This, however, is only a short-term remedy and, accordingly, we must promote industry and improve the employment figures as much as we can. As I have said before, the growing confidence in this State is shown by the fact that there are some 250 000 people not gainfully employed in Western Australia.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You mean in Australia.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is so; in Australia; that is certainly not the case in this State. I believe that 20 per cent of the people who are unemployed in Australia are not interested in working. I am sure the figure I have quoted is a conservative one. The people concerned are quite happy with the situation as it is at the moment.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is universal.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is so. As an example let us consider six to 10 people living in a home—whether they be young or old does not matter—and bringing in \$350 a week. They pay their rent and do not worry about anything else. They collect their unemployment benefits and they are quite happy with the position. This is happening both in the metropolitan area and in many country areas.

Only the other day I met a young fellow who had been married three months. He had sold or leased his panel beating business, and has been living on unemployment benefits ever since. Every so often

he gets a note from a friend and collects his money. He is quite happy with the situation, but I feel that is all wrong. We have heard from the Minister for Education that building projects have been held up because of a lack of labourers. The position is ridiculous when we have so much unemployment in this State.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Why don't you put things right?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Mr Cooley should be aware that we are trying to do just this. If he looks at the unemployment figures in this State he will see that to be the case. Unfortunately for Mr Cooley he was a couple of days too early with his comments and the figures he gave us.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are blaming the Federal Government for the unemployment figure going up and you are also blaming it when the figure comes down.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I would like to give another example of a local firm which has been looking for truck drivers. The salary offered was \$120 a week and though the firm advertised for two weeks it did not receive any applications.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: That is not a very high rate of pay.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I do not suggest it is a high rate; but it is the award rate. I should have thought that anyone receiving \$30 a week would be happy to take on a job on \$120 a week. I am merely quoting the situation as I see it.

I do not want to particularly press this aspect because the situation in Gnowangerup has already been referred to. A similar situation is growing in many other country towns. In these places there is a high percentage of unemployed—whether it be Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal does not concern me. The fact is that people are receiving unemployment benefits and are quite happy to continue doing so rather than accept jobs which are advertised.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What would be the housing situation in Gnowangerup?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I do not know, but I do know that there is a considerable amount paid out by way of unemployment benefits even though jobs are being advertised. The people concerned are just not prepared to take them.

The Hon. R. Thompson: There is no accommodation.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: If a job is offered and a person takes it his social service benefit is terminated for all time.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is right, but he has only to go to the boss and be a bit insulting and he is put out of work again.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You are only quoting isolated cases.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I could also quote a number of cases both in the metropolitan area and in the south-west of people who I know are living in bulk—if I may use that expression—and drawing unemployment benefits when jobs are offering and who, as a result, continue to bludge on society.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You do not suggest unemployment benefits should be cut out.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: No, not altogether, but in some cases I think they should be withheld. I believe the Commonwealth Government should promote high-labour-content work, and those who are receiving unemployment benefits where there is work available should be required to turn out for work at least one or two days a week and cut out the benefits they are receiving. I am only talking about the 10 or 20 per cent who are bludging on society.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: How do you get those figures?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am only guessing.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It is a pretty rough guess.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I believe that people who are offered work and who are not prepared to accept it and make some excuse for not doing so should not be given the benefits they receive. Many such people are quite content to continue receiving benefits with no thought of working.

It is my belief that it is those with families who should be given the necessary benefits. Perhaps some system of vouchers could be introduced which would mean that the money they would be otherwise paid would not go into the coffers of the Swan Brewery or the TAB, as happens so often all over the country.

When I was in the U.K. I visited an industrial area in South Wales which was experiencing a lot of unemployment. Many jobs were unfilled, but some of the working clubs and social clubs were filled to capacity during the afternoons. Those people were receiving social service benefits and were working only one or two days a week for cash and living quite comfortably. This is the situation we will reach in Australia unless we tighten up the requirements.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is the situation you are getting to.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: We are not encouraging bludgers.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are working only one or two days a week and you receive quite a lot of money for that.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is the opinion of the Leader of the Opposition. I hope it is his true attitude, because at the next election he may have some difficulty in holding his seat.

The Hon. R. Thompson: My constituents know I work a seven-day week.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I should now like to touch on the national health scheme proposed by the Federal Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It is not a national health scheme.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It will be eventually; this is the thin edge of the wedge. Lately we have heard, particularly in this House, people holding up Great Britain as a fine example of national health at work. They say, "Look at the United Kingdom; is it not wonderful? Look at what they have done. What a magnificent set-up." They use such phrases whether they are referring to the union system in the United Kingdom or the national health scheme which operates in that country.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: That has not been said.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Who said that?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: If members refer to the *Hansard* record they will see that Mr Cooley has said that on a number of occasions.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: That statement simply is not true.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The statement has been made that the national health scheme in the United Kingdom was so good that no Government has dared to change it. But it cannot be changed; it would be impossible; it would cost too much and upset everyone and everything. So, it is plain stupidity to suggest that subsequent Governments have not changed the scheme merely because it is such a good scheme.

It is recognised as a financial disaster. In 1961, the British national health scheme cost \$1 456 million; in 1970-71, it cost \$4 174 million; and it is estimated that in 1975-76 it will cost \$6 300 million. The interesting point is that two-thirds of that money goes into hospitals.

I should like to read to the House an article contained in the *New Statesman* of the 10th January, 1975, written by Mr Donald Gould and headed, "The Sick Health Service". Mr Gould writes as follows—

This share has steadily increased, so that now two thirds of the total NHS budget of some £3,500m. a year is spent on the hospitals. But putting a patient into hospital is a horribly expensive way of succouring the sick. The cost might be justified if it were

essential, but several studies have suggested that something like one third of patients in hospital at any one time, including the mentally disabled, could just as well be looked after as out-patients, or at home.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: What has that to do with national health?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is exactly what is going to happen here.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: What—that patients will have to wait six years to get into hospital?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Under the proposed scheme, we will have to wait a very long time before we get hospital treatment in this State. Mr Cooley made the comment and he is quite right.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Do you think people will go into hospital just for a holiday?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: No, but I think doctors will misuse the system; sending patients to hospital represents the easy way out and people will accept it because it is cheap.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Do you think people will have to wait lengthy periods before getting into a hospital?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am sorry Mr President; I am being sidetracked. The present situation is that treatment is available immediately in this State in most instances. Of course, we pay later.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is not a true statement.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: In most cases, immediate hospital treatment is available. Certainly, in all cases of emergency such treatment is available.

The Hon. R. Thompson: If one is a casualty, yes.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: And in most other cases, too. I am referring particularly to my area, as I am quite familiar with the situation there.

If we do adopt a national health scheme similar to the one operating in Britain, we will find that we will have to wait two or three years or even more to get hospital treatment. Apart from that, we will be paying in advance for the treatment, added to which it appears that we will also have to pay into a scheme to make sure we are eligible for some sort of service. I repeat: I am not saying that the present position is without fault; where people have great difficulty in paying their bills, obviously the system is wrong and needs rectifying.

I should like to refer to hospitals and, in particular, to the proposed Wanneroo Hospital. The Government has seen fit to commence planning immediately for the

Wanneroo Hospital and it is suggested that construction will commence within the next two years.

The Hon. R. Thompson: We are hoping the Commonwealth will build one for you, so you will not have to worry.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is fine; I should be very grateful if the Commonwealth Government did build a hospital in my area. However, at the moment the only firm proposal we have is the promise by the State Government that it will get stuck into planning and constructing the hospital.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Why should the Commonwealth Government come in and build a hospital?

The Hon. R. Thompson: Because you will not build one.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Why does it not just give us the money and let us get on with the job?

The Hon. R. Thompson: The State will not build sufficient hospitals.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: We cannot afford to build hospitals because the Commonwealth is bleeding us dry.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: There is a great need for a hospital at Wanneroo, which is one of the fastest growing areas in this State. By building a hospital at Wanneroo, and by the purchase of the Kalamunda Hospital, we are returning to the smaller, community hospital concept which I believe is what is badly needed in this State.

I strongly oppose the great big medical empires that are being built in Perth. By building small, community hospitals we generate support in the community and it is to the good of the community generally.

The Hon. R. Thompson: But the Government did not want to buy the Kalamunda Hospital.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Is that so? I happen to know the decision was made in only four or five days.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The Government was forced to buy the hospital.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: By whom?

The Hon. R. Thompson: By the local people.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I believe I know a lot more about this situation than the Leader of the Opposition, and what he says is not correct. The Kalamunda Hospital was purchased by the State Government and I express again my appreciation to the Minister for Health, because he was responsible not only for the purchase of the Kalamunda Hospital but also for getting the Wanneroo Hospital under way in my province and we are very pleased with the proposal.

Perhaps I could give members an idea of the community spirit generated in matters to do with their local hospitals.

At the moment Kalamunda is organising a Kalamunda Week; most of the local organisations are involved and they are hoping to raise at least \$10 000 to purchase essential equipment for the hospital. I am hoping that the Minister may see fit to contribute some money towards this essential equipment and assist the local organisations. The most important thing is that the community is involved and the people are working for the good of the hospital. The project has been extremely well supported and the doctors and patients are very happy with the results.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Why did they not support it when it was a private hospital?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Because there were two hospitals in the area, and one has just closed.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You obviously know a lot more about this matter than I do; I acknowledge that fact. Could you tell me whether the bed fee has been reduced since the Government took it over?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: No, that is a fixed amount.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: All I know is that the hospital is being more fully utilised at the moment than it was previously.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It was not used much before, was it.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: No, only about one-third or an average of 23 beds in the hospital were utilised previously, whereas now, I believe, 55 of the beds are utilised.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Do you not believe that the residents of Kalamunda will get free hospital treatment if the Government acts responsibly towards Medibank?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: If Mr Cooley is optimistic enough to think Medibank will be free, I admire him. However, I believe he is only talking with his tongue in his cheek; he does not really believe that.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: He is being naive.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I am only sucking a lolly

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Well, if Mr Cooley is only sucking a lolly I apologise. However, I do not think Mr Cooley believes the scheme will be free.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I think you are allowing your speech to interrupt the interjections.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Many of the interjections have been made with tongue in cheek.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I think the Medical Department should buy more hospitals which are in financial difficulties. We have a couple in my province.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I should now like to touch on the subject of Aboriginal affairs.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Do you know anything about this matter?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: No, not much; however I do know that every member of this House is concerned with the issue. There does not seem to be an answer to the problem. There is growing discontent on this issue, not only in my province but also throughout the State and the rest of Australia. I believe some of the controversy has been deliberately stirred up; nevertheless, we do not know the answer to the problem.

In some respects I criticise the newspaper reports because in some cases they seize the opportunity to print a few headlines in order to sell more newspapers when, in fact, the situation which they are reporting is not as bad as they make out. I instance the report on the recent disturbance at Collie. Mr T. H. Jones, the member for Collie, claimed that the newspaper reports were exaggerated and I believe this to be the case.

Although, in fact, the brawls which took place that week may have been between Aborigines and non-Aborigines, I believe that, the previous week, the brawls may have been between Aborigines only and, the following week, the brawls may have been between non-Aborigines only. I do not believe this type of newspaper reporting helps the situation or portrays an accurate picture of what is happening.

I realise there are problems in the State Housing areas of Girrawheen and Forrestfield; discontent in those areas is becoming more worrying and if we are not careful it could erupt into violence. This is what concerns me more than anything else. Recently, a man who worked at night came home to find his family had been threatened. His wife, who was nine months pregnant, was chased over a 6-ft. fence and had to be sheltered by a neighbour. A hole was knocked in her front door.

The husband was very upset, and understandably so. He had been working late to help maintain his family and to pay for his house, and he came home to find that the Aborigines living opposite had crossed the street and threatened to kill his family. He was also threatened. I do not blame him for being upset, particularly when he knows that they are not working, but are receiving social security benefits, while he works hard to support his family.

I am not pointing to the rights or wrongs of such a situation; I am merely saying that we must find a solution. If people, whether they be Aborigines or non-Aborigines, cannot maintain a proper standard of behaviour, we must look carefully to find a solution.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I have one Aboriginal family in my area who telephone the police and me regularly to complain about the behaviour of their white neighbours.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Yes, I do not deny that this situation can arise. Whatever their colour or creed, if people cannot maintain a reasonable standard of behaviour, something should be done. I believe similar sentiments were expressed by the Minister for Housing in a recent Press release.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: Why did you bring this matter up as an Aboriginal problem if it is universal?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I do not say it is solely an Aboriginal problem; however, I am concerned with the discontent which is felt in the community in relation to this problem. In regard to Aborigines, I believe one of the main problems is their unearned income; of course, drink is another important cause of the disturbances. We must do something about a situation where people are being terrorised by others, whatever their colour or creed.

Sometimes I wonder whether we are not on the wrong track in directing these people into State Housing areas. We do not do it with the Italians, the Yugoslavs, or the British; they can go where they like. Are the Aborigines being forced to live where they do not particularly want to live?

The Hon. R. Thompson: The State Housing Commission does not direct anybody to live in any area.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am not suggesting that the State Housing Commission has directed these people.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Then who directs them?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am just saying that I wonder whether they are being directed to these areas.

The Hon. R. Thompson: They are not being directed; they are offered homes under the same conditions as any other person and according to their position on the waiting list. If they accept the offer of accommodation, that is their business.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I hope the Leader of the Opposition is correct.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: How do you reconcile that statement with the fact that the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs has purchased houses earmarked for Aborigines?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I know that every member in this House is concerned with this increasing problem. I was one of those who voted in favour of Aboriginal drinking rights. I know this is a dangerous subject, but I wonder if the decision made us feel better and the Aborigines worse.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Plenty of white people have drinking problems.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is true. Once again, I should like to express my personal appreciation for the manner in which His Excellency the Governor opened

this session of Parliament and I wish him good health in the future. I believe his health is improving, and we hope to see much more of him in the future.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [5.44 p.m.]: Firstly, I wish to refer to a matter which has been in the news recently and which has caused a great deal of concern and to which the responsible Minister has added a feeling of confusion in relation to what are the Government's aims. I refer to the Government's pre-primary centre scheme and the system of pre-school education now provided under the authority of the Pre-School Education Board.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: We cannot hear you on this side.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister made a statement in the House on the 18th March. In it he made a number of accusations against people whom he did not name; for that reason those people have no opportunity to defend themselves. In it he made reference to a letter I had written. He said he did not know to how many pre-school centres the letter was sent.

For the general information of the House I shall read the letter so that members will understand more clearly what I did set down at that time, and be able to judge for themselves what was my attitude to the programme. That letter was forwarded to 37 pre-school centres, the majority of them being in my electorate, and one or two being kindergartens on the boundaries of my electorate. My letter is as follows—

Members of your Association will be aware of the State Government's policy to establish Pre-Primary Centres on School sites.

The implementation of this policy will have important implications for the existing system of Pre-School Education.

It should first of all be noted that under the previous Tonkin/Labor Government, the number of Pre-School Centres in this State, increased by 162 in the years from 1971-1974. That is an average of 54 centres per year. Information given in August '74 indicated that only 23 new centres would be opened at the commencement of the 1975 school year. Apart from this, the Government is establishing its six Pilot Pre-Primary Centres.

You will note the dramatic decline in the provision of Pre-School Education under the new Government's policy.

It should also be noted that the Government has assured the State School Teachers Union that no funds

from State sources would be spent on the Pre-Primary Centres. This will mean that the new scheme will absorb funds that would previously have been used for the existing Pre-School System.

You may be aware that the Tonkin Government had intended to abolish the parent levy for children attending Pre-School Centres, at the beginning of 1975. The present Government does not intend to adopt the same policy. This will mean there will be created two classes of children receiving Pre-School Education.

There will be no fees for those attending the Pre-Primary Centres and the pupils will also be transported to them, free of cost.

Children attending the centres affiliated with the Pre-School Board will be both fee paying and required to pay bus fares, where they travel by this means.

There has been no clear statement from the Government as to what role it sees the present Pre-School Centres will play in the educational system. However if the Pre-Primary Centres become general, then centres such as your own will be able to cater only for children in the year they turn 4 years and younger.

I believe it is also of importance that under the new scheme the Teachers in the Pre-Primary Centres will become absorbed within the State Education System and must therefore lose influence because they will form part only, of a much larger group.

The Kindergarten Movement in this state has been able to maintain its high standards because of its independent specialised role and if they no longer continue to deal with the present age group, they will obviously not be able to influence the system in the way they now do.

I gleaned the facts contained in the letter from statements made by the Minister, information in certain publications such as the *Western Teacher*, and answers given to questions in this House.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Except for the party political stuff contained in the letter, it was a very sensible one.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Since I am a Labor member of Parliament I would not deny that some of the information would be slanted to the advantage of my party, but I think such slanting of the information was well justified.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Except for the party political stuff, the rest of the letter was very sensible, and the part dealing with the problems confronting the Pre-School Education Board was spot on.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That was what the letter was designed to do chiefly.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The Pre-School Education Board appreciated that there would be problems.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would expect that board to be interested.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do you not think the Minister for Education has a right to be interested?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would also like the parents, and teachers who are actively involved in the pre-school education stream, to take an active interest in the future role of the board.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Of course they should, but to whom should they speak first—the board or the other people?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister has raised a very good point. I come back to the statement made by the Minister for Education, now that he has indicated there is nothing objectionable in the letter I wrote. Certainly the Minister would not place my letter in the same category as the utterances he made in his statement to the House. In this statement the Minister said—

From what I have heard of the allegations, these contain a large proportion of flagrant misrepresentation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That was not a statement made in reference to your letter, in any shape or form.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am making it clear the Minister would not have done that. Further on in his statement to the House the Minister said—

However, it would appear that some people are more interested in using the discussions between the board and myself, not for the purpose of helping children, but for personal advantage and political gain.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is right, and so they did.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would ask the Minister to name those people. When the Minister made that statement in the House I interjected and asked—

Would you like to name those people?

The Minister replied to that interjection and said—

I could, but I will not; it is a matter for the board to discipline them, and I sincerely hope it does so. I refer of course to people on the board itself. I have just named Mr Cloughton, so everyone knows about that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have admitted that your letter contained some party political stuff; and we have put that aside. However, we did consider the other portion.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: We both agree on that point, but I am saying the Minister should not have included me with those whom he accused of using the discussions for personal advantage and political gain.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Your letter was one of the reasons that caused me to talk to the board. You put your finger on the problems which any thinking person would know are arising.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: My letter was designed to provoke people into thinking about the matter. Both of us now agree it was a worth-while letter to circulate.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It would have been better if the political stuff had been left out.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The letter said that the Tonkin Government had a very good record. I am not ashamed of that statement, and I only hope for the sake of the present Government that its record will be comparable with that of the Tonkin Government. I think it was pertinent to point that out in my letter. It is unfortunate that the Minister took advantage of his privileged position to denigrate some members of the board.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They deserved it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister did that in a most unjust sort of way.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It was not unjust. I was absolutely justified.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister berated those people because, according to him, they had spoken to people outside the board.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They made all sorts of statements from one end of the State to the other, by telephone and in telegrams.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister said they should have kept the matter between the board and himself.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Should the Minister make such statements, in attempting to set an example?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: About the remarks to the board, instead of making them publicly?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: In doing that the Minister has left himself open to the same sort of criticism.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is the weirdest sort of inference I have heard. Those people made all sorts of statements from one end of the country to the other, by telephone and in telegrams. That being the case, does the honourable member think I am not entitled to make a statement in my own defence?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister berated these people.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Did they not berate me?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: For attempting to speak to people outside the board?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: No, for breaking the confidence between us and not giving an intelligent answer to the Minister who is responsible for the administration of the Act.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the Minister had named those people they would have had a chance to say something in their defence, and be given an opportunity to disprove what the Minister had accused them of. As the position stands all the members of the board are under a cloud, as a result of the statement made by the Minister.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: No, they are not.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister could have said it was Mr Smith or Mr Jones, but because the Minister has not mentioned any names we have to suspect all the members of the board.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The board is responsible, and I have a rough idea who they were.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is a pity the Minister criticised them but would not name them.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I was perfectly entitled to take that sort of action.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Perhaps so. In his statement the Minister said it was his role and his duty to speak with the proper representatives of the people concerned.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Apparently the Minister was asking those people to make suggestions and recommendations to him.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister was asking them to do that. If we talk to the representatives of the parent groups up and down the State, or the teachers' representatives up and down the State, but do not have discussions with the people whom they represent, how can they give a firm view on what they see as being the future role of the board?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The only real justification for this sort of reasoning is that you have not been placed in a position of authority, so it is understandable that you make this sort of silly statement.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is a pity the Minister makes the sort of statement I have mentioned.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are getting to the point of desperation.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is not reasonable to denigrate others in an argument.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: As I have explained, you want to talk to the board and you want to make some suggestions. The next thing is that you put up these alternatives, and discuss them as widely as you can. Because of the action of the board, people have a completely garbled account of what has gone on, not through my fault but that of some members of the board.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister has disclaimed his responsibility.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I have not.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister is now saying that it was not his fault but that of somebody else.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Yes, on that point.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister addressed the board for approximately 1½ hours about the future role.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It was nearer two hours.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I shall not mention any names, but I can tell the Minister that one of the members of the board rang me. So that the Minister does not have a wrong impression of the intent of that board member, I indicate he rang me because he thought I might have some information about the objectives of this Government. Obviously that person was concerned about the concept of the Minister as to the future of the board, but he was seeking some form of confirmation on the matter. He was very diffident in speaking to me, in case he broke the confidentiality of the board.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Good on him.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I respect him for that. I can draw my own conclusions, even if he did not provide me with that information. On the Tuesday when the Minister made his statement I rang that person and another member of the board, and conveyed to them some information I had gained.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Was that after you saw Mr Bowen?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The statements I made to those members were based on reports which I obtained from other sources altogether. From my experience of those two members of the board I can say they were certainly not at fault.

Obviously, both of them were extremely agitated about the intentions of the Minister. I would say that despite the denials by the Minister in the Press he may have

given the wrong impression—unintentionally—because members of that board gained some very strong impressions of what the intentions of the Minister were to be.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I cannot understand how they did that; I was very careful. Perhaps some people close their minds.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The two persons to whom I have referred are quite intelligent, and are quite able to draw conclusions about what is going on. Apart from the statement by the Minister in this House, he has made several other statements to the Press but even now it is not clear, from any of those statements, what the intention of the Government is to be.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thought I made it clear that I asked the board to advise me as to what it thought ought to be its proper role in the future. How the devil else can I say what I want to do? I have not a closed mind. I am waiting advice from the board. I will then consider it, and then make public what I believe ought to be the proper role of the board as a result of the suggestions I receive.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: We will accept that, as far as the Pre-School Education Board is concerned.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Fair enough, but it has not come back with the requested suggestions. The issue has been clouded.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Is the Minister asking the Pre-School Education Board to make suggestions about pre-primary schools?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: No, but about its own role in conjunction with the Children's Commission.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would expect the Minister to be the one to provide the information to clear up any confusion about what is to happen. The Minister, in his statement, referred to the Hon. Lionel Bowen, and went on to say—

I was given a detailed explanation of the Commonwealth's philosophy regarding the Children's Commission, and this will necessitate a review, not only of the State's pre-school and pre-primary programme, but also to some extent programmes affecting all children of school age.

That is a generalised statement; what does it mean?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What it means—and it ought to be obvious—is that Mr Bowen asked me to treat the matter confidentially, which I did. He still had to speak to the other States. The Minister may have told the member opposite more than what he told me in confidence.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister (the Hon. Lionel Bowen) cannot tell the State Minister what his decision will be.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Of course he cannot, but he can ask for my confidence in so far as what happened at that meeting.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister is the only person who can tell us. Let us have a clear statement as to what the future of the board is to be.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have had that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The position is not clear from the statement made by the Minister.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The statement was not about that matter at all.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member kindly address the Chair.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Thank you, Mr President. The statement sets out that there is need to review the State pre-primary programme.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is quite ambiguous waffling, and states nothing definite at all. So, again, the people are left up in the air about what to believe with regard to the actual intentions of this Government.

In a statement the Minister referred to the sum of \$900 000. However, when the report reached *The Sunday Times* which was published on the 23rd March, last, the figure had become \$871 000.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I made the statement of approximately \$900 000.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Yes, \$900 000. However, the Minister tells the Press that the figure is \$871 000. Does not this Chamber merit that sort of accuracy in a statement? It seems we have to go to the Press.

Sitting suspended from 6.05 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Before the tea suspension I was dealing with a report in *The Sunday Times* of the 23rd March and the statements of the Minister contained therein. I complained of the differences between the amount given in the Press article and that given in the Minister's statement to this House. Two differences are apparent. I would just repeat that the article in *The Sunday Times* commenced as follows—

There seemed to be a deliberate attempt to confuse State Government's pre-education policies, the Minister for Education, Mr MacKinnon, claimed last night.

If there is confusion, and I am not disputing that there is, the responsibility for this lies with the Minister and his Government. Two references to pre-school education were contained in the Liberal Party policy for the last election. The Liberal Party said it would encourage pre-school education and the establishment of pre-primary centres. Inevitably these two aims must conflict.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Why must they conflict?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If members cannot work out for themselves how these two matters will conflict, then I feel very sorry for them.

The Hon. N. McNeill: I am sure all the members want is your explanation.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I also feel very sorry for the people of this State—

The Hon. R. Thompson: There is conflict in the eyes of the public.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Explain to the House how they conflict.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr Williams will have an opportunity to say a few words later.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: I will take it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I will be very pleased to hear from the honourable member. If we have managed to provoke him to his feet, that is a win for our side, I presume, as Government members have been most reluctant to speak to the Address-in-Reply.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Most reluctant! He was going to get up when you barged in ahead of him.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: In reply to that interjection I say that I deliberately waited to see whether a Government member would rise.

The Hon. N. McNeill: How many speakers have there been on the Address-in-Reply?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Not many from the Minister's side.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Not very many, stop.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: To come back to the State of confusion the Minister is complaining about—

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You have not been out of a state of confusion, let alone coming back to it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: —It is largely of his own and the Government's making. In the statement he made in this House he claimed that people were interested in using pre-school education for personal advantage and political gain rather than for the purpose of helping

education generally. It appears from the article in *The Sunday Times* that the Minister has a new line of attack. This time he says that the people are more intent on empire building. These are very serious accusations that he is levelling against the members of the board and I believe he has a duty to justify them. If any empire building is going on, perhaps it is occurring within the Education Department.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Did the Minister attack any specific member of the board? You tell me.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the honourable member had listened earlier he would have heard me say something about that. I do not propose to repeat my earlier remarks.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: I will read it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I hope the honourable member does.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: You believe *The Sunday Times* is a better representative than *Hansard*, and *The Sunday Times* is your Bible. We must remember that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If that is the sort of basis on which the honourable member arrives at decisions, I can only feel sorry for him and the people of the State since he is a member of the Government. It is no wonder the State is in such a serious position when you have people on the Government side making statements of this sort.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Do not feel for me, feel for yourself when I get up.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Do not point, that is rude.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Tell you what, if we could make any headway with the Commonwealth Government, then the State would not be in this position.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I presume you mean the Australian Government.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: No, the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I tell you I am not a Commonwealth, I am an Australian.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the honourable member had read tonight's Press he would have seen a statement emanating from the City of Stirling to the effect that the city is very grateful to the Australian Government for its grant for the development of the Karrinyup cultural centre.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Everybody is grateful if they receive funds. Do you think they would be ungrateful?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Of course the City of Stirling is grateful. If money is needed, the Australian Government is prepared to help. If the State Government approached the Australian

Government in this spirit of co-operation, I am sure the people of this State would be a lot better off.

I will now return to the statements I was making. The Minister made a number of charges, and he seems to change his view when he gives information to different people.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: In other words, you mean he changes his opinion every time he speaks to somebody?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable member said that.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: This is what I thought you implied.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That may be a judgment of what the Minister is doing, but the honourable member made the statement and not I.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: What did you say?

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Well, what did you say?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: As I said, it seemed that the accusation in *The Sunday Times* was that the members of the board were empire building. I feel this is a most unjust accusation to be levelled at the members of the Pre-School Education Board. Naturally these people would be concerned about the area they are responsible for, and would not like to see any reduction in it.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What about the kids?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I have said previously that I believe the system of pre-school education administered by the Pre-School Education Board in this State is of an extremely high standard and that it works very much for the interests of the children who attend these centres. It is not to the advantage of the children to change the system, even if the Minister is now saying that the Pre-School Education Board and the centres would be under the control of the Education Department.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There are quite an appreciable number of very intelligent members of the pre-school board who disagree with you and believe there is very urgent need for change—change in the government of the board.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If this is so—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You agree that is right?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: —the information should be given out to the public so there can be intelligent debate about it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Why? I want a consensus view of the board before I give anything out to the public, and that is the proper way to do it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: As I understand it, the Minister expressed this idea at the last meeting he held with the board.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: No I did not. I received a great degree of sympathy, and they pointed out to me that they had furnished a report about 12 months ago, very much in line with the general ideas I had been discussing with them; which I knew of course.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Well, we can only take the Minister's word for this.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: No, do not take my word. Ring up Mrs Esme Fletcher, wife of Mr Harry Fletcher. She was a member of the committee.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You would not dare!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: None of this present argument would have arisen—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Of course it would have arisen.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: There is no argument.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is little use Mr MacKinnon's sitting there and denying it because obviously the people on this board were most concerned.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Yes, some of them were, for the reasons I have already given to you, to this House, and to *The Sunday Times*.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am afraid I cannot go along with that statement, or with the statement the Minister made in the House. For me, at least, the Minister's credit has been badly denied.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Well, that means the Minister must have been dead right.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I hope he was not "dead" right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister made assertions about things which subsequently proved to be untrue. An instance of this was displayed in the House when he spoke of pensioners receiving treatment at public hospitals. It is a grave situation when the credibility of a Minister is called into question in this way.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Who is calling it into question? Only you and your stirrers because you do not know the facts.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Everyone who speaks up is a stirrer.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is amazing—

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: It is quite amazing!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not know whether or not to be pleased that the honourable member charges me with being a stirrer. He seems to believe I have

some special power or control over people that I can get them stirred up against the Government.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Not special—you know what I mean.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr Williams seems to know something that I do not.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Yes you do all right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not have any special control over these people.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: You know what I mean.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: This storm arose because of approaches to me, not because of approaches from me. If we want to carry this a little further, we can look at a report in the *Weekend News* where the President of the Country Party (Mr Reid) made statements to the Press expressing his concern.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Fortunately his knowledge is about the same as yours.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Infinitesimal.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Luckily Mr Williams' judgment of my knowledge is never likely to be of great concern to me.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have quite reasonable knowledge, you just listen to the wrong people, the same as Mr Reid did.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: I am not judging your knowledge, I am judging the veracity of your statement.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would just like to quote a little of this article from the *Weekend News* of the 22nd March. It refers to Mr Reid and says—

He considered the board was running smoothly.

He was disturbed about allegations of jobs being threatened and people being gagged after discussion between the board and Mr MacKinnon.

In his reply, Mr MacKinnon said he would willingly have told Mr Reid there was no truth in any of the material Mr Reid had apparently so readily accepted. It is a question of what the Minister is denying. He denied in this Chamber the allegation that the board would be absorbed by the Education Department. However, Mr Reid was saying he was disturbed about the allegations. That is a slightly different thing; and I am afraid I was most disturbed.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You know I never tell lies, so you can accept that what I said was true.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: As I said a minute ago, I am afraid the Minister's credibility is being sadly dented as far as I am concerned.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You must be made of celluloid; you dent easily.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I made reference to the statements made by the Minister relating to pensioners, and all the benefits they have received; and I pointed out the statements were demonstrably untrue.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are going by the word of the law and not by what happens, of course.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: We can go back to the debates on the Education Act Amendment Bill, when the Minister was berating Miss Elliott and myself because we did not deal with the detail of the Bill during the second reading debate. We were criticised for not examining the detail to see whether or not the Bill was correctly drafted. Then in the Committee stages it became quite obvious that the Minister had not examined the Bill and did not know what the drafting meant. This was not a case of a Minister handling a Bill on behalf of a Minister in another place; the Bill was related to his own portfolio, and he had absolutely no knowledge of the detail in the measure.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: It would be interesting to hear what the people of Western Australia think of the job being done by the Minister and his department.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Yes, and I suggest Mr Lewis examine the matter very closely. He might find his view is not shared by the people in the teaching profession.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Is that a fact, is it?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr President, the member who interjected raised the point, and I am simply advising him that if he really wants to know the situation he should talk to a few people in the profession.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: The situation of the teaching profession in relation to the Minister for Education: is that what you are asking us to ascertain?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Once again Mr Williams has posed a question. He was in the Chamber and would have heard the interchange between Mr Lewis and myself. Mr Williams may place whatever interpretation he likes upon that exchange; but he cannot expect me to interpret it for him.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: The total teaching profession in relation to the Minister's performance; is that it?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am not going to repeat myself. The honourable member can read *Hansard* to ascertain precisely what I said.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: You made the statement a minute ago, and I was in the Chamber. You answer that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It will be in *Hansard*, and Mr Williams can check it there.

The other point of concern in the pre-school and pre-primary situation is that what the Government is doing in providing free pre-school education in pre-primary centres is creating a rift between the two groups of people involved in this field.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Backed up by the Federal Government.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Again, I simply say to Mr Lewis that perhaps he should have a private talk with the Minister.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Why? Did the Federal Government not back them up with money?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister is more conversant with the details than I am, and I think he is the best source of information for Mr Lewis.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I understood the Federal Government backed them up with money. Are you denying that?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I will not pursue the subject.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: That is dead right; you won't.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: As I said, Mr Lewis can go to the fountain to obtain his information; I have no doubt he will be properly enlightened. The fact is that the Government is creating two groups within the pre-school area. Inevitably, as the Government's programme enlarges more and more people will become aware of this divergence, and will demand that something be done about it. That is a problem the Minister will have to bear, but it is a problem of his own creation; and if it leads to confusion or complaints then he has only himself to blame.

I would regret it very much if this dissension led to the present system of pre-school centres under the Pre-School Education Board being destroyed.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Would you say that again?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the Government's present policy in regard to pre-school centres leads to the destruction of the present system of pre-school education under the Pre-School Education Board, I think that would be a sad thing.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Obviously it will lead to the system being altered, but it will certainly never lead to its being destroyed.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If that is the case, perhaps my fears are not warranted.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: How many times do I have to say it?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister's saying so does not necessarily mean anything.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Yes, there is always the remote chance that we may have a Labor Government again.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Under the present system of pre-school education as proposed by the Government we have pre-primary centres where children can attend free; and then we have the system which has developed under the Pre-School Education Board in which this education is not free.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: And you think that system will be destroyed?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I find it difficult to see—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The fact that you find it difficult to see does not mean it will be destroyed. It will not.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the Minister for Education was a parent and had available to him a centre which offered free pre-school education, and also a system in which he would have to pay if his child attended for pre-school education, to which system would he send his child?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They cannot go to one centre until they are over four years of age, but they can go to the other centre under that age.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister is saying that is his opinion.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am not saying that. It is what I thought the pre-school board might have put forward to me as a suggestion.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: So we get to the point I was making.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Watch out for your finger; it will come off.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is only doing battle with the Minister across the table.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The pre-school board has already included in a report a suggestion that this ought to be its franchise. I asked the board to have another look at it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It would be of more value to us if the report were tabled in this place so that the information could become public knowledge and we would have a solid basis to work upon.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think it has been made public by the board. I was sent a copy out of courtesy, so I suppose it has been published.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Has it been tabled in Parliament?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Not to my knowledge; I have never been asked to table it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Then perhaps the Minister will be good enough to table it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I will see if the board wants it to be tabled.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If it is tabled perhaps we will have a solid basis to argue on. However, it would seem from the Minister's remarks that perhaps the members of the Pre-School Education Board did have a real basis for concern. I cannot say whether in its report the board said it should deal not only with five-year-olds—as it does predominantly at the moment—but also with four-year-olds. The Minister seems to imply that the board should deal predominantly with those children of four years of age and under.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think from memory one suggestion was that the board should deal with children up to whatever age they go to school.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Including five-year-olds?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That has been changed. The five-year-olds will now be on the school site.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is the policy of the present State Government.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is the policy of every other State Government in Australia.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Apparently the Minister agrees with me that if the Government's programme continues, five-year-old children will not attend pre-school centres.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Of course they will not. You do not have to be a genius to know that. We have already said it 1 000 times.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am glad the Minister has at last discerned the point I am making.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: If that is your point, why don't you sit down? Everyone knows that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is a rather sweeping statement which perhaps could be easily proved to be untrue. Not everyone knows it. The Minister should be more temperate when making sweeping generalisations.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Who wouldn't know it?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I could pick someone off the street, and he would not know it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He would not know about the pre-primary system the Government is going to introduce?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: He may not even know about that; but we are talking about the consequences of the system, and that is a different thing. That is what I am talking about.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are not. You were talking about the fact that four-year-old children will be attending pre-primary centres on school grounds. That has been publicised right, left and centre.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: No matter how far the Minister may attempt to argue, he is getting himself further in the mire. The fact is that he intends to arrive at a situation in which five-year-old children will no longer attend pre-school centres as they do now.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Are you trying to wipe the egg off your face? The Federal Government put up \$900 000 from the Children's Commission.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Tedious, Mr Lewis, tedious.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Of course it must be tedious to you to try to wipe that egg off your face, because you have made so many statements about this and your own Federal Government came in with \$900 000. That must be very embarrassing.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It was not \$900 000, but \$871 000.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Do you agree that they came in with \$871 000?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is the state of Mr Lewis' information. He is a member of the Government, and he can talk to the Minister as a party colleague—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: And you can't?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: —in a more confidential way than someone from the Opposition can talk to him.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I think you could speak confidentially to the Minister.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Obviously Mr Lewis is assuming some expertise in this matter, but he is not aware of the basic facts. He is talking about the money from the Children's Commission, and he does not even know the precise amount. Had he read *The Sunday Times* he might have ascertained the correct figure.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Isn't it marvellous! You have misled the whole point again.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It has taken a considerable time even to start to obtain the facts about these pre-primary centres. One would think the Government was actually doing its best to conceal the programme from the public. I do not blame the Government for not being proud of the programme.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You don't blame the State Government?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The policy it has introduced is a most unfortunate one for the people of this State.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: And it is backed up by your own Federal Government. That Government must be proud of it, because it has backed the programme to nearly four times the previous amount.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: In fact, Mr Lewis is being very tedious again. For heaven's sake, if he wants to make statements about this he should at least research the facts.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: If you would do your research there would be no need for me to interject at all.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the honourable member had done his research he would not be making these interjections because he would then know that he is wide of the mark.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Are you going to deny that the Children's Commission did advance that money?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not deny that the Children's Commission granted this State \$871 000.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: So the commission did not think it was a good scheme?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The commission did not have to judge whether or not it was a good scheme.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: The commission was using taxpayers' money, and yet you say it did not have to judge whether or not it was a good scheme! The honourable member leaves me speechless!

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is the best thing I have heard tonight.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Apparently that is all the honourable member can raise. Cannot the Australian Government rely on the members of this State Government? Is the honourable member going to say that Mr MacKinnon is a dill and that the Australian Government should not take any notice of his recommendations?

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I did not take any notice of your comments, because after you made them the Commission granted this State Government \$871 000 and at the time it did not take much notice of you despite the fact that you are a member of the same party.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member will disregard interjections and by doing so he will make some progress with his speech.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Heckling, and not interjecting.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Thank you, Mr President. The less interjections there are the better; they hardly add to the quality of the debate. The point is that this Government's pre-primary education system, which the Minister was doing his best to defend, has continued along the lines the Minister obviously has in mind; that is, that it will eventually grow to absorb all the five-year-olds who wish to attend these pre-primary centres. This will completely change the present pre-school arrangements, because they will no longer have the children who are presently being catered for.

The Hon. N. McNeill: It is limited only to those children who are four and over.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The definition is: during the year they turn five.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: They attend in the year they turn five. That is a long-worded way by which to say it. If I refer to five-year-olds I think the Minister will understand what I am talking about.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: He would be about the only one in the House who would.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: From the remarks he was making, the Minister quite obviously has in mind that that is what will happen, and then the Pre-School Board will deal with all those children aged from one to four years; that is, all those children aged from one to three years plus, if the Minister prefers it that way.

If the members of the Pre-School Board have been showing concern I think it has been amply demonstrated that there is a solid basis for that concern because I understand they have no wish that this sort of change should come about.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You are saying that the complete board, or even some section of it, has no wish that this change should come about?

The Hon. R. Thompson: He has no knowledge of the board wishing this.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I have not, as yet, heard any statement from the Pre-School Education Board that the board itself is against this scheme.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I will not deny that. In the article published in the *Weekend News* references are made to the fact that these people feel they are being gagged.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Who was it, in the *Weekend News*, who said they were being gagged? Mr Reid is quoted as saying: I believe they were being gagged; but there is nothing published about the Pre-School Education Board saying anything about being gagged.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Obviously that is one article that was read by the honourable member. There were others and if I can find them among my papers in front of me I might quote from them. I thought the article to which I am referring appeared in the *Daily News*, but on glancing quickly through the relevant issue of the *Daily News*, I am afraid I cannot find it. Therefore, unfortunately, I am unable to quote the article to the honourable member. Apparently the article has become mixed up in the papers I have not yet dealt with.

However, I know for a fact that there were some members of that board who did feel seriously that they were being gagged.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I do not object to that statement. Probably some members feel they are being gagged, but I object to your saying that the whole board felt it was being gagged.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not think I said that, but I will not argue.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Good.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: So we have seen, then, that the general tenor of the objections had a real basis, and we have also seen that there is a real divergence of opinion between the members of the coalition parties. Obviously, if Mr Reid is expressing the view of the Country Party, that party does not agree with what the Government is doing. Certainly the pre-primary platform was not contained in its election policy. I will now pass from that and deal with other matters.

One item, which is more of a local issue, is the "Grayden affair" which occurred in the City of Stirling. Mr Grayden, after addressing, in a very political way, a naturalisation ceremony in the City of Stirling offices, was obliged to apologise to the council. Unfortunately, in the statement that was printed in the Press and in which he made a public apology, he attempted to involve members of the Labor Party, claiming that they had made political speeches at naturalisation ceremonies held by the council previously and, in doing so, he attempted to excuse what he had done.

On a number of occasions I have spoken at naturalisation ceremonies at the City of Stirling, with which I have a very good relationship, and I have encountered no problems after having spoken on those occasions. I last spoke in the City of Stirling only a few weeks ago. I take it as a rule of thumb that this is a non-political forum and, as a parliamentary representative, as a general rule, I remind the people who are seeking citizenship of the privileges they gain, which includes the right to vote in parliamentary elections, and I always urge them to take an

interest in such elections. I certainly criticise Mr Grayden for attempting to level this sort of charge against Labor Party members. Certainly on none of the occasions I have spoken, and at which Mr Grayden has never been present, have I given him cause to judge me accordingly. On my own behalf I have not demanded an apology from him, but I thought that he at least would have had the decency to make an apology unequivocally without trying to make this sort of implication. It did him no credit whatsoever.

The Hon. N. McNeill: You are not saying that no ALP member has ever used such a forum for political purposes?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am saying that I am one of those members who was concerned in the statement he made, and I am denying that I have ever made a speech at such ceremonies which contained political content.

The Hon. N. McNeill: But you do admit some other Labor members may have made such speeches?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Last Wednesday I was representing the Hon. J. T. Tonkin and I merely made that known to the assembly. I did not say I was a member of the Labor Party. I simply said I was representing the Leader of the Opposition (the Hon. J. T. Tonkin).

The Hon. N. McNeill: Quite properly.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is right. Therefore I take exception to the remarks of Mr Grayden that I was one, when addressing people at the City of Stirling naturalisation ceremony, who did the sort of thing he claimed.

I might go a step further and say that, apart from one instance, Government members act in the same sort of non-political way.

In his speech, the Hon. Gordon Masters attempted to give some credit to the Premier for his visit overseas. I am afraid I have a very different point of view in regard to what he may have achieved. In fact, I feel it is another one of those visits in regard to which the Premier is not doing this State a great deal of good. To back up this sort of charge I would like to refer to an editorial that appeared in *The Age* in Melbourne on Friday, the 31st January, 1975. This editorial was published following a visit by the Premier of this State, together with the Premier of Queensland, to the United Kingdom specifically to make representations concerning the Privy Council. The opinion contained in that editorial—and *The Age* is certainly not a Labor biased newspaper by any stretch of the imagination—paints quite a different picture from that which Mr Masters would seek to paint of the

Premier's activities in the United Kingdom. This article which appeared in *The Age* reads as follows—

Premiers in a vain appeal

Unencumbered by the cares and responsibilities that burden the leaders of our national Government, the Premiers of Queensland and Western Australia have taken time off to fly to London to importune Her Majesty's Government on a matter of little significance to anyone but themselves. Obsessed with preserving the rights and privileges of what they regard as their sovereign States, they have sought to persuade the British Prime Minister (Mr. Wilson) that appeals arising from State Supreme Courts to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council should not be abrogated.

As Mr. Wilson has been occupied with more important affairs (it would be difficult to think of anything less important), the two Premiers had to be content with lodging their protests with the fourth-ranking Minister at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, who, being a peer, nobly obliged.

The Hon. N. McNeill: And the British Prime Minister conveyed to the Premier his regrets that he would be unable to meet him due to his absence.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: He is a polite man. To continue—

Lord Goronwy-Roberts politely told them what they could have discovered quite simply without leaving Australia: that British policy has not changed since the Foreign Office was last beset by indignant Premiers from Australia in 1973.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Mr Whitlam endeavoured to change it, didn't he?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: To continue—

This bipartisan policy is that constitutional quarrels between Federal and State Governments are "essentially matters for resolution by Australians in Australia".

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is exactly right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: To continue—

What seems to have eluded the troubled minds of Mr Bjelke-Petersen and Sir Charles Court is that that is precisely how Mr Whitlam proposes to resolve the question of Privy Council appeals.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Why approach the United Kingdom Government without reference to Western Australia or Queensland?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Obviously the Minister for Justice does not like the contents of this editorial, which continues—

The Federal Government will introduce legislation to abolish completely the already diminished right of appeal from Australia to the Privy Council.

I could go on, but I have read sufficient to convey a very different picture of the Premier and his overseas trips from that which Mr Masters conveyed.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You should read the reports in other papers. The one you are reading suits you.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It does not suit Mr Masters.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Naturally.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It would be very difficult to find those papers to which the honourable member refers which would paint a different picture of Sir Charles Court's jaunts overseas.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Mr Whitlam found it important enough to take up the time of the British Government on that very question, so is it not significant that Premiers do likewise?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: As I said when I commenced my remarks, there was a very different picture painted of the result of Sir Charles Court's trips overseas from that which he tries to impart to us. I will not be drawn into some other argument about Mr Whitlam because I have not brought with me the cuttings which would have proved the tremendous reception Mr Whitlam received on his overseas trip. If I had the supporting evidence I would speak about it.

The Hon. N. McNeill: He had a good PR man, I will say that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister for Justice is not trying to tell me Sir Charles Court knows nothing about public relations after the 12 years he was in office and all the publicity which went with that Government, is he? It is silly to try to accuse the Australian Prime Minister of having a first-rate PR set-up and to say that is why he gained credit.

The Hon. N. McNeill: I am not accusing him. I am giving him credit for having it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the Minister for Justice is giving the Prime Minister credit it is commendable of him. The Prime Minister deserves credit.

The real situation is that the present Government in Western Australia has performed in a dismal fashion and has very little on which it can draw to gain favour with the public. It would seem that the Premier would serve this State a lot better if he stayed here instead of going to Japan in April as he proposes. I cannot

visualise that we will gain much from that trip. He has not been able to demonstrate that he is a Premier who is of great value to Western Australia.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Don't you think he was very successful as a Minister in the Brand Government?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If a person is a seller of washing machines and washing machines are short so that everyone flocks around the salesman to buy one he can prove himself to be a first-class salesman, but it is when things become tough that a salesman really has to prove himself.

The world economic situation is different from what it was in the 1960s and the Premier has a real opportunity to prove that his previous reputation was deserved. If he does this I will not be niggardly in giving him credit; but so far he has proved very little along those lines. He is in line with that other man in Queensland who made certain statements and held the gun at the heads of the Japanese by saying they could not have our coal unless they also took our beef. Goodness knows what damage that did to our trade relations with Japan.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Has it done any yet?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Perhaps it is not surprising that the Australian Government is having a great deal of difficulty in negotiating the NARA treaty. The Japanese are being very difficult to get along with.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Perhaps we had better send Sir Charles and Mr Bjelke-Petersen because they might be successful.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I can quite understand that Mr Masters would believe that; but they have not really proved themselves at all capable along those lines.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Mr Bjelke-Petersen seems to have proved something to his electorate.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: With 27 per cent of the votes, he has proved himself to the electorate? How do you work that out?

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: He didn't go badly as far as seats were concerned, did he?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is one of Mr Baxter's gerrymanders.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: When the seats are gerrymandered as they are it is not difficult to do well and if members say that the Labor Party polled badly in the election, I would agree with them. It did. I do not think that history will show that the way Mr Bjelke-Petersen gained his result is anything of which to

be proud. I think the Queensland people themselves are beginning to be very sorry they voted as they did.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: We were told they were very sorry last year.

The Hon. N. McNeill: At least they were not bought by promises of \$8 million by Mr Whitlam during the Queensland campaign, were they?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Members are quite right. The ALP polled very badly, but I do not think even the Queensland Liberal Party would say that the Government was democratically elected. If that judgment were based on electoral distribution I am sure they would love to have a very different pattern of seats over there—a much fairer one.

On the 19th March, *The West Australian* dealt with a new project for Yalgoo; the cost being \$70 million if it goes ahead. The comments of the principals of the company involved make interesting reading. The article does not say, for instance, that the Premier (Sir Charles Court) was very influential in bringing the project about. The principals gave a very fair appraisal of the current economic situation. I will read some of the article for the edification of Liberal Party members because they may not have bothered to read it for themselves. Under the sub-heading, "Programme", the article reads—

The likely programme over the next six months is to fill in a fairly open drilling pattern, with the possibility that some more deep holes will be drilled.

EZ Industries will then decide whether shaft-sinking is justified to obtain bulk ore samples and provide a base for underground drilling to test the depth of the ore body.

The managing director of Electrolytic Zinc Co of Australasia Ltd, Mr G. A. Mackay, said in Perth yesterday that the present downturn in copper prices was not causing great concern at this stage of the project.

It could prove to be the best time to begin planning a new copper mining venture, which would come into production in time for what he regarded as an inevitable future upswing in commodity prices.

That indicates that what the company is concerned about is not whether or not Sir Charles Court is here, but what is the current world economic climate. Obviously if no-one wants to buy copper or it looks as if no-one wants to buy it the project does not go ahead, but if in the company's estimation the industrial nations will run out of their present stocks, or the economic climate takes a turn for the better, there will be a demand

for the product, and it is on this information the company decides whether or not it will develop.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I hope it does.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Of course we all hope it does. Again in *The West Australian* on the 17th March, under the heading, "Government accused of oil search bluff", was the following—

The WA Minister for Fuel and Energy, Mr Mensaros, has accused the Federal Government of bluffing over its latest statements on energy exploration.

He described last week's reported softening of policy on oil exploration as a red herring.

"I do not believe oil exploration will be any easier or more successful before the general feeling of confidence in Australia's political stability returns," Mr Mensaros said.

This is the sort of statement a man in a most responsible position makes. In other words, he is spreading gloom. In a time when there is a real need for people to gain confidence, the Minister is making the wrong approach entirely. The Government and its Ministers deserve censure for this and it is time they took a hold on themselves and acted in a more positive way in the interests of Western Australia.

As I said when I commenced speaking, this is indeed the most dismal Government the State has ever experienced and it is a real misfortune to the State that it ever came to power. We can only hope its term of office will be short.

I now wish to deal with something connected with my own electorate. Today I asked a question to which the Minister replied. It concerned the road development in the City of Stirling, relating particularly to Stephenson Avenue, and reads—

Will the Government approach the City of Stirling with the view of commencing construction as soon as possible in the next financial year of Stephenson Avenue, south of Scarborough Beach Road?

The Minister's answer was—

No. However, funds have been provided this financial year through the Inner Metropolitan Councils' Urban Road Fund for the upgrading of Pearson Street.

I should have thought the Minister would take a little more trouble to seek more advice on what is actually taking place in the area. He may not know there are two bad intersections; namely, the intersections of Leige Street and Selby Street with Scarborough Beach Road, where the Innaloo shopping centre is. The intersection at Leige Street is particularly bad. The planning in this area has been a real

nightmare and the council has spent a lot of money trying to improve channellisation; but the possibilities are very limited because of the nature of the businesses on those roads.

In addition, there is a proposal to develop what is at present an unused site at the intersection, which would further aggravate the situation. Both of those roads could be closed off if Stephenson Avenue were developed. The land is already reserved, so it is not a matter of having to purchase it. It is part of the regional road system. All the reserves are there, and we have a situation at the moment where the local authority intends to spend roughly \$500 000 on road development involving Liege Street and Pearson Street, which I think would be a complete misuse of public funds when the real need is development of a regional road scheme.

I regret the Government has not taken more interest in this matter. I hope it is not too late for the Minister to have a second look at it. It is completely crazy and a misuse of public funds to spend \$500 000 on roads which are bad and to build up the traffic along them and ignore the regional road scheme. If the section between Scarborough Beach Road and Pearson Street were developed, it could be the beginning of an overall scheme and we could close off those bad intersections.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Has that been the request, advice, or suggestion of the Stirling City Council?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: No. The council put up the proposal to spend \$500 000 on Pearson and Liege Streets. I have not approached the council about it because I believe at a recent meeting one of the councillors submitted this proposal and it was rejected. To continue to improve those roads simply confirms their use. When more money is put into them it will be said, "We must keep using them because we have money invested there." Let us have a look at the system which I believe would not only make a start on Stephenson Avenue, which should be an important north-south link, but would also be much safer because we could do away with two very bad intersections.

The Hon. N. McNeill: In fact, you think the Stirling City Council should be convinced that that should be done?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am not a road engineer and all I can do is make suggestions to people. If in the end things go the other way, we must accept it, but to my mind it is a crazy proposal when we need a regional road system. We are about to spend \$500 000 in upgrading roads on which money should not be spent. That could be used to develop Stephenson Avenue southwards. From Scarborough Beach Road it would eventually link up

with Pearson Street. Improvements are needed to Pearson Street further south, but not at the northern end.

The present proposals will perpetuate two bad intersections where there are continually accidents, although they have traffic lights. I hope the Government will ask the department to have a look at the matter and find a way to have this job done, even if it means juggling funds around. I think it would fit in with the requirements of the Commonwealth Government's Bureau of Roads by improving the metropolitan regional road system.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Once the Leederville section is completed, is that not the next stage?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: No; that is on the Mitchell Freeway. I am speaking about Stephenson Avenue. It is planned to cut across the golf course and go through Perry Lakes, and so on. I am speaking about the northern end which starts at Scarborough Beach Road and joins up with Pearson Street. I cannot see any objection to that. In fact, I think it is the sensible thing to do.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: I am wondering about that corner where Liege and Pearson Streets meet, which is such a bad stretch.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: We could cut that out.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: I take your point. We must improve that. If a surface were put on it, that would satisfy me for the time being.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is right. It is necessary only to develop part of the road width.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: This is one time when we are not at variance.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am not being critical of the Government, even though I say I am disappointed with the answer. I understand it is a local matter and perhaps advice has been sought about it, but I am disappointed that the Government did not go into the matter further. I think it warrants an investigation of that kind.

I could say much more about the Address-in-Reply and the record of the Government, but I suppose I will have other opportunities to do so, and no doubt other members want to have their say. A couple of items in the legislative proposals raised some questions in my mind. I asked a question about the referendum in regard to local government boundaries, which relates to the proposals in the Governor's Speech on page 3 of *Hansard* No. 1, which reads—

amendments to the Local Government Act permitting expression of rate-payers' views on proposed changes in municipal boundaries;

I hope it does not mean a referendum, because the history of referendums is not good when it comes to saying "Yes". I believe this is an area in which Governments must exercise their responsibilities to ensure reasonable boundary changes are made.

Every time a proposal is made for a major change in local authority boundaries, there is very emotional reaction from the local people. We have only to consider what happened at Swan-Midland and Kalgoorlie-Boulder to realise that once a change is made people can see the advantages of it. If the Government proposes to hold a referendum, I think it would be a very retrograde and irresponsible step. If that is what the Government has in mind, I hope it will have second thoughts about the matter.

I conclude my remarks by saying I acknowledge my loyalty to The Queen, as expressed in the motion moved by Mr Pratt. I have a very high respect for the British parliamentary system. I only regret it is not fully implemented in this State; but I will not develop that theme.

The Hon. N. McNeill: But you take the best possible advantage of it.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. V. J. Ferry.

House adjourned at 8.41 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 25th March, 1975

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

CANNING RIVER RECLAMATION

Kwinana Freeway Extension: Petition

MR A. R. TONKIN (Morley) [4.33 p.m.]: I present the following petition relating to the proposed extension to the Kwinana Freeway—

To the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled

We, the undersigned citizens of Australia do humbly petition the Parliament of Western Australia that it might take such steps as may be necessary to re-locate and re-design the proposed extensions to the Kwinana Freeway, so that no part of the Canning River or its foreshores may be used for roadways.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

The petition contains 8 123 signatures and I have signed to certify that it conforms with the Standing Orders.

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

QUESTIONS (48): ON NOTICE

1. RECREATION OFFICERS

Diploma Courses

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Recreation:

- (1) Subsequent to my question 3 of Wednesday, 13th November, 1974, what action has been taken to establish a correspondence course to assist community recreation officers studying for diploma courses and stationed in country areas?
- (2) If there has been any correspondence to and from the Secondary Teachers College re this matter would the Minister please table a copy of same?

Mr STEPHENS replied:

- (1) As a result of approaches made by the Community Recreation Council, the Secondary Teachers College is currently making available theoretical subjects for external study by Community Recreation officers stationed in country areas. In addition credit is given for practical units taken through the Technical Education Division of the Education Department.

The Secondary Teachers College advises that eight persons are presently enrolled under the scheme.

- (2) Negotiation has been by personal conference and internal memorandum. There is no correspondence which would merit being tabled.

2. PATCH THEATRE GUILD

Letter to Premier

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Premier:

- (1) Subsequent to my question 4 asked on Wednesday 13th November, 1974 has he now fully replied to the letter from the Director of Patch Theatre Guild?
- (2) What action has been taken or is contemplated to be taken in respect of the matters raised by the said letter?
- (3) What financial assistance can the Patch Theatre Guild expect to receive this calendar year through a Government department or agency?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The matter was referred to the Western Australian Arts Council for examination, and it is understood that their full report is imminent.