

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

Fourth Session of the Thirty-fourth Parliament

*Parliament was prorogued on 4 March 1996, to 14 March 1996, when it met for the despatch of business.
 Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor (Major General Philip Michael Jeffery, AO, MC).*

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT**Legislative Council**

Thursday, 14 March 1996

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

The Legislative Council met at 2.30 pm.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths) took the Chair, and read prayers.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT - VISITORS WELCOMED

THE PRESIDENT: I take this opportunity to welcome everybody to the fourth session of the Thirty-fourth Parliament of Western Australia. I hope that everybody will have a very interesting and enjoyable time. Everybody will know, from reading the newspaper and watching the television, that a brand spanking new television system is operating. Therefore, if people smile it will make it seem like they are happy, anyway. On behalf of the members of this Chamber, I welcome everybody and thank them for coming.

PROCLAMATION

The Clerk of the Parliaments (Mr L.B. Marquet) read the Proclamation of His Excellency the Governor (Major General Philip Michael Jeffery, AO, MC) summoning the fourth session of the Thirty-fourth Parliament.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

His Excellency the Governor entered the Council Chamber at 2.33 pm; and, the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attended in the Chamber obediently to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following speech -

Mr President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council.

Mr Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Before outlining the Government's legislative program for the fourth session of the Thirty-fourth Parliament of Western Australia, it is appropriate to record appreciation of the service given by Hon Ian Taylor as a member of the Legislative Assembly. A former Minister and former Leader of the Opposition, he resigned to contest the seat of Kalgoorlie at the recent Federal election.

It is also with regret that I note the death of two distinguished former members, Hon Sir Leslie Charles Diver Kt, and Hon John Tresize Tonkin AC. During 22 years in the Legislative Council, the late Sir Leslie Diver represented the people of the agricultural regions of Western Australia with distinction and for 14 of those years he also served as President. He was a farmer of great repute and combined an active role in farming with his political career. His book, titled *From Plough to Politics*, is an interesting summation of his life in both spheres of endeavour.

The late John Tonkin was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1933 as the member for North-East Fremantle. In a parliamentary career spanning a remarkable 44 years, his achievements included holding the Education portfolio in four different Governments, and being Labor Party leader and Premier between 1971 and 1974. The title of his biography, *A Conspicuously Decent Man*, reflects the high regard in which he was held.

I am sure members of both Houses join me in offering sincere condolences to the families of both men.

Seventy-fifth Anniversary of Edith Cowan's Election to Parliament

1996 is a significant year in Western Australian and Australian politics. Just two days ago we celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of the election of Edith Dircksey Cowan, the first woman to be elected to any Australian Parliament. It is fitting that we pay tribute to the contribution of Edith Cowan and use the example she set - as a committed and concerned member of the community - to promote greater involvement of women in all areas of public life. While many celebratory events have already taken place, many more are planned over the coming months. These activities will lay the groundwork for Western Australia's centenary year of suffrage in 1999.

Economic Performance

I now wish to comment briefly on Western Australia's economic performance. A little more than three years ago, the Government was elected on a platform of creating more jobs and delivering better management. The implementation of this platform has given Western Australia one of the strongest performing of all the state economies and seen it consistently outperform the national economy.

For 1995-96 growth in the Western Australian economy is estimated at 4.25 per cent, in real terms. In comparison, growth in the national economy is forecast at 3.25 per cent over the same period.

Western Australia's labour market remained strong in 1995 with employment rising by 4.2 per cent during the year, which is marginally higher than the 4 per cent rise recorded nationally. The State's unemployment rate is consistently below that of the nation, and it continues to record the highest rate of participation in the work force, as well as the lowest rate of youth unemployment.

Wages have continued to grow strongly, increasing by 4.9 per cent in the year to December 1995. Despite higher than average increases in 1995-96 both wage and price growth are forecast to remain modest over the medium term. This, together with the ongoing microeconomic reforms, will add further to Western Australia's competitiveness and increase the range of business and employment opportunities.

Public Sector Finances

Western Australia's public sector finances have shown considerable improvement over the past two financial years as a result of the Government's public sector and financial management reforms.

From the outset, the Government's budgetary strategy has focused on the need to reduce net debt, which stood at \$8.262 billion at 30 June 1993. The first recorded reduction in net debt was \$146 million in 1993-94, followed by \$511m in 1994-95. By 30 June 1995 net debt was down to \$7.605 b. It will fall by more than \$1b in 1995-96, with the proceeds from the sale of BankWest being applied to debt reduction.

As a result of this performance in debt reduction, and an international credit rating agency recently placing the State on a positive credit watch, Western Australia is well on the way to regaining the AAA credit rating it lost in 1991.

Budget

The early introduction of the Budget is an important part of the Government's program to improve public sector management. The Budget for 1996-97 will be introduced in May 1996. This initiative is a key part of the Government's commitment to full accountability and scrutiny of the State's finances. It allows for expenditure and revenue plans to be considered, modified and approved prior to the commencement of the new financial year.

Legislation

In addition to the Budget Bills, the legislation program for this session includes a number of items which will be reinstated on the Notice Paper. Among them will be the Financial Legislation Amendment Bill, the Veterinary Surgeons Amendment Bill, the Transfer of Land Amendment Bill, the Land Administration Bill, the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill, the Coroners Bill, and the Justices Amendment Bill. The completion of the passage of these Bills will add to the achievements of the previous parliamentary session.

Major legislation passed during that year included the Local Government Act, which resulted from the first comprehensive review of the principles on which local government in this State is based. Also passed in 1995 was the promised Swan Valley Planning Act, which ensures that the essential character of the Swan Valley is protected for future generations.

I would like to thank all members for their contribution to the work of the many committees which play such an important role in the conduct of parliamentary business and in inquiring into matters of community interest and concern, such as road safety.

The parliamentary program for 1996 will reflect the Government's commitment to good management and to promoting social and economic development. New Bills to be presented will include -

- amendments to the Official Corruption Commission Act 1988 (WA) to expand the role of the Official Corruption Commission by extending its jurisdiction to improper conduct and establishing its own investigation unit, as well as giving it the rights, powers and immunities of a royal commission;

amendments to the Criminal Code and criminal law to increase the accountability of members of Parliament and Ministers of the Crown, and to impose on members of government corporations duties of honesty, care and diligence similar to those required of company directors under the Corporations Law;

the Competition Policy Reform (Western Australia) Bill and the Competition Policy Reform (Taxing) Bill, to apply the restrictive trade practices provisions of the Trade Practices Act to all persons within Western Australia and give effect to national competition policy;

the Taxes and Charges (Land Subdivision) Legislation Amendment Bill, to defer some taxes and charges until the first transfer of title for new lots;

the Human Reproductive Technology Amendment Bill, to extend the storage period for frozen embryos and give couples a more generous time frame to attempt implantation;

the Acts Amendment (Marine Reserves) Bill, to enhance the marine conservation reserve system and address perceived uncertainties associated with commercial ventures in marine reserves; and

the National Environmental Protection Council (Western Australia) Bill, which will give the State a role in the development of national environmental standards on matters like air and water quality.

Resources and Economic Development

Legislation, such as state agreements, with specific relevance to the resources sector, will also be introduced.

It is anticipated that among these agreements will be those for the Yandicoogina project, involving the production of approximately 15 million tonnes of iron ore per annum, and the \$400m Yakabindie nickel concentrating plant, which will use new technology developed in Western Australia.

Thirty-eight resource projects, worth \$6b, are under construction at present. In addition, commitments have been made to an additional 22 worth \$4b. A further 51 projects valued at \$12b are under active consideration for the next five years, with \$30b worth of projects being considered for the next decade. Those which proceed will provide a substantial stimulus to the Western Australian and Australian economies and result in significant additional business and employment opportunities.

Planning for Regional Development

While resource projects, like the proposed mid-west steel mill, make a significant contribution to regional development, such development also requires appropriate land use planning. Amendments to the planning Statutes enacted in 1995 give the Western Australian Planning Commission the power to prepare regional planning schemes for areas outside the metropolitan area, where issues of state and regional importance are involved. During 1996 the commission will use those powers to prepare and present to Parliament at least one statutory country regional planning scheme. The Government's strong commitment to regional economic growth and the development of statewide infrastructure will be reinforced by this planning.

Serving Community Needs

Also of great importance to the Government is the planning and delivery of services to the community. The significant decline in private health insurance, to a record low of 36.9 per cent of the Western Australian population, has grave consequences for the delivery of health services.

The Government has become increasingly concerned about the additional pressures being placed on the public hospital system as more and more people drop their private health cover. In order to reduce this pressure, additional health moneys from the Treasurer's Advance will be made available during 1995-96 to maintain the quality of care and help cut public hospital waiting lists. A Bill will be introduced to ensure that funds can be appropriated for this purpose.

The multipurpose health facilities at Dongara and Kalbarri, for which \$3.1m was appropriated in the 1995-96 Budget legislation, and the planned new health campuses for Bunbury, Joondalup and the Peel region are evidence of a commitment to match government services with community aspirations.

The same is true for the development of new tertiary and higher education facilities at Busselton, Rockingham, Mandurah and Kalgoorlie-Boulder. These TAFE facilities, and others, will gain autonomy and increased community and industry representation on their governing councils with the passage of the Vocational Education and Training Bill.

Again, in meeting the needs of people with disabilities the aim is to help them and their carers to take their place in the community.

An appropriation of \$5.35m in 1995-96 Budget legislation for new and expanded services and an additional \$1m from the Lotteries Commission, specifically for accommodation support services, are helping to lift the barriers, to provide a range of housing options and easier access to transport and other services.

The Government has recently endorsed an "Action Plan for Accessible Public Transport for People with Disabilities in Perth", which includes a 20 year program of enhancements to existing services, and the purchase of 133 low-floor easy access buses. As well, the Government will continue its program to upgrade the suburban rail network and augment services with wheelchair accessible taxis.

New funding mechanisms and accountability measures for non-government organisations delivering services to people with disabilities will widen choice, while still ensuring compliance with service standards and the principles and objectives of the Disability Services Act 1993.

In addition, I am pleased to report that more than 95 per cent of Western Australia's state agencies and 142 local government authorities have submitted to the Disability Services Commission plans to improve access for people with disabilities.

Law and Order

As well as making community services more accessible the Government is working to make our communities safer. A major initiative in this regard is the Western Australia Police Service's Delta program, with its focus on a regional management structure which will put the Police Service closer to the community and make it more responsive to community safety and security needs. The program is designed to produce police officers who are better trained, highly skilled, sensitive to local issues and generally capable of working more closely with the community.

Added to this is the Government's drive to increase the profile of crime prevention within the regions and to address the problems of domestic violence.

In carrying out their duties the police will be assisted by the passage of legislation including the Witness Protection (Western Australia) Bill, the Security and Related Activities (Control) Bill, and the Telecommunications (Interception) Western Australia Bill. These Bills were introduced in 1995 and will be reinstated in 1996.

Also to be reinstated is the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, containing, among other things, provisions relating to summonses, to the protection of person and property, and the Kurli Murri work camp for young offenders.

Giving Young People a Brighter Future

The particular needs of young people have been recognised by a Cabinet decision made in February this year to create an Office of Youth, responsible to the Minister for Youth. This paves the way for the introduction of a number of initiatives, in addition to the establishment of the Government's youth training scheme.

Initial funding for 10 pilot projects in the youth training scheme is covered by appropriations in the 1995-96 Budget. Cadet services based on the Police Rangers, St John Ambulance, Emergency Services, Army, Naval Reserve and Air Training Corps at senior high schools and colleges as far apart as Carnarvon and Collie will give young people first class leadership skills and training.

Conclusion

Creating additional opportunities for the State's youth is but one example of the way in which the Government is working to deliver a high quality of life to all Western Australians. Through better planned government services, delivered close to the people who need them, the Government is paying a social dividend from its pursuit of sound financial management and economic growth.

Mr President, Mr Speaker, and members of both Houses, I now have much pleasure in declaring the fourth session of the thirty-fourth Parliament open. I trust that Providence will guide your deliberations.

[His Excellency and the members of the Legislative Assembly withdrew from the Chamber, and the President resumed the Chair.]

PETITION - LAND USE

Soil Conservation Land Use Policy, Right to Farm on Land Removal

Hon B.K. Donaldson presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 11 persons -

We, the undersigned residents of Western Australia declare that land has been removed from the Petitioners' use and control under the Government's present Soil Conservation Land Use Policy, thereby removing the right to farm on land, which affects viability and options for alternative equity, including compensation and alternative land use.

Your petitioners, therefore humbly pray that the Legislative Council will, as a matter of urgency, address the issue of clearing controls, remnant vegetation management and associated issues of equity, including compensation and alternative land use.

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper No 28.]

PETITION - LAND USE

Acacia Guinetti (Rare Plant), Prevention from Farming Land Inquiry

Hon B.K. Donaldson presented the following petition bearing the signatures of four persons -

To the President and the Members of the Legislative Council and the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned Directors of Murphyl Pastoral Company; Mervan Edgar Heinrich, Phyllis Rowe Heinrich, Ross Mervan Heinrich and Bruce Phillip Heinrich are claiming hardship over a period of ten years due to a so-called rare plant i.e. acacia guinetii having been found on our farming property "Murphyl" located at Yetna, Via Geraldton by a local Conservation and Land Management officer in 1982. As a result we were informed that we could no longer farm the area where the rare plant was found and this effectively prevented us from farming the said land for a period of 10 years. The plant was subsequently found to be neither rare nor endangered and as a result we have unnecessarily sustained losses in the order of \$1.5 million.

Your petitioners, therefore humbly pray that the Legislative Council will investigate this matter and recommend to the Government of Western Australia that appropriate compensation be paid to the undersigned.

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper No 29.]

[Questions without notice taken.]

LICENSED SURVEYORS AMENDMENT BILL

Leave to Introduce

HON GEORGE CASH (North Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [3.24 pm]: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation I move, without notice -

For leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Licensed Surveyors Act 1909.

Question put and passed; leave granted.

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Hon George Cash (Leader of the House), and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Distribution of Copies

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths): For the sake of accuracy I have obtained copies of His Excellency's speech, which will now be distributed to members.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY - MOTION

HON BARRY HOUSE (South West) [3.27 pm]: I move -

That the following address be presented to His Excellency -

To His Excellency, Major General Philip Michael Jeffery, AO, MC, Governor in and over the State of Western Australia and its dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

May it please Your Excellency -

We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

It is appropriate for us also to look beyond the formal wording of this motion and personalise our appreciation, not only the Governor's speech but also the efforts he and his wife, Marlena, have made for all Western Australians. His Excellency is assured that this Parliament is convinced of the importance of the Governor's role in our State and appreciates the important work carried out, in a very full time capacity, in the interests of Western Australian residents. The people of Western Australia admire and respect the Governor's commitment to the arduous role and especially appreciate the friendly manner in which he carries out his duties.

It is now 170 years since Major Lockyer raised the Union Jack in Albany, and Western Australia has seen many key economic, political and social changes in that time: The early settlement on the Swan River; scattered settlements through the south west; the discovery of gold; the First World War; group settlement; agricultural expansion; the Second World War; the postwar baby boom; the minerals boom in the goldfields, Pilbara and Kimberley; and the communications revolution of recent years. As we reach the end of this century we seem to have reached an equitable geographical balance of development across the State, and Western Australia has become the economic giant which does so much to contribute to the economic health of the nation. Without Western Australia's contribution to our export income I hate to think what our national debt would be. It is alarming enough now! We produce diamonds, oil, aluminium, copper, nickel, gold, mineral sands, coal, salt, tantalite, talc, black granite, iron ore and tin and have the potential to produce uranium, which has been significantly enhanced since 2 March. Add to this substantial primary production and emerging manufacturing, technological, communications and tourist industries, and members will see why WA leads the rest of the nation.

Having made the point about the State's importance to the national and worldwide economies, in this wide ranging general debate I would like to draw attention to the south west of Western Australia. This is the region I am privileged to represent in the Legislative Council. In the next few minutes I will outline some of the exciting developments taking place in the south west and highlight some of the challenges we face that must be overcome to ensure the region realises its potential. Without doubt, our greatest asset is the people. The south west population will increase by 25 to 30 per cent over the next 10 years. The service industries and small businesses will need to cater for this increase and also the big influx of tourists to what is affectionately known as God's own country. We as a Government and the elected representatives of this Parliament should be aware of the need to diversify industry and services and provide the infrastructure to cope with the demands of one of Australia's fastest growing regions.

Transport, industry and tourism are co-dependent, and the upgrading of highway access to the south west is critical for future developments. The four lane extension of the Old Coast Road will allow quicker and safer access to the region. Significant progress has been made in the last couple of years with most of the road between Busselton and Lake Clifton being upgraded to four lanes. Incidentally, now that it is a major highway, I feel it is appropriate for a name change for that highway.

Hon Doug Wenn: The Barry House highway!

Hon BARRY HOUSE: Mr President, without having given it much thought, the "Forrest Highway" comes to mind. Lord Forrest was the former member for Bunbury and the State's first Premier and he had a major influence on the south west region.

The demands of the enormous resources boom this area is experiencing will highlight the critical points in our transport network in the next few years. Two examples which spring readily to mind include the need to promote the construction of the service corridor to the Bunbury port where truck movements are anticipated to increase from 20 000 per annum to 100 000 per annum by the turn of the century. This will become an enormous bottleneck unless prompt action is taken. Secondly, while the north-south connections are being developed quite quickly. Although I look forward to the extension of the Kwinana Freeway to Pinjarra Road and beyond around the Peel and Harvey Inlets, and also the Busselton bypass, east-west connections also need attention.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It will be done.

Hon John Halden: But you may not live to see it.

Hon BARRY HOUSE: There are increasing demands on the South West Highway and other roads connecting the regional centres on the west coast with Manjimup and Albany, as well as Albany Highway which is stretched to the limit. The development of the new airport at Busselton will allow easier and quicker access to interstate and international visitors to the tourist heart of the south west.

The advent of ecotourism is well suited to the forest, streams, caves, beaches and rolling hills of the south west. One development of which I am particularly pleased is the progress being made towards a trails network. The ministerial task force that I chaired last year examined, among other things, the rail-trail concept where disused railway reserves could be utilised to enhance non-vehicular access. In the 11 recommendations made by the task force, we were aware of the need to maximise the potential of the trails for recreation, conservation, education and tourism. In other parts of the world, disused railway reserves have often been developed into popular walking, cycling and horse riding trails while at the same time being used as service corridors for utilities providing electricity, gas and communications. These trails have rejuvenated many small towns. Maybe the same sort of potential exists here. We have an enormous advantage in that most of these valuable, linear reserves still exist in Crown ownership and we have a potential backbone of a great network in the Bibbulmun Track stretching approximately 750 kilometres from Kalamunda to Albany, one of the world's best long distance walking trails. I am very pleased that the State Government has revitalised and resourced this project. This was recently supported by an injection of \$1.38m from the Federal Government with matching state funds. Who cares if it was announced in the middle of an election campaign; we will take the money!

A central recommendation in our report to the Minister - I am sure the Ministers for Sport and Recreation, and Finance are aware of this - is the establishment of a small coordinating unit in the Ministry of Sport and Recreation to be known as Trailswest. Our task force opted for this structure after extensive research and discussion. After seeing how it operated in Victoria where there is a strong political commitment and enthusiastic dedicated local communities, but a lukewarm and disjointed bureaucracy, and South Australia where there is a very strong, dedicated unit which does virtually everything in the Department of Sport, Recreation and Racing with no visible community involvement or support, we were of the opinion that a three man Trailswest unit in the Ministry of Sport and Recreation to assist and guide local authorities and organisations would be the best model to achieve a coordinated and well-managed network of trails for residents and visitors to enjoy in the south west. I look forward to a funding allocation in this year's Budget to allow Trailswest to be set up and begin work to assist the growing number of communities which see value in the trails concept.

A pilot trail program well suited to development is the Bibilup to Nannup section of disused railway reserve. It contains the necessary ingredients: A picturesque section of disused reserve, primarily through state forest; while it is not a discontinued line which has been subjected to a discontinuance Act, it is a disused line and Westrail has indicated support; and an enthusiastic local community prepared to take

ownership of the project, spearheaded by the Nannup Tourism Association and the Nannup Shire Council with support from the South West Development Commission. This could well become a showpiece like the rail conversions at Mundaring and between Margaret River and Cowaramup. They are a great credit to their local communities and are extensively used by residents and visitors alike.

Quality of life is composed of many elements, such as health, education, environment and community facilities as well as economic viability. The south west offers some of the best the world can offer in this regard. In health, a pioneering longitudinal study of key medical conditions of the Busselton population since the 1960s has broken new ground in medical research. Imminent hospital developments in Bunbury, Mandurah and Manjimup will ensure top class facilities and treatment in the area. Education is a key service for the growing population and while there is currently a huge demand for facilities due to growth in the area as well as many aging schools in need of maintenance, in one corner of the South West electorate in recent years we have seen new schools built at Picton, Parkfield in Australind, and Margaret River Senior High School, plus private schools established at Yallingup, Busselton, Dunsborough and Bunbury. There are many more.

Tertiary education is currently provided by the TAFE network and Edith Cowan University at Bunbury. The artificial demarcation between TAFE and university is slowly breaking down and the provision of a university service needs to be re-examined in relation to the provision of services to a large area. There is a real danger in thinking of a university as a building in one location. Perhaps the days of the clients coming to the university are almost over and we can expect educators to provide for individuals and groups at the clients' convenience. Nevertheless, the Bunbury campus of Edith Cowan University is an excellent facility with potential to develop into its own independent institution. I think it is fair to say that it has not been served too well by the centralised administration of Edith Cowan University in recent years. The Bunbury campus has made strenuous efforts to develop unique courses, such as aviation and hospitality, only to see these stolen by other campuses such as Mt Lawley and Joondalup. Recent discussions with the previous and current Ministers for Education have centred on developing student accommodation and providing some financial autonomy. The development of the new Bunbury Regional Hospital next to the Bunbury campus of Edith Cowan University provides exciting potential for a joint health-education campus.

Agriculture is of key importance to Western Australia, and the south west is one of the most vital food baskets of the State and will continue to develop. In addition to cereal production, horticulture is becoming extremely important to the region. Water supply and appropriate soils are key factors which will limit our capacity to increase production to keep pace with local, interstate and international demand. There is still considerable potential to expand horticultural production in the Donnybrook, Manjimup, Pemberton and Scott River area. The Scott River area is being opened up rapidly to dairying, horticulture and other pursuits. While it has benefited from the improved access to power and transport as a result of the Jangardup and Beenup mineral sands mines, the Government will need to address other infrastructure needs for an area which is, in some sense, the last development frontier in the south west.

Viticulture has continued to expand, with high quality table grapes being grown and the wine industry continuing to attract international commendation. Large new acreages are being planted in Pemberton, Margaret River and elsewhere to meet the demand for premium wine and table grapes. Wine production goes hand in hand with a viable tourism industry, and the combination of premium wine, excellent restaurants, galleries displaying the very best of the local art and craft industries, and the natural attractions gives the south west corner a worldwide presence. The south west is already Western Australia's premier tourist destination, and it is attracting increasing numbers of visitors to share a slice of the "good life". A typical example of this trend is my guest for the day: Hobart Brown, an affable American, very skilled in metal sculpture, has become a regular visitor to the area as "artist in residence" at Happs Vineyard and Pottery in Dunsborough.

I turn now to the forest industry. Tree plantations of blue gums are transforming the face of agricultural land where it can be demonstrated that they improve the viability of properties. Continued plantings of a variety of trees will lessen the demand for valuable forest timbers. Wespine Industries Pty Ltd's sawmill expansion is on track, and the south west is eagerly awaiting the announcement of the site of Wesfarmers-Bunnings' \$450m eucalypt pulp and paper mill. Will it be Kemerton or a greenfields site such as Wilga, between Boyup Brook and Donnybrook? This chemi-mechanical mill will employ an operational work force of 1 500 and represent an important step forward in value adding and import replacement.

Arable, fertile land is a state resource, and to ensure that this land is retained for primary production it will be necessary for the state and local governments to undertake planning to identify productive land and then ensure that housing developments do not compromise this asset.

Undoubtedly, the availability of fresh water will be a major factor in any determination of our State's future. In the south west, we need to learn from the experiences in drier areas and plan now to control pollution of streams and rivers and to take major steps to control salinisation. The protection of ground water supplies too is critical, and we will need to take steps to deep sewer all major townsites. I am sure all Western Australians are very pleased with the Government's \$800m infill sewerage program, which is gathering momentum throughout Western Australia. Despite discoveries of extensive underground aquifers, it is not an unlimited resource and must be managed carefully in the future. The new structure that will result from the three water Bills that were passed by this Parliament in the last few days of the last session establishes the framework for better management of water resources.

The mining industry is becoming the unsung jewel in the crown of the south west. There is a widely held misconception that Western Australia's mining industry is based entirely in the goldfields and Pilbara regions. In fact, 30 per cent of the State's mining activity occurs in the south west, side by side with many other diverse land uses, operating in cooperation and harmony.

Coal is still a major energy resource, and the new 300 megawatt coal fired power station at Collie has commenced, with the opening ceremony being conducted yesterday. Expenditure is expected to be in the vicinity of \$800m. Furthermore, two Collie mines - Griffin and Western Collieries - are undertaking new developments worth \$160m. Mineral sands and silica mining is a growth area. Gwalia Consolidated Ltd is undertaking a silica mining project at Kemerton. Construction has commenced, and it is expected that 400 000 tonnes, increasing to 1 million tonnes, per annum will be shipped from the Port of Bunbury. Fifty people will be employed during construction.

SCM Chemicals Ltd is in the final stages of its feasibility study to expand its titanium dioxide pigment plant expansion, which is also at Kemerton. Production will increase by 140 per cent from 79 000 to 190 000 metric tonnes; the company will spend \$275m and employ an estimated 300 people during construction and 175 during operations.

At Capel, Westralian Sands Ltd is expanding its synthetic rutile plant. A second plant is expected to be commissioned in April 1997 at a cost of \$134m. Cable Sands (WA) Pty Ltd is investigating an extension to the Jangardup mine adjacent to D'Entrecasteaux National Park. BHP's titanium production at Beenup, near Augusta, is due to commence this year. This is a huge mine, with a life span of over 100 years. It will have enormous implications for the development of the Scott River area, transport to the Port of Bunbury and employment in the region.

Alumina, like mineral sands mining, is about to expand its refining capacity. Worsley Alumina Pty Ltd, operating near Collie, is undertaking a feasibility study to double production. Expenditure is expected to be \$500m, with an operational work force of 180. Alcoa at Wagerup is also undertaking feasibility studies to expand its production. Construction is expected to be in the vicinity of \$960m.

Tin was discovered at Greenbushes in 1888 - the same year that coal was discovered at Collie - and mining has continued until the present. Gwalia is now mining spodumene, which contains lithium. Greenbushes has the world's largest rock lithium source. As an important value adding exercise, spodumene is processed into lithium carbonate and is used in aluminium smelting to reduce operating temperatures. It is also used in the pharmaceutical and glass industries.

The mining and mineral industry in the south west employs more than 20 000 people directly and generates \$3.5b per year. Mining companies are outstanding corporate citizens who, as well as being major contributors to our economic welfare, are also generous sponsors to many schools, and to sporting, cultural and community organisations. Mining in the south west occurs in the most picturesque part of the State, often in close proximity to existing towns. The miners have to take into account strict environmental protection measures in their operations, and sensitive rehabilitation is critically important.

One of the best examples of rehabilitation that I can see almost daily is RGC Mineral Sands Ltd's wetlands rehabilitation at Capel. In the days of dwindling wetlands because of encroaching agricultural uses and urban creep, RGC has rehabilitated a sand mining area and developed 52 hectares of lakes teeming with marine and bird life. In conjunction with the Royal Australian Ornithological Union and the Science Teachers Association, RGC has developed a valuable educational and tourist resource. This is an outstanding example of sensitive development and is worth visiting.

Mining has met the challenges of working successfully in environmentally sensitive areas close to other land users. Miners now seek to have more input into the planning process so that the full potential of rich mineral deposits can be realised before urbanisation or other land uses makes it impossible to retrieve in the future without major expense and upheaval. This must be addressed by the community and planning authorities in a sensible, rational way.

Other projects of international significance are taking place in the south west. The concrete gravity structure which will support Ampolex Ltd's Wandoo oil project is being constructed in the Port of Bunbury. Fifty workers are employed on the concrete casting basin, which will cost \$89m. It will shortly - temporarily, until it is launched - dominate the Bunbury skyline, together with the wheat silos, which I hope are also temporary. As it takes shape its height will be equal to a 14 storey building.

Further development is taking place in the harbour with berth C. The nearby Bunbury harbour city project is transforming a harbourside industrial area into a residential and recreational show piece. More than 170 residential and commercial lots will be released over the next five years. This is an outstanding piece of real estate. It is pleasing to finally see the culmination of many years' work coming to fruition.

Major tourist facilities are being constructed at Busselton and Dunsborough. The Port Geographe development at Busselton has commenced. Over the next 10 years development will take place of an inland harbour, marina, convention centre, shopping centre, tourist facilities and more than 1 000 residential sites. The Dunsborough Lakes project is taking shape and will involve construction of a retirement village, resort hotel, golf course and more than 1 000 building sites. Expenditure on both sites will amount to more than \$350m. These are but two examples of development from one corner of the south west. Many more projects total hundreds of millions of dollars.

Residential building in the south west does not suffer the same fluctuations as the metropolitan area and over the years steady growth has occurred. This will continue. To a large extent the regional centres on the coast have been insulated against large fluctuations which occur in the building industry elsewhere. This has helped provide a solid employment base in the south west.

Members can see from this short, potted resume of the south west that it is one of the finest places in the world in which to live and work. There is an air of optimism as the area develops in a balanced and sustainable way. There is also an air of excitement about the potential for many areas which is slowly unfolding for the world to discover.

I thank the Governor for his speech and commend the motion to the House.

Hon MURIEL PATTERSON: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon Tom Helm.

House adjourned at 3.54 pm

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT - BURG, ASHA

1. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that Asha Burg, a seven year old child suffering from cerebral palsy, epilepsy, hearing impairment, attention deficit disorder and immune deficiencies, successfully mainstreamed Koondoola Primary School last year with the assistance of a 0.6 teacher aide?
- (2) If so, can the Minister confirm that the Principal of Koondoola Primary School requested 0.8 teacher aide so that Asha could continue to be mainstreamed at Koondoola Primary School?
- (3) Is it correct that, without any consultation with the parents of Asha Burg, he was transferred back to Burbridge Special School in 1996?
- (4) Is it correct that, despite the principal's request for 0.8 teacher aide time for Asha, only 0.2 time was allocated in 1996?
- (5) Is it correct that, despite numerous requests for the allocation of aide time to rectify this problem, it has not occurred?
- (6) Is it correct that, because of administrative errors and the inability of the Education Department to rectify the situation quickly, Asha Burg still has not attended school in 1996?
- (7) What action will the Minister take to rectify the situation immediately?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I am advised by the Minister for Education in the following terms: I am aware of the case of Asha Burg, which has a lengthy and detailed history. Given the nature of the question and the fact that it relates to an individual, it clearly requires a considered response. I undertake to provide that response to the member early next week.

GOLD ROYALTY - INTRODUCTION DECISION

2. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Finance:

I refer to comments made by the Minister for Resources Development, the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party and aspirant to the leadership of the Liberal Party and Premier status, Colin Barnett, on the front page of Monday's *Kalgoorlie Miner*.

- (1) Does the Minister agree with Mr Barnett that the gold industry should pay a royalty?
- (2) Will the Minister confirm Mr Barnett's revelation that a gold royalty has not been rejected by the coalition and is off the agenda only for the present term of this Government?
- (3) If he does not agree with Mr Barnett, will the Minister guarantee that this and any future coalition Government, should we be so unfortunate, will not introduce a gold royalty?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

It is not for a Minister representing a portfolio to make a decision that the Minister should make.

WESTRAIL - PROSPECTOR TRAIN SERVICE *Kalgoorlie-Perth*

3. Hon KIM CHANCE to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Government's decision to cancel the Friday afternoon *Prospector* rail service from Kalgoorlie to Perth an indication that the Government intends to eliminate or wind down the service between Kalgoorlie and Perth?
- (2) If that is not the case, will the Minister give an assurance on behalf of the Government that it will honour its election promise to maintain and improve the *Prospector* rail service to Kalgoorlie?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1)-(2) The member obviously is not aware that the decision to take away the Friday afternoon service was made in response to requests from the people of Kalgoorlie. The people of Kalgoorlie asked for a better service by allowing the people who come to Perth to have a full day in Perth before going home in the evening. The Government changed the late night timetable for arrivals into Kalgoorlie because it did not allow the taxi service to provide an adequate service to people getting off the train. The Government, as it has done in a range of public transport measures, has responded to the travelling public and not run the service for one section that may benefit, but in response to a number of people. As a consequence there has been a 15 per cent increase in the usage of the *Prospector* to Kalgoorlie - a phenomenal turn around from the decline that was experienced some years ago.

Far from wanting to downgrade the *Prospector* service, the Government has provided a total refurbishment of the *Prospector* inside and out. The only problem the people of Kalgoorlie and

the Government face is that the *Prospector* is overflowing: People cannot get on the *Prospector* because it is booked out. Therefore, the challenge for the Government is to put on additional services. Far from the totally misleading innuendo in the campaign that is being run, the Government has responded to the people of Kalgoorlie with additional services.

In addition, the Government has ensured not only that the *Prospector* will continue to operate, but that its service will be increased. That is consistent across the country passenger services in Western Australia, with not only the *Prospector* but also the additional service from Northam to Perth and the *Australind* to Bunbury - all of which have seen an increase in patronage. There is an absolute commitment by this Government not only to keep the *Prospector* going, but also to improve the service.

PORT KENNEDY LAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMITTEE -
PORT KENNEDY SEA RESCUE GROUP, PREMISES - MILLAN, DENIS

4. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of assurances given during debate on the Port Kennedy Development Act, as reported in *Hansard*, about the premises for the Port Kennedy Land Conservation District Committee and the Port Kennedy Sea Rescue Group?
- (2) What steps has the Minister taken to provide these premises?
- (3) Does LandCorp plan to evict these groups?
- (4) If so -
 - (a) When will this occur?
 - (b) Will they be offered compensation and other premises?
 - (c) What is the figure budgeted for this?
 - (d) Is Denis Millan of the Department of Land Administration involved in this issue?
 - (e) Was Mr Millan investigated previously in relation to the equipment missing from the Land Conservation District Committee?
 - (f) If yes, what were the results of any investigations?

Hon GEORGE CASH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1)-(2) I am not immediately aware of the particular assurances to which Hon Jim Scott refers. However, if he is prepared to give me a copy of the *Hansard* to which he refers, I will endeavour to provide a response on that.
- (3)-(4) The Port Kennedy Land Conservation District Committee and the Port Kennedy Sea Rescue Group have been unofficially occupying premises on land owned by LandCorp for some time. These groups have now been requested to vacate the premises to allow LandCorp as the owner to proceed with the development of the land. Compensation has not been decided. By virtue of his position at the Department of Land Administration, Denis Millan is a member of the Port Kennedy Management Board. However, he has no involvement in this issue. Mr Millan has previously given evidence to the police about allegations of missing LCDC equipment. Mr Millan was never investigated in relation to the equipment, and any allegations to the contrary are offensive and without foundation.

BAAC PTY LTD - WRIT SERVED ON GOVERNMENT FOR CANCELLED
STEVEDORING CONTRACT

5. Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission or the Minister received a claim for damages from BAAC Pty Ltd for its cancelled stevedoring contract?
- (2) Has a writ been served for this claim?
- (3) If so, when was that writ served and what was the sum claimed?
- (4) Does the Minister intend to defend any such writ vigorously?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1)-(4) Yes, a writ has been served on the Government by BAAC as a consequence of the Government's decision to not continue with the state shipping service. The reasons are well known: The Maritime Union of Australia refused to service those vessels as a consequence of the stevedoring contract let to BAAC. The Government will make its decision on how it will defend that case in due course.

BAAC PTY LTD - WRIT SERVED ON GOVERNMENT FOR CANCELLED
STEVEDORING CONTRACT

6. Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Transport:

What is the approximate sum claimed in the writ?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

Off the top of my head, it is \$3m or \$4m

TAFE - CENTRAL METROPOLITAN COLLEGE OF TAFE
Cost of Tourism Course

7. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Employment and Training:

I refer to the cost of courses at the Central Metropolitan College of TAFE.

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the cost of first semester tuition fees and books for a pensioner concession card holder undertaking a tourism course is \$635, when that course previously cost \$65 plus books?
- (2) How can the Minister or the college justify such huge increases in cost?
- (3) Is the Minister concerned that these new higher costs will deny access to second chance education to all those who cannot afford it?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1)-(3) The cost of the tourism course has increased from \$543 in 1995, not \$65 plus books as the member suggests, to \$635 this year. This has been due to an increase in material fees to cover the increased cost of providing materials to students, a marginal increase in hours of tuition, and the introduction of a first-aid course at the request of the industry. Some of these costs are one-off; the three following semesters will cost \$355 each.

PORT KENNEDY DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT ACT - FIRE CONTROL AT
RESERVE

8. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

In relation to fire management in the area affected by the Port Kennedy Development Agreement Act -

- (1) How many fires have been recorded at Port Kennedy since the lifting of the soil conservation reserve?
- (2) What area has been burnt out during this period?
- (3) Who is now responsible for fire control at Port Kennedy since the lifting of the soil conservation reserve, and who was previously responsible?
- (4) What area of Port Kennedy was burnt out during the period it was under the soil conservation order?
- (5) How long was Port Kennedy under a soil conservation order?
- (6) Have important scientific and ecological areas been burnt out since the lifting of the soil conservation order? Does this include highly significant and sensitive wetland areas?

Hon GEORGE CASH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. I am advised by the Minister for Emergency Services -

- (1) Eight.
- (2) Approximately 100 hectares.
- (3) The Department of Conservation and Land Management is now responsible for fire control at the reserve. However, a mutual aid understanding ensures there will be a multi-agency response from the WA Fire Brigades Board, the Bush Fires Board and CALM, which has reduced the intensity and severity of the fires. I am not aware of who was previously responsible. The Port Kennedy Fire Management Board is responsible for maintaining firebreaks, etc in this area.
- (4) When the land was under the soil and conservation reserve order approximately seven to eight fires occurred annually. However, advice indicates that those fires were of a greater intensity and, therefore, more damaging. Information of area lost is not available.
- (5)-(6) These parts quite clearly come within the portfolio of the Minister for the Environment. If the member puts them on notice I am sure he will answer the question.

SICK LEAVE - TRADING OFF PRECLUDED UNDER MINIMUM CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT ACT

9. Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN to the Minister representing the Minister for Labour Relations:

- (1) In view of the Federal Government's support for the trading off of sick leave entitlements, notwithstanding its promise that sick leave would be a guaranteed minimum condition of employment, does the Minister for Labour Relations support cashing out of sick leave entitlements under workplace agreements?
- (2) Does the Minister for Labour Relations believe that the Minimum Conditions of Employment Act precludes any such trading off of sick leave entitlements?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. The Minister for Labour Relations has provided the following reply -

- (1)-(2) The Minimum Conditions of Employment Act precludes the paying of cash in lieu of sick leave.

HOSPITALS - BUNBURY DEVELOPMENT
Combined Facilities Agreement Signing Ceremony

10. Hon DOUG WENN to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Can the Minister explain why no copies of the agreement between the State Government and St John of God's Hospital were available on the signing of the agreement on Tuesday of this week?
- (2) Will the Minister explain why the member for Bunbury was a signatory to that agreement?
- (3) Will the Minister explain why no-one from Bunbury City Council or other councils was in attendance at the signing?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Due to printing time constraints only five copies of the combined facilities agreement were available for the signing ceremony which took place on Tuesday 12 March 1996. Copies of the agreement, including an explanatory memorandum, may be obtained on request from the General Manager, Bunbury Health Service.
- (2) The member for Bunbury was not a signatory. Mr Osborne witnessed the Minister for Health's signature.
- (3) The Mayor of Bunbury was invited to the ceremony. However, his apologies were conveyed to the organising committee.

JUSTICE, MINISTRY OF - GRANT, DAVID
Elliot, Richard

11. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Attorney General:

- (1) Did Mr Richard Elliot advise the Attorney General to remove Mr David Grant from his position as Director General of the Ministry of Justice?
- (2) Was this advice related to Mr Grant's concerns about Wanneroo Inc?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1) No.
 - (2) Not applicable.
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