

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 26 July 1983

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

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER

THE SPEAKER (Mr Harman): I have this day administered the Oath of Allegiance, according to law, to the Hon. Alexander Donald Taylor, the member for Cockburn.

BILLS (2): ASSENT

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

1. Prevention of Excessive Prices Bill.
2. Acts Amendment (Prevention of Excessive Prices) Bill.

STATEMENTS BY SPEAKER

Legislative Assembly Officers

THE SPEAKER (Mr Harman): For the information of members, particularly the newer members, I would like to introduce to them the officers who are serving this House.

Immediately in front of me sit the Clerk (Mr Bruce Okely) and the Clerk Assistant (Mr Lionel Farrell).

In entering the Chamber to-day I was announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr David Green) who is now seated opposite me at the far end of this Chamber.

Seated at the rear of the Chamber on my left-hand side is the Clerk of Records and Papers (Mr Andrew Liveris). With him are his two Assistant Clerks of Records (Mr Alan Rogers and Miss Monica Jones). Miss Jones is seconded from the Public Service for one year's parliamentary service.

Attendants who will be working in the Chamber are, from my left, Mr Jim Green, Mr Victor Moate, and Mr Peter Pascoe.

All these officers are directly employed by the Legislative Assembly and will do everything possible to assist members in the discharge of their responsibilities.

There is one other officer, employed by the Legislative Assembly, who does not serve in the Chamber itself. I refer to Miss Cynthia Pick, my official secretary. Miss Pick is also the secretary-

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stenographer for the "department" of the Legislative Assembly.

Microphones and Tape Recorders: Use

Since the House last met, this Chamber has been equipped with a sound reinforcement system and tape recorders. In addition, a relay of the debates of each House to all members' offices will shortly be available.

In respect of sound reinforcement, members should find the voice of the member whose microphone is live is noticeably clearer and just a little louder. The microphone switches are activated by a monitor who is seated in the gallery. The volume level of the sound reinforcement has been pre-set and cannot be adjusted by the monitor.

The relay of debates to members' offices is for the convenience of members only. It is not to be used for unofficial tape recording, relay, or reproduction in any form whatsoever. I emphasise this point. Any member or person using the relay for unofficial reproduction or publication is not only doing so without the protection of parliamentary privilege, but also might well be regarded as having infringed those very privileges.

I turn now to the dual tape-recording system. One set of tapes is being made in the gallery. This set is for my use should it be necessary for me to determine a matter such as whether or not certain words were used by a particular member.

The second set of tapes is being made in the *Hansard* offices as an aid to reporters, and in the resolution of disputes that may arise. If a member believes a mistake has been made in the transcript of his speech, he should take up the matter with the Chief *Hansard* Reporter. If he is not satisfied with the Chief *Hansard* Reporter's decision, he may refer the matter to me, and my decision will be final.

Members will not have access to the tape recordings; that access will be available only to the Chief *Hansard* Reporter (Mrs Jessie Bussola) and myself.

Mrs Bussola, together with her deputy (Mr Neil Burrell), and staff of the parliamentary *Hansard* service, will become known and appreciated by newer members as the session progresses. Traditionally their place in the Chamber is at the Table of the House directly in front of the Clerks' table and immediately between the Government and Opposition benches.

Standing Orders: Reprinted Volume

I draw the attention of members to the volume of Standing Orders which is placed before them.

This volume has been completely reprinted since the House last met. In addition to this there are two changes which I would like to mention.

Firstly, the volume has been produced in loose-leaf format. This means that future amendments to Standing Orders can be inserted into the volume by simply reprinting and replacing the pages involved. The improved efficiency and economy of this change is obvious.

Secondly, the volume includes, for the first time in this or any other Australian Parliament, annotations indicating significant rulings from the Chair. These annotations appear as footnotes to each chapter of the volume. They represent the collective wisdom of the House as expressed through its many presiding officers since 1890.

The House owes its gratitude to all who have been involved in the preparation of this volume—to the several officers, past and present, who have recorded, checked, and rechecked the hundreds of entries involved and to the Government Printer and his staff for the excellent manner in which the printing has been carried out.

I am informed the contents of the volume are stored in electronic data form by the Government Printer. This will mean that additions and alterations to the Standing Orders and the listed precedents can be carried out with a minimum of cost and delay.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Enforcement: Petition.

MR WILLIAMS (Clontarf) [4.38 p.m.]: I have a petition addressed to the Honourable Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia. It reads—

We, the undersigned citizens of Western Australia affirm that—

1. Capital punishment was and still is commanded by God in the Bible as a punishment for capital crimes.
2. A Government's primary responsibility is to protect the rights and freedoms of law-abiding citizens. The possibility of release on parole or escape of criminals threatens the safety of society.
3. Gaol terms very rarely rehabilitate criminals. Experience has shown that ex-prisoners generally commit further crimes.
4. The expense of maintaining criminals in imprisonment for the term of life is not justified.

We therefore entreat that capital punishment be left on the Statutes of Western Australia, and enforced as a law of this State.

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

This petition bears 955 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No. 2.)

ANIMALS: DOG ACT

Review: Petition

MR GORDON HILL (Helena) [4.41 p.m.]: I present a petition, signed by 31 citizens of Western Australia, which reads as follows—

To the Honorable Members in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, wish to draw your attention to the fact that the recommendations put to the Minister by the Dog Act review committee, May 1983 are a serious menace to our civil rights and accordingly hereby request that you reject, in its entirety, the reported recommendations of this committee and as your humble petitioners shall ever pray.

I certify that the petition conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No. 3.)

DISCRIMINATION: SEXUAL

United Nations Convention: Petition

MR COYNE (Murchison-Eyre) [4.42 p.m.]: I present a petition signed by 18 citizens of the Murchison-Eyre region, which reads as follows—

To The Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, request that the Australian Government will refrain from RATIFYING the United Nations Convention on:—“The Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women” on the grounds of its profound and long-lasting effects on the Family Life of our Nation.

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

I certify that the petition conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No. 5.)

GAMBLING: CASINO

Legalising: Petition

MR COYNE (Murchison-Eyre) [4.43 p.m.]: I present a petition signed by 50 citizens of Western Australia, which reads as follows—

To The Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, request that the Western Australian Government will refrain from legalising any Casino in the State of Western Australia on the grounds of its promotion of organised crime which will have a damaging effect on the citizens of our State.

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

I certify that the petition conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No. 4.)

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION: BILLS

Motion

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Leader of the House) [4.52 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the Firearms Amendment Bill, the Business Franchise (Tobacco) Amendment Bill, the Local Government Amendment Bill, the Temporary Reduction of Remuneration (Senior Public Officers) Bill and the Supply Bill to be introduced without notice and to pass through their remaining stages in the one day of sitting and to enable the aforesaid business to be entered upon and dealt with prior to the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

In moving the motion I want to indicate that I have discussed these matters with the Leader of

the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—with both of whom I have had very courteous discussions—and I understand that the Opposition is prepared to accede to the suspension of Standing Orders on the grounds that these matters are regarded as urgent. Of course that does not mean that the Opposition will agree with the contents of the Bills, but certainly in respect of the Firearms Amendment Bill the Opposition accepts the serious hazard that is facing the farming community. So it is hoped that the Firearms Amendment Bill will be dealt with today.

I am not sure of the present situation with regard to the Local Government Amendment Bill and whether or not that legislation can be passed today. In regard to the Business Franchise (Tobacco) Amendment Bill, it is hoped that the Leader of the Opposition will be able to speak to that measure tomorrow and the Bill can be passed on Thursday.

I understand that the Temporary Reduction of Remuneration (Senior Officers) Bill and the Supply Bill will be dealt with next week, although the Supply Bill should be explained by the Treasurer today.

In most cases the need for the passage of these Bills will be self-evident. We would like the House to give us the opportunity to put before the Parliament and the people these matters which we consider to be quite urgent.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.54 p.m.]: On behalf of the Opposition, I indicate that the Leader of the House—as he now refers to himself—has been in touch with me concerning the legislation, and the Opposition believes that it can accommodate the Government in relation to the five specific Bills. It is my understanding that today we will complete all stages of the Bill to amend the Firearms Act.

Although the Leader of the House has provided us in confidence with a copy of the Bill to amend the Local Government Act, we are not in a position to deal with that today. It was certainly my understanding from discussions with the Leader of the House that we would deal completely with one Bill only today. Other than that, the arrangements as outlined appear to agree with our mutual understanding of the way in which we will proceed in the next few days at least.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [4.55 p.m.]: I rise to speak to this motion as, quite contrary to his usual practice, the Leader of the House failed to notify the National Party of his intent. We do not oppose the motion, but I ask him if he will do us the

courtesy of informing us about any such matters in the future.

Mr Tonkin: Do I have a right of reply to this motion?

The SPEAKER: Not normally.

Mr Tonkin: All right.

The SPEAKER: To be successful, this motion must have the support of an absolute majority of the House. If, when I put the question, a dissentient voice is heard, I will have to divide the House to establish whether the motion has the support of an absolute majority.

Question put.

The SPEAKER: I have counted the House. An absolute majority is present, and as there is no dissentient voice I declare the motion to be carried with the concurrence of an absolute majority of the whole number of members of the House.

Question thus passed.

FIREARMS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mr Carr (Minister for Police and Emergency Services), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [4.58 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is a Bill to amend the Firearms Act to allow the Agriculture Protection Board to use, under strict controls, silencers on firearms in pursuit of birds commonly known as "starlings", or *Sturnus vulgaris*.

A degree of urgency relates to this matter in view of a known number of the birds entering Western Australia, via the Nullarbor Plain. This urgency is compounded by the onset of the mating and nesting season.

Starlings were brought to Australia from England in the 1850s and were conditioned to the Australian environment in Victoria over a period of three years, at which time they were released—36 of them. Within the next 22 years they were established in New South Wales and Queensland, and later still in South Australia.

The birds settled around Ceduna, moving west occasionally but not across the Nullarbor, until, it is believed, some man-made facilities assisted them to move across the treeless plains and settle in caves nearer to our border. From those areas they have moved as far west as the swamp

country at Esperance. From October 1982, over 500 starlings have been monitored on the Nullarbor. At present only 36 at Mundrabilla and two at Eucla are known to remain.

The Agriculture Protection Board believes it has used all available methods of control. These have included trapping with decoy birds in "crow traps", using poison in water during hot dry stretches, explosives, netting, and, of course, shooting from hides.

Of the count of 500 from October, approximately 100 have not been positively accounted for in the control methods previously mentioned. However, some of those may have died beyond the reach of marksmen and some probably returned eastwards to the South Australian agricultural areas when the season broke.

The remaining birds are very difficult to approach. Those that escape from any explosion become quite wary as do those that have not been located by the marksmen, but are frightened by the gun noise. One nesting pair, if left unhindered, could raise 12 young.

All the previously mentioned methods, except the use of explosives, have been used at Esperance. Currently approximately 45 starlings remain, 85 having been destroyed since last October.

While the Government acknowledges the seriousness and concern expressed in the possession and use of silencers, it is believed that the need to destroy the last Esperance starling is of paramount importance. An escape by any of these birds could see them quickly re-establish in the favourable swamp habitats of that region and from there they could spread quickly throughout Western Australia.

Starlings are most undesirable birds, being a pest of various forms of agriculture; in particular cereal growing, orchards, and vineyards. In addition they compete with small native birds for environmental space and affect the balance of species. In the cities and more settled areas, they cause fouling and contamination of buildings when they become established.

The purpose of this Bill is to allow the officers of the Agriculture Protection Board, under very strict statutory requirements, use of silencers to facilitate the destruction of this vermin.

Under the provisions of the Bill the Minister for Police and Emergency Services may authorise officers or employees of the Agriculture Protection Board to possess, carry, and use, a silencer, such silencer to be used only in conjunction with a .22 calibre rifle licensed by the board. The authorisation will be for a specified time. However,

such authorisation may be revoked at any time for any reason.

The Agriculture Protection Board will not be purchasing its own silencers, but will be using those currently in the possession of police. At the cessation of use they will be returned to the Police Department.

When an officer or employee is granted an authority, the Bill provides that he shall use such only for the purpose of shooting common starlings in the performance of his duties and—

shall obtain one from a member of the Police Force at the police station nearest to the area in which he proposes to use the silencer; shall comply with such directions as are from time to time given to him by a member of the Police Force acting on the instructions of the commissioner; shall not use a silencer otherwise than in conjunction with a .22 calibre rifle named and identified in the corporate firearm licence held by the Agriculture Protection Board; shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safekeeping of a silencer possessed, carried, or used by him; shall, when not using or about to use a silencer, keep the silencer separate from any firearm in conjunction with which it is capable of being used; and shall, when he is directed to surrender, or no longer requires the use of the silencer, surrender that silencer to a member of the Police Force at the police station from which it was obtained.

Any digression from the strict requirements of the Bill, or the directions of the Commissioner of Police, will make the person liable to the penalty presently applying to the unlawful possession of a silencer, which is \$100 or six months' imprisonment, or to the use of a silencer which is \$200 or 12 months' imprisonment.

I commend the Bill to the House.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.03 p.m.]: Could I first ask the Minister to interject to the extent necessary to assure me that the copy of the Bill, which we received on a confidential basis, in advance of today's sitting and which is headed "Draft No. 2—21 July", is the same as the Bill now presented to the House?

Mr Carr: Yes, it is; unless someone has made a change which I do not know anything about. However, it is certainly my understanding that it is the same Bill.

Mr HASSELL: The starting point for the consideration of this matter is the provision contained

in section 23(7) of the Firearms Act which provides that "a person who is in possession of a contrivance commonly known as a silencer or any contrivance of a similar nature, commits an offence" for which the prescribed penalty is \$100 or imprisonment for six months or both.

Therefore, the present law recognises that the use of silencers in Western Australia is a serious matter and is prohibited under a penalty which, in monetary terms, may be out of date, but which, in terms of imprisonment, renders the use of silencers to be a serious offence.

The reason for that is the Act, including the provision to which I have referred, is in line with a general belief that, for the benefit of the community, the use of firearms should be regulated strictly and subject to stringent control.

Of course, some of the provisions in the Firearms Act are controversial and have been the subject of a great deal of debate and questioning on the part of a number of groups of people who are involved in the use of firearms for recreational purposes.

The former Government commissioned a report, referred to as the Dixon report, and at the time of the change of Government consideration and implementation of the recommendations of that report were in progress.

In considering this legislation tonight, we need not canvass those issues and I do not intend to do so, except to observe that the report did not make any recommendation for a fundamental change in direction in terms of the regulation of the use and possession of firearms as represented in the current law.

The legislation which has been brought before the House by the Government seeks to deal with a particular problem. The ambit of the legislation is confined to that problem, and rightly so.

In general terms, the Opposition supports the Bill and it will facilitate the passage of the Bill today because it recognises the problem that needs to be dealt with and the manner in which the Government proposes to do so.

As I said, the Opposition's support is in general terms. In the Committee stage I shall raise one or two questions as to the extent of the requirements under clause 2 of the Bill for officers and employees to take precautions for the safekeeping of a silencer and the associated rifle. However, I shall leave those comments to the Committee stage. Apart from that issue, I indicate the Opposition's general support of the legislation which is of particular importance to the agricultural industry. It is on that basis, Mr Speaker, that we approach the legislation.

MR OLD (Katanning-Roe) [5.08 p.m.]: I have a few words to say in support of the remarks made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Bill with which we are dealing is very important. The Opposition has considered it in detail and will do all in its power to expedite its course, because members on this side of the House realise the seriousness of the problem which is faced by the Agriculture Protection Board. The board can be commended for the way in which it has approached its responsibilities and I am sure that the security that is required of the board will be forthcoming.

In his second reading speech, the Minister indicated that the silencers, when not in use, would be kept by the police and such a provision is essential. Members may recall that, during the last session of Parliament, permission was given for the Agriculture Protection Board to purchase SLR rifles for the control of feral donkeys in the Kimberley. That permission was given under the strictest security and after a great deal of consideration. I certainly agreed with the then Minister for Police and Traffic that a great necessity existed for security, as such a move was contrary to the Act and represented a one-off situation which I considered to be most important.

The Agriculture Protection Board is doing a tremendous job under difficult circumstances in the control of starlings in this State. I understand that currently there are still about 30 birds in the swamp lands at Esperance. Of course, this is too close for comfort. As the Minister said, the birds have paired off and are mating now, and it is necessary that the operators use silencers in order that they may track some of these birds. It is essential that the pairs be shot, otherwise we could still be in a great deal of trouble.

I assume that no more than two silencers at any one time would be issued to the shooters as I understand that probably they would be shooting in two different locations at once.

I have no doubt that the Minister has the situation well under control. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that he would be asking some questions in Committee and doubtless those questions will relate to security. However, in general terms, we support the Bill and acknowledge its importance to the agricultural industry in Western Australia.

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Transport) [5.11 p.m.]: The Government brings forward this legislation as its foremost priority. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services should be congratulated on making this piece of legislation the foremost priority of the Govern-

ment's legislative programme. It recognises the importance of our agricultural industry to the State and the real threat that "stirlings" pose to that industry.

Mr Blaikie: I think they are called "starlings".

Mr GRILL: I am sorry; I meant "starlings".

Mr Blaikie: The member for Stirling is still alive and well, although you had him on your side for some time.

Several members interjected.

Mr GRILL: The starlings referred to in the Bill have been colonising the Mundrabilla-Esperance area of this State for more than one season now. They have been and still are on the brink of getting out of control.

If the starlings do get out of control, they will have a catastrophic effect on the agricultural industry of the State. More than any other people in the State, the people of the Esperance area have realised the threat posed by the starlings and have agitated for some time for officers of the department to be allowed to use silencers to help to eliminate this menace.

Action must be taken quickly and, as I mentioned previously, it is in recognition of that fact that the Government has introduced this Bill today. There is no doubt that the use of silencers will be kept under control and that they will be used effectively. I hope this legislation will result in the starlings being wiped out.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [5.12 p.m.]: We, in the National Party, support the Bill. Bearing in mind that self-praise is no recommendation, we do not mind reiterating to some extent the words used by the Minister for Transport. I congratulate the Government on introducing the Bill at this early stage in view of the very serious threat starlings pose. I only hope that the Government will give the same prompt consideration and attention to many of the other agricultural problems which beset farmers in this State. We shall certainly be looking forward to prompt action in this regard and we shall ensure the Government is aware of the problems that face the agricultural community.

Perhaps in his reply the Minister could indicate why a provision on page three of the Bill provides that the silencer obtained must be returned to the police station from which it was issued. Perhaps such a measure would not present any great difficulty at the moment, but, were starlings to make greater inroads into our community, and were it necessary for silencers to be available over a much wider area of the State, problems could arise in returning them to the police stations from which

they were obtained. Surely it would be sufficient for the silencer to be returned to a police station and not necessarily the one from which it was obtained.

With those few remarks, we support the legislation.

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [5.14 p.m.]: I desire also to make some comments on this legislation. It is most unusual that, on an occasion which would normally be the opening day of Parliament, the Government has been able to achieve the complete co-operation of members of the Opposition in order that its legislative programme may be completed in an expeditious manner.

Mr Davies: We are looking after the farmers; that is what we are doing.

MR BLAIKIE: It is interesting to hear the Minister for the Environment make that comment, because I do not think he would know where farmers live.

This is an historic occasion and I hope members of the Press and the public who are here today understand the co-operation which the Opposition is extending. When in the interests of the people of this State, positive and purposeful legislation is brought forward by this Government, the Opposition intends to co-operate. That is the case with this legislation.

From my quick reading of the Bill, I find that the Government proposes to allow silencers to be fitted to .22 calibre rifles for the specific purpose of shooting common starlings; namely, *Sturnus vulgaris*. I hope our officers of the Agriculture Protection Board know what a *Sturnus vulgaris* is, and they do not intend to chase one of those birds referred to by a member in this place. I think the member for Rockingham was concerned.

Mr Barnett: It was a double breasted mattress thrasher.

MR BLAIKIE: It is important to return to the more serious note of this legislation, which is important to agriculture in this State. The Parliament recognises the urgent need to have this legislation effected so that starlings can be shot during their pairing season. The silencers are an effective method to do that, and I compliment the Government on the efforts it has made in this regard. I trust the Government appreciates and acknowledges the role the Opposition will play in ensuring this legislation is given the speedy passage it deserves.

Point of Order

Mr O'CONNOR: Mr Speaker, I seek your guidance in respect of the microphones in front of

us. Are they turned on at all times so that discussions between members not on their feet can be heard? I am sure all members would like that question answered.

The SPEAKER: To clarify this matter, I indicate, as I pointed out in my announcement at the beginning of this sitting, that only the microphone in front of the member speaking will be turned on.

Debate Resumed

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [5.18 p.m.]: I thank members for their support of this legislation and for their co-operation in expediting the second reading stage.

The member for Katanning referred to the number of licences. His understanding is correct in the sense that we intend to grant authority for only two silencers to be used in the localities of Esperance and Eucla. We deliberately avoided specifying a number of authorities in the legislation because the situation may change. At the moment it is our intention that only two silencers be issued.

The member for Stirling asked whether a silencer would need to be returned to the police station from which it was obtained. I would not see any great difficulties arising from his suggestion and I suppose we could well have considered it. However, it was decided that the transportation of silencers should be in the hands of police officers. An officer will take the silencers to Esperance or Eucla where they will be given with an authority to officers of the board. The silencers will then be returned to the police station from which they were issued. Should there be a need for a silencer to be issued in a different locality, the police could arrange this, and they would have the responsibility for the transportation of a silencer to that different locality.

I thank the member for Vasse for his remarks and co-operation. In view of his comment that the Opposition will support positive and purposeful legislation, perhaps we on this side should change our programme to fit in the electoral reform Bill right now. Be that as it may, I thank the Opposition for its co-operation and commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Barnett) in the Chair; Mr Carr (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Section 17B inserted—

Mr HASSELL: I indicated my intention to raise the question of the adequacy of the controls for the safekeeping of a silencer and the associated rifle. Whilst at first glance the controls appear to be very strong, when one gets down to proposed new paragraphs (d) and (e) of new subsection (3), one finds the obligations appear to be quite general in their terms and do not seem to be of the high order of requirement that one would expect in relation to an activity which hitherto was totally unlawful and carried a penalty of up to six months' imprisonment. I ask the Minister to express his opinion as to whether he is satisfied that those provisions are sufficient, or whether they might have been improved by being more specific in their requirements as to the handling of a silencer and the associated rifle when used in the field. It is just in those circumstances that men on the job tend to be a little lax, and in those circumstances a silencer may be stolen. For example, I would have thought it appropriate to have another requirement that the silencers be locked up, not simply to have a requirement that the men in the field take all reasonable precautions with the silencers. The terms used are general and do not impose any specific obligation, especially when one bears in mind what we are dealing with.

I direct this question directly to the Minister, a question which may assist him: Are his police advisers completely satisfied with these provisions?

Mr CARR: I draw the member's attention to proposed new subsection (3)(b). What has been done in the drafting of this legislation is not to write into it specific requirements for the safekeeping of the silencers. It is our intention that the commissioner, in issuing his directions through a policeman, will ensure that quite specific instructions are issued as to how the silencers should be maintained.

I point out also that these facilities are to be given only to people approved by the Commissioner of Police. Members have the assurance that only people approved by the commissioner will be issued with silencers. The precise instructions as to how the silencers will be maintained will also be issued by the commissioner.

Mr STEPHENS: I mention again that the silencer must be returned to the police station from which it was obtained. On this point I was

not altogether convinced by the Minister's reply to the second reading debate. I am pleased that he indicated that the police will be responsible for transporting the silencer. The legislation as it now is might be satisfactory while starlings are in the Esperance area, but what would be the situation—and let us hope it does not happen—if they were to be more widespread in scattered parts of the State? It may be that an officer of the APB will receive a silencer at Esperance and then wander through the bush, perhaps finishing at Kukerin. Under the Bill at present, when he no longer has any further use for the silencer he has to go right back to Esperance to return it. I cannot see the sense or purpose in that. I ask the Minister to give consideration to this point so that the officer can return the silencer to a member of the Police Force at the nearest police station. If this is not provided for, I can envisage that in a couple of years' time, if the starling invasion continues and becomes more widespread, this little piece of legislation will be back with us for amendment to facilitate administrative procedures.

Mr CARR: The argument put forward by the member for Stirling is quite reasonable and if he were to move an appropriate amendment we would probably be prepared to accept it.

Mr STEPHENS: I move an amendment—

Page 3, line 8—Insert after the word "the" the word "nearest".

If the Chamber agrees to my amendment, I intend subsequently to delete all words after the word "station" in the same line.

Mr Blaikie: I hope the rest of the legislation is drafted better than this.

Mr Stephens: I don't think you need to be critical. It shows co-operation.

Mr O'Connor: If it doesn't show bad drafting, it shows the Minister should read the legislation.

Mr Stephens: They are prepared to listen to reasoned argument.

Mr HASSELL: With great respect for the Minister, I think in his zeal to be seen to be reasonable by accepting this amendment he may, in fact, be accepting an amendment which weakens the protective provisions of the legislation. Very clearly the purpose of the requirement in the Bill that the silencer should be surrendered to a member of the Police Force at the police station from which the APB officer has obtained it is to ensure that the silencer remains in police possession for the maximum time and that, for example, an officer of the APB does not pick up a silencer from the Merredin police station,

take it all the way to Esperance, go out on his patrol, and then return it to the Esperance police station.

It is clear from the very scheme of it, which the Minister has explained in answer to the question I raised, that the purpose of the present wording is that the Commissioner of Police will very carefully direct that the silencer be taken to the police station nearest to the area of operations, that it will be released to the officers at that station, that they will be aware of the particular requirements and the fact that the APB officer has the silencer, and that the silencer has to come back to that police station.

The Opposition cannot go along with this amendment and, more particularly, the Minister should think twice before he accepts it, because it is not as innocent as it looks.

Mr COWAN: It is quite obvious to me that it is a case of sour grapes with Opposition members. They had the Bill for two days and they should have seen this themselves.

If a person has a silencer in his possession and is required to carry out the functions of an APB officer to shoot starlings, and if in the performance of that task he moves to another area, surely he will not be expected to go back to the place of origin to return the silencer. Surely it would be safer for him to return the silencer to the nearest possible police station. That is all that this amendment provides for. I urge the Opposition not to be so pig-headed and to support it.

Mr OLD: I oppose the amendment. I think it was made perfectly clear in the second reading debate that the prime object of the clause is security. In fact the Minister agreed that this was so. Starlings are very definitely grouped, one group being near Esperance, as the Minister for Transport said. Obviously, if the officers were working from Esperance, the Esperance police station would be used.

If people are to cart these things around and drop them in anywhere, the Commissioner of Police is in danger of losing control of the security provision which I am quite sure he would have been very keen to see inserted in the Bill. The Bill as it stands is desirable and does away with any problems that may occur with the return of the silencers.

It is a very important thing; it is a one-off situation. Nobody else in this State is allowed to use silencers on rifles and we should respect the necessity for very close scrutiny of their use.

Mr STEPHENS: When the Liberal Party decided to oppose the amendment we were not surprised that the National Country Party also op-

posed it. The member for Merredin discussed the present situation. We accept that currently silencers are situated only at Esperance. The APB officer was instructed to handle the starlings at Esperance. It is common sense to provide that silencers be returned to the nearest police station—Esperance, in this case. The proposal in the Bill does not adequately handle the situation. I do not think that the Leader of the National Country Party or the member for Cottesloe can give a guarantee to this Committee that starlings will not be found in other parts of the State. That is the whole purpose of the amendment. It will be simpler if the legislation operates without the necessity at some future time to come back to this Chamber to correct a weakness which is now obvious.

Mr CARR: I am a little surprised at the way the Opposition has reacted to this amendment with comments along the lines of "wandering around with a silencer". The impression is being created that there will be many silencers and many people wandering around with them in a most indiscriminate way. We are talking about a situation where a very small number of silencers will be issued. At this stage we are talking about issuing two silencers. We are talking about their being issued only by the Commissioner of Police to people specifically approved in accordance with the Firearms Act and we are discussing a situation where very close tabs will be kept on the location of these silencers.

If the type of situation occurs as outlined by the members for Merredin and Stirling where a shooter with the APB moves from one place to another in pursuit of the starlings, and if the argument by the member for Cottesloe were pursued, in fact the silencer would be in the hands of the APB shooter for a longer period of time. If it is provided that the silencer be returned to the nearest police station, it will simply mean that it will get back into police hands more quickly. Any suggestion that the police will be unable to keep track of the silencers' positions underestimates the communications and records facilities of the Police Force.

Mr O'CONNOR: By way of interjection, could the Minister tell me whether all police stations in the State have silencers?

Mr Carr: No; certainly not.

Mr O'CONNOR: They do not?

Mr Carr: The only silencers in existence are maintained at the ballistics branch at Maylands and it is our intention in this case that two silencers will be transported from Maylands to the police stations concerned.

Mr O'CONNOR: The legislation states that a silencer can be obtained only from a police station close to the location of the starlings. If that police station does not have a silencer, a silencer will not be obtainable from anywhere else, according to the terms of the legislation. The legislation reads as follows—

(3) An officer or employee to whom an authority has been granted—

(a) shall, when he requires the use of a silencer, obtain one from a member of the Police Force at the police station nearest to the area in which he proposes to use the silencer;

An officer can obtain a silencer only from that area and, if that police station does not have one, he will have to wait for it to come from elsewhere.

Mr Carr: The situation is that once an authority is issued to a certain APB officer—for example, in Esperance—a silencer will be transported to the police station nearest to the area where he will be shooting.

Mr O'CONNOR: The question I asked was: Do they all have a silencer? The answer is, "No, but they will be sent to the areas involved."

Mr GRILL: This amendment does have merit and should be supported. The member for Stirling contemplates the situation of this outbreak getting out of hand and the police and the APB desiring and needing to move quickly and expeditiously. In that situation we need very effective and flexible legislation. We do not want to come back to this Chamber to amend the legislation to cover that eventuality. We want to wipe out the starlings—

Mr O'Connor: So do we.

Mr GRILL:—this season, as expeditiously and effectively as possible. If there is a defect in this legislation we should correct it here and now. If a defect exists, it is not a major one. If an outbreak occurs we will need to move effectively and this amendment will allow that to happen. The amendment should be supported.

Mr HASSELL: The Minister for Police and Emergency Services, who one assumes has the responsibility for the carriage of the Bill, has in response to the Leader of the Opposition, made the critical point that silencers are not located at police stations all over the State. They will be kept only at one place; namely, the police ballistics section at Maylands. When one or two silencers are required—that is the number contemplated by the Minister—by special arrangement they will be taken to the nearest police station. That is exactly what the Minister has

properly provided in proposed new section 17B (3) (a).

An officer requiring a silencer must go to the police station specified because silencers are not situated all over the State. They are located at only one place and will be handed on a one-to-one basis to a particular police station, and will be picked up under special instructions from the Commissioner of Police as provided in the Bill. They must be returned to that police station in accordance with those instructions. That is the legislative pattern which the Minister has written into proposed section 17B (3) (a) and it is an essential part of the subsequent provisions of paragraph (f). Instead of following that pattern through, the amendment appears to have been invented on the spur of the moment. It is not the member for Stirling's fault because he has not had further time to look at it; I am not blaming him for that, but I am really saying to the Minister and to the Committee that the Minister is undermining the very important security element of his own legislation. We accepted the legislation because it contained that provision. Now he is removing that provision; he should think about it again.

Mr BLAIKIE: I also wish to comment in opposing the amendment moved by the member for Stirling. I support the remarks made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Minister needs to have a further look at the legislation and to appreciate its refinements and protection aspects. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services introduced the Bill for very good reasons. Contrary to the statement of his ministerial colleague who said that the APB at any time may need to move silencers around the State, it will not be the APB's right to direct whether the silencers are to be moved; it will be decided by a determination of the Police Force, and the security will remain with the Police Force under the provisions of the Firearms Act.

I plead with the Minister in this regard: A silencer or silencers under proposed section 17B (3) (a) will be made available to an authorised person by a member of the Police Force at the police station closest to the area where it is proposed they be used. If this is to be the Esperance area, one would assume a police station within the Esperance area would be appointed and that the silencer would be issued from there by an officer of the Police Force and after its use in that area it would be returned to an officer of the Police Force in the same area. As a result of this measure security will not be lacking when silencers are carried or transferred around the State.

The legislation was framed as it stands for very good reason; that is, to ensure the security of silencers. I believe the Minister does not want silencers to get into hands other than those of people who are approved by the Police Force. Is that right? Is the purpose of the legislation to ensure that the Commissioner of Police, or his officers, will determine who will use a silencer?

Mr Carr: That is correct.

Mr BLAIKIE: If that is the case, it is important the amendment be defeated. I oppose the amendment moved by the member for Stirling.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr Carr (Minister for Police and Emergency Services).

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Practice: Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr Harman): Before I allow questions without notice, I would remind members that Standing Orders provide for such questions to be taken at the discretion of the Speaker. In previous Parliaments the various Speakers have used their discretion to permit such questions.

Generally, the practice has been that a certain time has been allotted for this purpose. Questions must contain an element of urgency and conform to the Standing Orders relating to questions on notice.

Speaker Thompson made the point that questions without notice "must not be taken as an opportunity for debate, argument or interjection" (*Hansard*, 10 April 1979, page 402.)

I intend to follow previous practice.

I would suggest members form their questions accordingly, otherwise I will have to rule the question is out of order and proceed to call another member.

While there is no Standing Order as to the manner in which a question will be answered, I would suggest the members who elect to answer questions without notice do so in an expeditious manner.

I would not wish to see questions without notice time used to deliver long ministerial statements.

I conclude by reminding members that interjections are highly disorderly on any occasion and will not be tolerated during questions without notice.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

FIREARMS AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting. The Chairman of Committees (Mr Barnett) in the Chair; Mr Carr (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2: Section 17B inserted—

Progress was reported on the clause to which the member for Stirling (Mr Stephens) had moved the following amendment—

Page 3, line 8—Insert after the word "the" the word "nearest".

Mr STEPHENS: Before progress was reported, the member for Cottesloe was basing part of his case for opposing the amendment on the fact that the silencer, in the first place, must be obtained at the police station nearest the area in which it is proposed to use the silencer. He has placed another interpretation on the provision. It would appear that, having obtained the silencer, say, at the Esperance police station, the APB officer could follow the starlings to a point slightly north of Norseman; he would then have to return the silencer to the Esperance police station, and go to the Norseman police station to obtain another silencer. That would be absolutely ludicrous. The point made by the member for Cottesloe is not valid. It would make the procedure unworkable.

If the amendment is supported, it will mean that the same APB officer, if he finds himself north of Norseman, can return the silencer to the police station at Norseman after he has used it. If he is further away—say, at Lake Grace—he could return it to the police station at Lake Grace, without the necessity of having to go back to Esperance to return it.

We could look at it in another way. If the officer obtains a silencer at Esperance, and finds the necessity to use a silencer at Lake Grace, on the interpretation given by the member for Cottesloe the officer would then have to return the silencer to Esperance, obtain another silencer at Lake Grace, and return that silencer to the police station at Lake Grace.

The Committee will acknowledge that this is rather a stupid, time-wasting mechanism. It is one which would not ensure efficiency in the destruction of the starlings. I question whether members of the Liberal Party and their followers, members

of the National Country Party, are sincere in their opposition to this amendment.

Mr BLAIKIE: Would you believe that this should not be controlled by the police? It would probably be better with the APB?

Mr STEPHENS: I do not believe that at all. I agree with the provisions of the Bill.

Mr BLAIKIE: That is what you are saying.

Mr STEPHENS: I am not saying that at all. The Government is being understanding and realistic in accepting this amendment.

Mr WATT: One of the interesting things about a debate of this type, when we find ourselves with legislation with which we are not familiar, is that one has two sides of an argument presented, both of which sometimes seem to have logic. I must confess that I accept the member for Stirling's motives are well intentioned, and he is attempting to streamline the operations of the APB in its pursuit of the starlings.

One of the points that ought to be considered is that the fundamental aim of this Bill is to provide the mechanism for the hunt for the starlings, and the fundamental aim of this clause is to do it with safety. Safety is the overriding aim of the clause. It is for that reason that the proposed subsection provides for the police to have absolute control over the use of silencers.

What ought to be explained, and has not been explained, is the operation of the APB in hunting the starlings. Frankly, I have only ever heard of a few isolated outbreaks of starlings, and I imagine that the APB has some proficient riflemen or crackshots located in Perth or some other area. If the APB were alerted to a sighting of starlings in a remote part of our State, it would call in its most efficient marksmen to go to that place in an endeavour to shoot the birds. That suggests that the talk about where the silencers are to be located is drawing a fairly long bow. It seems that the likelihood of an APB officer going on a prolonged trail in pursuit of a starling would have to be, in the words of one of our members, "remote in the extreme".

If there is a sighting, it would be in one district. The likelihood of a succession of sightings that would take an APB officer on a trip through the length and breadth of the country is remote. If we reach the stage of that happening, more silencers would be available, because more people would be chasing the birds.

The point I have reached is that, being somewhat undecided, I will err on the side of caution and oppose the amendment, and leave the word-

ing so that the silencers must be returned to the police station from which they were collected.

I would be grateful if the Minister could explain the process of the APB's hunt for the starlings.

Mr HASSELL: I ask the Minister whether, during the tea suspension, he took the opportunity to seek further advice on the amendment. If so, what is the result of that? If not, would he indicate an intention to obtain further advice and have the case reviewed in the other place, if the advice should indicate that is necessary?

Mr CARR: I have not taken further advice. Frankly, I am rather astonished at the way this little storm in a teacup has developed. It is important for me to place in context what we are talking about.

We are talking about a situation which, at every point, involves considerable security in dealing with silencers. The Act is full of emphasis on security in the handling of anything related to firearms and weapons. We are talking about a situation in which two silencers will be issued at this stage. They will be issued to particular people, under the authority of the Commissioner of Police. They will be handled in a way specifically set out in directions issued by the commissioner. Clearly the Police Department will have complete knowledge at all times of the location of the silencers, and for what they are being used.

Mr BLAIKIE: Just on that point, you cannot categorically guarantee that there will only ever be two silencers in use. Be reasonable, please!

Mr CARR: I have already made it clear that our intention at this stage is that there be two. I concede the possibility that, should the starlings become an even bigger problem and spread further, it is possible that more silencers could be issued.

The member for Stirling outlined his amendment in the context of that situation. Contrary to what the member for Albany has said, it is conceivable that, in a good season and with good breeding conditions, the starlings could move from the closely concentrated areas.

Mr Cowan: If you don't hurry up they will be all across the State.

Mr CARR: That is right. I cannot understand the major argument about this. It really is a storm in a teacup.

I am satisfied that the arrangements proposed in the Bill for the handling of these silencers are secure. The amendment is a reasonable and sensible one that should be carried.

Mr BLAIKIE: I make the plea that I made earlier. Unfortunately the Minister has missed the point of my concern and that expressed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Minister has not given the explanation sought genuinely by the member for Albany.

The Minister in charge of the Bill will be aware of the provisions of the Act and the implications for any person who has a silencer in his possession illegally. I will pause to give the Minister the opportunity to explain what happens to a person who has a silencer illegally. Does he know?

Mr Carr: If a person has a silencer illegally, he is subject to the sanctions of the Act and the penalty spelt out in it.

Mr BLAIKIE: That is right. It is an extremely heavy penalty. The Act regards that as a very serious offence. The amendment deals with the availability of silencers for specific purposes.

Mr Cowan: It deals with the return of a silencer.

Mr BLAIKIE: It deals with availability of a silencer for a specific purpose, and that is to shoot starlings. It also deals with the return of the silencer. As the Bill was drafted originally, the silencer is to be returned to the police station at which it was obtained. The member for Stirling is seeking that it be returned to the nearest police station.

I ask the Minister to consider the situation that could develop. We have been talking about starlings in the Esperance area only. There could well be another outbreak of starlings in the Coolgardie area, the Norseman area, the Moora area, the Three Springs area, and all up the line.

In all these areas, as laid out under this clause, the Commissioner of Police in his wisdom is able to agree that the officers should be given silencers to enable them to protect our agricultural industries. So instead of having two silencers in use, we could end up having many.

My point is that only the police officers of the station from which the silencers were issued will be able to make an absolute check on their whereabouts. I do not believe it is good enough for the silencers to be picked up from one station and then later to become available at another station. How on earth are the police to keep a check on them in these circumstances? I would like the Minister to indicate how he believes this situation could be satisfactorily tidied up.

Mr CARR: It is very clear that the authority to use and to possess a silencer will be given to specific people under specific circumstances. The Police Department will have clear records of to

whom a silencer has been issued, where that person is using it and the manner in which he is using it.

If we find we are dealing with a seasonal thing with these starlings, then between the seasons the silencers will be back in police possession. The tendency is to say that if we have starlings all over the place we will have dozens of silencers. But the very considerable likelihood is that if we can get two silencers out there working very quickly before the coming nesting season we will be looking at only one season or so. The police will have clear records of who has a silencer; and the activities of these people will be monitored by the Agriculture Protection Board. If the police find themselves uncertain of the whereabouts of a person with a silencer and what he is doing, it will not be difficult to check up on him.

Mr Blaikie: Does the Police Force support this amendment?

Mr CARR: Quite clearly the Commissioner of Police, whose prime responsibility is to deal with security, would rather there not be legislation at all to permit the use of silencers. I make it clear that we are talking about a situation where the Government has decided—and I hope the Parliament will decide—that the threat to the agricultural industries in this State is just so severe that we must have silencers legalised under these strict conditions.

Mr Hassell: You are weakening the conditions.

Mr Stephens: Is it to be government by department or government by Parliament?

Amendment put and passed.

Mr STEPHENS: I move an amendment—

Page 3, lines 8 and 9—Delete all words after the word "station"

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with amendments, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Carr (Minister for Police and Emergency Services), and transmitted to the Council.

BUSINESS FRANCHISE (TOBACCO) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Brian Burke (Treasurer), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Treasurer) [7.51 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This legislation is the first step in a comprehensive campaign to be implemented by the Government to try to reduce the appalling human and financial cost of smoking. My Government is determined to do all it can to discourage people from smoking, to help them stop, and to encourage people, especially young people, not to take up what has been shown beyond doubt to be a deadly habit.

The tobacco-caused carnage is appalling. More than 1 200 Western Australians die every year because of tobacco-related illness. Thousands more are treated in hospitals.

Health officials estimate the annual cost to the State's hospital system of treating tobacco-related illness to be more than \$65 million—about four times the amount raised by tobacco licence fees last financial year, and still more than double the amount expected to be raised if this measure is passed. Therefore it should be apparent to members why the Government has accorded such a high public health priority to reducing the incidence of smoking in the community.

We propose a four and possibly five-avenue attack on the problem.

The first is contained in this Bill—raising the price of tobacco products. During the lobbying that surrounded last year's legislation to outlaw the advertising and promotion of tobacco products, I was visited, as I am sure other members were, by representatives of the tobacco and advertising industries. They told me that the most effective means of encouraging people to give up smoking was to raise the price of cigarettes. This legislation will have the effect of raising the price of a packet of cigarettes by about 25c.

The second measure we propose is legislation—to be brought here later this year—to tighten the law relating to the sale of tobacco products to juveniles.

Thirdly, we intend to provide assistance to smokers who wish to give up the habit by the establishment of so-called "quit centres".

Fourthly, we intend to implement a public education programme on a scale never before seen in this State. The aims of this will be to remind people of the dangers of smoking, to encourage them to give up, or to discourage them from starting. Particular emphasis will be placed on young people.

A possible fifth avenue is the introduction of legislation to eliminate the advertising and promotion of tobacco products. The Government has this matter under consideration.

The implementation of the third and fourth parts of the package—assisting smokers to give up and educating people about the dangers of smoking—are to a considerable extent dependent on the passage of this Bill.

Expenditure of some millions of dollars annually is anticipated on these measures, and it is proposed to finance the programmes from the increased revenue raised by this legislation.

The Minister for Health and health officials have been working on these campaigns for some time. The passage of this legislation will enable the commencement of full-scale campaigns later this year. A preliminary campaign began in the Press last weekend and will begin on television tomorrow night.

Our plans for the full-scale campaign include—

- a shop-front office in a central city location to act as an advisory and counselling centre;
- stop-smoking clinics;
- touring clinics for country areas;
- assistance for general practitioners to encourage smoking patients to stop;
- a hard-hitting media campaign to promote antismoking programmes and a non-smoking lifestyle as the norm; and
- measures aimed specifically at school children.

The antismoking message will be developed as part of a broad programme to promote healthy lifestyles.

Cabinet has approved minimum funding of \$2 million a year for three years, but I should stress that this figure is for planning purposes and could be increased when more detailed plans are presented to the Government. Nevertheless, this is the most significant boost to the antismoking campaign in this State's history.

Previous State Governments have done virtually nothing to promote the antismoking message. Total expenditure over the last five years is less than \$75 000, compared with revenue from the tobacco licence fee of more than \$57 million.

The proportion of revenue devoted to antismoking campaigns over the last five years is a paltry 0.13 per cent.

In 1982-83 the O'Connor Government allocated only \$16 200 of tobacco licence fee collections estimated at \$16.620 million—or 0.09 per cent of revenue.

The minimum expenditure proposed by my Government represents a 120-fold increase on last year's expenditure and a 26-fold increase on total funding over the last five years.

I turn now to the specific provisions of this Bill. It provides for the present tobacco franchise licence fee to be increased to 35 per cent and to be applied to all tobacco products sold by licence holders on or after 1 July 1983.

In accordance with the requirements of the existing legislation, any person in the State who wholesales tobacco products must apply for, and be granted, a licence and pay the prescribed fee. Similarly, any person in the State retailing tobacco products must either purchase his goods from a licensed wholesaler or apply for, and be granted, a licence in his own right, and pay the prescribed fee.

In other words, no person can sell tobacco products within the State unless he either holds a current licence or purchases his supplies from a licensed person. A licence runs for a period of two months and is based on sales of tobacco made in a preceding two-monthly period. By the fifteenth day of the second month of a current licence period, the holder is required to apply to have that licence renewed for a further period of two months.

Currently, when applying for the renewal of the licence for the next two months, the holder of a wholesale tobacco licence is required to pay a fee of \$20 together with an amount of 12½ per cent of the value of tobacco products sold in an earlier two-month period, and in the case of the holder of a retail tobaccoist's licence a fee of 12½ per cent of the value of tobacco sold in an earlier two-month period.

Apart from the proposed increase in licence fees to 35 per cent of the value of sales already referred to, there will be no other alteration to the existing procedure.

As the present legislation has a two-monthly licensing provision, this will occur midway through a relevant sales period. Consequently, this will mean that the first payment of fees due from licence holders in August 1983 will be comprised of fees based on sales made in June at the old rate and fees payable on sales made in July at

the new rate. Thereafter a normal situation will apply.

The Bill also proposes to substantially increase most of the penalties under the Act which have remained unchanged since the legislation was enacted in 1975. These penalties—generally in the order of \$200 to \$1 000—were at that time considered to be reasonable, having regard to the particular offences and the circumstances then existing.

However, apart from the fact that times and values have changed, it is also necessary, on the grounds of equity, to protect genuine taxpayers from anyone who attempts to evade or avoid the lawful payment of taxes or fees. This can be achieved only by having substantial penalties for non-compliance with the legislation.

A substantial increase in penalties should provide a more effective deterrent to anyone who, as a result of avoidance or evasion of the fees, places an unfair burden on other members of the community.

It is also proposed to close a minor loophole that might allow an unlicensed retailer in Western Australia to purchase tobacco products from a retailer in another State upon which no fee, or a lesser fee, has been paid.

Collection of the fees will be closely monitored and further amendments will be made to the legislation should duty avoidance or evasion situations appear to make this necessary.

I commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Leader of the Opposition).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Carr (Minister for Local Government), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Local Government) [8.03 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This legislation deals with local government rating and has been brought forward as a matter of urgency because local authorities are currently finalising their budget deliberations and determining their municipal rates for 1983-84.

The Bill proposes that the Local Government Act be amended to provide an option to councils to phase-in over a three-year period increased valuations which result from a general valuation of a municipal district.

The Government's attention has been drawn to the fact that many ratepayers were likely to experience severe rate increases in 1983-84 as a result of the revaluation of their properties coming into effect for rating purposes this financial year. I informed councils some four weeks ago of our intention to introduce this new measure so that, if they so wished, they could defer the finalisation of their 1983-84 rates until the outcome was known.

As members will be aware, the Metropolitan Water Authority has for several years provided for the phasing-in of rates by limiting the amount of increase in rates which may occur per assessment in any one year. In addition the Metropolitan Water Authority is using a new scheme this year which provides for the phasing-in of valuations over a three-year period.

These and other alternatives have been investigated in the course of considering the practicability of introducing a scheme which would provide for a method of phasing-in of municipal rates to reduce the effects of increased valuations occurring in the course of a general valuation.

Under the provisions of this Bill, councils will be able to alleviate, by spreading the introduction of the higher valuations over a three-year term, the impact of rate increases caused by a revaluation. In the first year rates would be assessed on the basis of the old valuation plus one-third of the difference between the old and the new. In the second year it would be the old plus two-thirds the difference and in the third year the new valuation would apply fully. Where a new valuation is the same as or less than the former valuation, the council shall apply the new valuation.

I wish to emphasise that each council will have to decide for itself whether it wishes to adopt this phasing-in scheme.

In acknowledging the concern of some ratepayers and councils over the possibility of massive rate increases for 1983-84, the Government has acted quickly to bring this amending legislation to the Parliament in order to provide councils with a power to enable them to soften the impact on the ratepayers concerned should they so desire to utilise such an option.

The Government has not provided for the introduction of a ceiling on the percentage increases to ratepayers because this would have overly complicated the scheme for councils at this late stage. Nevertheless, the Government intends to examine the feasibility of providing for such a ceiling at a subsequent occasion.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Mensaros.

SUPPLY BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Brian Burke (Treasurer), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Treasurer) [8.06 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This measure seeks the grant of supply to Her Majesty of \$1 240 million for the works and services of the year ending 30 June 1984 pending the passage of Appropriation Bills during the Budget session later in the year.

The Bill seeks an issue of \$1 100 million from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and \$80 million from moneys to the credit of the General Loan Fund. Provision is also made in the Bill for an issue of \$60 million to enable the Treasurer to make such temporary advances as may be necessary.

The amounts sought are based on the estimated costs of maintaining the existing level of services and works, and no provision has been made for any new initiatives, which must await the introduction of the Budget.

Before turning to machinery matters, I would like to briefly mention the financial results achieved in 1982-83.

As members will recall, the 1982-83 Budget, which was presented to Parliament on 30 September last, forecast a balanced Budget with both revenue and expenditure estimated at \$2 335.5 million.

In the event revenue fell short of the estimate by \$10.6 million and amounted to \$2 324.9 million after bringing to account interest earnings on Treasury cash balances of \$31 million. Expenditure totalled \$2 339.1 million, some \$3.6 million more than expected; the net result being a deficit of \$14.2 million on the year's operations.

Mr MacKinnon: Employ more advisers!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The outturn for the financial year just ended has received considerable publicity and I do not wish to cover all the ground again. Suffice it to say that when the Government assumed office in February, indications were that the deficit could be of the order of \$21 million. Later more ominous trends emerged which indicated that unless corrective action was taken the blowout could be in excess of \$30 million.

Looking at the Budget result in a little more detail, we find that subdued real estate demand and difficult economic conditions were responsible for a \$17 million shortfall in taxation revenue with payroll tax and stamp duty contributing \$16.5 million of this figure. Mining revenue and timber royalties also were less than expected, but these areas were more than offset by increased revenue earned by public utilities, largely due to increased grain haulage by Westrail.

On the expenditure side, while total outlays were held close to Budget there were some significant variations, which are to be expected given the magnitude and diversity of the State's Budget.

Areas in which the major variations occurred were—

Education—expenditure exceeded the allocation by \$8.6 million due mainly to higher than expected salary and wage costs.

Transport services—despite efforts to contain expenditure, the overall Budget allocation to Westrail, Stateships and the Metropolitan (Perth) Transport Trust was exceeded by about \$8 million. In the case of Westrail, however, the overrun was offset by higher traffic receipts.

Interest payments to the Commonwealth were \$7.8 million below estimate, reflecting the uncertainty of forecasting interest rates and changed arrangements with the Commonwealth.

Natural disaster payments were about \$3 million above estimate.

With regard to the current financial year, my Government is firmly committed to a responsible policy of balancing the Budget. Notwithstanding the discipline that will be required, members can be assured that we are already taking positive steps to achieve that goal.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I now move to the formal provisions of the Bill which I have already described, and commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Leader of the Opposition).

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME

Ministerial Statement

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Premier) [8.13 p.m.]: I seek leave of the House to make a statement concerning the Government's legislative programme for the current session.

Point of Order

Mr HASSELL: On a point of order, before the Premier is granted leave—as far as we are concerned leave will be granted—I seek your clarification now, Mr Speaker, to avoid my interrupting the Premier during his statement. I understand that under Standing Order No. 118 the time limit in relation to the Premier's statement and the reply will be 20 minutes in each case; is that so?

Mr Davies: That is our understanding.

The SPEAKER: That is correct.

Debate (on ministerial statement) Resumed

There being no dissentient voice, leave is granted.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I believe it is appropriate, at the resumption of the sitting of this House, that I should, for the information and benefit of all members, give an outline of the Government's legislative programme. That programme will, of course, deal with many of the reforms which the Government has undertaken to carry out, and for which it has a mandate from the electors of Western Australia.

Amendments to, and the comprehensive revision of, various other Acts—the need for which has become apparent since the election to office of the Government—will also be brought forward for the consideration of members.

At this year's election, the Australian Labor Party offered Western Australians a series of fundamental commitments. These were to work—

the restoration of economic growth to raise living standards and protect jobs;

sound and responsible administration of the State's affairs;

a cautious, yet progressive programme of moderate social reform reflecting our perception of the community's attitudes in the last part of the 20th century; and,

the introduction in this State of a parliamentary and electoral system that properly reflects democratic principles.

It is a matter of history that at the general election held on 19 February, Western Australians gave the Australian Labor Party an overwhelming mandate to implement its programme—according to the party almost 54 per cent of the vote. The electorate did not simply offer a tentative gesture in the direction of change, but demonstrated firmly and unmistakably that it wanted a Labor Government that would implement its announced programmes.

I believe that every member of this Parliament has a solemn responsibility to bear this clearly in mind during the deliberations in this place in the months and years ahead. Failure to do so will be nothing less than a gesture of contempt towards Western Australian electors—and my Government has no objection in principle to offering the electors the opportunity to express their view on such gestures.

The actions of my Government in its first five months in office and the programme we will place before the Legislature in the months ahead reflect in large measure the fundamental commitments we offered Western Australians in the months leading up to the election.

Considerable emphasis will be placed on the obligation the electorate has imposed on us to pursue democratic reform of the State's parliamentary and electoral systems. We make no apology for the priority accorded to this matter because, to the extent that the Parliament fails to reflect the will of the people, the credibility and relevance of the Parliament and its decisions are diminished.

In any community that likes to regard itself and to be regarded as democratic, the quality and fairness of parliamentary representation is fundamental to everything else.

We will act for democratic reforms. During the life of this Parliament, we will legislate for an electoral system that more truly and accurately reflects the will of the people. Reform legislation for the Legislative Council will provide for a reduction in the number of members from 34 to 22. The Government has promised to seek approval of these reforms at a referendum. We believe that these reforms are fair by any democratic criteria.

At the present time, if the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly disagree on any aspect of legislation under consideration, there is no mechanism for the deadlock to be resolved. Therefore the Government proposes legislation which will provide for deadlocks between the Houses to be resolved.

In accordance with Government policy, legislation in this session will be directed at achieving the dual goals of a scrupulously fair electoral system and assisting the citizens of the State to become enrolled and to vote. It is proposed to remove a number of unfair and unnecessary restrictions which have been built into the Electoral Act.

Provision will be made for a close working relationship between the Australian Electoral Office and the State Electoral Department.

The Government sees all these proposed reforms as a transition to a more mature and

democratic phase in Western Australia's political development.

My Government has already launched a number of initiatives aimed at restoring economic growth and stimulating employment by protecting existing jobs and creating new ones.

Our strategy has been two-fold. Firstly, we have taken essentially short-term measures to provide an immediate boost to the economy and especially to employment, and secondly, we have begun work on longer-term initiatives designed to position the State to take advantage of the international economic upturn when it comes and to generate home-grown economic growth.

Much of our thinking has been guided by the successful outcome of the State's first employment summit. The holding of that summit earlier in the year was one of the first election undertakings honoured by the Government. It attracted a positive response from more than 30 groups which took part, representing most fields of economic activity.

The Government wishes to place on record here its gratitude to the parties who participated in the summit for their constructive and co-operative approach. The results of the summit will become even more evident in future months as the Department of Employment and the employment task force reach their full capacity.

The short-term measures we have adopted include employment creation schemes through the Department of Employment and a boost to the housing sector through an enhanced building programme.

During this Parliament, amendments to the Housing Act will be brought forward to enable the State Housing Commission to enter into joint venture arrangements with the private sector. An exciting range of longer-term plans are under way to foster economic growth and legislation resulting from many of these will be brought forward in due course.

Planning and negotiations are well in hand for the formation of a Western Australian development bank and a South-East Asian marketing corporation. The development bank will marshal funds for the development of Western Australian industries and resources and ensure a greater share of the benefits of development remains in the State. The marketing corporation will promote increased sales of the State's agricultural and other products, and will give Western Australia a more aggressive approach to the rapidly expanding Asian markets the potential of which has as yet hardly been scratched by Western Australia.

Legislation on both these agencies, which are being developed in conjunction with the private sector, is expected during this Parliament.

We will legislate for the establishment of a small business development corporation, reflecting our belief that the small business sector can play an enormous role in promoting growth and creating employment. High technology industry is being encouraged by the Government; and legislation to facilitate the development of the proposed technology park will be brought forward.

The "Bunbury 2000" development strategy announced by the Government is a major and unique initiative to boost economic growth through regional development. The south-west development corporation is a key element in the implementation of the development strategy and legislation setting out its charter will be placed before the Parliament.

The Government is committed to giving greater emphasis to tourism, believing the industry's potential economic contribution has been overlooked for far too long. A tourism forum involving all elements of the industry was held in June. Recommendations from that forum are currently being pursued and legislation which might be required in that area will be given high priority.

Sound industrial relations play a major part in promoting economic health. The Government has embarked on a number of initiatives in the field of industrial relations which include the establishment of a tripartite council to report to the Government and, if necessary, the Parliament, on legislative priorities, reforms, and administrative steps necessary to improve industrial relations in this State.

The tripartite council is currently reviewing the Industrial Arbitration Act with the aim of encouraging conciliation as the prime method of dispute settlement and wage and employment conditions determination, while maintaining a just and equitable arbitration system.

Consistent with the statement of accord and the National Economic Summit Conference communique, the Government supports the return to a centralised system of wage fixation. This will support the joint objectives of providing wage justice to employees while seeking to ensure that wage increases do not give added impetus to inflation and unemployment.

Proposed changes to industrial law and planning will, among other things, ensure that co-operation takes place between Government, employers and unions as a means of overcoming confrontation; that harsh and unworkable penalties

are removed; that unions are free to conduct their affairs democratically; that industrial matters are confined to industrial law; that the industrial field is insulated from the intrusion of other legislation which does not have industrial purposes, such as the Trade Practices Act; and that the Western Australian Industrial Commission is given power to reintroduce preference to unionists provisions.

Some other amendments will relate to the Fuel, Energy and Power Resources Act and to the Workers' Compensation and Assistance Act for which it is proposed to implement a sole workers' compensation insurer in this State.

The mining industry remains of enormous importance to Western Australia's economy, but my Government believes the industry's potential has been damaged by the new Mining Act brought into operation recently. Members will be aware of the Government's decision to establish a committee of inquiry into the Mining Act 1978-82. It is expected that the report will be completed later this year, following which the Government will consider the committee's recommendations and whatever legislative action might be warranted.

My Government is firmly committed to maintaining the crucial economic role of agriculture. A range of proposed legislation includes measures to—

- widen the scope of the Rural Adjustment Authority;
- amend the Dairy Industry Act to implement some of the recommendations of the Royal Commission;
- amend the Marketing of Lamb Act and the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority Act;
- give the Department of Agriculture a corporate identity to undertake overseas projects; to provide the department with a commercial basis for dealing with farm aspects of research station operations, and to provide for improved management of special research grants by the department; and
- completely overhaul all existing Acts as they relate to the State's meat industries.

Other economic measures include—

- updating of a number of agreements applying to existing industries;
- legislation for the proposed wage cuts for members of Parliament, Ministers, and other servants of the State; and,
- establishment of the State Engineering Works as a statutory authority.

I believe the economic programme we are offering is the most comprehensive ever brought to this place, reflecting the Government's determination to work to overcome the current economic malaise and to fan the spark of recovery now becoming evident.

The Government is anxious to attend to the backlog of Law Reform Commission reports on which no decision or action has been taken, and the processing of these matters will be given high priority. In the area of law reform, the Government proposes legislation to abolish the death penalty.

Legislation based wholly, or in part, on four recommendations of the Law Reform Commission will provide for amendments to the Limitation Act as it affects latent diseases, particularly in relation to asbestos-related diseases; the Absconding Debtors Act; the Fatal Accidents Act; and the straying stock liability Act.

A prisoners' interstate transfer Bill will allow prisoners to be transferred to another State, when either it is in a prisoner's best interest, or to enable an outstanding charge to be dealt with.

The Government proposes to legislate in this session to regulate public assemblies and processions in lieu of section 54B of the Police Act. It is proposed also to amend the Local Government Act in several different areas, including changes in respect of allowances to council members and regulation of street trading.

The Cemeteries Act of 1897 is to be repealed and a new Act, more appropriate to current times, and which is based on the recommendations of a committee appointed to review the existing legislation, will be brought forward for consideration by members.

Laws dealing with false advertising, the labelling of clothing, and matters relating to trade standards will be consolidated into a new all-encompassing trade standards Act. One of the objectives will be to strengthen legislation particularly so far as false advertising in relation to employment is concerned.

In conformity with Government policy, it is proposed to amend the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act and to provide for the introduction of a fidelity fund in relation to motor vehicle dealers, and to repeal both the Money Lenders and Hire-Purchase Acts and to replace them with a modern scheme of consumer credit which will achieve uniformity with other States as well as provide greater information to all consumers.

The Government has appointed a committee of inquiry to examine the problems of the liquor industry, and a moratorium on the granting of

certain licences and permits for 12 months has been introduced. Legislation to support the moratorium is scheduled for this session.

It is proposed to amend the Liquor Act to allow licensed stores to extend their trading hours to 9.00 p.m. when other stores may do so, as in the case of late night shopping.

Amendments to the Lotteries (Control) Act will be designed to—

- permit the playing of bingo on licensed premises;

- permit use of beer ticket machines on licensed premises; and,

- provide for payment of the expenses of instant lottery advisory committees.

A Cabinet subcommittee has been formed to examine reports from a Government gaming study group and a Government casino advisory committee. Both will review submissions from a wide cross-section of the public and business community. A Bill may be required to consolidate all of the State's gaming laws into one piece of legislation.

Recommendations by the review committee appointed to consider suggested amendments to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act will be incorporated in legislation which the Government will bring forward.

It is the Government's intention to introduce legislation to give the Urban Lands Council statutory status and to substantially amend the Town Planning and Development Act, and to table in Parliament several major amendments to the metropolitan region scheme.

In the area of education, the Government is pursuing three main themes, namely—

- the updating of the education system so that it meets the needs of our modern society and prepares students for major changes in technology and industry;

- the restoration of harmony and a sense of purpose to our education system; and,

- providing sufficient levels of funding and resources to education to enable the system to meet the needs of today's society, and to prevent our system falling behind that of other States and other countries.

In pursuit of these objectives, the Government has already established one of the most wide-ranging inquiries ever conducted into education with the establishment of the committee of inquiry into education, chaired by Mr Kim Beazley (Senior)—a former Federal Minister for Education.

The committee has been asked to report to the Government by the end of March next year and has been given a firm undertaking that any legislation which might be necessary as a result of its recommendations, will be given high priority.

The Government is in the process of establishing a women's advisory council to advise the Government on matters of concern to women. The Government will give attention to recommendations from the council for legislative measures to promote and defend the interests of women.

I now refer broadly to some other Bills which will be included in the legislation to be placed before Parliament during this session. These include Bills to—

provide for the disclosure by members of Parliament of their financial interests;

amend the Public and Bank Holidays Act to provide for the Queen's Birthday to be celebrated in Western Australia on the Monday of Perth Royal Show week;

establish a commission for multi-cultural and ethnic affairs;

establish an occupational health, safety and welfare commission;

amend various Acts as required to introduce the Commonwealth Government's "Medicare" health insurance scheme;

generally update and strengthen the Health Act, especially in relation to uniform food legislation, penalties, therapeutic goods, pesticides, private hospitals and nursing homes. It is proposed that only licensed nursing homes will be permitted to use the term "nursing home";

strengthen the law prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to juveniles;

establish a dental technicians' registration board and permit members of the public requiring removable dentures to deal direct with registered dental technicians;

amend the Parks and Reserves Act to protect the safety and interests of visitors to Kings Park by permitting the use of speed measuring devices in the reserve;

allow for the introduction of daylight saving in Western Australia on a trial basis—to be accompanied by a referendum;

introduce a licensing system covering travel agents which will give greater protection to the public; and

amend the Child Welfare Act relating to supervision and licensing of day care centres for children.

From all I have said, it will be apparent to members that the legislative programme ahead of us is extensive, even though the measures I have outlined are not a complete list. Nevertheless, this is not unusual after a change of Government—especially after nine years. Further, we believe the measures outlined are necessary and worthwhile.

Let me conclude by saying that my Government is committed to the persistence of Parliament as a viable and vital institution, rather than as a moribund rubber stamp. The spirit in which we approach this Parliament is that we have no monopoly on wisdom. If our legislation is flawed or can be improved, I hope members from both sides will not hesitate to point out weaknesses and possible improvements. Sensible proposals put forward in a genuine spirit will never be rejected by this Government simply because they came from the other side of the House.

At the outset of this session, I offer members opposite goodwill and co-operation, trusting it will be returned. All of us should remember that this Parliament exists not for personal advancement or political advantage, but to further the best interests of the people of the best State in the best country in the world.

I look forward to working constructively in the months ahead with all members with that aim firmly in mind.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [8.32 p.m.]: The final comments by the Premier were very much different from those at the commencement of his speech. In actual fact, we will not be bluffed by the stand-over tactics of the Government which, I can tell members opposite, will not work. As far as good legislation is concerned, we will assist wherever we can. In the case of bad legislation we will do everything we can to oppose it.

The Premier talks about a mandate. He had a mandate to reduce unemployment in this State and to reduce charges. Neither of these things has come about. In fact, the reverse has occurred.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr O'CONNOR: A cursory perusal of the Premier's speech indicates clearly that some points will be acceptable to us and will cause no problem. It also indicates clearly that some of the legislation outlined will harm business and will benefit trade union leaders only. I can assure the House that this type of legislation will run into trouble and we will not accept legislation that will benefit only a few and be detrimental to the rest of the community. It is obvious that the Oppo-

sition will require precise information in relation to legislation before it can support or oppose it.

The signs in some cases are ominous—one need only look at the proposal for one workers' compensation insurer. This is unnecessary and unjust and it precludes individuals from having the right to choose with whom they wish to insure. It is something we should not be legislating for and if a person thinks that a particular insurer is too dear or his services are unsatisfactory, that person should have the right of choice.

It is clear from the Premier's speech that he is suggesting that people should be channeled in a certain direction—in this area we are seeing the first move towards centralisation. This proposal would mean that the State Government Insurance Office would be the only insurer to handle workers' compensation. I do not like this proposal as it will affect businesses and, I believe, it will cost individuals and industry a great deal. It also will cost jobs in the insurance field and create a great deal of insecurity for a number of people presently employed in that field. That obviously will follow the opening up of the franchise as far as State Government insurance is concerned.

The most dastardly legislation indicated by the Premier is that of placing industrial action beyond the rule of the law. I believe that is disgraceful.

Mr Parker: It does nothing of the sort.

Mr O'CONNOR: We cannot tolerate its being placed in the hands of industrial vandals as has been the case in the past. The Premier's words were that it is "to insulate from legislation without industrial purpose." The Crimes Act does not contain provisions relating to industrial purpose, neither does the Criminal Code or the Road Traffic Act. Does this mean those people will be exempt in these areas? If it does, the Government will have a hell of a fight on its hands.

I hope the Premier will tell us in due course whether the advice to put unions outside the law in relation to industrial action came from his advisers. If that is the case, I can understand why this legislation is proposed. The Minister for Industrial Relations (the Hon. D. K. Dans) was a secretary of the Seamen's Union. His adviser, Mr McGinty, was secretary of the Hospital Employees Industrial Union, and the Premier's adviser on industrial relations, Mr Butler, was secretary of the Painters and Decorators Union and President of the ALP. If they are the sorts of people advising on this legislation, no doubt these are the types of provisions they would like.

Mr Pearce: Is W. W. Mitchell still advising you?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr O'CONNOR: At this stage we have a Government dominated by union representatives and not operated by the elected representatives of the people. Preference to unionists again is a denial of basic human freedoms. It is also contrary to an ILO convention and the International Declaration of Human Rights. It denies freedom for the majority in favour of the minority. Less than half the electors in this State are members of unions. We should not discriminate against people on the basis of religion, race, or class. Why should we discriminate in relation to union membership? It is both absurd and discriminatory.

Mr Pearce: Why are you trying to stop union officers taking positions with the Government?

Mr O'CONNOR: Because the Government is controlled by them. Ministers have little say. The elected representatives have little to say and obviously are dominated. These matters give us a lot to worry about. I see the member for Pilbara smiling and so she should when she reflects on the comments she made on the prices legislation and sees what has happened in the Pilbara since that time.

If we consider this legislation together with the comments made by the Minister for Housing a couple of days ago, when he was asked whether he could guarantee the Government would not offer 50 per cent of the State to the Aborigines, and he replied, "No", I wonder how much we have to worry about.

Mr Parker: Viner accused you of not telling the truth.

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest the Leader of the Opposition addresses his remarks to the Chair and he will be heard in silence.

Mr O'CONNOR: I will be happy to do that, but I point out that Mr Viner has the bull by the tail. He was referring to some comments I made regarding the Northern Territory and said I had made those remarks about Western Australia. I make that comment to indicate there was nothing in the matter.

To return to the question of land rights, I indicate that if that is the sort of legislation that will be going through, I hope some stability exists in one of the Houses here and I can say, "Thank God for the Legislative Council."

If the legislation relating to section 54B protects the right of individuals in a better way than the present law and is an improvement, it will be acceptable. I am not happy about the proposals relating to disclosure of financial interests and the ban on tobacco advertising. They are an infringement of the rights of the individual. These sorts of legislation indicate clearly the Govern-

ment's dictatorial attitude and its unwillingness to be bound by rational principles of basic freedom and the right of privacy. In this area we will take on the Government. We will support good legislation, but the Government will have a great fight on its hands if we find the type of legislation to which I have referred to be unacceptable.

SUPPLY BILL

Message: Appropriations

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the Bill.

House adjourned at 8.41 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

WAGES: CUTS AND INCREASES

Members of Parliament: Voluntary Restrictions

59. Mr CRANE, to the Speaker:

- (1) With regard to the proposed salary cuts introduced by the present Government—
 - (a) were there voluntary restrictions on salary increases recommended by the Court Government in 1977;
 - (b) if not, which year were such restrictions recommended?
- (2) Will he publish the names of the members who signed Treasury documents relinquishing the salary increases at that time?
- (3) Will he publish the names of the members presently sitting in this Parliament who did not relinquish their increases at that time?
- (4) Did the Cabinet, in July 1980, make a similar recommendation that parliamentary increases should not be accepted by the Cabinet?
- (5) Who were the Cabinet members who did not take this increase?
- (6) What were the names of other members of Parliament who also relinquished this increase at that time?
- (7) What were the names of present members of Parliament who did not voluntarily relinquish their salary increases in 1980?
- (8) To which political parties did they belong?

The SPEAKER replied:

- (1) to (8) As these questions concern the private and personal arrangements made by individual members relating to parliamentary salaries and allowances payable to them it is not my intention to provide the information sought.

60. *This question was postponed.*

LAND: YILGARN

Special Lease

61. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) With regard to the so-called "special lease land" in the Yilgarn area, is he aware of the review undertaken by his predecessor and Mines Department officers regarding the release for freeholding of this land?
- (2) Is he aware of the full discussions and representations which were held in relation to this matter, in Southern Cross on 15 and 16 February 1983?
- (3) Would he please indicate the undertaking given by his predecessor in regard to the special lease land in the Yilgarn?
- (4) Has this undertaking been revoked?
- (5) Was any revocation the result of a submission to, and consideration by, State Cabinet?
- (6) If so, on what date was the consideration and determination?
- (7) Was any discussion held with the then member for Yilgarn-Dundas prior to any submission to Cabinet; or prior to, or during any consideration being given to revoking the policy undertaking?
- (8) Was advice sought from the Mines Department on this matter, especially the Assistant Under Secretary for Mines who participated in the review of policy, and in the discussions at Southern Cross on 16 February 1983?
- (9) When is it the Minister's intention to personally answer my correspondence on this matter dated 28 April 1983?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) to (9) On taking up office following the State elections on 19 February 1983, the Government considered it necessary to review some of the decisions made by the previous Government immediately before the elections and, in particular, where such decisions changed policies

which had existed over a long period of time.

One of the decisions which was reviewed was that by the previous Minister for Mines (Hon. P. V. Jones) who, when he met with the Yilgarn Shire Council and other interested parties on 16 February 1983, gave an undertaking that a long-standing practice by the Mines Department in objecting to freeholding of leasehold land in the Yilgarn area where such land was the subject of a mining tenement, would be discontinued and that in future, no objections would be raised in respect of freeholding such land.

On 21 March 1983 Cabinet reviewed the undertaking given by Mr Jones and considered that, in view of the long-standing policy which had existed, the decision made by Mr Jones should be reversed.

BUSINESSES

Taxes and Charges: Increase

62. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) What consideration was given by him or his department to the serious economic effects upon existing or potential business activity in Western Australia which would result from the increase in Government taxes and charges?
- (2) Was any submission on behalf of the business community considered by Cabinet before determining the level of increases?
- (3) If not, has any submission been prepared subsequently indicating the impact of increased Government taxes and charges upon the business sector, especially the small business sector?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) Consultations were held with a number of business, trade union, and community organisations prior to the Government making a decision to increase certain taxes and charges.

The likely impact of the increases on all Western Australians received consideration.

- (2) Submissions were received from a number of organisations, including some representing the business community,

prior to determination of the level of increases.

- (3) Not applicable.

MINING: IRON ORE

Koolyanobbing: Discussions and Compensation

63. Mr PETER JONES, to the Premier:

- (1) With regard to the cessation of BHP operations at Koolyanobbing, what discussions have occurred between his Government and the company, since 1 March 1983, and relating to any impending reduction in activities?
- (2) What obligations for compensation by the company are contained within the relevant agreement Act?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Discussions between the Government and company representatives were held on two occasions since 1 March 1983.
- (2) The obligations for compensation referred to in the question are contained in the Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd's integrated steel works agreement No. 67 of 1960, a copy of which I am sure can be obtained by the member from the library if he so desires.

As members will know, BHP has not yet closed its Koolyanobbing operations. If the closure proceeds, the Government will pursue the question vigorously.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: BUNBURY

New Industries

64. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

What industries of national and international importance have signified an interest in becoming established in Bunbury as indicated by the Minister for Transport and referred to in *The West Australian* of Monday, 18 July 1983?

Mr BRYCE replied:

At this time there are 11 organisations which have shown some interest. However, because of the need to recognise confidentiality insofar as the private companies are concerned, it is inappropriate to release their names in the House.

ECONOMY: ECONOMIC PLANNING AND ADVISORY COUNCIL

Membership

65. Mr PETER JONES, to the Premier:

- (1) As Western Australia has no members on the Federal Government Economic Planning and Advisory Council, what protest has he made regarding this oversight?
- (2) How will Western Australia now be able to pursue its economic arguments with the Federal Government in view of no involvement in EPAC, and the Prime Minister's statement that EPAC will be the main source of national economic planning and advice?
- (3) (a) Is he planning any further protests;
(b) if he is not, has he already sought a review of the membership?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (3) I have expressed to the Prime Minister my Government's displeasure at the failure to include a Western Australian representative on EPAC and am awaiting a response from him. My Government does not expect any difficulty in pursuing economic arguments with the present Federal Government, especially as that Government's conciliatory and accommodating attitude is in such marked contrast to that of the Fraser Government.

MINING: URANIUM

Yeelirrie: Government Attitude

66. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) As the development of the Yeelirrie uranium project has been approved by the Parliament of Western Australia, and is subject to a ratified agreement with the State, what action has the Government taken to assist the joint venturers in finalising their equity participation and subsequent contracts?
- (2) What discussions have taken place between the Federal and Western Australian Governments to ensure the project's proceeding?
- (3) As uranium sales potential is improving, what action has the Government taken to ensure that there are no political or

administrative difficulties in the path of the project?

- (4) Is the Government against the project's proceeding as soon as possible?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) Pending a review of Commonwealth policy on uranium, approval has been withdrawn for continued negotiations for the sale of uranium from Yeelirrie. The issue of State Government assistance to the joint venturers to finalise their equity participation and subsequent contracts has, therefore, not arisen.
- (2) Discussions have taken place at a ministerial level between State and Commonwealth, and the latter has been fully informed as to the status of the Yeelirrie project.
- (3) The question of uranium exports is a Commonwealth matter and the State Government is currently awaiting the outcome of a review of Commonwealth policy on the matter.
- (4) The future of the project is dependent on the Commonwealth review of uranium policy.

RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Federal Involvement

67. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) Is he aware of the instruction issued by the then Federal Department of Trade and Resources on Monday, 7 March, indicating a greater Federal involvement in development and marketing of Western Australia's resources?
- (2) On what dates, and in what form did the Government object to this further Federal intrusion?
- (3) In view of his statement that the Western Australian Government would not permit greater Canberra intrusion into Western Australian affairs, what was the result of his undoubted protest to his colleague, the Minister for Resources and Energy in Canberra?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) There were a number of exchanges at ministerial and officer level with the Commonwealth during the time in which the policy was being reassessed.

- (3) As the instruction was a holding instruction pending clarification of the new Commonwealth Government's policies, and as opportunity for consultation on the new guidelines was provided, no further response was warranted.

BRIDGE: NICHOLSON ROAD

Heavy Haulage Vehicles

68. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In view of the tonnages being carried by heavy haulage vehicles using Nicholson Road, Cannington, does his department consider the Nicholson Road bridge across the Canning River in Cannington safe and able to carry such tonnages?
- (2) How often is this bridge examined by his department to ensure its safety and strength?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) The bridge is safe for regulation loads. The Main Roads Department only issues overload permits for heavier loads which it considers the bridge is able to carry safely.
- (2) The Nicholson Road bridge is under the control of the Gosnells and Canning City Councils. On request from the local authorities, the Main Roads Department last examined the bridge about two and a half years ago, following which the department carried out some maintenance work on behalf of the councils.

69. *This question was postponed.*

WASTE DISPOSAL: DRINK CONTAINERS

South Australian Legislation

70. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is he aware of the large number of throw-away containers littering our roads and verges which could be reused by the container processors?
- (2) If "Yes", would he introduce a Bill similar to the South Australian Beverage Containers Act (1975-1976) which has produced remarkable results by stopping the trend towards one-way packaging?
- (3) If "No" to (2), why not?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) The Government is currently considering the introduction of legislation with investigations being conducted by the Department of Conservation and Environment and the Keep Australia Beautiful Council.

The Victorian Government is also conducting an exhaustive inquiry in this regard; and this Government will be examining the outcome of that inquiry along with the results of our own investigations.

- (3) Answered by (2).

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT: BINGO CARDS

Printing

71. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Will he investigate why West Australian Newspapers Ltd., which survives on Western Australian advertising, distributes bingo cards for the *Daily News* which are printed in England by Edward Thompson (Printers) Ltd., Sunderland, England?
- (2) In view of the unemployment situation in Western Australia and the downturn in the printing industry in this State, does his department consider this action fair and reasonable?
- (3) If not, will he urge *The West Australian* and *Daily News* to support local industry?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) Inquiries made with West Australian Newspapers Ltd. reveal that Edward Thompson (Printers) Ltd., England has the world copyright on the style of bingo card used by the *Daily News* and supplies to most countries in the world, including the USA.

Because of the multiple number combinations on bingo cards only major printing establishments can undertake work of this magnitude. No printer in Australia, including West Australian Newspapers Ltd. (the State's largest printer), is capable of handling this work independently.

It is understood Edward Thompson (Printers) Ltd. has franchised one Australian company to perform overprinting

work but this is only one element of the total production process.

- (2) Yes, in view of the information contained in (1).
- (3) Not applicable.

WATER RESOURCES: METROPOLITAN WATER AUTHORITY

Police Investigations

72. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Referring to the police investigations about allegations of graft and corruption in the Metropolitan Water Authority, could he please inform the House whether the investigation has been concluded?
- (2) Have any irregularities or graft been found regarding allocations of contracts?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), can he name the specific contracts?
- (4) Were any irregularities found that material, being the property of the Metropolitan Water Authority, and/or labour, (direct or indirect) having been paid for by the Metropolitan Water Authority, was used at non-Metropolitan Water Authority properties in the interests of other persons?
- (5) If "Yes" to (4), can he name the properties and the owners and occupiers of these properties where such material and/or labour have been irregularly used?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) to (5) I have no specific knowledge of the allegations but attach for the member's information a copy of advice received from the Commissioner of Police following the completion of police inquiries.

GOVERNORS

Federal Government Request

73. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact that the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia has approached the United Kingdom Government and/or Her Majesty the Queen with the request that there be only one contact between the Monarch and Aus-

tralia and that be through the Commonwealth, thus rendering the Premier's role in recommending the appointment of State Governors superfluous?

- (2) Are he and his Government as a policy, supporting such a request?
- (3) If not, has he lodged a strong protest against such centralising action with the Commonwealth Government?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) The Commonwealth has suggested that recommendations by Premiers on the appointment of State Governors should be channelled through the Commonwealth and subject to the further advice of the Prime Minister.
- (2) No.
- (3) The State has made clear its opposition to the proposal and further negotiations are proceeding.

WATER RESOURCES: SYDNEY METROPOLITAN WATER BOARD

Rates

74. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Can he tell me what were the recommended average percentage increases in rates and charges for the 1983-84 financial year by the Sydney water board for—
 - (a) residential properties;
 - (b) non-residential properties;
 - (c) excess water charges;
 - (d) the maximum increase for any home owner?
- (2) Is he able to say whether the New South Wales Minister for Water Resources accepted these recommendations or found them unjustified?
- (3) What were the final percentage increases in the categories (a) to (d) above with the Sydney water board?
- (4) If the Western Australian Metropolitan Water Authority percentage increases for 1983-84 in these categories are higher, can he state the reason for such higher increases?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) to (4) Not known.

It is suggested that the member seek this information from the NSW Minister for

Water Resources or the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board in Sydney.

75. *This question was postponed.*

PARLIAMENT: HOUSE

Microphones and Tape Recorders: Cost

76. Mr MENSAROS, to the Speaker:

- (1) From what part of the 1982-83 vote was the supply and installation of microphones, tape recorders, and other ancillary equipment in the Chambers and throughout Parliament sought?
- (2) What is the estimated total amount for supplying and installing this broadcasting equipment in Parliament House?

Mr SPEAKER replied:

- (1) and (2) I have referred the member's question to the Minister for Works with the request that he replies directly to the member.

PARLIAMENT: HOUSE

Microphones and Tape Recorders: Operating Personnel

77. Mr MENSAROS, to the Speaker:

- (1) What additional personnel has been or will be employed to switch on and off the individual microphones during sittings of the House and otherwise operate the broadcasting equipment?
- (2) What is the total estimated cost of operating this equipment including salaries for the above personnel?

Mr SPEAKER replied:

- (1) and (2) By arrangements made through the Department of Politics at the University of Western Australia, a panel of students has been engaged to monitor the sound reinforcement and relay system and operate tape recorders.

These monitors will be employed on a casual basis during the sittings of the two Houses. At this stage no permanent appointments are envisaged.

Estimated costs, based on average sitting hours, indicate a total of \$11 000 to \$12 000 per annum, to be shared between the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly.

78. *This question was postponed.*

DRAINAGE

Country Areas: Rating Systems

79. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Having noticed with satisfaction that the work started under the previous Government to simplify country rural drainage rating systems is continuing under his administration, would he extend the courtesy—as I did on request by anyone—to supply me with up-to-date information about the plans which have been prepared for discussion with local representatives and keep me supplied from time to time with additional material as it is being prepared?

Mr TONKIN replied:

Meetings to discuss the plans for country rural drainage rating have already been held with the ratepayers concerned. Thirteen meetings were held at strategic locations, which were attended by a total of 357 ratepayers out of 5 985 invited.

The department has prepared a detailed report which is currently before Cabinet.

I will consider making a copy of this report available to the member as soon as it has been considered by the Government.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Initiatives: Expenditure

80. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) (a) Could he please itemise all the new initiatives within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which were not planned by the previous Government and for which there were no specific allowances in the 1982-83 revenue Budget, or in case of an instrumentality not being subject to votes within the revenue Budget, items of the budget of the instrumentality; and
- (b) could he also set the amount expended in 1982-83 against that item?
- (2) Could he indicate any votes or part votes in the 1982-83 revenue Budget (or, in the case of instrumentalities, in their

budgets) within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which have not been expended, and have been used for initiatives as under (1) above?

Mr DAVIES replied:

- (1) and (2) Although I have put in hand a number of new initiatives since assuming office, they have all been in the area of policy development and have not involved expenditure of any significance.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Rates: Three per cent Levy

81. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:

Considering his strong opposition—which no doubt was genuine—to the three per cent Government levy on the turnover of designated State business undertakings, does his Government now intend to abolish the levy, thereby giving an opportunity for State utilities to charge lower tariffs for water, sewerage, electricity, gas, etc.?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The State Government has under constant review all means by which lower tariffs can be achieved in the areas referred to.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Initiatives: Expenditure

82. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services:

- (1) (a) Could he please itemise all the new initiatives within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which were not planned by the previous Government and for which there were no specific allowances in the 1982-83 revenue Budget; and
(b) could he also set the amount expended in 1982-83 against that item?
(2) Could he indicate any votes or part votes in the 1982-83 revenue Budget within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which have not been expended, and have been used for initiatives as under (1) above?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) and (2) Although I have put in hand a number of new initiatives since assuming

office, they have all been in the area of policy development and have not involved expenditure of any significance.

WATER RESOURCES: PLUMBERS

Licence Fee

83. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has the plumbers' licence fee for the 1983-84 financial year increased or is it proposed that it be increased from the present \$20 as far as the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Water Authority is concerned?
(2) If so, what is the increase incurred or proposed?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) The plumbers' licence fee for 1983-84 financial year has not increased, but the board of the MWA has resolved to raise the fee to \$30 as from 1 July 1984.
(2) Answered by (1) above.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Initiatives: Expenditure

84. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) (a) Could he please itemise all the new initiatives within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which were not planned by the previous Government and for which there were no specific allowances in the 1982-83 revenue Budget, or in case of an instrumentality not being subject to votes within the revenue Budget, items of the budget of the instrumentality; and
(b) could he also set the amount expended in 1982-83 against that item?
(2) Could he indicate any votes or part votes in the 1982-83 revenue Budget (or, in the case of instrumentalities, in their budgets) within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which have not been expended, and have been used for initiatives as under (1) above?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) and (2) Although I have put in hand a number of new initiatives since assuming office, they have all been in the area of policy development and have not involved expenditure of any significance.

WATER RESOURCES: DAMS

Bicentennial Water Resources Programme: Withdrawal

85. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has he protested to the Commonwealth Government for its having withdrawn the bicentennial water resources programme which would have benefited the building and augmentation of dams in the south-west of Western Australia?
- (2) If so, can he describe the manner and time of his protest and also the response by the Commonwealth Government?
- (3) If he has not protested, can he give reasons why not?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) to (3) The State Government is always concerned that due priority is given to the need to build and augment dams in Western Australia and will not hesitate to press the Commonwealth at every opportunity on this matter.

However, I am confident that worthwhile projects will be properly considered for funding by the Commonwealth Government under Federal Programmes initiated by it.

NOISE

Cannington Light Industrial Area

86. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) In view of continual complaints by ratepayers regarding noise in the light industrial area in Cannington, what action should the local authority take to abate the nuisance?
- (2) Why would a senior council officer advise a ratepayer to take private action against the noise offender?
- (3) What action is open to a ratepayer to control excessive noise in an instance where he has received from a council mayor advice that the matter has been rectified, when in fact the noise nuisance is worse than at the time of the original complaint?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) to (3) These questions are associated with the administration of the Noise

Abatement Act which comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Health.

However, as the questions appear to relate to specific incidents involving the City of Canning I think that the member should make inquiries with that municipality.

WATER RESOURCES: DAM

Canning Pipehead Dam

87. Mr SPRIGGS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Metropolitan Water Authority to develop a pipehead dam below the Canning Dam?
- (2) If so, when?
- (3) As the Stinton Creek watershed takes in an area of Karragullen, what restrictions will be placed on the existing orchard properties before and after their development?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) It is the intention of the MWA to construct two small dams below Canning Dam from which water will be pumped back to the main Canning Dam storage.
- (2) On present planning, construction will not be before 1990 and 1996 respectively.
- (3) Stinton Creek catchment is not affected by the first proposal. However, draft catchment management guidelines are currently being prepared. These should be available about October 1983 for distribution to land owners and the public for comment.

EDUCATION: SCHOOL BUSES

Karragullen-Roleystone

88. Mr SPRIGGS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it still his intention to remove the school bus service from the Karragullen-Roleystone area at the end of the school year?
- (2) If so, what alternatives have been made to enable pupils to get to the Kelmscott Senior High School and the Roleystone District High School?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes. Not one student who uses this service is eligible to do so.

- (2) There are public services available and the Education Department is liaising with the Metropolitan Transport Trust to extend the public services where appropriate.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Roleystone: Completion

89. Mr SPRIGGS, to the Minister for Education:

Would he give assurances that the Roleystone District High School will be completed sufficiently to allow it to be used for the next term of this school year?

Mr PEARCE replied:

Completion of the present building programme at the Roleystone District High School is well advanced and, given no unforeseen delays, the school will be occupied in the first week of third term.

MINING: NICKEL

Inquiry

90. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

Has the Government any plans for an inquiry, or conference, into the nickel industry, involving the industry, Government, and unions?

Mr BRYCE replied:

The Government is continuing to monitor the state of the nickel industry in Western Australia, and close contact is being maintained with nickel producers and unions on this matter. The Deputy Premier recently convened a meeting of nickel industry representatives to discuss the difficulties facing the industry. Indications were that the prospects for the industry are improving steadily as a result of changing world economic conditions. A final decision has not yet been made on the timing for a conference or a detailed inquiry.

FUEL AND ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Deficit/Surplus Budgeting

91. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has the State Energy Commission budgeted for an operating surplus, or deficit, for the coming year?

- (2) What is the estimated surplus, or deficit, for the coming year?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) and (2) The commission has budgeted to balance its expected expenditure with estimated income for the financial year.

FUEL AND ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Commissioner: Employment terms and Conditions

92. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

Could he please detail the current terms and conditions of employment of the State Energy Commission's managing director, Mr Bruce Kirkwood?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The commissioner, Mr Kirkwood, is employed pursuant to the provisions of the State Energy Commission Act 1979-1982, and is remunerated at the special 5 level as determined from time to time by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

FUEL AND ENERGY

Energy Forecasts

93. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Is his department confident that the State Energy Commission's energy forecasts, as previously publicised, are correct?

Mr BRYCE replied:

The commission produces a number of forecasts throughout the course of the year to satisfy particular planning needs within the commission and for the public. Forecasts need to be continually reviewed as new information comes to hand and adjustments made as the perception of the future changes. A variety of forecasting techniques are employed to ensure commission forecasts are as accurate as possible. A single projection for sales will never be 100 per cent accurate. The commission forecasts aim to provide a sound picture of the future direction and some bounds of confidence on the forecasts to allow sensible planning to proceed (that is, use of high and low growth scenarios).

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOLS

Lynwood, Rossmoyne, and Willetton: Enrolments

94. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the current enrolment at each of the following high schools—
 - (a) Lynwood Senior High School;
 - (b) Willetton Senior High School;
 - (c) Rossmoyne Senior High School?
- (2) Assuming no new high school is built in the Murdoch electorate over the next five years, what is the projected enrolment for each of these schools at the beginning of each of the following academic years—
 - (a) 1984;
 - (b) 1985;
 - (c) 1986;
 - (d) 1987;
 - (e) 1988?
- (3) Where is it planned that the next high school will be built in this area?
- (4) When is construction of this high school likely to commence?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Enrolments at 1 July were—
 - (a) 1 251
 - (b) 1 169
 - (c) 1 258
- (2) Lynwood Senior High School March enrolments are expected to be—
 - (a) 1 320
 - (b) 1 275
 - (c) 1 260
 - (d) 1 240
 - (e) 1 220

Projections for Rossmoyne and Willetton Senior High Schools beyond 1986 are hypothetical as options are being examined for the provision of additional secondary places for the area. It is assumed that a new high school will be built.

Rossmoyne Senior High School—

- (a) 1 325
- (b) 1 395
- (c) 1 380

Willetton Senior High School—

- (a) 1 315
- (b) 1 420
- (c) 1 475
- (3) and (4) A high school site has been identified in Leeming but the date of commencing construction of a school has not been fixed.

FUEL AND ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Staff: Number

95. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) How many staff are currently employed by the State Energy Commission?
- (2) How many of these employees are classed as "day labour"?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) 5 667 as at 30 June 1983.
- (2) Nil.

LIQUOR: WINE

Western Australian: Promotion

96. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) Referring him to an article in *The West Australian* of 24 March 1983, headed "Expert: WA Wines need promotion" which reported that—

The chairman of judges of the Sheraton wine awards, Mr John Hanley, said at the medals presentation yesterday that WA wine-makers should set aside an advertising budget and seek professional marketing expertise.

what plans has the Government for assisting the wine industry in Western Australia to promote its products in the Eastern States of Australia in the coming year?

- (2) What plans has the Government for assisting the wine industry in Western Australia to promote its products in overseas markets in the coming year?
- (3) What funds have been allocated for this purpose in the 1983-84 Budget?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The Government will continue to liaise closely with the Western Australian

Grapegrowers and Wine Producers Association to ensure that marketing assistance is available in the Eastern States to local wine producers.

- (2) My department co-ordinated a tasting of Western Australian wines in Hong Kong last March to assess market prospects, and the Agent General for Western Australia is co-ordinating a presentation of Western Australian wines in London this month.
- (3) The department's marketing budget provides for promotional support to general industry including the wine industry.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Local Companies: Preference

97. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services:

Referring him to question 25 of 23 March 1983, respecting Government contracts, as he has now been a Minister for some months, has he any examples of where a Government contract was awarded to an overseas company ahead of a local company which was competitive with regard to price, quality and delivery and, if so, would he provide me with these examples?

Mr PARKER replied:

As Minister for Planning and for Employment and Administrative Services, I am not responsible for or aware of the details relating to the awarding of Government contracts. I am however greatly concerned with the policy as it affects employment.

I am advised by the Minister for Economic Development and Technology, who is responsible for the administration of the Government's policy in regard to this matter, that as there is such a large volume of contracts awarded it is not possible to provide the information requested; however, if the member can provide details of a specific nature where the Government's policy has not been followed, he will investigate the matter.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: BUREAU

Prices Commissioner: Staffing and Cost of Operation

98. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) Referring him to question 26 of 23 March 1983, respecting the Prices Commission, what is the current staffing

level of the office of the Prices Commissioner (in addition to that previously allocated to the Prices Commissioner)?

- (2) What will be the estimated cost of running this office for the financial years ending 30 June 1983 and 30 June 1984?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Three officers now seconded plus one typist currently employed (this represents one additional officer).
- (2) Legislation will cease to be operative December 1983 unless otherwise determined by Parliament. Cost for part years will be approximately \$67 000.

However, it is pointed out that the officers were seconded from existing staff within the Public Service which in real terms represents an adjustment of salaries between the departments concerned.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT: STRATEGIES TASK FORCE

Incentive Programme: Examination

99. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Employment:

- (1) Has the State employment strategies task force yet examined the incentive programme referred to by him in the *Daily News* of 24 February 1983?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If the answer to (1) is "Yes", what is the outcome of that examination?
- (4) If the task force has not yet examined this incentive programme, when is it expected to do so?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) to (4) Further to the information given to the member in my reply to a similar question asked by him on 23 March 1983, I wish to advise that the Government, through the State employment task force, is preparing a detailed report on the provision of the financial and technical assistance for small business co-operative ventures.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Voltage: Report on Change

100. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) When was the independent study into the feasibility of changing Western Australia's voltage standard from 250 to 240 volts decided on by the Government?
- (2) When is the final report expected to be completed?
- (3) Will the report, when completed, be made public?
- (4) If not, why not?
- (5) How much will the report cost?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The decision was not made by this Government.
- (2) December 1983.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Answered by (3).
- (5) Not known as yet.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ACT

Amendment

101. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Referring him to an article in the *Sunday Independent* newspaper of 20 March 1983, which reported that the Burke Government may be moving to amend the
the Fuel and Energy Act of 1974, which allows the Government to suspend Parliament and all civil rights and to rule by decree for periods of up to six months
is the Government planning to amend the Fuel and Energy Act 1974?
- (2) If so, what will be the general nature of these amendments?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) These matters are under consideration.

HOSPITALS: TEACHING

Bed and Ward Use

102. Dr DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) (a) How many wards are not in use; and

(b) how many beds does this represent; in each of the teaching hospitals and their annexes?

- (2) Why are these beds not in use?
- (3) Does he propose to open these beds in the near future?
- (4) If "Yes" to (3), at what cost of staff increase?
- (5) If "No" to (3), why not?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital has one ward closed, representing a total of 28 beds.

King Edward Memorial Hospital has three wards unused, representing 60 beds.

No other teaching hospital has wards unused.

- (2) Because present bed numbers are adequate.
- (3) Extra beds will be provided as required.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) See (2) above.

REVIEWS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Initiation

103. Mr RUSHTON, to the Premier:

- (1) What reviews or investigations have been initiated by his Government since 19 February 1983?
- (2) When is it expected the reviews and investigations will be completed?
- (3) Will the Government make the findings of the reviews and investigations available to the public?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Thirty inquiries covering important areas of government and seeking community contributions have been initiated since the Government took office.
- (2) The inquiries will be completed at varying dates.
- (3) Government's decisions on the recommendations in the inquiries will be carefully considered.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Grain

104. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) (a) How many tonnes of grain were estimated in the 1982-83 Budget for

transport during that year by Westrail;

- (b) what were the actual tonnes of grain transported by Westrail for the 1982-83 year?
- (2) (a) What was the value of freight on grain allowed for in the 1982-83 Budget;
- (b) what was the actual value of freight on grain received for the 1982-83 year?
- (3) What is the amount of value of freight on grain transported during the 1982-83 year to be included in the 1983-84 financial year?
- (4) What was the deficit allowed for in the 1982-83 Budget and the actual deficit as at 30 June 1983 for—
 - (a) Westrail (commercial basis);
 - (b) MTT;
 - (c) State Ships?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) (a) 4.0 million tonnes
- (b) 4.7 million tonnes
- (2) (a) \$57.2 million
- (b) \$68.2 million
- (3) Nil
- (4) (a) \$48.0 million Budget. Figures for 1982-83 have not yet been finalised. However, the loss for 1982-83 is expected to be in the order of \$50.0 million.
- (b) 1982-83 Budget deficit \$50.849M. 1982-83 actual deficit not yet available but is expected to be marginally in excess of Budget, probably less than 1 per cent.
- (c) 1982-83 Budget deficit \$14.85. 1982-83 actual deficit \$14.85.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Less-than-carload: Deregulation

105. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will he give the reasons for holding an inquiry into the deregulation of LCL freight (Total West) considering—
 - (a) the full information is already held through the Southern Western Australia Transport Study report;

- (b) strong support of the present system is contained in the January monitoring report issued by the Commissioner of Transport;
- (c) all his transport advisers recommend the present system?
- (2) Have the railways unions pressed for the inquiry?
- (3) Has the Transport Workers' Union pressed for the inquiry?
- (4) What are the terms of reference for the inquiry?
- (5) Who are the members of the steering committee?
- (6) Who are the members of the study team?
- (7) Why are Westrail and the Transport Commission not represented on the steering committee?
- (8) Why have the unions a seemingly heavy loading of representatives on the steering committee when the inquiry should be about—
 - (a) best service to the user public;
 - (b) most efficient use of transport resources in Western Australia;
 - (c) maximum effective production use of rail transport;
 - (d) the user being free to choose the mode of transport most suitable to the task?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) (a) to (c) The Government's reasons for holding the inquiry were clearly and publicly announced at the time the inquiry was instituted. The Government wishes to determine whether the existing arrangements provide an appropriate and efficient way of handling the State's LCL and general freight traffic; to locate areas where improvements are achievable; and to identify the changes necessary to effect any such improvements.

The Southern Western Australia Transport Study (SWATS), based largely on 1975 data, reported in 1977, and recommended a number of changes—including deregulation of LCL and general freight. The present inquiry has a much narrower scope, and will focus on developments which have occurred in

the LCL and general freight markets since SWATS was completed. In assessing these developments, the inquiry will make use of the Transport Commission's monitoring work, but its brief extends beyond the commission's role to include an examination of alternative arrangements.

- (2) Yes. The railway unions have been one of the many groups which have, at various times, suggested to the Government that a review of developments within LCL and general freight transport should be conducted.

- (3) No. The union is, however, represented on the steering committee.

- (4) The terms of reference of the inquiry are as follows—

- (a) Review and report on the operations of the present land freight transport policy and the agreements, commitments, contracts or legislation on which it is based.

The examination will include review of the operation of any such agreements, commitments and contracts, and the financial and other consequences, if any.

The inquiry shall establish the effect upon Westrail of the policy, including the freight tonnage and revenue lost from its rail and road operations as a result. In addition the assessment shall include any loss of superphosphate, wool and wagon-load traffic as a result of policy changes.

- (b) Review and report on measures to improve the efficiency of the arrangements and methods for handling, consolidating and distributing LCL and general freight consignments.

The examination will comprehend total social costs, including the extent and costs of unemployment.

- (c) Review and report on alternative organisational bases on which Westrail might compete efficiently for LCL and general freight traffic as a viable transport supplier in its own right, as opposed to its role as a shareholder in Total West.

The examination will include review of the extent to which existing policy and the joint venture agreement prevent Westrail's present or future direct participation in all aspects of freight transport, both road and rail.

- (d) On the basis of these investigations, recommend such changes to the existing arrangements as should be made in the public interest.

The inquiry is to pay special regard to the social and economic consequences of its recommendations upon transport users, rural communities and the State generally, Westrail and its staff, and the shareholders and staff of other transport businesses.

- (5) The members of the steering committee are—

Dr J. H. E. Taplin (Chairman)—Co-ordinator General of Transport

Mr J. Alford—Australian Railways Union

Mr P. Bullock—Pastoralists and Graziers Association

Mr P. Cooper—Local Government Association of W.A.

Mr L. Criddle—Primary Industry Association

Mr D. G. Duffield—Total Western Transport

Mr D. Jeff—West Australian Locomotive Engine Drivers', Firemen's and Cleaners' Union

Mr J. North—Country Shire Councils' Association

Mr T. O'Brien—Road Transport Association

Mr J. O'Connor—Transport Workers Union

Mr L. Robinson—Railway Officers' Union

- (6) The study is being conducted by the University of WA's Centre for Applied Business Research. The study team is—

Professor Alex Kerr—Project chairman

Mr Paul McLeod—Project co-ordinator

Mr Keith Houghton—Section leader—accounting

Mr A. Siopis—Section leader—law

Mr R. Petridis—Section leader—labour, economics and industrial relations

Dr L. Entrekin—Section leader—management

- (7) Total West, of which Westrail is joint owner, is represented on the steering committee of the inquiry. Generally, however, it was considered that the Commissioner of Railways and Commissioner of Transport have total access to the Government through their formal operating responsibilities, and their detailed views on the freight policy are already well known. Both commissioners will be giving every reasonable assistance to the inquiry. In order to keep the steering committee within a manageable size, the number of State Government officials was kept to a minimum, with the Co-ordinator General of Transport playing a co-ordinating role as chairman of the committee.

- (8) Members of both rail and road unions are vitally affected by the arrangements which govern the carriage of LCL and general freight. It is therefore only right and proper that these unions should be adequately represented on the steering committee.

This has not been done at the expense of user bodies. There are four union members on the committee; there are also four members appointed specifically to ensure that the views of major user groups are heard—the Local Government Association, the Country Shire Councils' Association, the Primary Industry Association and the Pastoralists and Graziers Association are all represented.

WATER RESOURCES: CATCHMENT AREA

Karragullen: Declaration

106. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Is it intended to declare a water catchment reserve for Stinton Creek, Karragullen?
- (2) Will owners be consulted and advised of the board's plans prior to gazettal of any regulations?

- (3) Will he table a copy of the proposals?

- (4) When will the local owners be consulted?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) Yes.

- (3) and (4) Draft management guidelines are currently being prepared. These should be available about October 1983 for distribution to land owners and the public for comment.

HOSPITAL: ARMADALE-KELMSCOTT DISTRICT MEMORIAL

Staffing and Accommodation

107. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Relating to the Armadale-Kelmscott District Memorial Hospital, as concern is growing in the Armadale region over the Government's refusal to appoint staff to enable the new day care unit and the Rotary bus to function—

- (a) when will the necessary appointments be made;

- (b) which professionals are to be appointed?

- (2) Will he table a copy of the plans for the future development of the hospital?

- (3) How many psycho-geriatric patients are to be accommodated at this hospital?

- (4) Because a number of patients are being turned away for the want of some extra general ward beds, is a new general ward including provision for some local geriatric patients to be provided in the first stage of the new development?

- (5) Does the Government intend to require local doctors to man the accident and emergency service on a sessional basis (i.e., no fee for service) and, if they decline, to deny the doctors entry to the hospital to attend their patients who wish to be hospitalised at the hospital?

- (6) What authority has the Government to refuse entry to a patient's doctor to attend his patient in a Government hospital provided by the taxpayers?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) The hospital is currently reviewing its priorities and staff rostering arrangements and it is anticipated

that a decision should be made regarding these positions in the near future;

- (b) see (a) above.
- (2) No. Plans for the total future development of the hospital are the subject of a consultant's report which is yet to be finalised. Only block plans to enable the siting of the proposed psycho-geriatric extended care unit have been approved to date.
- (3) Twenty-four, in a new purpose-built facility.
- (4) See answer to question (2).
- (5) The Government is awaiting the response from the doctors at Armadale on their preferred method of staffing the casualty department. The Government has made no stipulations on methods of remuneration for medical service at this hospital.
- (6) To ensure acceptable standards of medical care, it is increasingly necessary that medical practitioners who wish to admit patients to a hospital should produce evidence of their ability and competence in the particular areas of medicine which they wish to practice within a hospital and that they should receive a formal approval to admit patients by way of an appointments mechanism.

The medical treatment of public and hospital service patients is provided at non-teaching hospitals by medical practitioners who act as independent contractors to the hospital and for which they are paid by that hospital. The hospital has the right to determine those medical practitioners with whom it shall contract for such services.

TRANSPORT

Charges: Increases

108. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Transport:

What increased charges (i.e., rates, taxes, freights, fares, etc.) has the Government decided to make since 19 February 1983 in the agencies within the Transport portfolio expressed as—

- (a) amount on each item;
- (b) a percentage increase on previous charge;
- (c) total amount in each agency;
- (d) date of effective increased charge?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (a) to (d) The member's question requires quite an amount of tabulation. I am having the information prepared and will forward it to him shortly. In general, however, I would be intrigued to hear how the member considers he would have come to grips with the sorts of deficit levels his own personal administration built up.

TRANSPORT: BUSES

Metropolitan Transport Trust: Fares

109. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What total amount is expected to be raised from MTT fares in each zone?
- (2) What was the estimated total MTT fares received from each of the previous zones for the 1982-83 financial year?
- (3) What is the amount allowed for "buyer resistance" to the large increase in fares?
- (4) Will he table a fare schedule with old and new fares included?
- (5) What has been the previous fare and the new fare for—
- an adult;
 - a pensioner;
 - a student; and
 - a child; to
 - Byford;
 - Armadale;
 - Kelmscott;
 - Roleystone;
 - Gosnells;
 - Mandurah;
 - Rockingham;
 - Wanneroo;
 - Mundaring;
 - Kalamunda?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Expected revenue from each zone 1983-84—

	\$
2 Sections	3 236 300
1 Zone	6 329 700
2 Zones	11 117 800
3 Zones	1 664 400
4 Zones	1 022 800

5 Zones	102 400
6 Zones	148 000
7 Zones	45 300
8 Zones	113 200
All day	200 700

\$23 980 600

(2) Estimated revenue expected from previous fare zones—

	\$
2 Sections	2 688 000
1 Zone	14 350 000
2 Zones	3 263 000
3 Zones	166 300
4 Zones	87 500
5 Zones	33 800
All day	962 300

Total \$21 550 900

(3) The amount allowed for resistance in the 1983-84 Budget figures is 3.5 per cent of expected revenue.

However, I am hopeful and expect the resistance will be considerably less and that current patronage will be maintained.

Daily Cash Tickets—

(4) Adults travelling in—

	1 July 1982	10 July 1983
2 Sections	.45	.50
1 Zone	.80	.80
2 Zones	.80	1.00
3 Zones	.90	1.10
4 Zones	.90	1.20
5 Zones	1.30	1.50
6 Zones	1.30	1.70
7 Zones	1.60	2.00
8 Zones	2.00	2.30
All day travel	4.00	4.00

Children travelling in—

2 Sections	.30	.30
1 Zone	.40	.40
2 Zones	.40	.50
3 Zones	.45	.55
4 Zones	.45	.60
5 Zones	.65	.75
6 Zones	.65	.85
7 Zones	.80	1.00
8 Zones	1.00	1.15
All day travel	2.00	2.00

Pensioners and other concessions travelling in—

2 Sections	.15	.20
1 Zone	.25	.25
2 Zones	.25	.30

3 Zones	.25	.35
4 Zones	.25	.35
5 Zones	.30	.40
6 Zones	.30	.40
7 Zones	.30	.40
8 Zones	.30	.40
All day travel	.45	.60
Scholars travelling between home and school	.30	.30

(5) Comparison of previous fare with new fare.

	Adult (a)		Pensioner (b)		Student (c)		Child (d)	
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
Byford	1.30	1.50	.30	.40	.30	.30	.65	.75
Armadale	.90	1.20	.25	.35	.30	.30	.45	.60
Kelmscott	.90	1.10	.25	.35	.30	.30	.45	.55
Roleystone	.90	1.20	.25	.35	.30	.30	.45	.60
Gosnells	.90	1.10	.25	.35	.30	.30	.45	.55
Mandurah	2.00	2.30	.30	.40	.30	.30	1.00	1.15
	(1.00)*(1.15)							
Rockingham	1.30	1.50	.30	.40	.30	.30	.65	.75
Wanneroo	.90	1.10	.25	.35	.30	.30	.45	.55
Mundaring	.90	1.20	.25	.35	.30	.30	.45	.60
Kalamunda	.90	1.10	.25	.35	.30	.30	.45	.55

* It applies to non residents.

RAILWAYS: FREMANTLE-PERTH

Statistics

110. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will he table a schedule showing the related comparative changes in rail and bus services and frequencies of services, in the metropolitan area, before and after the reopening of the Perth-Fremantle rail passenger service?
- (2) How many railway carriages which had been written off from suburban passenger services have been patched up to be brought into use after 30 July 1983?
- (3) What has been the cost of material and wages for refurbishing the written off carriages?
- (4) (a) How many carriages (powered and trailer) were in use before the decision was made to reopen the Perth-Fremantle passenger service;
(b) how many carriages will there be in use on the reopening day;
(c) how many carriages will there be in use in 12 months' time?
- (5) What is the amount of public risk insurance to be taken and to compensate any passengers and relatives for any

damages incurred from the use of passenger rail carriages which had been declared unsafe for further use?

- (6) What is the cost of maintaining the railway between Fremantle-Perth including proportion for all indirect costs?
- (7) What has been the cost of bringing the Fremantle to Perth railway up to a standard to take the suburban passenger service in—
 - (a) material;
 - (b) wages?
- (8) When does the Government intend to introduce electric power on the suburban rail services?
- (9) Will he table the completed report on the use of light rail vehicles on the suburban service?
- (10) Where are the linc buses previously used on the Perth-Fremantle route in use now, and would he please list routes and numbers?
- (11) How many MTT employees have been made redundant by the opening of the Perth-Fremantle rail service?
- (12) What is the total number of MTT employees engaged in running and maintaining the bus services which will be reduced or removed due to the opening of the Perth-Fremantle rail service?
- (13) How many MTT employees will not now be required to service the bus services to be reduced or removed due to the reopening of the Perth-Fremantle rail passenger service?
- (14) Will all details be kept of the patronage and costs (running, capital, all overheads, etc.) for the next three years of trial running of the Perth-Fremantle rail service and adjacent bus services?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) to (14) It will take some time to provide all of the information required by the member and I will send him the details in writing as quickly as possible.

FORREST PLACE: REDEVELOPMENT

Padbury Building: Development Plans

111. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Does the Government have definite development plans for the Padbury Building, Forrest Place, Perth?

- (2) If "Yes", will he table a timetable for development?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) Considerable work has been undertaken by the Government and the Perth City Council on the redevelopment of Forrest Place.

A co-ordinator has been appointed (Mr G. O. Edwards), who reports to the Minister for Planning's liaison committee which consists of the Minister for Planning; the Lord Mayor, City of Perth; and the Chairman, Metropolitan Region Planning Authority. It is anticipated that the proposals will be made public by the Minister for Planning and the Lord Mayor later this year.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Rates: Increase

112. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

What additional revenue will be raised by Westrail in the 1983-84 financial year from the 10 per cent increase in rail freights which took effect from 1 July 1983?

Mr GRILL replied:

There was no increase in gazetted freight rates as from 1 July 1983.

TRANSPORT

Inquiries: Initiation

113. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How many inquiries have been commenced within the Transport portfolio since the State election on 19 February 1983?
- (2) Would he list each of the inquiries and the names of those persons who will be involved with each inquiry?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Six.
- (2) (i) Review of the Future of the Port of Albany:

Steering Committee

Dr J. H. E. Taplin—Co-ordinator General of Transport (Chairman)

Mr B. J. E. Hudson—
Managing Secretary,
Albany Port Authority

Mr G. Cunnane—Assistant
General Manager, Depart-
ment of Marine and Har-
bours

Mr J. R. Winslow—Assistant
General Manager, Grain
Pool of WA

Councillor J. A. Riggs—Shire
President, Shire of Albany

Councillor L. A. Davis—Town
of Albany

Mr I. Hill—Pastoralists &
Graziers Association

Mr J. Busic—Manager
Transport Policy, Australian
Wheat Board

Mr E. J. U. Green—General
Manager, CBH

Mr W. H. Gayfer—Chairman,
CBH

Mr G. Thorpe—Distribution
Manager, The Shell Co. of
Aust.

Capt. D. L. King—WA Rep-
resentative, Australian Phos-
phate Corporation

Mr G. M. Lawrence—Deputy
Director, PIA

Mr J. Groves—Economist,
PIA

Representative of the Under
Treasurer.

(ii) Land Freight Inquiry.

Steering Committee

Dr J. H. E. Taplin—Co-
ordinator General of
Transport (Chairman)

Mr J. Alford—Australian
Railways Union

Mr P. Bullock—Pastoralists
and Graziers Association

Mr P. Cooper—Local Govern-
ment Association

Mr L. Criddle—Primary In-
dustry Association

Mr D. G. Duffield—Total
Western Transport

Mr D. Jeff—West Australian
Locomotive Engine Drivers'
Firemen's and Cleaners'
Union

Mr J. North—Country Shire
Councils' Association

Mr T. O'Brien—Road
Transport Association

Mr J. O'Connor—Transport
Workers' Union

Mr L. Robinson—Railway
Officers' Union.

(iii) Transport Strategy Committee on
Transport Needs of the Perth
Central City Area.

(The State Transport Co-ordination
Act 1981, introduced by the pre-
vious Government, made provision
for the Minister for Transport to es-
tablish transport strategy com-
mittees under the chairmanship of
the Co-ordinator General of
Transport to examine any area of
transport).

Membership is—

Co-ordinator General of
Transport (Chairman)—Dr
J. H. E. Taplin

The Lord Mayor of Perth (or
nominee)—Mr Michael A.
Michael

The Chairman of the Vehicle
Parking Committee of the
Perth City Council (or nomi-
nee) — Councillor
Neville Monkhouse

The Town Clerk of the City of
Perth (or nominee)—Mr R.
Dawson

A representative of the Retail
Traders Association—Mr J.
Morrison (President)

A representative of the Build-
ing Owners and Managers
Association — Mr C.
Clenshaw (President)

A representative of the Perth
Chamber of Commerce—
Mr K. Rosenthal

The Managing Director of the
Metropolitan (Perth) Pass-

enger Transport Trust—Mr A. Robinson

The Commissioner of Main Roads—Mr D. H. Aitken

The Commissioner of Town Planning—Dr D. Carr.

- (iv) Inquiry into Industrial Relations within Westrail.

Dr N. Dufty—Chairman of Arts, Education and Social Sciences, Western Australian Institute of Technology

- (v) Study into the Feasibility of Establishing a City Bus Terminal for Tourist Coaches and non-MTT regular bus services.

Membership of the working party is to be—

Mr R. J. Ellis, Commissioner of Transport (Chairman);

Mr N. Semmens, Director of Tourism;

Mr N. Lamb, Chairman, Licensed Coach Operators, Division of the WA Road Transport Association;

Two mini bus operators nominated by the Division;

Nominee of interstate bus operators, who is yet to be determined.

- (vi) Review of Students' Travel Subsidy Scheme

Mr R. J. Ellis, Commissioner of Transport (Chairman);

Mr G. Gaines, State Education Department;

Mr R. Holt, State Treasury;

Mr T. Moustaka, Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs;

Mrs R. Field, Nominee of the Minister for Transport;

Mrs Percy, Isolated Children's Parents' Association.

TRANSPORT: WOOL

Deregulation: Government Policy

114. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

As the previous State Government intended as part of its policy of

deregulation of transport to deregulate the cartage of wool, what is the present Government's intention with regard to this commodity?

Mr GRILL replied:

The policy of the present Government in relation to any further deregulation of wool transport is that any such action will only be taken after having regard to all relevant social and economic factors. Within the ambit of these criteria, no further deregulation of wool transport will be instituted at the present time.

RAILWAYS

Standard Gauge: Federal Commitment

115. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

As the Federal Minister for Transport, when opening a national conference on rail policy in Canberra in March, indicated that the Federal Government is committed to—

(a) completion of the standard gauge system;

(b) upgrading of port and rail facilities for export traffic;

(c) the upgrading of mainline rail links;

how will this policy affect Western Australia, and what approaches has the Western Australian Government made to the Commonwealth in order to share in these policy undertakings?

Mr GRILL replied:

The Australian Transport Advisory Council through its groups of advisers has developed an action plan for national railway development which includes a list of investment projects for the national rail network.

The projects affecting railways in Western Australia total \$70.7 million and I will be announcing the details shortly.

The funding of projects was taken up with the Federal Minister for Transport at the recent ATAC conference and the State will continue to press the Federal Government for appropriate funding at every opportunity.

TRANSPORT: ROAD

National Road Freight Industry Inquiry: Input

116. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

What input has the State Government had to the national road freight industry inquiry being set up by the Commonwealth Government?

Mr GRILL replied:

The Premier has advised the Prime Minister of this State's willingness to co-operate with and assist the national road freight industry inquiry. I, as responsible Minister, have been consulted and have expressed views on the terms of reference for the inquiry. The services of the Co-ordinator General of Transport and the Commissioner of Transport have also been made available and they have been consulted by Commonwealth Department of Transport officers.

TOURISM: DERBY

Motel Complex

117. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Did he receive an invitation to officially open a new motel complex at Derby?
- (2) As the developer of the motel has indicated that he extended such an invitation in mid-April and had not received any response by mid-June, can the Minister indicate when he responded to the invitation.

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Verbal advice was given to the developer in mid-July. It was desirable to coincide the opening of the motel with my visit to Broome to open the Shinju Matsuri festival.

MINING: SALT

Lake McLeod: Submission

118. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) Has the State Government received a submission from Dampier Salt Limited regarding the future of the Lake McLeod salt project near Carnarvon?
- (2) If so, when was this submission received?

- (3) When will the Government make public its response to the company's submission?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) to (3) The future of the project is currently under discussion between the State Government, the company, and relevant union officials. The Government is exploring every available avenue to keep the project in operation. The Premier, the Deputy Premier, and the Minister for Industrial Relations have each visited the area since May. During the visit of the Minister for Industrial Relations on Tuesday, 19 July, meetings were held with representatives of the local authority, the Chamber of Commerce, the company, and the unions. At this meeting, the positions of the Government and the company were canvassed in some detail. The Hon. I. J. Laurance attended the principal meeting in Carnarvon.

Discussions are continuing to find an acceptable basis on which the project can remain in production.

EVAPORITES (LAKE McLEOD) AGREEMENT ACT

Amendment

119. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

Does he intend to introduce amendments to the Evaporites (Lake McLeod) Agreement Act during this session of Parliament?

Mr BRYCE replied:

This will depend on the outcome of discussions currently underway with Dampier Salt.

UNITED STATES WARSHIPS

State Government Welcome

120. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

- (1) During the visit of United States Navy warships in early July, were officers and men officially welcomed by the State Government?
- (2) What functions were held or sponsored or supported by the State Government for these people?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) All normal courtesies were extended to officers and men during the visit of US Navy warships to Western Australia earlier this month.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS: FILMS

Censorship: Federal Action

121. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services:

- (1) Has his attention been drawn to a report in *The West Australian* of 18 April 1983 in which it is stated, "the Federal Government had decided to allow the Melbourne and Sydney film festivals to screen films without the approval of the Film Censorship Board"?
- (2) Does the unilateral action of the Federal Government in this respect affect the obligations of the Federal Government to the States under agreements and arrangements in relation to film censorship?
- (3) Has he considered whether film censorship in Western Australia will be affected by the action of the Federal Government in making a unilateral decision in relation to aspects of film censorship?
- (4) (a) Has he made representations to the Commonwealth concerning this matter; and
(b) if so, what are they?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) (a) Yes;
(b) requested to be advised of any exemptions granted relating to film festivals in Western Australia.

It should be noted that should a film be shown in Western Australia as part of a festival, the powers in accord with section 12B of the Censorship of Films Act would enable me to direct that the film not be shown, if such course of action was desired.

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLES

Ownership: Change in Practice

122. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Is it a fact that the police licensing branch has recently changed its practice

and now refuses to provide information concerning ownership of vehicles, from the registration number of a vehicle, on the completion of an appropriate form and the payment of a prescribed fee?

- (2) If so, was this change made with his authority?
- (3) Why was the change made?
- (4) Is he aware that the change has caused significant inconvenience to the insurance industry, other businesses, and members of the public?
- (5) Is it a fact that the requisite information can now be obtained only on an individual request with a specified reason?
- (6) Who judges the validity of the reason given?
- (7) Is not the procedure cumbersome and wasteful of resources of manpower and time?
- (8) Will he review the position?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) Police Department Traffic Licensing and Services Centre provides information of ownership of vehicles to those persons engaged in the administration of the law.
- (2) No.
- (3) Information relating to vehicle ownership and holders of motor driver's licences is provided by the public as a requirement of the Road Traffic Act to enable the effective administration of licensing and enforcement of relative law. Release of information obtained in this manner is contrary to Police Department policy, having regard to public sensitivity to the proper management of such information.
- (4) Yes. However, consideration has been given to a number of requests received which have been dealt with in line with the 1976 committee of inquiry on privacy and data banks on the basis that—

"Information recorded" for Government purposes should be regarded as held only for the purpose for which it was supplied and it should not be used or made available for any other purpose, unless the appropriate Minister of the Crown decides that such course is desirable in the public interest.

- (5) Yes, and subject to the provision as outlined in (3).
- (6) The Commissioner of Police, by delegation to a senior officer of the Police Department Traffic Licensing and Services Centre.
- (7) No.
- (8) As the current policy provides for supply of information to those who have a legitimate claim for access to recorded vehicle ownership in their role in the administration and enforcement of the law, it is not my intention to review the present position.

WATER RESOURCES

Goldfields: Future Needs

123. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Have estimates been made of the future water needs for both domestic and industry purposes on the goldfields?
- (2) Do those estimates indicate that the present provisions for water supplies will be inadequate within a few years?
- (3) If so, what plans have been made in relation to future needs?
- (4) If it is believed that the present provisions are adequate in the foreseeable future, what scenarios have been contemplated within the process of planning under which the present provisions would not be adequate and if those events occur, what provision could then be made?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The present capacity is adequate, but it is anticipated that demand will increase beyond present capacity within a few years. However, provision is being made for the construction of works to accommodate this anticipated increase.
- (3) Works in progress or planned include the construction of two new pump stations at Karalee and Boondi, the upgrading of five existing pump stations, and the construction of a 25 000 kilolitre storage tank at Kalgoorlie.

The Public Works Department has a long-term programme of works designed to upgrade the scheme to meet any reasonable increase in water demands.

The demand projections are reviewed regularly, at least once a year and priorities for the works are adjusted accordingly.

- (4) Not applicable, answered by (2) and (3).

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Contractory Extension Scheme: Election Promise

124. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that his Minister for Transport, when a candidate for Esperance-Dundas in the State election, undertook on behalf of the Australian Labor Party, to give farmers the option of taking State Energy Commission power without initial capital contribution?
- (2) In particular, is he aware that this promise was made in relation to the sensitive issue of State Energy Commission power in the Cascades area of the Esperance region?
- (3) Is the Government going to implement the promises of its Minister made on behalf of the Australian Labor Party?
- (4) If so, when?
- (5) If not, why not?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (5) All of the matters referred to are under consideration by the Government, which is conscious of the need to honour its election undertakings.

It is difficult to understand the Opposition's attitude in these matters as all members will be aware of the Opposition's criticism of the Government's action in honouring its promise to re-open the Perth to Fremantle railway line.

Perhaps the Opposition could provide the Government with a list of those election promises it believes should be honoured and those it believes should not.

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

Appointments: Additional

125. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) Will he detail the number of new appointments to the Department of Premier and Cabinet since he took office in February 1983?

- (2) What was the size of the department's establishment prior to his assuming office?
- (3) What is it now?
- (4) What is the additional annual cost of wages, overheads and contingent items resulting from the increased establishment?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (4) The Department of Premier and Cabinet did not exist prior to February 1983.

Accordingly, it is not possible to compare the present department which includes provision for my added ministerial responsibilities of Minister for Forests, Tourism, and Women's Interests, with the previous Premier's Department.

I will be making a statement to the House in the near future on changes to the machinery of Government which will address these matters.

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

Premier's Office: Renovation

126. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

Would he provide a detailed breakdown of the publicly announced \$500 000 cost of refurbishing his office earlier this year, listing, in particular, costs related to—

- (a) floor and wall coverings;
- (b) equipment;
- (c) furniture?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (a) to (c) I am not aware of any "publicly announced \$500 000 cost" of refurbishing the Premier's office.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN: CABINET

Policy Development Group: Membership

127. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) What is the purpose of the group within his Ministry referred to as the "policy development group"?
- (2) How many people are involved?
- (3) What is the classification of each position?
- (4) What duties does each perform?
- (5) How many were Public Service employees prior to February 1983?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) It is already a matter of public knowledge that a policy secretariat has been established within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to assist with policy implementation, co-ordination, and review.
- (2) Three officers.
- (3) A-I-8, A-I-5, C-II-2/3.
- (4) See answer to (1).
- (5) One.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT: ELECTORATE OFFICES

Entitlements: Guidelines

128. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Speaker:

- (1) What were the detailed guidelines establishing members' entitlements with regard to electorate offices at the time the Government assumed office in regard to—
 - (a) office space;
 - (b) staff entitlements;
 - (c) office equipment;
 - (d) telephone facilities;
 - (e) stationery?
- (2) (a) Has any member been granted facilities outside these guidelines; and
 (b) if so, which members and what are the details of the additional benefits?
- (3) Under whose authority were these additional benefits granted?

The SPEAKER replied:

- (1) to (3) This question is one for the attention of the Joint House Committee. I have forwarded the question to the chairman of that committee with the request that he communicates direct with the member giving the relevant information.

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY MEMBERS AND UNIONISTS

Government Appointments

129. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) Would he list the names of all persons employed by the Government since it took office who—
 - (a) have been or are, members of the Australian Labor Party;
 - (b) have been or are, union officials?

- (2) What positions did each occupy in the Australian Labor Party or union?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) Declaration of political party membership is not a prerequisite of employment by my Government.

MR MICHAEL NAYLOR

Salary and Position

130. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) What salary was received and what position was occupied by Mr Michael Naylor in the office of the Leader of the Opposition prior to February 1983?
- (2) What are Mr Naylor's present salary and position?
- (3) What qualifications did Mr Naylor have enabling him to prove to the Public Service Board that he was entitled to such rapid promotion?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Mr Naylor occupied the Public Service position of Item 26 0317, Research Officer, C-II-5/6, salary \$20 603 prior to February 1983.
- (2) Mr Naylor's present position is Ministerial Adviser, Policy Development, A-I-3, salary \$34 733.
- (3) The position of Ministerial Adviser, Policy Development, is not a Public Service appointment.

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES

Purchases

131. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

How many new Government passenger vehicles were purchased in each month over the period 1 January 1982 to 30 June 1983?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The information is being collated and a reply, by letter, will be forwarded to the member.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: CONSULTANTS

D'Arcy Farrell and Associates and Mr W. W. Mitchell

132. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) What is the total annual cost to taxpayers of the Government's contract with public relations consultant D'Arcy Farrell?
- (2) (a) Does the Government provide Mr Farrell with facilities such as office accommodation, telephones, etc.; and
(b) if so, what is the estimated annual cost of each?
- (3) What was the total annual cost to taxpayers of the previous Government's contract with Mr W. W. Mitchell?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) It is estimated that the annual cost will be around \$35 000.
- (2) (a) and (b) As the need arises, facilities will be provided on a shared part-time or occasional basis at minimal cost.
- (3) Over the four-year period from 1979-1982, Mr Mitchell was paid \$78 726.44 in annual payments varying from \$16 260.26 to \$25 931.65.
However, it is not possible to estimate additional costs incurred by Mr Mitchell for the use of office accommodation, telephones, and other facilities.

133. *This question was postponed.*

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Electronic Equipment: Purpose and Cost

134. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it fact that since assuming office, the Government has had highly sophisticated electronic equipment installed, capable of monitoring electronic media and also capable of exercising surveillance?
- (2) Is its purpose to monitor the electronic media?
- (3) If not, what is its purpose?
- (4) What was the cost of the equipment?
- (5) Where is it located?
- (6) Will he describe the equipment and indicate its capacity?
- (7) Is it fact that since taking office the Government has installed a highly soph-

isticated telephone communications system linked or otherwise to the monitoring surveillance equipment referred to above?

- (8) What was the total cost?
- (9) What is the purpose of this installation?
- (10) Where is the equipment located?
- (11) Is it linked to ministerial offices?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Not to my knowledge.
- (2) to (11) Answered by (1).

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Visits: Number and Cost

135. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) How many Ministers have undertaken overseas visits since the Government took office in February 1983?
- (2) Would he list—
 - (a) the Ministers;
 - (b) the purpose of each trip;
 - (c) the number of staff taken with the Minister; and
 - (d) the total cost of each trip?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) The Leader of the Opposition has forgotten already what the tasks of governing involve. Overseas travel is part of the business of governing. It was undertaken by the previous Government in the interests of this State and will be continued by us.

However, should the Leader of the Opposition have concern for any specific visit undertaken, he may care to let me know of his concern in writing and I will have the matter investigated.

NURSES AND HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES

Replacement Policy

136. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

Did the Royal Australian Nursing Federation and the Hospital Services and Miscellaneous Workers Union make representations to the Government about the Government's new cutback replacement policy, and if so, what was the outcome of such representations?

Mr HODGE replied:

No. In line with the Government's policy of fostering good industrial relations, I have been holding regular discussions with a number of unions with members employed in the health field, particularly the Hospital Services and Miscellaneous Workers Union. During those meetings, staff levels have been discussed in general terms.

The Royal Australian Nursing Federation has not approached me on this matter. Staff levels were discussed at a recent meeting with them in the context of the new rostering arrangements of 9½ hours between shifts.

NURSES AND HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES

Replacement Policy

137. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) When did the Government's new policy of replacing only half of those employees who retire or resign, commence operating?
- (2) Has the policy been applied to hospital or health services?
- (3) (a) Have any Government hospital or health employees in this category not been replaced; and
(b) if so, how many?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) 1 July 1983.
- (2) There are no exceptions to the Government's general policy, but in the health field the policy is being administered in such a manner as to ensure that there is no reduction in the standard of care and attention available to patients
- (3) (a) Yes;
(b) 34.

HEALTH: DRUGS

Deaths

138. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What percentage of Western Australians died from drug-related causes in the latest year for which statistics are available?
- (2) What percentage of these deaths were caused by—
(a) tobacco co-related diseases;

- (b) alcohol use;
- (c) other drugs?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) 18.8 per cent.
- (2) (a) 14.9 per cent;
- (b) 3.3 per cent;
- (c) 0.6 per cent.

(From the Commonwealth Health Department statistics for 1981.)

HEALTH: MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

Qualifications

139. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

Is it intended to amend section 39 (9) of the Medical Act 1894-1968 in order to overcome anomalies created by the Medical Act Amendment Act 1979 in respect of those medical practitioners whose medical qualifications were acceptable before the coming into force of the amendment to section 11 of the Principal Act but which ceased to be so thereafter?

Mr HODGE replied:

There is no section 39 (9) of the Medical Act. Consideration is being given to significant amendments to the Act and if the member has any suggestions to make, I will be happy to receive them.

HEALTH: DENTAL

Dental Technicians Registration Board

140. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (a) Does the Government intend to introduce legislation establishing a dental technicians registration board and permitting members of the public requiring removable dentures to deal with dental technicians;
- (b) if so, when is it proposed that the legislation will be introduced?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (a) Yes;
- (b) I hope to introduce it this session.

FUEL AND ENERGY: PETROL

Cancer Risk

141. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware—
 - (a) that signs warning of a possible risk of cancer from inhaling petrol vapours are to be placed on service station pumps in the United States;
 - (b) that the American Petroleum Institute designed the signs after research found a higher incidence of kidney and liver cancer in mice and rats exposed for long periods to fumes from unleaded petrol?
- (2) If so, is it intended to develop similar signs for Western Australian service stations and if not, why not?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) Yes;
- (b) yes.
- (2) Departmental officers will obtain copies of the reports for study. Unleaded petrol is not available in Western Australia, but I can assure the member that careful consideration will be given to the proposal before unleaded petrol is introduced.

HOSPITAL: SUNSET ;

Maintenance Revenue Figures

142. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

In the financial years 1981-82 and 1982-83 respectively, what were the maintenance revenue figures in respect of—

- (a) hospital and nursing home benefits (Federal subsidy);
 - (b) pharmaceutical benefits;
 - (c) other revenue;
 - (d) total gross revenue;
 - (e) Government assistance (total and per patient day);
 - (f) bed average;
 - (g) patient fees;
- for Sunset Hospital, Nedlands?

Mr HODGE replied:

Financial and statistical details in respect of Sunset Hospital for 1981-82 and 1982-83 respectively are as follows—

- (a) \$981 878 and \$1 118 833
- (b) \$77 408 and \$52 310
- (c) \$835 532 and \$936 476
- (d) \$1 894 818 and \$2 107 619
- (e) Total government assistance (both Federal and State) was \$4 286 078 and \$5 147 395.
Total Government assistance per patient-day was \$48.50 and \$59.01.
- (f) 242.1 and 239.0
- (g) \$776 867 and \$898 430.

HOSPITALS: PRIVATE

Regulations: Industry Submissions

143. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Have representatives of the industries involved in the delivery of health care in Western Australia been given adequate opportunity to comment on the proposed new private hospital regulations?
- (2) Is it a fact that the Associated Private Hospitals of WA was informed of the proposed new hospital regulations only one day prior to the first meeting scheduled to discuss the implementation of the regulations?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Some representatives may have received late notice, but there has been ample opportunity since to comment.

HEALTH: NURSING HOMES

Staffing: Regulations

144. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware that the proposed new regulations relating to minimum staffing levels in nursing homes must streamline with the annual Commonwealth patient subsidy increase in order to avoid undue financial hardship to patients and their relatives?
- (2) If "Yes", have officers of the Commonwealth Department been kept fully informed of all aspects of the proposed new regulations?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.

HEALTH: ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Membership

145. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he established a health advisory committee?
- (2) If so, who are the members of the committee and what expertise do they possess?
- (3) When was the committee established?
- (4) Did he seek representation on the committee from the Associated Private Hospitals and the Nursing Homes Association of Western Australia (Inc.), and if not, why not?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) No. The matter is still under consideration.
- (2) to (4) Not applicable.

HOSPITAL: WANNEROO

Casualty Service: Details

146. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) When was the manned 24-hour casualty service at Wanneroo Hospital implemented?
- (2) What was the demand for the casualty service by the community as demonstrated by attendances at the hospital at the time the 24-hour casualty service was implemented?
- (3) What will be the annual cost of providing the 24-hour casualty service as it operates at present?
- (4) What studies were undertaken by him to establish the extent of the after hours service to the community in the Wanneroo district?
- (5) Is it intended to upgrade the casualty service at Wanneroo Hospital to provide diagnostic back-up (pathology, radiology), or will the existing casualty service compete with the primary care service available to the community through the doctors in the district?
- (6) What is the charge by the hospital for a patient's attendance at the casualty facility at Wanneroo, and how does this compare with fees under the Commonwealth medical benefits schedule for an attendance at a doctor's surgery during

normal hours or a home visit after normal hours?

- (7) At present resident staff in training positions and working under the supervision of senior doctors at Government teaching hospitals are seconded to work the casualty roster at Wanneroo Hospital. What supervision by senior doctors is provided at Wanneroo Hospital for doctors working the 24-hour casualty roster?
- (8) (a) As in a crisis people are not going to differentiate between a "primary care" casualty service available at Wanneroo Hospital and the emergency care service provided at Royal Perth Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, has the Government considered that the establishment of the casualty service at Wanneroo Hospital may give rise to expectations of treatment which in some emergencies cannot be provided at Wanneroo Hospital;
- (b) does the Government appreciate that a commitment by a patient to attend Wanneroo Hospital (bearing in mind that Wanneroo Hospital is located some distance from the community), may prejudice the patient's chances of survival, as that patient should have gone direct to the emergency centre at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) 11 June 1983.
- (2) As it was well known in the local community that a staffed casualty service did not exist at Wanneroo Hospital, the number of patients actually attending cannot be used as any indication of the demand for the service. The real underlying demand can be measured only by the increasing number of inquiries being received at the hospital from patients dissuaded from attending because of the lack of such a service and the frequency of complaints and criticisms through the media and to members and the shire.
- (3) The present system of providing a casualty service at Wanneroo Hospital will terminate on 30 September 1983. In the period 11 June to 30 September, the estimated cost will be \$15 500.
- (4) The lack of an appropriate after-hours service was evidenced by the requests and complaints described in (2) above.
- (5) The primary care service provided by local general practitioners in the community is complemented by the casualty service provided by doctors on continuous duty at the Wanneroo Hospital. Appropriate diagnostic backup is available at the hospital.
- (6) The charge for a GP consultation during normal hours and a home visit after normal hours varies according to the duration of the attendance and whether the doctor charges Commonwealth medical benefits schedule fees, AMA recommended fees or other level of fees set by the doctor himself.
The Commonwealth medical benefits schedule fees vary between \$9.10 and \$34.00, and \$16.00 and \$42.00 respectively. AMA recommended fees can be significantly higher.
- (7) The general practitioners and specialists who use Wanneroo Hospital volunteered to assist the resident doctors at Wanneroo. This is occurring at present.
- (8) (a) The emergency departments at Sir Charles Gairdner and Royal Perth Hospitals can service only a small area of Western Australia, and in many other areas adequate crisis assistance is provided without the facilities of Sir Charles Gairdner and Royal Perth Hospitals.
Patients suffering from major trauma and serious illnesses are mainly transferred to hospitals by ambulance. There has been no diversion or alteration to existing ambulance referral patterns. Such patients will still be taken to the major accident and emergency sections at the teaching hospitals.
- (b) The implication in this question is incorrect and could be dangerously life-threatening to a potential patient. If a patient, whose chance of survival was at risk, had decided of his own volition to attend Wanneroo Hospital, his chance of survival could be considerably greater than if he had decided to travel from the Wanneroo area to Nedlands to attend the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

HOSPITALS: OSBORNE PARK AND WANNEROO

Medical Practitioners: Salaried and Sessional

147. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) In view of the fact that the Government has announced the decision to appoint doctors at Osborne Park and Wanneroo Hospitals on a salaried and sessional basis, is it not the case that if a doctor does not have an appointment at Osborne Park Hospital or Wanneroo Hospital his pensioner patients and health care card holder patients will not be able to be admitted under his care?
- (2) Will all doctors located in the Osborne Park-Wanneroo area be able to admit their private patients to these community hospitals or will those doctors with salaried and/or sessional appointments receive preference?
- (3) Will doctors who are not granted an appointment be able to appeal against that decision?
- (4) If admissions to Osborne Park and Wanneroo Hospitals can be arranged only through those doctors with appointments, or that preference will be given to those doctors admitting private patients, will not this result in waiting lists for admissions being established at these hospitals?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) The details of the medical staff appointments system to Wanneroo and Osborne Park Hospitals to be implemented from 1 October 1983, have not yet been finalised and are being negotiated with the Australian Medical Association.
- (2) See (1) above.
- (3) Medical practitioners who are not recommended for appointment following review of their application will have a right of appeal to the Minister for Health.
- (4) See (1) above.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE STATE FINANCE: SHORT-TERM INVESTMENT

Earnings

22. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Treasurer:

- (1) How much money was earned by the Government during the 1982-83 financial year from earnings on the short-term money market?
- (2) How much of this was used—
 - (a) to offset Budget deficit;
 - (b) as carry-over to the 1983-84 Budget?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) \$37 million.
- (2) (a) and (b) None of the money has yet been allocated.

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

Luncheons

23. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

I understand that since the election the Labor Party has continued to conduct luncheons for invited guests at a cost of \$20 per head—a substantial increase over the cost applicable before the elections—and that these functions are known as “Decision Makers Luncheons.” I ask—

Is it true that an officer or advisor of the Premier or one of his Ministers who is on the Government payroll has, since his employment by the Government, been responsible for promoting and organising those Labor Party luncheons?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

I must say the \$20 represents excellent value and that the luncheons have proved to be remarkably successful. I am not sure of the details of the answer to the question. However, if the member cares to place the question on notice, I will give him a considered answer.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Charges: Complaint of Overcharging

24. Mr GORDON HILL, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Has the Minister received a complaint from a tenant in the Southlands Shop-

ping Centre, Willetton that he is being unfairly charged for electricity by the managing agents, Boothroyd Iverson & Co?

(2) If so, what are the details?

Mr TONKIN replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The storekeeper has reported that when the State Energy Commission bulk bills the managing agents of the shopping centre, the following charges apply under Rate L—

Only 35 units overall are charged at 12.13 cents/unit.

Only 130 units overall are charged at 11.76 cents/unit.

Only 1 485 units overall are charged at 9.53 cents/unit.

The next 14 850 units are charged at 8.22 cents/unit.

The managing agents have adopted the practice of billing each tenant on this same basis. This enables them to collect—

26 x 35 units at 12.13 cents/unit.

26 x 130 units at 11.76 cents/unit.

26 x 1 485 units if applicable—at 9.53 cents/unit.

The remaining units are charged at 8.22 cents/unit.

This has the effect of not passing on to the tenants the cheaper rates for electricity as charged by the SEC on large accounts. The complainant estimates that by adopting this technique, the managing agents make a profit of \$100 to \$130 a month on SEC charges from him alone.

Regulation 245f of the State Energy Commission requires that sub-tenants should not pay any more for their electricity than if they were buying the electricity direct from the SEC. There is no penalty for non-compliance with this regulation.

I am most concerned that there appears to be evidence that this shopkeeper and many others in the same position are being grossly overcharged for their SEC accounts.

The prices monitoring unit attached to the Consumer Affairs Department has also drawn my attention to the fact that

the complaints have been received from tenants at certain caravan parks whereby they also have been exploited by the proprietors who are making money out of SEC charges by not passing on cheaper rates applicable to large bulk accounts.

I have requested the Prices Commissioner to keep me advised on any further reports of people being forced to pay unnecessarily high SEC charges in the manner I have described. Consideration will be given to taking action under the Prevention of Excessive Prices Act to stamp out this practice.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS: NATIONAL TRUST

Bunbury Classifications

25. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Regional Development and the North West with special responsibility for "Bunbury 2000":

(1) What steps are now proposed by the Government following the National Trust decision to classify the old Bunbury railway station, Round House maintenance depot, goods sheds, rolling stock, vintage steam trains and carriages and assorted signalling equipment?

(2) Does the Government intend to accept or reject the National Trust proposal?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) and (2) I have called for a report on the matter and once the report has been received the Government will consider what action it will take.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: HOUSING

Cracking

26. Mr TROY, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

What action has been taken to overcome the problems experienced by many new home owners, particularly those in foothills and hills areas, with respect to cracking which has occurred as a result of poor footings?

Mr TONKIN replied:

On being advised of the problems and following personal inspection of a number of affected homes I immediately formed a working party of specialists to conduct a detailed inquiry and report to me. The working party is chaired by the

member for Helena and comprises the following—

- One representative from the Australian Institution of Engineers.
- One representative from the Master Builders Association of WA.
- One representative from the Housing Industry Association.
- One representative from the Local Government Association of WA.
- The Registrar of the Builders' Registration Board of WA.

The area which is of concern has been ignored for nine long years by the previous Conservative Government and is an example of its steady neglect in consumer matters.

GOVERNMENT CHARGES: INCREASE

Announcement Prior to Premiers' Conference

27. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

I refer the Premier to the following article which appeared in *The West Australian* newspaper of 5 June 1982 under the heading "State puts up charges"—

Mr Burke said he was disappointed that the increases had been announced before the Premiers' conference on June 24 and 25.

I ask the Premier—

- (1) Why was he disappointed when Leader of the Opposition last year that the then Premier had increased charges prior to the Premiers' Conference?
- (2) Why did the Premier himself announce increases in Government charges prior to the Premiers' Conference this year?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) Had this Opposition, when in Government, been confronted with the mess we were confronted with originally, no doubt it would have put up taxes and charges much more quickly than we. As it happens, those members opposite who can read would be aware that we were constantly exhorted by the Opposition to announce increases, and berated for not having done so according to their own timing.

The Opposition cannot have it both ways. We had front-bench members op-

posite continually calling on the Government to announce increased charges, and today we have the spectacle of one of the same front-bench members criticising the Government for what his leader exhorted us to do.

Mr MacKinnon: You had better answer the question next time.

HEALTH: TOBACCO

Antismoking Campaign and Tax

28. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What expenditure has been outlaid through the Department of Health on anti-tobacco measures during the last five years?
- (2) How much was raised by the Government through tobacco tax in the past five years?
- (3) What percentage of this revenue has been spent on anti-tobacco measures?

Mr HODGE replied:

I provide the following information—

(1)	\$
1978-79	6 000
1979-80	7 500
1980-81	11 750
1981-82	33 000
1982-83	16 200

(2)	\$
1978-79	8 962 000
1979-80	9 681 000
1980-81	10 191 000
1981-82	11 942 217
1982-83	16 620 000

- (3) The percentage of gross tobacco revenue the previous Government spent on anti-tobacco education measures was 0.1 per cent.

MR ERIC WALSH

Employment by government

29. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

The Premier should be able to answer the following questions without any trouble—

- (1) Has the Canberra lobbyist, Mr Eric Walsh, ever been employed by the Burke Government?
- (2) If so, would he advise in what role he was employed and, if possible, what fees were involved?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) The answer to the first part of the question is "No". For the information of members opposite, Mr Walsh was one of a number of people with whom this Government spoke up to about three weeks ago. However, no contract has been signed with any lobbyist—not Mr Walsh or any other lobbyist. Therefore, part (2) of the question becomes irrelevant.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

"Consumers": Definition

30. Mr D. L. SMITH, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Are farmers and other small businessmen included in the category of "consumers" for matters other than their normal domestic purposes under the Consumer Affairs Act?
- (2) If "No", why not?
- (3) Will the Government give consideration to changing this?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The reason this is not so is that the previous Government has persistently refused requests to include farmers as consumers.
- (3) Yes. The Government is giving consideration to changing this and in fact it has a Bill drafted for introduction as soon as possible to suitably amend the Consumer Affairs Act.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS: DISPUTES

Criminal Offences

31. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:

- (1) To prevent threats against elected representatives of the community, as recently happened with the Perth City councillors, is he prepared to introduce legislation which would make it a criminal offence for unions, union members, or anyone to cut Government utilities' or other services to consumers when the utility in question is not involved in any industrial action?
- (2) If "Yes" can he undertake that his Government will not interfere in the prosecution of offenders for resulting criminal offences?

- (3) If the answer to the first question is "No", why not?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (3) The member for Floreat appears to be talking about a secondary boycott situation. However, I have had no notice of the question he has asked; should he put it on the notice paper he will receive a considered answer.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN: OVERSEAS TRIPS

Soviet Union

32. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it correct that some time ago one or more of his Ministers visited the Soviet Union as guests of the Soviet Government at Soviet expense?
- (2) If the Premier is not aware of the details of this matter, will he undertake to carry out inquiries and advise the House accordingly?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) I am not aware of any of my Ministers having visited the Soviet Union, but if there is—

Mr Hassell: As guests of the Soviet Union.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —some implication that anyone visited the Soviet Union as a guest of the Soviet Government, the member for Cottesloe can detail what causes him such unease and I will do my best to answer it.

I might add that many members on both sides of this House have visited the United States of America as guests of the American Government, yet this is not reflected in any sort of a question from the member opposite.

Mr Hassell: Are you not concerned about the Ministers going to the Soviet Union as guests of the Soviet Government?

The SPEAKER: Order! I made it clear at the beginning of questions without notice that interjections would not be tolerated. I expected that I would get co-operation from members. Now, the position is in members' hands.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is worried about some particular aspect of overseas visits by one or other of the Ministers in this Government, he need only detail those areas of his concern—

Mr Hassell: I asked you a question.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —and he will elicit a considered reply. I would simply add that I understand his former Prime Minister travelled extensively throughout those "red bogey" lands of the east and members from all sides of all Houses of Parliament of this country have travelled from time to time to the People's Republic of China. Perhaps cold war tactics are the long suit of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Grain

33. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has he ordered an inquiry into grain freight rates charged by Westrail?
- (2) Who is conducting the inquiry?
- (3) When will the findings of the inquiry be published?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) to (3) There is a committee made up of representatives from industry and grain growers which meets to discuss with Westrail the level of freight rates. If that is the committee to which the member refers, yes, there is a committee. It does not bring down a report; it merely negotiates a price for freight with Westrail for that particular season.

REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS

Initiation

34. Mr RUSHTON, to the Premier:

I refer to question on notice 103 on today's notice paper and ask the Premier if he will list the name or title of the 30 inquiries to which he refers in his answer. I ask whether he will give me an answer tomorrow?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

I do not have that information but I am happy to provide the names to the member some time tomorrow.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Charges: Australian Labor Party Promises

35. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

The Premier is reported in *The West Australian* of 1 September 1982 as promising the people of this State that

electricity costs would be reduced under a Labor Government. I ask—

How does he reconcile this and other statements on the subject with the 15 per cent increase imposed recently?

Mr MacKinnon: He inherited it from the previous Government!

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The member for Murdoch has put his finger right on the pulse. I might well ask the Leader of the Opposition why his Government concealed deliberately the fact that it was facing a deficit of more than \$20 million by 3 February. Why, after the election, was it left to the member for Narrogin to stand up and say, "We did not tell you about this because we thought it might have been misinterpreted"? It would have been!

Mr O'Connor: Are you going to answer the question?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The truth is that the Government is committed, and has been committed from the time it was in Opposition, to lowering the impost of Government taxes and charges upon the public. We stand firmly behind that proposition. The Leader of the Opposition is surely naive if he expects to be able to disguise and secrete Budget deficits of the sort his Government was facing, and then expect any Opposition to be able to make sensible and well-judged comments about prospects for containing costs.

Mr O'Connor: You were left with a surplus.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The truth is this Government confronted a deficit exceeding \$20 million, judging from the Treasury report of 3 February, and moved immediately to start to put its house in order. It was necessary, unfortunately, that increased charges had to be levied in certain areas. I can tell the House what the Opposition would have said had we not raised those charges. It would have said, "Financial irresponsibility—you cannot run statutory authorities at a deficit." The Leader of the Opposition would have been the first, prodded by his deputy, to start accusing the Government of financial irresponsibility.

All we have sought to do is to ensure that a time will come within the life of this Government when some containment of Government charges and the way they affect people will occur. Not only did we increase SEC charges, as the Leader of the Opposition suggests, but also we were the first Government to start realistically to try to provide some sort of relief for consumers hardest hit by the burden being thrust on them. Everybody knows that pensioners and other low-income earners had complained about the supply charge levied by the SEC. I am proud to say my Government was able to abolish that charge for pensioners.

HOSPITAL: ROYAL PERTH

Elective Surgery

36. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that elective surgery has been cancelled at Royal Perth Hospital and that pressure on beds at the hospital is more serious than in previous years?
- (2) If so, what steps is the Government taking to overcome the problem and to ensure the current situation will not worsen?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) and (2) No, I am not aware that elective surgery is being turned down at Royal Perth Hospital. I have not been advised of that fact. It is certainly true that Royal Perth Hospital is undergoing a fairly difficult period. It is under some strain as is quite common at this time of the year. My advice is that it is coping reasonably well. Talks have taken place between RPH, my department and other major teaching hospitals with a view to other hospitals relieving the burden.

TRANSPORT: BUSES

Linc: No. 760

37. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Transport:

Has the MTT made the necessary transport arrangements for school-children in the Claremont-Mosman Park area when the No. 760 linc bus is discontinued?

Mr GRILL replied:

I would request a detailed question of that nature to be put on notice so it can be answered in the proper way. I hear a few laughs, but that question obviously represents a matter of some detailed knowledge and it will receive an answer in due course if it is put on notice.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN: OVERSEAS TRIPS

Soviet Union

38. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

Further to my earlier question, I ask the Premier if he would be concerned if any of his Ministers—

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member reads Standing Orders—

Mr Brian Burke: I don't mind answering it.

The SPEAKER: The member must obey Standing Orders. It is not proper to ask for an opinion.

Mr HASSELL: With respect, Mr Speaker, I am asking the Premier a simple question of fact. It is not an opinion but a question of fact as to whether he would be concerned. He has refused to answer the question I asked before. I am asking if he would be concerned. He invited me to present him with the facts.

Point of Order

Mr TONKIN: That is a hypothetical question.

THE SPEAKER: Order!

Questions without Notice Resumed

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Gascoyne.

TOURISM: DERBY

Motel Complex

39. Mr LAURANCE, to the Premier:

My question is supplementary to No. 117 on today's notice paper and relates to an invitation the Premier received to officially open a new motel at Derby.

He would be well aware as Minister for Tourism that this is a major development in the Kimberley. It is being undertaken by a developer with a marvellous track record in the Kimberley. The Premier was invited to open it in mid-April, and in response to a question today, he indicated that in mid-July—

three months later—he gave verbal advice as to whether he would accept. I ask—

In view of the importance of this development to the northern areas of the State, and in view of the increased number of people employed in the Department of Premier and Cabinet—several additional employees, including a tourism adviser—does he consider it was fair and reasonable for the developer to have to wait three months for a response from the Premier?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

I am not sure what the member is getting at. If he is trying to say I am being rude to people, then I am definitely not being that. It might interest the member to know that earlier this month when I went to Derby I stayed in the motel and it is still not finished. The picture the

member is trying to paint of this finished motel waiting to be opened by the Premier just is not the case.

I will tell the member the reason for the delay. Not wanting to go twice to Derby at the taxpayers' expense—and that is something the Opposition is worried about unceasingly—I decided as far as possible to schedule and co-ordinate the events for which I am required to be in Derby. I was in Derby earlier this month. I could have opened the motel then. The point is, it was not ready to be opened. I am co-ordinating the opening of the motel with a visit to Broome for the Shinju Matsuri festival. If the member finds some criticism in that, let him say so. If he is accusing me of deliberately being rude to people he is wrong, and he should withdraw that imputation.
