

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 2nd August, 1977

The **PRESIDENT** (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Election

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [5.12 p.m.]: In accordance with Standing Order 29 I move—

That the Hon. V. J. Ferry be elected as Chairman of Committees.

THE HON. G. E. MASTERS (West) [5.12 p.m.]: I second the motion.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.12 p.m.]: In accordance with Standing Order 29 I move—

That the Hon. D. W. Cooley be elected as Chairman of Committees.

THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON (East Metropolitan) [5.12 p.m.]: I second the motion.

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) [5.13 p.m.]: Would the two members nominated please indicate in accordance with Standing Order 20 that they are prepared to stand for election.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [5.13 p.m.]: I have pleasure in indicating my preparedness to stand for the position.

THE HON. D. W. COOLEY (North-East Metropolitan) [5.13 p.m.]: I submit my name for election.

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) [5.14 p.m.]: The two members having submitted themselves to the will of the Council, I call upon the Clerk to ring the bells.

Bells rung.

Before asking the Clerk to distribute the ballot papers, I wish to announce that in accordance with Standing Order 397 I appoint the Hon. N. E. Baxter to act with the Clerk as scrutineers. The Clerk will now distribute the ballot papers.

The method of balloting will be to write one name on the ballot paper; that is, the name of the person each member wishes to serve as Chairman of Committees.

[A ballot was taken.]

I wish to announce that the ballot reveals that

the Hon. V. J. Ferry has been elected as Chairman of Committees.

THE LATE HON. JACK HEITMAN

Condolence

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [5.20 p.m.]: I move, without notice—

That this House expresses its deep regret at the death of the Hon. Jack Heitman, who was at the time of his death a member for Upper West Province and Chairman of Committees in the Legislative Council of Western Australia, places on record its appreciation of his long and meritorious public service, and tenders its profound sympathy to his widow and the members of his family in their bereavement.

I consider those members who did not know Jack Heitman to be unfortunate. He was a man whom I think we were the richer for knowing. I was fortunate in having worked for Jack—one cannot think of him in any other way—when he was elected to this House in 1963. He was born at Boulder in 1906 and died on the 25th April, 1977, still a member of this House. He was educated in the country, at Tammin, and indeed he was such a typical country Western Australian that he would have stood as the archetype in that category. He married Dela Yewers on the 7th March, 1934, and most of us also know Dela with affection. They had three sons and one daughter.

Some people become magnified in their own personalities through the partner they choose, and I think the Heitman couple were in that category. It has been my great fortune to work with Jack in his electorate and stay with Dela and Jack in their house. They had the open-hearted generosity and harmony in their house which made one feel at home the moment one stepped across the threshold. Indeed, after the first visit one found oneself looking forward to arriving at the house they built in Morawa.

The Hon. Jack Heitman had a distinguished career in public service—in local government as well as in Parliament. He was elected as a member of the Morawa Shire Council in 1943; he was chairman of the shire council in 1950-51 and vice-chairman from 1948 to 1950, and from 1953 to 1964. He was a member of the Bush Fires Board from 1956 to 1963 and a member of the Agriculture Protection Board from 1960 to 1964. Prior to coming into Parliament he was President of the Country Shire Councils' Association.

Jack Heitman was elected to the Legislative Council as a member for the Midland Province on

the 17th August, 1963, in succession to the late Hon. C. H. Simpson. The province was abolished on the reconstitution of the Legislative Council and he was elected as a member for the Upper West Province at the conjoint elections in 1965. He represented the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at the Tenth Australian Area Conference in Sydney in 1969. He was elected Chairman of Committees on the 30th July, 1974, and represented the Western Australian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at Sri Lanka in 1974.

I am quite sure those of us who knew the Hon. Jack Heitman will recall most of all the fact that at any time one could walk into his office and have a talk with him knowing one would get the total truth in a friendly fashion. If one happened to do something with which he disagreed he would tell one in no uncertain manner. He was a man of absolute integrity and whom one had to admire.

We pass on to Dela and his family our utmost sympathy in their loss. They must feel reassured to some extent by the fact that everybody who knew him feels his loss but, indeed, feels richer for having been acquainted and friendly with him, and also by the fact that he graced this State and this Parliament.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.25 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the members of the Labor Party on this side of the House, to second the motion moved by the Leader of the House. I had very great admiration for Jack Heitman. I did not agree with his politics—that would be understood—and I could say that equally he did not agree with mine and did not hesitate to let me know it. But outside this Chamber I found Jack Heitman to be a very honest and upright man. He was a person I liked to have a drink with occasionally.

When I attended his funeral a great number of people from all political parties and every walk of life were present. While I know it does not do one a great deal of good to have a lot of people at one's funeral, nevertheless it signifies to the people present the respect in which the deceased was held. I was therefore under no illusions as to the great popularity of Jack Heitman.

I admired the man's sincerity and dedication to his party. Even though not agreeing with him, I always admire a man who is dedicated to his ideals and expresses them in a forthright manner. After all, that is what the system is about and what we are here to protect in the final analysis—the right to stand up, speak, and be heard in defence of one's ideals. I think Jack

Heitman did that and it gives me pleasure to second the motion.

THE HON. M. McALEER (Upper West) [5.27 p.m.]: As the late Jack Heitman's colleague in the Upper West Province for the last three years, I would like to support the motion and offer my condolences to Mrs Heitman and his family. I would also like to take the opportunity to express the regret of very many people in the province and their sympathy with his family.

Jack Heitman was in many respects a fortunate man. He was a successful farmer, he was successful in local government, he was a successful parliamentarian, and he was fortunate in having a very happy family life. But all this good fortune was well deserved and often quite hard-earned. For instance, as a youngster in the bush he lived many miles from the nearest school and the only way to get to school at that time was on foot or by pony; and when he was a very young man he had to work extremely hard to get together a stake and to establish his farm, often in harsh conditions and at difficult times. He would have been about 24 when the depression of the 1930s overtook him but he enjoyed the battle as he enjoyed most of the battles he fought during his life.

He acquired as a consequence a great practical knowledge of farming and country life, and in addition—and it is not automatic—sympathy and understanding for other people fighting similar battles. He was a man who always looked for practical solutions, and as he was sturdily independent himself he valued independence for others and prized initiative, self-reliance, and the opportunities to exercise them.

His contribution to Parliament was a wealth of knowledge of rural industries and rural life, a great experience in local government, and a sound, practical judgment in many other matters. He worked tirelessly for the electorate. Perseverance was one of his attributes, as many of the officers in various departments would testify.

In his dealings with people he was fair and straightforward; he did not care for humbug, whether for a political or any other cause. He was kind in small ways, just as he was in large ways. Very many people in his constituency and outside it have reason to be grateful to him.

Whilst his family will miss him greatly I hope that they will gain comfort from reflecting on the work he was able to do and the respect and affection with which he is remembered by the members of this House and by many people elsewhere.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [5.31 p.m.]: On behalf of myself and members of the

National Country Party I would like to join in the sentiments expressed by the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, and Miss McAleer. We express our sympathy to Mrs Heitman in her bereavement.

I knew Jack fairly well over the years. I was first associated with his wife Dela, because my sister knew her at Morawa before she married Jack. Such an association creates a tie between people. As Miss McAleer has said, Jack Heitman brought to this House a wealth of experience, including experience in farming in several areas of the State, experience in local government, and experience in many organisations. He was an asset to this House.

He took over from me as Chairman of Committees when I was elevated to the Ministry in 1974. He carried out the duties of that position in a very able manner, just as he had carried out his duties in this Chamber over the years.

Again I express, on behalf of my colleagues, my sincere sympathy to his family.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [5.32 p.m.]: I wish briefly and sincerely to support the motion before the House. The late Hon. Jack Heitman was a man of tremendous capacity, as has been indicated by previous speakers. He was a man who, by his endeavours throughout his lifetime, contributed a great deal in every field in which he contested. He contested the land and was a successful farmer in his own right; he was also a great family man; and he was a man who contributed to the community around him, particularly in his district of Morawa. More than that, he contributed greatly to the State as a whole before he entered parliamentary life.

I might mention that the late Jack Heitman entered the parliamentary circuit perhaps a little later than is normally the case, but his age did not in any way disadvantage him in this House, and the Parliament was the richer for his presence here. He was a man of great capacity and of tremendous straightforwardness. I believe that we who knew him have lost a great parliamentary colleague and a true and trusty friend.

I join with others who have preceded me in extending sincere sympathy to his widow, Dela, and her family. I have no doubt they will cherish his memory in many ways, not the least of which will be the knowledge that he contributed to the best of his capacity to this Parliament.

THE HON. GRACE VAUGHAN (South-East Metropolitan) [5.33 p.m.]: I would like to add a few words to those which have already been spoken. I did not have much to share with the late Jack Heitman in the way of political preferences,

but I did share with him some other things and I found him to be a very gentle man. Among the other things we shared was a love of a Yewers, because we both married one.

I had many conversations with Jack about his great affinity with the soil, and by talking to him I grew to learn quite a lot about farmers and their special needs. He loved Western Australia and had a special affinity with the soil which made him love it perhaps more than most. I certainly regret his passing, as I know we all do.

I would like to add one more point. In his position as Chairman of Committees I always found the late Jack Heitman to be extremely fair, especially with new members. I recall when I first entered this place he was particularly patient with me in regard to certain points of form. He had a gentleness which belied his rather great frame. I offer my sincere condolences to his widow and family.

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths): Honourable members, before putting this question I would like to endorse the remarks of the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, and other members who have spoken.

My family and I were privileged to know the late Hon. Jack Heitman prior to his entering Parliament, because we came from Morawa ourselves. When I first entered Parliament in 1965, the late Jack Heitman was one of the first members to welcome me and to extend to me an offer of assistance and advice should I require it at any time.

His dedication to the various responsibilities he held both inside and outside the Parliament is recognised and acknowledged by all who knew him. During his three years as Chairman of Committees, as one of his deputies I had closer contact with him than I enjoyed previously, and I found it was a pleasure to work with him and a privilege to be ranked among his colleagues.

I am sure his family is aware of the deep respect that we have for Jack and the sincerity with which we extend this vote of sympathy.

Honourable members, I would ask you to carry this motion and pay tribute to our late friend by standing in silence.

Question passed, members standing.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION FUND

Appointment of Trustees

On motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Leader of the House), resolved:

That, pursuant to the provisions of the

Parliamentary Superannuation Act, 1970-1976, the Legislative Council hereby appoints the Hon. V. J. Ferry and the Hon. N. E. Baxter, to be Trustees of the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 28th July, on the following motion by the Hon. R. G. Pike—

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. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.37 p.m.]: First of all, Mr President, let me congratulate you once more on assuming the very important role of President of this Council. I know you will carry out your duties with dignity and absolute fairness. Let me also congratulate Mr Ferry on being appointed Chairman of Committees. I am sure he, too, will carry out his duties with dignity and absolute fairness.

I would like to congratulate the Hon. R. G. Pike on his delivery of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. However, I certainly do not congratulate him on the contents of his speech. I do not want to dwell on this subject, but in this Parliament I have consistently tried to steer away from what I call confrontation politics. I remind the House that I have always been of the opinion that if there were less use of "isms" there would be far fewer schisms in the community. I hope the pattern established in that speech does not continue, because it does no good at all. We have ample opportunity to debate matters in the normal course of the session; and when we have a partisan audience, such as we had on opening day, those people who have never been here before go away a little more disenchanted with our system, and that is something we do not want to happen.

If the system in this country is to be changed, then let it be changed by the ballot box, as I am sure it will.

Mr Pike delivered his speech in very good faith, and he delivered it very well. However, I hope he will remember in future that there is a convention, and that convention should be

adhered to. It seems we are in an age of breaking conventions.

I found very little joy in the Governor's Speech. It was possibly one of the most restrained Governor's Speeches I have heard since I have been in this House. It contained none of the usual barbs or thrusts contained in some Speeches in the past. I do not think our present Governor would make a Speech of the type we have heard from others who have occupied the position.

I congratulate the Governor on his delivery of the Speech. However, on going through the Speech it seems to me to be more like some kind of election speech in that it refers to things that have been done. Then, towards the end—on page 9 of a 9½-page Speech—we found what was loosely called "Proposed Legislation".

That list of proposed legislation does not appear to contain anything of note, which leads me to the conclusion that we are living in very troubled times when there is a lack of money abroad, when unemployment grows daily and the economy grows worse daily, and all we get from certain people is a beating of the breast and talk that somewhere in the distant future something like 100 000 jobs will be created.

Let me remind the Government that during the last election it very successfully ran a low-key campaign. It was so low key that the Government was able to sweep under the carpet the questions of unemployment and the economy. Let me further remind the Government that those questions are still with us, and we need some conclusive proof that the Government of this State and, indeed, the Government of the Commonwealth, are doing something to alleviate the suffering and the hardship experienced by those people who have found themselves genuinely out of work, and those youngsters who are leaving school and seeking their first jobs. In addition, the Governments ought to be doing something constructive in respect of repairing the damaged economy.

Now, Sir, it is easy to bring out a whole string of facts and figures, and to quote from newspapers. However, I do not intend to do that—although I may quote briefly later—because I am sure the people abroad know exactly what is happening. The unemployment situation is worsening, and whilst the Governor did make reference to that and said it is at an unacceptable level, we did not hear him say that the Government would do certain things to provide jobs for school leavers and to provide work for those who genuinely seek it.

All I can gather is that something is going to

happen in the not-too-distant future that will bestow upon the State the right to impose further taxes; and as a very overtaxed member of the community I do not take very kindly to that attitude. I hope in the coming sessions of this Parliament the Government will indicate some very real—not just illusionary—steps it is taking to reduce the level of unemployment in this State. It is not good enough to say that somehow or other the situation in Western Australia is far better than that in the other States.

That is certainly not the answer, because I have always held the view that there is unemployment when there is one person genuinely looking for a job but cannot obtain one; and when there is unemployment of 1 000, 10 000, or 100 000, we are only speaking in multiples of that. I think we set our sights too high. We do too much talking and not enough acting.

The economy continues to stagnate. The rate of inflation is not coming down. I shall not indulge in any of the involved mental gymnastics that every economic commentator in Australia indulges in. I shall not get on that bandwagon which economic commentators and their parliamentary followers try to get on from time to time. But one thing must come through quite clearly to the people; that is, it is not the political ideology of a particular party or a particular political leader which will answer our problems.

Elections have been fought and won and lost on the myth, or the fallacy, that this country, the antipodes, is different from other parts of the world. We all know that is not correct. Very shortly, no matter which party is in government, someone will ask: When are you going to start doing something?

In among all the hotchpotch and failure to perform by the Fraser Government and the present Court Government one thing comes shining through; that is, industrial relations. I have always told this House that industrial relations is merely another term for human relations. That is all it means. There is nothing very smart about industrial relations, although a whole tribe of people get jobs in universities and go on lecture tours to tell other people how to solve their industrial relations. Industrial relations are only human relations. That is what it boils down to.

Today I was looking at some old union journals of 1935. I have not brought them into the Chamber, not because I did not want to bring them but simply because I forgot them. One thing that surprised me about them is that the banner headlines of that era were the same as the

headlines we read today. The country was at the height of a depression and there were banner headlines such as "Law and Order", "Low Productivity", "Prosperity is just around the corner", and "Elect us and we will fix it". Most of us who are a little older than the general run of members of this Chamber will remember that the only way we dragged ourselves out of that situation was when war was declared in 1939.

The situation is the same today. We have a shocking situation today, and because of growing unemployment and a further stagnation of the economy the old juggernaut of law and order and union bashing is dragged out once again. From reading our daily Press in this State, I would say that we seem to be even better at carrying out this kind of exercise than our country cousins in Queensland.

Mr President, I have been keeping a file of Press cuttings and I have labelled the file "Labour and Industry". I hope no-one asks me to table it because the cuttings are all in the library if members should wish to see them. I have headline after headline, very few of which are designed to bring decent human or industrial relations back into the community. By and large all are designed to inflame the situation and the passions of the people involved.

At the root of every industrial situation is a fear. Most industrial situations or stoppages are generated through fear—fear of uncertainty, fear of the future, and fear of the falling value of the dollar. We are told that a band of people is wandering around the countryside miraculously urging the workers in the Pilbara—who incidentally do not return Labor members now—to go on strike and stay on strike.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: They are on the ball, are they not?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: On what ball, Mr Tozer? The honourable gentleman does not even get to first base. There has not been a genuine attempt in this State to bring about a situation which will minimise the effect of these stoppages. They have an effect on the economy but they have a worse effect on the workers taking part in them. They are the people who really miss out.

I was horrified—I have heard that word previously in this context—when listening to the radio one morning to hear the Minister for Labour and Industry (Mr Grayden) have the temerity to say that he was going to see the President of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission (Sir John Moore) to have a talk with him about deregistering the Transport Workers' Union. I do not understand

how a responsible Minister for Labour and Industry or a responsible Minister for anything could publicly say that he was going in through the back door—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have proof he publicly said it?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I have already ascertained from radio station 6PM that I can obtain a copy of the tape. There are no worries about that. Somehow the Minister was going in through the back door to persuade the independent President of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission—I know that Sir John Moore is independent—to listen to the Minister. When I heard that I thought, “There must be something wrong here; it is not possible.”

I was very alarmed and so I did some checking. I was also very pleased to note that it was not an officer of the Department of Labour and Industry who made that statement. An officer of the department would simply be too wise to make such a statement. The situation could be like that of the Secretary of the Waterside Worker's Federation having a private talk with Sir John Moore before a court case, because the wharfies wanted their pay doubled. I do not think that kind of activity, along with these banner headlines, which is really blood and guts stuff, is the kind of constructive activity which will minimise or prevent industrial disputes. It is certainly no substitute for the tried and tested methods which are normally employed by responsible Ministers of the Crown, whether they be Liberal Party Ministers, National Country Party Ministers, or Labor Party Ministers.

When hundreds or thousands of housewives and working-class people hear this kind of thing on the radio they say to themselves, “What faith can I have in an arbitration system which will allow this Minister, who is on the front page of every newspaper almost daily and on almost every talk-back programme, to manipulate Sir John Moore so that the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission can simply deregister the Transport Workers' Union?”

The Minister is very naive because an application to deregister a union either at the State or Federal level is a very complex matter which is not taken very lightly. A question was asked in this Chamber today as to what effect deregistration of a union would have. It does not have a great effect on most unions because they are responsible and would rather remain registered. I recall that some of the greatest gains made by my union were in 1928 when it was

deregistered. The action of deregistering a union would be treated most seriously by a judge or a conciliation commissioner.

I nearly had the temerity to write to Sir John Moore about that radio programme and enclose a copy of the tape, because I think he would have been staggered to listen to a State Minister saying what Mr Grayden said. Sir John Moore is a man beyond reproach. His integrity and fair-mindedness are admired by everyone who comes before him, not only with regard to industrial relations but also with regard to the national trust and other matters with which he is concerned. I do not think this kind of activity serves this State at all. I hope that in the not-too-distant future the Minister to whom I am referring will realise that the greatest thing one can do in an industrial confrontation situation if one is not right in there is to keep one's mouth shut and allow the participants at least to get round the table and try to solve their differences.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You would not think the Minister for Labour and Industry is in there with them?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I have no doubt the Minister for Labour and Industry has had meetings with unions and has tried many of the things I have spoken of. That does not give him the right to make the kind of flamboyant and inflammatory statements that he makes and then to make the greatest one of all which is that he is going to corrupt, if I may use that term, the President of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You know better than that. Someone has to make an application in these matters and that is what he meant. It is a standard thing.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The Leader of the House, who is an astute member of Parliament and politician, will not pull the wool over my eyes in that way.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I would not dream of doing that.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The procedure is to make an application to the registrar and not to go to the president of the commission.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Of course he would know that.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Oh yes! I do not wish to dwell for too long on industrial relations—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are making a good job of it.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: —but just wish to point out the wrong turn we have taken in this

Parliament whereby we have made a bad situation even worse.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You admit it is a bad situation?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am sure other speakers on this side of the House—not only Mr Cooley but also others—will have more to say on this very complex matter. I hope they get the message across.

I was horrified to see in *The West Australian* of Tuesday, the 26th July, a heading which read, "Compensation. Employers seek inquiry." This subject is dear to my heart, to Mr MacKinnon's heart, and also to the heart of a man who used to sit in this Chamber (Mr Logan). The report continued—

The Confederation of WA Industry wants a State Government inquiry into the cost and structure of workers' compensation.

The executive director of the confederation, Mr Basil Atkinson, said yesterday that industry was seriously concerned.

"The \$32 million cost of premiums last year took away money that could have meant work for many unemployed people," he said.

This matter has been floated around for a considerable time and I think it would be an act of treachery by this Government if, as a result of an inquiry, it was to reduce the amount payable to a worker who was injured on the job.

A Select Committee was set up by the Tonkin Government to inquire into this matter. The Hon. Mr MacKinnon served on that committee, and served on it well, as did Mr Les Logan of the National Country Party. That committee brought down a unanimous report. Its recommendations were based on the evidence placed before the committee. I remember making the comment that we were going to make a determination based on the evidence placed before the committee.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Would you do me a favour? Would you tell the House which of the representatives who came before us recommended the 100 per cent?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I cannot really recall. Maybe the Minister can recall?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Would you like me to remind you?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Yes.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It was the employer representatives—the two of them.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is right. I am saying that we had a unanimous—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You remember that now?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I think so. We made a unanimous decision. That decision bestowed a great benefit on working people who were injured in the course of their employment. I am sure the Leader of the House will know that everyone who came before that committee, including insurers, agreed that the situation that prevails in South Australia and Tasmania should prevail here.

What has happened is that, along with other costs in the community, premiums for workers' compensation have gone up. I do not think the escalation in this area is any greater than in any other area. In fact, long before we recommended to this Parliament that it should accept our unanimous report a great many industries were paying 100 per cent workers' compensation by private treaty.

Studies overseas and in this country indicate that, because of the many problems confronting working people today, the loss of \$5 or \$10 a week from their pay packets can spell disaster. People on a very low workers' compensation rate have experienced some psychosomatic effects and have never worked again.

I hope this inquiry is never held, because if it is it will be a retrograde step. If it is held and it does make some recommendation to reduce the amount of compensation payable to persons injured, I hope this Chamber will act like a real House of Review and that those three members on the Select Committee will vote against the recommendation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: How can they do that?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I know that Mr Logan is not here now, but I hope he is here in spirit. I am sure that the Leader of the House will agree it was a very far-reaching inquiry which resulted in that recommendation.

I wish to touch on a couple of other small matters. I say at the outset that I am not a great believer in Address-in-Reply debates. This is not the policy of the Labor Party because most Labor members disagree with me. However, I have long believed that only new members should speak on this occasion and that they should be heard in complete silence. We will shortly have a Supply Bill and usually amendments are moved and members run out of puff. However, members still like to have a say and as a consequence, because of time wasted early in the session, we run into problems towards the end of the session. No-one would disagree with that.

One of the disturbing features in this State of

ours today is the lack of water, and it appears to me that the present Government has sadly neglected this matter.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: As have other Governments in the past, of course.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Labor Governments have an excellent record with regard to water supplies, including the country water supply scheme, as Mr MacKinnon knows. Irrespective of how long Labor or Liberal Governments have been in power we are now into August and we have only just had the first sign of some action by the Government in the form of fines. This has been done in an effort to conserve water.

Recently I had the experience of flying over two of our dams when I returned from Sydney and I was staggered to look down on what appeared to be small ponds of water and open fissures in the ground.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It is the first time I have seen a windmill—

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The honourable member was heard in silence on Thursday, but he will not be heard in silence in the future. I have a couple of things in store for him.

Not only the Government, but also the Opposition, should be using every endeavour in this Parliament to impress upon people in this State that the most sacred commodity is water. It is the most inhibiting factor in our development. We hear about industries here and there, but we will not be able to get any industry off the ground unless we have sufficient water. Instead of research being made into solar energy, we should be researching the possibility of the desalination of sea water because we have reached the stage where we must engage in constructive thought about the growth of the population, about how much more industry we can permit, and about how many more gardens we can cultivate. I have no way of checking, but I have been told that the Perth basin is the most irrigated area of land in the world.

We cannot grow front lawns unless we have water. Programmes should be devised by which to educate people to cultivate some other kind of garden rather than the old-fashioned buffalo lawn. I do not make the suggestion with the intention of stirring up a hornet's nest. I make it with the sole purpose of making people realise the serious water situation which faces us. It has never been more serious in the history of our State since the population reached over 100 000.

I wish to make one other point although I do not intend to dwell on it. I am referring to the slight the people of Fremantle felt when Her

Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh visited Fremantle in the Royal yacht *Britannia*. The City of Fremantle was the host city to that yacht. I went aboard to a reception also attended by the Leader of the House. A number of people had been to dinner aboard the yacht. I do not know what possessed the Government, but the Mayor and Mayoress of Fremantle were excluded. They did not want to attend the dinner on board, but it would have been a nice gesture to the people of the City of Fremantle had the mayor and mayoress been asked aboard to the reception.

The slight has not been forgotten in the City of Fremantle. It has been well canvassed by the council. I have not joined the empire of loyalists or royalists, but the people wanted and expected the mayor and mayoress to be invited, but they were slighted. One gets the feeling that this occurred because the Fremantle people return Labor members year in and year out. I hate to think this was the reason, but I can assure members that the councillors of the City of Fremantle, one and all—irrespective of political leanings—have not taken the matter lightly and they all hope it will not happen again.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It certainly would not have been for that reason.

Sitting suspended from 6.07 to 7.30 p.m.

THE HON. W. R. WITHERS (North) [7.30 p.m.]: Mr President, I think this evening members have been subjected to a classic example of what can happen when a member becomes self-righteous in this Chamber. We saw the Hon. Des Dans get up and berate the Hon. Bob Pike for giving an inflammatory speech and then Mr Dans got stirred up and gave us a sermon of fire. There is an old adage that people in glass houses should not throw stones, or people who play with dragons should not build fires. However, the message was that each man and woman in this Chamber will talk about what is in his or her province and they will endeavour to represent their electors as close to their ideologies as possible. Naturally, they will speak in a way that will inflame people of a different political colour. This will happen from both sides of the House.

In my six years of parliamentary experience I have taken on and become interested in everything my electors and this Parliament have placed before me—and I must say in my enthusiasm—with a little bit of diligence and assistance from my colleagues, the Government of the day, and the wisdom of Parliament I have been able to see with this assistance some corrections to the inequities that have existed in

my province. We now see that people in my province do have some equality with people in other areas of the State, and although we have a fair way to go we are not as far behind as we were six years ago.

I have a confession to make because, after that seemingly pompous statement, I have to say that I have had as much effect on the deep-seated and centralised bureaucracy of this State as a yapping Pekinese would have on a herd of wild elephants. Unlike parliamentarians, the public servants can stay in their elected positions at their level of incompetency for the remainder of their working lives. We find that public servants, like members of Parliament, can be progressive or regressive in their attitudes; they can believe in free enterprise or socialism; they can be competent or incompetent.

It is a fact of life that the inexperience of newly appointed Ministers of Cabinet usually turns them for advice to their professional officers, and quite often the advice is given by officers who have no real practical experience in the field in which that advice is given. Because of this, it leads some Ministers to lead a parliamentary life where they drone through their problems accepting advice from the bureaucratic workers who build a beautiful hive whilst the honey diminishes.

I wish to advise this House of my intentions in the present term of Parliament. If I find that officers of Government departments are advising Ministers contrary to the free enterprise principles and contrary to the wishes of the people, I will offer evidence to the Ministers in support of change. If that change is not forthcoming then I will endeavour to change the system through private members Bills and motions throughout 1977. However, having said that, I would like to say I have enough confidence in our Premier and our Cabinet Ministers to feel that I will not need to present any Bills or motions to effect change. I am sure they will have the competence and foresight to accept the evidence given to them which will enable changes to be made to correct any anomalies which are affecting the people I represent in the North Province.

I ask members to refer to a speech I made in this House on the 30th March, 1976, which was published in booklet form under the title of *How Well-Intentioned Governments Can Strangle the Development of a Nation*. In that booklet I gave evidence to show the inequities of income tax in remote areas which had extremely high costs of living. I pointed out that there had been no

corrections for inflation to that allowance since 1959.

I explained that Federal Governments, both past and present, were loath to change the situation because they had considered the income tax zone rebates—as they are now called—to be unconstitutional.

Recently, I was given some figures by a Federal member of Parliament indicating that some States are given a greater advantage over other States when we compare trade tariffs which manufacturers receive in particular States. The figures given to me indicated that Western Australia was the most disadvantaged State. If we can interpret these figures as showing Western Australia to be very low on the Commonwealth scale of trade tariffs; and if it can be shown, as these figures do, that Victoria was the most advantaged per head of population and Western Australia the most disadvantaged, then we could also interpret those same figures to show that there was a cash advantage per head of population as I will indicate. This refers to assistance in trade tariffs, and to use these figures we must accept the interpretation given to me by the Federal member. The trade tariff aid given to Victoria per head of population works out at 61.09c; New South Wales 26.87c; Tasmania, 17.73c; South Australia, 13.94c; Queensland, 8.81c; and Western Australia, 6.77c.

I think this system could be considered constitutionally legal under section 90 of the Constitution. I consider that section 99 would take precedence, and this would make it unconstitutional because section 99 reads as follows—

The Commonwealth shall not, by any law or regulation of trade, commerce, or revenue, give preference to one State or any part thereof over another State or any part thereof.

If the tariff protection can be interpreted as legal under section 99, I consider that taxation zone allowances could also be considered legal under section 99. Therefore Federal Governments, if they are to maintain the current aid of trade tariffs for manufacturers in the different States, should also be able to increase the taxation zone rebates to allow development in remote areas of our State where the wealth of the nation is being produced. I have asked Federal members to work on this matter. If we find those interpretations to be correct then the interpretation of the sales tax as allowed at the moment would be incorrect. I pointed this out in a previous speech. People in remote areas of our country facing high freight

costs can pay more sales tax than their city counterparts. To me that is not acceptable, yet, under the existing interpretations, it is law.

There is another Federal matter in which I am involving myself on behalf of my constituents, but I cannot ask the support of the State Government or my colleagues on this because it is considered to be a radical matter; that is, the subject of Highway No. 1. As members are aware, Highway No. 1 in my province is unsealed in several sections north of Port Hedland to Broome, and from Halls Creek to Fitzroy Crossing. When we look at these areas we find we have only a gravel road.

Recently, the Minister for Transport travelled on that road and I accompanied him. He now knows all about it. Our State Premier has promised funds to have the section north of Port Hedland to Broome completed before 1980. The Premier made that commitment without any matching commitment from the Federal Government.

Several months ago I became quite annoyed when it was announced that Mr Andrew Peacock had been to Thailand to open a road on which he could not travel freely because part of it was owned by communist insurgents. Mr Peacock went there to open a road which had been paid for from Australian funds. I was extremely cranky with that situation because I had complained to the previous Labor Government and urged it not to give away funds for the development of roads under the guise of foreign aid until we could meet our own commitments.

To me it is quite ridiculous to see Australia give foreign aid to countries specifically for the purpose of road building when these countries have better roads than we have. I am not speaking from hearsay because I have travelled on some of the country roads in Thailand as well as some roads way out back in the Philippines. Both these countries have received foreign aid from Australia for the purpose of road building.

Because of the situation I have written to Mr Peacock, our Prime Minister (Mr Fraser), and also Dr Kurt Waldheim, the General Secretary of the United Nations, seeking information on this subject so that we, as Australians, and particularly as northern Australians, can prevent any further aid going from Australia specifically for the purpose of road building until we can meet our commitments at home.

I have now received a reply from Mr Goldberg of Dr Waldheim's office, and I am advised in brief terms that it is the responsibility of the Australian Government and the Australian

Government alone to make allocation for roads. Because of this state of affairs, I now give notice to this House that if our Federal Government—regardless of whether it is a coalition National Country Party-Liberal Party Government or a Labor Party Government—is foolish enough to give our funds to other countries specifically for road building before Highway No. 1 is completed in this country, I will personally move in this House a motion of no confidence in that Government, regardless of its political colour. Let me state that I believe we should give foreign aid to developing countries but we should not give funds for road building to countries which have better roads than we have.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I am listening to you with interest. I do not want to be disappointed, but can you tell us something about your aluminium windows and how much progress has been made?

The Hon. Neil McNeill: I think you are being frivolous.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: To answer the honourable member's question, that was successful.

I would like to speak now about some matters in Western Australia upon which I will be concentrating my efforts. I hope that with the help of our departmental officers and their Ministers we may be able to change some of the existing inequities.

Some of the older members may remember that in my speech in this House on the 30th March, 1976, I mentioned the inequity which existed in regard to the current fire brigade levies which are extracted through insurance premium payments. I pointed out at that time that people in my province and other country areas of this State were subsidising metropolitan fire brigades to the tune of seven to one; in other words, I pay \$7 for every \$1 that metropolitan residents pay to subsidise fire brigades. By no stretch of the imagination could anyone say that such a situation is fair and just. Recommendations were made to the Government and I understand that a Cabinet decision will be made in the near future. If that decision corrects the anomaly, then I will be happy; however, if it does not correct the anomaly, then I will be initiating a private member's Bill.

When we come to consider the question of decentralisation, we find that changes are required in several departments, and this is particularly so in regard to the Department of Lands and Surveys, the Department of Agriculture, and the Public Works Department. I

would like to deal first of all with the Department of Lands and Surveys.

Here is a department with competent officers and a competent Minister. In the past it has had competent Ministers, but the advice that has been given to the Ministers by the competent officers has been in fields in which they have had no direct personal practical experience. The outcome of this situation has been that development in the remote areas of our State has been very slow and we find that people have been disappointed to the point where they have left the northern climes. Other impractical dreamers have obtained land, but they have not been able to develop it. The reasons for this are quite specific.

Looking at the history of our State we find that there were some initial problems in the Department of Lands and Surveys and those problems have not been corrected over the last century. This department is still operating in an old-fashioned way with its lease conditions. Our Statutes provide that land held under a 21-year lease can be used as security to borrow, but unfortunately, although it appears on the Statutes, members should try it in practice to see what does happen.

We find that 21-year-lease land is allocated to people who are prepared to appear before the land boards and to undertake certain commitments. Unfortunately the pragmatic developers do not bother to apply for the land because when they look at the conditions imposed they say, "This is hopeless; I will go elsewhere." And they do. I know of several cases in past years where developers have purchased land in the south of the State rather than develop land in the north under such stupid conditions. Developers have also purchased land in Queensland and New South Wales rather than attempt to develop land in the north of this State. This situation must change, and it will change.

We find that the banks have been rather loath to admit that they will not lend money under a 21-year lease. They were reluctant to admit this because the Statutes set out that such land can be used as security to borrow money. Now a few of the banks are prepared to say, "We have gone far enough and we will admit you are right. We cannot lend money on such land because there is insufficient security."

The Minister even admitted in a letter to me that there is not a 100 per cent safeguard that a person with a leasehold will eventually gain a freehold even if he meets every condition imposed on the land. Because of this, realistic lending bodies cannot accept a mortgage over the

leasehold land. Consequently, the people who apply for such leases may be incompetent and impractical dreamers. Of course, there are also people like me who say, "Surely sense must prevail before I want some real money."

Members are aware that I am involved with some land development at the moment. I wish to have this recorded because I want to make it clear to all members that I have worked out a way to freehold my land under the current Statutes without any change. However, I want to state that after I have done so, I want the law changed so that development can take place in the north. Young people with a reasonable amount of nous want to know that with hard work they can develop land in the north for the benefit of the northern part of Western Australia. The present situation does not allow this to happen readily.

I have asked the officers of the Department of Lands and Surveys to put forward a budget for land development to show how land can be developed in the north under the existing Statutes and with the existing attitude expressed by the department. Not one officer has accepted the challenge, and the reason for this is that no officer can accept the challenge. The principles involved are impractical. So in Parliament I again offer the challenge.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How did you buck the principles?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I was not going to mention this, but I will now tell the honourable member. I am 46 years of age; I have worked reasonably diligently and I have amassed a sum of money. Also, I have a wife who was content to sell her home to go to live on a virgin block. She now has wall-to-wall stars in the bedroom. There are not too many people who, at the age of 46, are content to put up \$64 000 to live on a virgin block whilst carrying water until pumps are filled.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is not answering the question.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: That is how it is done.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You had better qualify what you said. You said that people cannot get title to leasehold land.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Developers can obtain leasehold land, but not freehold. Eventually they can obtain title to freehold land, but it is very hard to do. Most of the land is released on 21-year leases and under certain conditions. The land can be surrendered after improvements have been made, and having surrendered the land the person concerned can

then apply for freehold, but there is no 100 per cent certainty that he will be granted the land.

The Hon. R. Thompson: No guarantee you mean?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Also, one would need a great deal of finance and perseverance to develop the land to the point where one could apply for the freehold.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Under this Government you would need great perseverance.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: It is quite fruitless to discuss what would happen under any particular Government because this has happened for the last century and over that period there have been a few changes of Government in this State.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: But not in this House!

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I will refer to a specific situation in Kununurra as I have obtained the permission of H. L. and B. A. Young to use their name in this House. This married couple applied for the leasehold on a virgin block to develop a caravan site. Against the advice of the shire council at the time, because it was felt that another caravan site was not needed, the Department of Lands and Surveys approved the lease. The Youngs went over their lease period, but because of the large sum of money which they had put into the land, the Department of Lands and Surveys agreed to extend the lease. However, it has now reached the stage where this couple has been asked to present a finishing date to the Department of Lands and Surveys—an opening date for 32 days. If this date cannot be given, the land will then revert to the Crown. The Youngs will have to pull down all the improvements and the land will have to be restored to its original state.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How long has this property been under development?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: For several years. These people suffered a reversal in business, but they kept this development going. I have checked this personally with the Youngs and the money expended on the park to date is \$71 000. Only another \$15 000 is needed to complete the park, but because of the leasehold conditions the Youngs cannot borrow the money. They approached the Department of Lands and Surveys and said, "Will you give us a conditional purchase agreement or some guarantee that we will attain a freehold when the development is completed? We will then be able to approach the bank and borrow the \$15 000 so that we can give you a completion date." The Department of Lands and

Surveys said, "No, you must give us a completion date or go." That is the situation which is going to be changed, and I would like to see other current policies in the Department of Lands and Surveys changed also.

An ex-serviceman who qualifies for a war service home loan may obtain a block on which to build. However, if the block is obtained under a 21-year lease arrangement, he cannot borrow money. The department responsible for loans to ex-servicemen is quite adamant on this point, regardless of the State Statutes. This department will not lend money for improvements to land held under a 21-year lease. The Department of Lands and Surveys operates by the book and it says that money can be borrowed on such land because it is laid down in the Statutes. As I said, it will change. I have already issued a challenge to the officers of the department, and I hope that a courageous officer will give me a budget to show how land can be developed under current conditions. I will mention the matter again in this House over the next few months if I do not get someone who will accept the challenge.

However, I must say I am quite hopeful that after the Minister has reconsidered the proposals members have put before her, she will change her attitudes to land release and land tenure in the north. On that subject, possibly the Minister might even suggest the holding of a joint meeting between the senior bank-managers of this State, departmental officers, the Building Societies Registrar, and the Australian Housing Commission officer in this State. Possibly, such a joint meeting will be able to devise a scheme whereby loans can be made on leasehold land. If that can be done I and the people concerned will be happy.

I turn now to the field of agriculture, and I intend to be quite parochial in my remarks. Our Department of Agriculture has no training college or scheme for people to be trained in tropical agriculture. Yet 36 per cent of our State is in the tropics. Where are the trials relating to tropical horticulture being carried out? They are being carried out in Carnarvon which is in the subtropics.

One of our growers in the tropics was given advice on how to grow mangoes. He planted trees according to the advice he was given and today he has 100 magnificent trees. However, there is only one great problem: He now must tear out every second tree, for the simple reason that the advice he was given was for growing the trees in the subtropics, not the tropics, which was where he was farming. As members would appreciate,

mango trees grow much better in the climates in which they originated.

In the past, officers of the department going to the north have not been tropically trained and have become post-graduate students to the very posts they were sent to the tropics to develop. One cannot blame the men and women involved; we cannot blame them for not being trained if there is no school or college in which to train them. They went up there and did their best.

This has led to some unusual happenings. Several officers of the department have been making comments about a new tropical industry proposed by one free enterprise farmer in the area. This man has run into a lot of financial problems, some of them his own, but others which have been caused by poor engineering designs in the irrigation land of the land release system. This man has proposed to establish an industry based on the growing of lemon grass, but nobody is very interested. For those members who have never had any experience with lemon grass, let me explain. I am sure all members have heard advertisements describing how many lemons are in a particular soap powder, and they would know lemon essence can be purchased. However, that essence does not come from lemons but from the oil of the lemon grass.

This man, Mr A. Morrissey, has done a bit of research into the subject, and has found that the Ord River is in the exact latitude where the highest oil yields occur around the world. The grass itself is very hardy; it will grow even in Perth. In fact, I have grown it on a block in Perth. However, apparently the oil production aspect is very sensitive to latitude, and it will give high yields only in the correct latitude.

Officers of the Department of Agriculture have advised that Mr Morrissey should not be assisted to grow this grass because they feel that it is not really necessary and that possibly he does not have sufficient expertise to grow the grass. Yet this man already has grown 40 acres of lemon grass and has been keeping it going by hand over the last three years.

Also, the CSIRO has taken some of his grass to Queensland, and is growing it up there. Now we find the Queensland farmers want to grow lemon grass.

The pity of it is that there is room for only one farmer in the whole of Australia; at this time, one farmer can produce enough lemon grass for the needs of the whole Australian industry. It would be a great pity if it were recommended that Mr Morrissey be not assisted with this industry. It would also be a great pity if the Government took

notice of all the reports which have been made by departmental officers without reference back to the farmer himself, because already I have found some great errors in those reports. The officers who have been writing the reports without reference to Mr Morrissey have made errors of up to 22 per cent in distillation costs. That is not funny, particularly when a potential Western Australian industry hangs in the balance.

I might add that it is not just the State Government which is involved in tropical research in the sub-tropics. When we look at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's tropical research station it is rather enlightening to find it is situated in Merbein, Victoria! If, as a budding horticulturist, I wish to import some mangoes from, say, Indonesia, which is some 450 miles from my home town, I cannot import the cuttings direct to Kununurra where they can be checked by officers of the department prior to planting. No, they must go all the way to the cold climate of Victoria and be checked under controlled conditions there.

I should also like to comment on the Public Works Department. At most times, I have found officers of the Public Works Department to be very easy to deal with; I have found them mostly to be pleasant, sensible people. This is because they have engineering training; they are not airy-fairy people who dream up ideas and do not put them into practice; they are engineers who must produce something tangible which works.

However, every now and then one comes across an officer who, in his enthusiasm, tends to waste a lot of money, both public and private. It is unusual for me to mention something in this House without being specific, but I am not going to be specific at this stage because I think to complain about what an engineer has done would be mischievous. I would far rather allow the engineer to think about what he should do, than contemplate what he has done. I simply hope that I will not have to mention in this House some of the things that Public Works engineers may be doing wrong in designs and expenditure.

I should like to congratulate Mr Bob Pike on his excellent "inflammatory" speech on the Address-in-Reply. I am being jocular in my use of the word "inflammatory" because the Leader of the Opposition used the word in his speech. I was not present when he made his maiden speech, but I read it in *Hansard* and I consider it to be a very good speech. I hope he maintains that standard throughout his parliamentary life. I found it to be most refreshing.

I should also like to congratulate you, Mr

President, on your election to that office. It must be a wonderful feeling to reach the exalted office of President of the Legislative Council although I must say the cuffs do not suit you!

I should also like to congratulate all those re-elected members who have gained the confidence of their electors, and I hope that in this Chamber we may all work to the betterment of Western Australia and the people therein. I support the motion.

THE HON. O. N. B. OLIVER (West) [8.10 p.m.]: Mr President, I am honoured to take my place in this Chamber; its history is a most significant one. It traces the rise of parliamentary democracy in Western Australia, firstly through the inclusion of citizens in Captain Stirling's first Council of Officials, and the subsequent growth of citizen representation; later, in 1870, in the establishment of the first semi-elective Legislative Council; then, in 1890, in its incorporation into our first self-governing Parliament; and, finally, in 1965, in its transition to a full adult franchise form of representation.

Throughout its long history, this House has stood for the principles of concern for legislative quality, resistance to damaging change, and encouragement of progressive thought and action for public value.

In entering this House, I pledge myself to stand by those principles. In doing so, I will be continuing the work of my respected predecessor, the Hon. Roy Abbey who, for 19 years, served his constituents in this Chamber. The former honourable member is a quiet man who served his people unremittingly and with high honour. He was the kind whose performance one could rely on and whose word one could trust, and if in my service in this House I can emulate the Hon. Roy Abbey, I will have been well rewarded.

It is in this spirit in my maiden speech in this historic Chamber that I should like to share some of the hopes with which I have entered the Parliament of Western Australia. Unfortunately, respect for Parliament is not as it should be, or as it could be. I believe the fundamental cause lies in the fact that Parliament has given too much attention to the making of laws and not enough to the giving of leadership.

None of us will deny the need for a framework of laws. But neither can any of us deny that laws need to serve a fundamental community purpose. Laws which serve only official purposes or express only a political fanaticism over petty detail invite disrespect and rejection. By doing so, they undermine respect for law which is vital for the preservation of real standards in the community.

In my view, we have suffered from an excess of this kind of lawmaking, by-lawmaking and regulation making.

In housing, the dead weight of laws and regulations is threatening the very survival of the private home. Cost has been added to cost, all piled on the altar of narrow subservience to theoretical standards which have long since buried common sense. I will be developing this position during my service in this House.

In planning, the same strangling influence is felt. The present purpose, one tends to feel, is to fight against rather than facilitate response to public demand for places to live. Scandalous delay now is the norm; scandalous, unnecessary escalation of cost to the ordinary homeseeker and property user is the result. I will be developing this position also during my service in this House. For the moment, I introduce these references as pointers to the attitude I intend to adopt on the legislative process.

I am deeply concerned that Parliament should give the quality of moral and intellectual leadership in thought and action which engenders the highest respect for law as a framework for civilised living, that upholds personal and family security and safeguards the responsible expression of personal freedoms. I am deeply concerned that respect for law must be maintained in this community. Unless Parliament—the maker of laws—gives the highest leadership in the keeping of laws, who else can be expected to do so?

I recall the recent disgraceful flouting of the law at Fremantle. I recall to mind the deliberate incitement of an organised mob to interfere with the rights of law-abiding citizens to go about their lawful business.

On the basis of a study of this incident and its aftermath in court proceedings, I am inclined to believe that a powerful attempt was, in fact, being made to undermine the standing and influence of the Parliament, the Government, and the essential fabric of protective law. This too, will be one of the positions I will be developing in my service in this House. My aim will be to build up the defences of a wonderful community with a long-cherished spirit of mateship, of friendship, and of family concern for the maintenance of basic values.

I call it the spirit of the West. It is a fine spirit. It is reflected in the sound moral values of the majority of our families, where there is not only a degree of proper authority, but also real leadership through personal example; it is reflected in the magnificent spirit of community service, so widely evident; and it is reflected in the

natural openness and friendliness of the people in all our communities.

It is not reflected in the bad public example set by adults who flout the law, or who say they will flout the law. Such people never consider what would be the consequence if their example were followed by others who disagree with them and express their attitudes in action. What kind of example is this for rising generations? Do not people care? It behoves Parliament to care.

I would like our Parliament to rise to the status of the highest and most widely respected forum of community discussion on vital issues. I would like it willingly to sacrifice some of its excessive preoccupation with the making of law, in order to give essential attention to the upholding of law. Parliamentary debate should have such a fire and conviction and quality as to arouse public interest, and build public consensus.

I am not advocating a mere "talkfest". I do not favour the making of speeches in Parliament's valuable time merely for the purpose of electoral notoriety. I am against contribution being made unless it serves a defensible purpose.

The community is full of unresolved issues, and the Parliament should be giving itself heart and mind to resolving them—recognising that full resolution rests with the higher parliament of public consensus. Here, we should be building that consensus through the quality of debate on vital issues in the forum of Parliament.

A high level of public reportage of parliamentary debate should be the contribution of the public media. Here is a duty that the media should not ignore. The coverage of sensations is not enough. Debate of society's fundamental values must attract more respect, and I challenge the media to be self critical as well as critical in its coverage of Parliament.

Having said this, however, I want to make it clear that I recognise the basic challenge is to Parliament itself to be relevant—to be part of the community, and not simply a law-makers' club in an ivory tower on the top of a hill.

I am very concerned for the viability of private enterprise. The economic environment is killing private enterprise with excessive tax, excessive documentation, excessive regulation, excessive procedure, and also excessive slowness in bureaucratic decision making—all adding up to disincentive, not encouragement.

The problem is further compounded by the standover pressures of monopoly unionism, as evidenced at Fremantle recently. This whole situation can and should be laid at the door of Parliament and the Government, and it is our job

to correct the faults. We should never forget that when it no longer becomes possible to move from employment to self employment we shall surely be prisoners of a most undesirable system.

Another of my deep concerns is the way our local economy is continually drained and bled of its financial reserves—reserves which could be of enormous benefit to our State. All financial institutions in this State, including the State Treasury, are obliged to hold certain safe reserves of money. They put them to work by placing them safely in various forms of accessible investment so they can be tapped when needed.

Where do they place the reserves? They place them predominantly in the Eastern States money markets; even the State Treasury does this. Quite obviously, we need to respond immediately to the challenge issued on this matter by the Treasurer (Sir Charles Court) who advocated the establishment of suitable financial institutions in Western Australia where we could channel our funds into our development.

I am speaking now not of a few millions, but of hundreds of millions of reserves held by building societies, banks, insurance companies, merchant banks, private companies, and the Treasury. I estimate that we could marshal annually more funds than are committed to the entire loan programme of the Government of Western Australia. At least more than \$300 million would be the figure.

In conclusion, may I add that I am proud to have been elected by my constituents as a member of a Government team firmly committed to take action in these areas of concern. I represent a policy which upholds law and order, and which promises fundamental reappraisal of government and planning. It undertakes to tackle the problems of enterprise, and especially small enterprise, whose leadership understands the key issues facing the community.

I look forward to my period of service in this House. I have already conveyed my congratulations, Mr President, on your appointment to the highest office in this Chamber, but I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you and members for the kindness and consideration shown to me since my election.

I would also like to convey my congratulations to the Hon. Graham MacKinnon on his election as Leader of the Government in this House; to the Hon. Des Dans on his re-election as Leader of the Opposition; to the Hon. Ian Medcalf on his appointment as Queen's Counsel; and to the Hon. David Wordsworth on his elevation to the

Ministry. Congratulations to the new members and those who have been elected to the various committees and positions in this House and in the Parliament.

One final concern I have is that no matter how far one may have advanced in one's civil vocation or public life, one comes to this Chamber with so much to learn. I hope members will treat this new boy with the tolerance and understanding which he may not deserve, but which he will surely need. Thank you.

THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON (East Metropolitan) [8.25 p.m.]: I would like to congratulate both members who preceded me in making their maiden speeches, and particularly Mr Pike because I was rather worried when I was told that in making one's maiden speech one was not supposed to be controversial and was supposed to limit oneself in time. For 20 years I have been making judicious statements, holding a balance and not being provocative at all, and now Mr Pike has shown me that convention need not be taken too seriously, and I intend to follow his example.

Mr President, I would like to congratulate you on being elected to your very high office and, at the same time, commiserate with you. I congratulate you because you have a fine reputation as being a person of some impartiality; and I commiserate with you because you have a reputation for being a fine mixer in this House and I am sorry I will not be able to hear you in form, as it were, because you will have to sit where you are with judicial and magisterial calm.

I am also pleased that a member of the back benches has been elected to the office of President and that on this occasion it has not become a retiring post for a member of the Executive. You have been elected at a very important time, when our institutions are perhaps under attack and when we have problems in the community which will bring this institution under attack. I suggest that some of the people who are trying hardest to defend it are the very people who might bring it low.

Aneurin Bevin, who introduced the health scheme in the Atlee Government and who died as Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but who, if he had lived, would have been a great Prime Minister, said in his book *In Place of Fear* in 1952 that society was an arena of conflicting social forces and not a plexus of individual striving. I would agree with him. He saw the forces as private property, poverty, and democracy. He said—

The conflict between the forces, always implicit, breaks out into open struggle during

periods of exceptional difficulty, like widespread and prolonged unemployment, and exposes the Government of the day and the political constitution to great strain.

I believe that is the situation now, and it perturbs me to read in the Governor's Speech that this very active Government has listed a whole 10 Bills it intends to introduce. No doubt others will turn up, but apparently they will be *ad hoc* or they have not advanced very far in their planning.

The Governor's Speech states—

The Government is anxious to prevent any abuse of the rights and privileges of Members of Parliament. The Attorney General has been asked to prepare appropriate amendments to the Parliamentary Privileges Act.

The Attorney-General is reported as having said—and I am sorry he is not here to confirm the report—that this will act as a deterrent. I am hoping the Leader of the House will later tell us against what it will act as a deterrent, because it seems to me that if since 1890 we have managed without certain powers—including the powers of expulsion of members which we are told the Government intends to introduce in its Bill—the timing is odd. I do not really object to the House having the power to expel members, but I do not see why it is needed. It is a power that the Federal Parliament has used only once, in 1920, to expel the member for Kalgoorlie for so-called treasonable utterances when he defended his native country, Ireland. He then went back to Ireland and became a very capable Minister in the Dail Eirann.

Why is the Government introducing this legislation? It seems to me that it is a sign of an overreaction—a fear by the Government that if we are not careful there will be too close a scrutiny made of Government actions by back-benchers.

Privilege was something asserted by the mother of Parliaments at Westminster—by the House of Commons—over many centuries. Privilege was introduced to enable it to defend its rights against the Executive at a time when the law courts were under the thumb of the Executive and members therefore wanted to assert their rights to challenge and query the Executive.

We have developed a long way since the days in which Queen Elizabeth I could say to the House of Commons, when talking about rights, "Your rights are to say, Yea or nay." She gave the members of the House of Commons no other right to petition or argue against her.

The House of Commons really came into

conflict with the Executive when Charles I tried to arrest five members, and from that time the very form for summoning members to the lower House at the opening of Parliament was to remind the people that the Sovereign, or his representative as Governor, did not set foot in a lower House of Parliament.

Privilege has been developed over the centuries in order to protect the rights of private members vigorously and adequately to criticise the Executive. But whereas Charles I was thrown out of the House of Commons, our "Charles" is in Parliament. This is one of the problems we have to face when we think about bringing in legislation which assimilates privileges brought in during past centuries, because one of the things that has happened in the Westminster system is that the Executive, the real Executive—the formal Executive in this State is still the Governor, but the real Executive is the Premier and his Cabinet—sits in Parliament. As has been said, the key thing about the government of the House of Commons is our confusion with regard to the Executive and legislative Governments. With the development of the party system—and I am not complaining, I cannot suggest anything else in a modern society where there is an inevitable growth of government and centralism regardless of what Government has been in power—in the system of party Government the Executive has effective control of both Houses of Parliament when a conservative Government is in office, and has control of one House when a Labor Government is in office. I will refer to that again later.

This means, of course, that if we are not careful and if we give Parliament power we may be giving the Executive power. As a result, under the guise of defending the privilege of members we may be giving the Executive power to take away the privilege of members, unless members oppose take their independence very seriously and ignore the Executive at times. I doubt whether it will happen in another place.

You, Mr President, sit there as custodian of our rights and I hope you are not reduced to the stage of the Speaker of the House of Commons, or to the level of Charles I when he fell on his knees and said, "Sire, I have eyes to see and a voice to speak only as this honourable House commands." You, Mr President, the same as the Speaker in the House of Commons, are here to guard our privileges. The privileges of parliamentarians are something to be guarded zealously. Unfortunately, quite often criticisms hit too near the bone. The right of private members to criticise

Governments is something we must guard very carefully.

It seems to me that we need to multiply the occasions in this Parliament during which we can examine legislation and examine the activities of Governments. I am suggesting—and I will suggest it in greater detail at a later stage—that we must multiply these occasions by developing a decent system of parliamentary committees in this Parliament of ours. It seems to me that the Government has over-reacted to certain events which occurred in another place last year, and that over-reaction is matched by over-reaction by all kinds of people outside Parliament. We have to realise that fear provokes confrontation, and further confrontation provokes greater fear. It would seem to me this is the great danger that exists in Western Australia at the present time, both inside and outside Parliament.

I am suggesting we need less confrontation and more dialogue, and this is more important in the realms of industrial relations. I will refer to this very briefly. I come from an electorate—the East Metropolitan Province—where the trade unionists are thick on the ground. I love them all because they are decent, hard-working and honourable people. Some of those unionists are out of work, and others see their jobs falling away. Some of them who work in the railways see the rolling stock running down. All sorts of problems are building up, and some of them have been mentioned earlier this evening. One of those problems I will mention again in a different way. I will refer to a member of the Transport Workers' Union employed as a tanker driver with a take-home pay of about \$109 per week. His job opportunities are vanishing. A few years ago there were jobs for 250 tanker drivers but now the number has been reduced to about 150. It is not surprising that those people are fearful of losing their jobs, and fear leads to confrontation. It seems to me it would be the responsibility of the Minister not to exacerbate the confrontation by loud utterances, criticisms and threats. He should try to get behind the scenes and try to get people to negotiate.

I have put a question to the Minister for Labour and Industry and I will be interested to hear his answer. I asked him what he hoped to gain if the Transport Workers' Union was deregistered. It seems to me that the only result would be that no longer would it be able to appear before the Industrial Commission. It will have no choice but to fall back on collective bargaining and adopt the tactics of confrontation.

At a time of high and rising unemployment we should be very careful not to blame one section of

the community. The scapegoat principle is an easy one to adopt, but it leads to the road to perdition. Adolf Hitler blamed the communists and the Jews when the unemployment in Germany rose to 30 per cent of the work force. In Western Australia so far we have got to the stage of blaming the communists and the trade unionists. However, the trade unionists are not the only ones responsible for what happens. The trade unionists are not responsible for unemployment. They do not run the capitalist system, and they do not bring about a depression. The trade unionists did not bring about the 1930 depression, the 1890 depression, or the 1850 depression.

Since the introduction of a system of industrial capitalism we have had 40-year cycles when there have been depressions and economic difficulties of great magnitude. On each occasion people have looked around for a scapegoat. Well, there is no scapegoat. After all, the trade unionists are not responsible for us having one of the most inefficient industrialised systems in the world, and the trade unionists are not responsible for the so-called centralism in Australia. Since 1886 the Liberal Party has been a party of State-supported private enterprise. As a private enterprise party it believes the State exists to provide the infrastructure for private enterprise, when private enterprise cannot provide that for itself.

It is odd to hear people in a system like ours—where there is a build-up of inefficient industries—claiming that one has only to control the unions in order to have a better system.

A problem is that when one is elected to Parliament one hopes to be able to do something, but it is interesting to note that under the Westminster system of government the battle is muted. We hear a great deal about the dignity of Parliament, and we have formalities and ceremonies. I am surprised when I hear about dignity because you, Mr President, sit there wearing, on your head, a wig which is a stylised form of the mark of the rake and the lecher of the 17th century. The full-bottomed wig was introduced into England by Charles II. As a matter of fact, with all due respect to you, Sir, I may call you a walking anachronism, because you have a 17th century wig over 18th century ruffles and underneath that you have a 13th or 14th century cassock. So, if that is tradition, I think it is time we did away with much of this tradition and, it may be, we should do away with the Westminster tradition of an upper House.

The Constitutions of British colonies were introduced in the 19th century. They were introduced at a time when the House of Commons had established itself as a responsible House, and

the House of Lords had become a House of Review. At least in theory the House of Lords had become a responsible upper House, a House which made sure that the democratic House was responsible—at least the representative House. There was no democracy in Britain in the 19th century; it had to wait until the 20th century to have a democratic House.

In every colony that the British set up they left behind a bicameral system with a lower House which was more or less representative. Of course, in Western Australia the lower House is not fully representative, but I will discuss that later when I introduce a Bill to transform the franchise of this House. As I was saying, the lower House was more or less representative and the upper House represented vested interests—the House of chieftains in some colonies but usually they represented a propertied interest.

I have just been reading the 1899 debate on the setting up of the Constitution of this State. Both Houses had a property franchise, and the honourable gentlemen in the Legislative Council then were quite sure nobody, without a stake in the country, who did not own property, could possibly be trusted to govern the country. Admittedly, some thought miners should be admitted to the franchise as well as lodgers paying some kind of rent, but that did not seem to be the general consensus.

The Legislative Council was well described by a Governor of South Australia in 1856 during a great debate between South Australians who were very progressive and the Colonial Secretary. They wanted to establish a Legislative Council which was elected on a property franchise, and the Colonial Secretary wanted a Legislative Council which was nominated.

Governor Sir Richard Grave McDonnell said the Colonial Secretary should accept the elected Council because he would then have one which was amply conservative, and if he held out much longer for a nominated Upper House the spirit of democracy might rise in South Australia. So the Colonial Secretary wisely gave way and the spirit of democracy was kept out of South Australia for many years. It took a long time to appear in Western Australia, which followed on the pattern of the other colonies.

It is said that upper Houses are Houses of Review—nonpartisan Houses which ensure the steady will of the people; that notice is taken of the steady will of the people; that one cannot trust a fly-by-night lower House which might be elected on a gust of electoral passion—and that, after all, the people who vote for it are people

without property and therefore they cannot be trusted. If they do elect the wrong kind of people, it is necessary to ensure the steady will of the people is maintained. For this reason most upper Houses are elected for a six, eight, or 12-year term with a proportion of the members—in this case half the members—retiring every three years, so that if the electorate is taken over by a gust of passion it will have a couple of elections to give it time to rethink.

This might happen if the House concerned were a House elected on universal franchise so that at each half-election it could represent the will of the people. But I suggest that a House for which one-third of the population returns 20 members and two-thirds of the population returns 12 members is not in any sense a representative House. It is a House which is designed to be a conservative upper House. Because we have not the old-fashioned kind of conservatives they have in Britain, "conservative" in this sense means a member of the Liberal or Country Party. It is a House designed to ensure that unless some miracle occurs—and I can assure you, Mr President, that we on this side of the House intend to try to get into the miracle business—the Labor Party can never control it; which means when a Labor Government is in office its reforms can be rejected, and have been rejected, time and time again by the upper House. Therefore its aims are stultified and the wishes of the electors are quite often stultified.

I am not arguing that this is happening at the present time or that the electors are supporting us at present. It is quite obvious when we look at the result of the last election that they are not supporting us. I am not complaining about it. I am saying we must do something about it so that we can get our policies across if we are to receive a majority vote. But if we receive a majority vote in the other place, we cannot receive one here, and 15 per cent of the electors could elect a majority in this House if they voted in the right place. I think this state of affairs needs to be changed.

I am not saying I will change it. I have been told often enough that people come into this House breathing fire and after a while they go out very tamely. I am not promising to do anything except try to convince members opposite with persuasion and sweet reason that they should join us in reforming this House and allowing a majority of electors after two elections to decide the composition of the House and who should control it. I will try to persuade members opposite that this is desirable. I realise it will be like talking to the invincibly ignorant but we will not

give up, and at the same time we will try to persuade the electors so that they will put pressure on members opposite as well as on us to convince them that this is desirable.

It might be possible to argue for an upper House to ensure the steady will of the people is maintained by electing half the members of the House at every election if the House was in fact elected democratically. The most democratic way so far as representation is concerned—I am not suggesting it for the other House—is a system of proportional representation, and later in the session we will try to persuade members opposite that this is a matter they can support.

The main point I want to make is it is time we stopped the politics of fear and confrontation in Western Australia. It is time we talked a little less about law, order, discipline, and keeping people in their place. It is time we tried to understand the problems of those who are concerned in what some people are pleased to call illegal strikes. The strikes are illegal because our laws say they are illegal, and they have always been illegal. So as far as I can see it is not possible in Western Australia to have a legal strike. The laws here are the laws of Britain in the 19th century.

People do not strike for no reason. May I mention one trade union leader who has come in for a great deal of criticism in the Press recently; I refer to Rob Cowles, the Secretary of the TWU. I was told by a former colleague of mine that Mr Cowles held big meetings at ovals so that he could keep right away from the rank and file; and I have been told by others he is always stirring up people. I saw him at a big meeting where he was quite close to the rank and file, many of whom were hostile, and he was dampening them down and cooling them off as he has done very often. When I hear the talk about militant unionists as though they were the devil incarnate, I think we should stop and work out what we are talking about.

After all, the owners of capital are fearful for their profits. The industrialists are fearful of what will happen to them in this economic recession. Likewise, the unionists are fearful about what will happen to them. They do not have money or power—whatever people might say, they have very little power—and when they go on strike they get great reactions through the Press. They are fighting not from a position of strength but from a position of weakness and quite often they are fighting for their very livelihoods. I think it is time we understood this and tried to do something about it, and I think it is time we made our Parliament an effective, businesslike body with a good committee system which could examine the

problems of our community. As my leader said earlier, there are no easy answers to the problems of today.

Some years ago when I was first a tutor in politics at the University of Adelaide, students in economics who came to my tutorials told me to stop worrying because it could never happen again and that Lord Keynes had solved it all. Lord Keynes did solve it all in a period of rising post-war prosperity which in my opinion was a period of great lost opportunities, a period when we could have afforded great social reform and failed to do anything about it. It was also a period when we failed to grapple with the problem that we were exporting more than we were importing and our balance of payments was becoming out of balance and we had to rely on vast inputs of overseas capital, which was fine so long as we were developing. But it was in the period of the McMahon Government that development capital turned into speculative capital and began in Australia the inflationary boom with which we are still trying to grapple.

We should remember that Governments of all political persuasions have been in power as inflation has increased and unemployment has risen. Some Governments have said they can stop the trend and some have said they can stop it State by State. I will perhaps have more to say about that later when we are debating the Supply Bill.

In fact, no Government of any western industrial country at present—whether it be Labor, Social Democratic, Liberal, Christo-Democratic, or Conservative—has found the answer to the problems which are facing us. The answer as I see it is not to bring about more repressive legislation; the answer is not to bring into Parliament laws to make it possible for the Executive to control back-bench members better. The answer is to try to look into the causes of the events giving rise to the problems which face us and honestly to seek solutions. I feel this has not always been done.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. N. F. Moore.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Assembly Personnel

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

House adjourned at 8.58 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HOUSING

Aborigines

1. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Housing:

(1) Is it a fact—

- (a) that approximately \$1 million of funds allocated by the Commonwealth to the State for Aboriginal housing for the financial year ended June, 1977, was unspent and therefore lost to the State;
- (b) that there are approximately 1 200 Aboriginal families listed as applicants for assistance by the State Housing Commission; and
- (c) that there are approximately 1 000 building tradesmen unemployed in this State?

- (2) If the answers to (1) (a), (b) and (c) are "Yes" why did the Government not establish a day labour force to provide both employment and houses?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) (a) No. In fact, funds available to the Housing Commission for Aboriginal housing have been overspent by approximately \$1.4 million.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) Yes.
- (2) No funds were available for material purchases or labour.

ELECTRICITY AND GAS

Fixed Charges

2. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) When was the decision to increase the fixed charges for electricity and gas supplies from \$2.04 to \$6.00 approved by State Cabinet?
- (2) When were these proposals first considered by Cabinet?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) 28th June, 1977.
- (2) In accordance with long standing tradition this information is confidential.

DAIRYING

Milk Production

3. The Hon. N. McNEILL, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) (a) In view of certain public statements concerning the future of the dairy industry in Western Australia, is it a fact that there has been a significant shift in milk production from—

(i) irrigation areas;

(ii) dryland areas:

north of Harvey during the past two years;

(b) if so, is it considered that this contributed to difficulties in maintaining a sufficient supply in the last year?

(2) (a) Is it correct that there is a considerable potential for expanded milk production—

(i) on existing licensed whole-milk properties;

(ii) within traditional whole-milk areas;

(b) if so, will the Minister initiate a review of policy governing—

(i) the issue of milk quotas; and

(ii) the increase in individual quotas;

in the interests of ensuring full community benefit of the most economic milk production; that the optimum number of proven producers remain in the industry; and that there is minimum necessity for the importation of dairy products?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

(1) (a) (i) There has been an overall reduction in milk production in Western Australia over the past two years. However dairy factory milk intake figures show that there has been a smaller decline in the intake of milk from the irrigation areas compared with the intake from dryland areas.

(ii) Available statistics indicate that milk production in the dryland areas north of Harvey over the last two years has declined in common with other dryland areas.

(b) Seasonal factors together with increased costs of production were the main reasons for difficulty in maintaining a sufficient supply of milk for special products during last summer.

(2) (a) (i) and (ii) Yes, there is potential for increased milk production on existing properties and within the previous whole milk areas.

(b) No, the policies governing the issue of milk quotas and the increase in individual quotas are considered to be in the best interests of the industry and the community as a whole.

EDUCATION

Pre-School Board

4. The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

When the Pre-School Board is disbanded and its functions are taken over by the Education Department—

(a) will kindergarten teachers continue to be given certain hours off to enable them to liaise with other departments and to visit parents; and

(b) what plans are there to cope with the under five age group at present catered for by pre-school centres under the board?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

(a) The principle of nonsessional time will be retained.

(b) Existing arrangements for the under five age group will continue, pending Government consideration of reports which will be received from an advisory committee appointed to consider future administrative and funding arrangements for this area of children's activity.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Vested Interests of Officials

5. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Has the Minister received a further request since the end of March from the Local Government Association and the Country Shires Association to introduce legislation requiring council officers and consultants to declare vested interests?
- (2) Does the Government intend to introduce legislation for this purpose in this session?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) A further request has been received from the Local Government Association but no such request has ever been made by the Country Shire Council's Association.
- (2) The matter is still under consideration.

RAILWAYS

Deraillments

6. The Hon. F. E. MCKENZIE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will the Minister list the number of deraillments which have occurred on Western Australian tracks each year for the past six years?
- (2) Will he also list the number of deraillments which have occurred each month for the past 12 months?
- (3) Will he list the cost per annum for each of the past six years, in terms of loss and rolling stock, costs of repairs to track and other costs as a result of deraillments?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1), (2) and (3) The information sought by the Hon. Member is not readily available in Westrail's records and will take some little time to collate.
I will forward it to him as soon as it is available.

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE

Beroona

7. The Hon. D. W. COOLEY, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Was the reported delay in the departure of the State Ship *Beroona* on Monday, the 18th April, 1977, solely due to the Minister for Transport's desire (as a news report put it) "to be present at the loading of the America's Cup Challenger *Australia*"?
- (2) If so, how long was the ship delayed?
- (3) What extra cost was incurred in demurrage charges, crew's wages, etc., as a consequence of the delay?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) No. The *Beroona* was originally scheduled to sail on Tuesday, 19th April, 1977.

Because the scheduled arrival day at the first loading port was Monday, 25th April (Anzac Day), the vessel was held back in Fremantle until Wednesday, 20th April, 1977. Had the reporter been observant, he would have noticed that the vessel was still discharging steel on that day.

- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) Nil.

RAILWAY BUS SERVICE

Geraldton-Perth

8. The Hon. T. McNEIL, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the seating capacity of the Westrail buses operating between Geraldton and Perth?
- (2) What has been the average number of unoccupied seats over the past 12 months?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) 32 and 36 seaters.
- (2) Via Three Springs—20 per cent unoccupied
Via Encaabba—22 per cent unoccupied.

HEALTH

Family Planning

9. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Health:

With reference to the committee appointed to investigate the question of Family Planning Nurse Practitioners as proposed in the Nurses Act Amendment Bill (No. 2), 1976—

- (a) has the committee yet finalised its deliberations and brought down recommendations;

- (b) if so, will the Government be translating those recommendations into legislation;
- (c) if not, why not; and
- (d) if the answer to (a) is "No" when is it anticipated the report will be finalised?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (a) No;
- (b) Not applicable;
- (c) Not applicable;
- (d) in 6-8 months.

ENERGY

Nuclear Power

10. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the report in *The West Australian* of the 30th March, 1977, of a protest about a proposed atomic power generating plant at Onagawa, Japan?
- (2) Can the Minister advise the reason for the Tohoku Electric Power Company offering to pay \$10.2 million in compensation to local fishermen?
- (3) Could he advise if the problems arising from the construction of this power plant will affect the construction of similar power plants in Japan?
- (4) If so, has the Government ascertained whether this will affect sales of uranium to Japan?

The Hon D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) to (4) I am not aware of the specific case referred to by the Honourable Member but he should know that it is the usual practice in Japan for local environmental action groups and authorities to negotiate environmental settlements with industries in the form of a cash payment. There is no evidence that the matter referred to will affect uranium sales to Japan. Indeed, Japan's chief concern at the moment is whether or not they will be able to obtain sufficient uranium from their prospective suppliers, including Australia.

EDUCATION

Handicapped Children

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

In view of the recommendations of the Western Australian Council for Special Education—

- (a) that the Education Department adopt the policy of providing for the education of handicapped children as near to their homes as possible; and
- (b) wherever possible facilities and resources should be provided to enable a child with a physical handicap to attend a local school—

will the Minister advise what action is being taken to provide access to all levels of existing and future school buildings and facilities for handicapped children?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

The Education Department has, for some years, been conscious of the need to accommodate the handicapped in local schools and, to this end, has endeavoured to design schools with this in mind. However, as there are degrees and types of handicap, not all handicapped children can be accommodated in all schools. Where a local school, for one reason or another, cannot accommodate a particular type of handicapped child, alternative arrangements involving transport to another school can be made.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Flammable Night Wear

12. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that—

- (a) 13 children were admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital during 1976 with burns which resulted from wearing flammable night wear; and
- (b) *Choice Magazine* of April, 1977, in a report on children's highly flammable night wear, stated that New South Wales and Victoria have acted to ban the sale of this clothing?

- (2) If so, will he consider the introduction of legislation in this State to prevent the sale of children's night wear which is shown to be a potential hazard because of its flammability?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (2) Legislation is presently being drafted for presentation to Parliament.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 2nd August, 1977

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

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Appointment

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [4.31 p.m.]: I move—

That the member for Karrinyup (Mr Clarko) be appointed Chairman of Committees.

MR O'NEIL: (East Melville—Deputy Premier) [4.32 p.m.]: I second the motion.

Question put and passed.

DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

Appointment

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I desire to announce that I have appointed the member for Vasse (Mr Blaikie), the member for Bunbury (Mr Sibson), the member for Albany (Mr Watt), the member for Moore (Mr Crane), and the member for Canning (Mr Bateman) to be Deputy Chairmen of Committees during the present session.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Numbering

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I desire to inform members that following discussions between myself, the officers of the House, and the Government Printer, arrangements have been made for the consecutive numbering of questions on notice throughout the session.

This means that a question will bear the same number, irrespective of whether it is answered, postponed, withdrawn, or disallowed. It is anticipated that questions which are postponed until the next day of sitting will appear at the beginning of that day's notice paper. Questions postponed for a longer period will be shown, as in the past, at the foot of all other business on the notice paper.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Days and Hours

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [5.07 p.m.]: I move—

That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 4.30 p.m., and on Thursdays at 2.15 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m., if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

As members will know, this is a motion which is moved at this stage of the session. The hours which are set out in the motion are those which have been adhered to fairly traditionally at the commencement of a session, but are subject to variation by negotiation from time to time.

The Government felt that at the commencement of the session there was no need to change the sitting days and times.

Mr Davies: Have you had a look at it at all?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Yes. I think the honourable member will realise, from his own ministerial experience, that the more one looks at the matter the more difficult it becomes to find an alternative if the Government of the day is to complete its business in a rational way and meet the many commitments made on it not only by the public, but also by members themselves.

I should mention that, as previously announced, it is not intended that we sit during Show Week, and I give that notice to members now.

The Leader of the Opposition has discussed with me another matter concerning sitting days and times, which I have not yet had an opportunity to discuss with him following the studies I have made of it; but if he so desires I can give him the answer now, unless he would like me to discuss the matter privately. I can indicate that we are favourably disposed to his proposal subject to one or two matters of detail which I would like to discuss with him. If he would like me to enlarge on the matter now, I will do so.

Mr Jamieson: I would prefer you to do so now.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The suggestion has been made that after the first four sitting weeks—that is, the weeks commencing the 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd August—the House should adjourn for a week. We would then reassemble for three weeks, if my reckoning is correct, because we would then adjourn for Show Week. The proposition was suggested because we will not now be sitting during the week set aside for the Constitutional Convention in October.

The Government has studied the proposal and