

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 9 November 1983

The SPEAKER (Mr Harman) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Job Security Test Case: Petition

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [2.16 p.m.]: I present a petition from 16 residents of Western Australia praying that it be known they do not support the application known as the job security test case, which the Australian Council of Trade Unions has brought before the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

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. 51).

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Precedence: Standing Orders Suspension

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Leader of the House) [2.22 p.m.]: I move—

That on and after Wednesday, 16 November 1983—

- (a) Standing Order No. 225 (Grievances) be suspended, and
- (b) Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day on Wednesdays as on all other days.

I did give notice to the Opposition that we would be moving this motion this week and that private members' business would cease after today, as of right. I also gave the undertaking that any private members' business on the Notice Paper, including that of which notice was given today—we see the Opposition has taken advantage of that—will be dealt with.

Mr Hassell: You expect us to do our job.

Mr TONKIN: That is right. I am not at all surprised. So, we will provide time for that to be dealt with.

This is the normal time for this motion to be moved. I hope the House will rise in the next two to three weeks, as long as we can get on with Government business. I hope that, today or tomorrow, the Premier will receive a letter from

me indicating the items of business that are still to be introduced into Parliament before the end of the session.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [2.23 p.m.]: We believe we can get through the legislation on the Notice Paper this session, but would be concerned if any controversial legislation should come forward in the last week or so of the session. We must bear in mind that it is reasonable to give the Opposition two or three weeks' notice of any major Bills.

The Government indicated that the legislative programme would be completed late November or early December, but there may be some difficulty—

Mr Tonkin: Like the action of the Legislative Council, for example?

Mr O'CONNOR: Of course, the Leader of the House is paranoid about that. He goes overboard and is often on the wrong track. Nevertheless, we will tell the Government that at the appropriate time.

Mr Bryce: Do you remember what you did last year with the diamond Bill? You introduced 165 pages of legislation with one week or 10 days to go.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am saying the financial institutions duty legislation has not been introduced at this stage and we will endeavour to try to handle this in the time permitted. I am trying to be co-operative; if the Government does not want our co-operation that is a matter for it to decide. The financial institutions duty legislation is an important Bill which affects not only institutions, but also every taxpayer. It affects people on the dole and those on pensions, and others. We want ample opportunity to look at this legislation on behalf of the people we represent; I do not think that is being unreasonable. If the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the House want to come in on this issue it is up to them.

Mr Brian Burke: On the financial institutions duty, I will arrange for Mr McCarrey to forward to you a copy of everything we have at the present time.

Mr O'CONNOR: I would appreciate that.

Mr Brian Burke: It has not been introduced because we are having a series of negotiations to explain it to the people most directly affected.

Mr O'CONNOR: I do not know whether it is true but I believe other people have been given a draft Bill of this nature. I would appreciate it if we could get one.

Mr Brian Burke: You will have one tomorrow.

Mr O'CONNOR: We will try to be co-operative but we expect to have sufficient time to deal with Bills on behalf of the public whom we represent.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.27 p.m.]: I rise briefly to support the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition, and to say I understand it is the usual procedure at approximately this time during the course of a session for the motion moved by the Leader of the House to be moved. We accept that, but it is also usual at this time for the Opposition to be advised of the remaining business to be dealt with. I take it the Leader of the House was referring to a letter to the Leader of the Opposition when he said he expected a letter to go to the Premier. I think that was a slip.

Mr Tonkin: I am sorry. He should have it today.

Mr HASSELL: I appreciate that and we will then be in a position to know the business to be dealt with. I appreciate that the Leader of the House in seeking to deal with the business of the House without skimping and that he gave an undertaking to deal with private members' business.

Question put and passed.

LOAN BILL

Introduction and First Reading

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

Second Reading

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balgownie—Treasurer) [2.28 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Each year through a measure such as this, authority is sought for the raising of loans to finance certain works and services as detailed in the Estimates of Expenditure from the General Loan Fund as tabled on Thursday, 13 October 1983.

The Bill seeks to provide authority for the raising of loans not exceeding \$85 million for the purposes listed in the first schedule.

It may be noted by members that the borrowing authority sought for each of the several works and services listed in the schedule will not necessarily coincide with the estimated expenditure on that item in the current year. This situation arises because it is necessary to provide for sufficient borrowing authority to enable works of a continuing nature to be maintained for a period of about six months after the close of the financial year. Also, the unexpended balance of previous authorisations has to be taken into account.

This action ensures continuity of works in progress pending the passage of next year's Loan Bill and is in accordance with usual practice.

Details of the condition of the various loan authorities are set out in pages 42 to 45 of the Loan Estimates. These pages also show information relating to the appropriation of loan repayments received in 1982-83 and the allocation of Commonwealth general purpose capital grants.

The main purpose of this Bill is to provide the necessary authority to raise loans to help finance the State's capital works programme.

As usual, the required borrowings will be undertaken by the Commonwealth Government which acts for all States in arranging new borrowings, conversions, renewals, and redemptions of existing loans.

This function of the Commonwealth Government is exercised under the terms of the 1927 financial agreement and within the total borrowings programme for all States as determined by the Australian Loan Council. The Loan Council also prescribes the terms and conditions attached to the loan raisings.

There is a longstanding arrangement whereby the Commonwealth Government from its own resources, will subscribe any shortfall to complete the financing of the overall borrowing programme of the States.

These special loans are made on terms and conditions similar to those prevailing for the previous Commonwealth public loans raised in Australia and are allocated to the States as part of their normal borrowing allocations.

This support enables us to proceed with a planned programme of works, secure in the knowledge that the full Loan Council allocation will be forthcoming.

In addition, the Commonwealth Government, by way of a capital grant, provides a proportion of the total programme for State Governments agreed by Loan Council. These grants now constitute one-third of each State's total general purpose programme and are intended to assist in financing capital works such as schools and institutions from which debt charges are not normally recoverable.

At its June 1983 meeting, the Australian Loan Council approved a total State Government general purpose programme of \$1 469 million for 1983-84, only seven per cent above the level of the previous year, made up of two-thirds borrowings—\$979 million—and one-third—\$490 million—capital grant. Western Australia's allo-

cation is \$90.6 million and \$45.3 million respectively.

During 1982-83 and 1983-84, the Commonwealth has given the States the option of nominating amounts from their Government borrowing programmes to apply to public housing, provided that the States meet their matching requirements under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. Western Australia nominated \$7.2 million under this arrangement during 1982-83 and \$7 million in 1983-84. Amounts nominated in this manner are provided to the States on the normal concessional loan terms and conditions of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and are therefore excluded from borrowing authorities sought under this Bill.

In addition to seeking to provide authority for loan raising, the Bill makes provision for an appropriation from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to meet interest and sinking fund on loans raised under this and previous Loan Acts. It also seeks authority to allow the balances of previous authorisations to be applied to other items. The second schedule sets out the amounts of these reappropriations and the Loan Acts which authorised the original appropriations. The items to which the funds are to be appropriated are set out in the third schedule.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

CITY OF PERTH PARKING FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Grill (Minister for Transport), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Transport) [2.34 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The amendments contained in this Bill have been brought forward at the request of the Perth City Council which is responsible for the administration of the City of Perth Parking Facilities Act.

In essence, the Bill seeks to overcome a very difficult situation which has arisen in respect to the development of a number of shop units on the Murray Street frontage of the No. 9 car park in Pier Street, Perth.

In 1981 the council sought authority to include a commercial component in the ground floor

frontage of car parks. The principal Act was amended in that year to permit the council, with the consent of the Minister, to make such provision at ground level for the use of land or buildings or portion of a parking station for other municipal purposes, commercial or other purposes including the provisions of premises for retail trading. The plan was to enable the use of valuable street level frontages to greatest advantage and at the same time provide a more pleasing facade.

The 1981 amendment ensured that such premises were to be used either for council purposes or sold with all money received from the premises to be paid into the parking fund and used only in relation to parking facilities.

The scheme devised at that time required the approval of the Minister for the inclusion of any commercial component and that such approval be published in the *Government Gazette* and tabled before both Houses of Parliament where it is subject to disallowance.

The sale of portion of a car parking facility, however, presents problems when one considers that the council has a need to ensure that it retains the right to deal with the total property at some future time, perhaps for a total redevelopment or even sale of the facility, should the need arise.

Council was given the power to impose restrictions and conditions in respect of any land sold under the provisions of the Act. However, with the benefit of hindsight it now appears unfortunate that the 1981 amendment placed a mandatory duty on the council to sell properties which were developed, say, for retail trading without regard for the implications of that requirement.

In line with the authority granted under the previous amendment the council proceeded with the development of five shop units along the Murray Street frontage of the Pier Street car park, and I am sure members will agree, the street frontage of the car park has been greatly improved as a result.

The council endeavoured to obtain freehold titles for the shop units, to overcome the cumbersome requirements of the Strata Titles Act. The proposed subdivision envisaged "isometric" or "cubic" titles; however, despite over two years of effort by the agencies concerned no real progress has been made.

The inability of the council to dispose satisfactorily of the properties under the existing restraints has had a serious financial impact on the parking fund budget. The council has therefore proposed that the problems associated with the

development may be best overcome by amending the Parking Facilities Act to allow the Minister to consent to a leasing or letting if the council satisfies him that the land cannot be sold.

This Bill therefore seeks to amend the Act to provide the Minister with the power to allow council to lease or let land, or part of any building which he is satisfied cannot be sold as required under the existing provisions.

I am aware that considerable opposition has been expressed in the past by members opposite over the City of Perth seemingly becoming involved in commercial ventures in competition with private enterprise.

This measure does not seek to give the council the right to become involved in commercial developments in its own right but merely seeks to overcome a particularly difficult situation that has arisen in respect of the shop units previously referred to in Murray Street.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Laurance.

HOUSING AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mr Wilson (Minister for Housing), and read a first time.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TOURISM COMMISSION BILL

Second Reading

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balgas—Minister for Tourism) [2.40 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Tourism in Australia is a growth industry. With appropriate support, the tourism industry can expand Western Australia's economic base and create thousands of permanent employment opportunities.

A recent survey by the bureau of industry economics indicates that Australians aged 14 years and over took more than 50 million trips, of one night or more, away from home in the 12 months to September 1982. On an average trip of about four days, average spending for each traveller was about \$155, totalling between \$7.5 billion and \$8 billion.

The survey also included day trips. An average of \$20 per person a day was spent on almost 90 million day trips, totalling an expenditure of \$1.8 billion.

During the same period—September 1981 to September 1982—just under one million overseas visitors came to Australia. They spent an average of 31 nights in Australia and, an average of \$1 121 per person. In 1981, this amounted to over \$1 000 million.

Today, tourism is a \$12 000 million-plus industry. After allowing for imports and transfer costs, the industry accounts for about six per cent of the gross domestic product. This means that tourism is equal to the mining industry as an income earner, but it makes a greater contribution to employment at a lower capital cost.

The medium term growth target to 1985—estimated by the Australian Travel Industry Association—represents an average growth in real expenditure of 6.3 per cent per annum. By 1990, the industry could attain a real expenditure growth rate of about 7.5 per cent per annum. The increased growth in expenditure will be achieved through an increased volume of tourism and increased expenditure per tourist.

There are 500 000 accommodation units available for domestic and international guests. The increase in the number of units will be steady until the end of the century. Considering the relative styles of accommodation, the growth areas will be motels, caravan and camping parks, holiday flats, and new concepts in health, recreation, and adventure. On the other hand, boarding and guest houses will decline in number.

Associated growth areas are booking and marketing services, security and maintenance, and franchise-style management services.

The development of tourism in Western Australia presents a great challenge. The challenge lies in developing the industry to ensure a widespread distribution of the benefits of development activity, taking into account the full range of financial, economic, social and organisational considerations.

It is a challenge which this Government is addressing in an aggressive manner, determined to ensure that sufficient momentum is generated to guarantee the industry develops in a planned, ongoing fashion. The piecemeal approach to tourism in this State has finished.

The success of the Government's plans to develop the tourism industry will largely depend upon the manner in which the following vital elements are managed—

- (a) the role and activity of the private sector interests in the industry;
- (b) the role and activity of Government;

- (c) the State's ability to attract investment into tourism infrastructure and facilities;
- (d) community attitudes towards tourism and its contribution toward our well-being;
- (e) the ability of the industry to plan its development to realise optimum benefits with minimal adverse effects; and
- (f) the manner in which the above-mentioned considerations are co-ordinated and directed toward common goals and objectives.

The private sector has a key role to play in the development of tourism in Western Australia.

Since the present Government took office, there has been a clear re-emergence of "confidence" among private sector interests and projects are coming off the shelf as the Government demonstrates its commitment.

There is much to be done, particularly when we consider some of the more isolated regions within the State which have a unique contribution to make to the industry. We will work closely together—Government and private enterprise—to ensure that our efforts complement and assist each other. I am confident this can happen—in fact, that it is already happening.

In particular the Government is currently working on the development of an investment incentive package specifically for the tourism industry. This investment incentive system will be designed to encourage and attract investment in tourism plant and infrastructures. It will help place Western Australia in the forefront of tourism infrastructure development.

The scheme is being developed in close consultation with the private sector, whose assistance and advice has been invaluable.

The State Government's role in the tourism industry is an important one and may be categorised under the headings of leadership, marketing, planning, research, and development.

Our role in the industry has been under review since we took office in February of this year, culminating in the presentation of this Bill to establish the Western Australian tourism commission.

With this initiative, the Government will—

- (1) Establish an organisation with a clearly defined set of objectives against which the performance of the commission may be measured.
- (2) Ensure that the new commission has the appropriate powers and authority com-

mensurate with its responsibilities and objectives.

- (3) Create a management environment sufficiently autonomous from the workings of Government, in which marketing can function in a creative and performance-oriented manner.
- (4) Create an organisation in which employees can pursue and develop a career in the tourism industry, aware that they may make a longer-term commitment to the commission.
- (5) Establish an organisation which is structured to enable a high level of commercialisation in its operations on both a day-to-day and a longer-term basis.
The commission, through its powers, will be strongly commercial in addressing and fulfilling its objectives, involving itself in a close working relationship with the private sector.
- (6) This structure and management philosophy will enable the commission's decision-making processes to be open to influences from the private sector and the marketplace, which will facilitate a more commercial approach to planning, research, marketing, and the role of Governments.
- (7) The new organisation will encourage financial investment in the tourism industry, by way of direct involvement or other forms of participation and assistance.
This will raise investor confidence, particularly in the "pioneering" projects so readily identifiable in many regional locations.
- (8) Finally, the Government's initiative will ensure that the new commission's activities will be to address the critical issues of planning and research. Such management disciplines are vital to the development of the industry and will be given a high priority in the structure of the new organisation.

The objectives of the Western Australian tourism commission shall be—

- (1) To market and promote Western Australia as a tourist destination for intrastate, interstate, and international travellers.
- (2) To increase the amount of travel within Western Australia and the use of tourist

facilities in Western Australia, by Western Australians.

- (3) To increase—
 - (a) the number of travellers to Western Australia;
 - (b) the period during which travellers or tourists stay at destinations in Western Australia; and
 - (c) the use of tourist facilities in Western Australia.
- (4) To improve and develop tourist facilities in Western Australia.
- (5) To support and co-ordinate the provision of tourist facilities in Western Australia.
- (6) To provide for the more efficient and effective utilisation of investment in tourism in Western Australia.
- (7) To advise the Minister upon any matters relating to tourism or travel that are referred to the commission by the Minister.

Given this precise statement of objectives, against which the performance of the commission may be measured and monitored, it is essential that the new tourism body have powers commensurate with its stated responsibilities.

The commission's powers are wide-ranging from both a financial and operational point of view.

As with every aspect of this Bill, these powers have been widely researched, with a significant input from the private sector. The Government has received overwhelming support from the industry concerning the desire to provide the commission with the necessary powers to effectively discharge its duties.

In preparing and framing this Bill, the Government embarked upon an exhaustive consultative process with the tourism industry. The Bill has been developed in close consultation with leading trade organisations, companies and operators, whose views have made an important contribution in the drafting of the Bill.

I appreciate and thank the industry for this involvement and support. A high level of accord has been reached between the industry and the Government and this augurs well for the future.

The new tourism commission will make a significant contribution to the vital management disciplines of planning, research, and development. This has been a major weakness in our past efforts and will be formally addressed on an industry basis.

It is, incidentally, a good example of how Government and private sector interests may work closely together for the betterment of all parties concerned.

The aim of developing a planning function within the Western Australian tourism commission is to facilitate a strategic development plan for tourism in Western Australia. The plan will comprehensively cover all aspects related to tourism for a 10 year period up to 1994.

It will be formulated to make provisions for intrastate tourism in Western Australia, interstate tourism from other parts of Australia, and overseas tourism to the State. All tourism motivations—business, holidays, visits to friends or relatives, other and combined purposes—and all market segments will be provided for in the plan.

Like good management in any field of endeavour, co-ordination of available resources and the manner in which they are utilised will largely determine our success. The tourism industry is massive, and is diversified both structurally and geographically, factors which make the co-ordinating role a difficult one.

The new tourism commission will play a key role from a co-ordination viewpoint. It will have the resources, both financial and manpower, to adopt such a role, particularly in view of the importance to be attached to the planning, research, and development functions.

To do this job effectively, the commission will need to develop a close relationship with the private sector, and the manner in which the commission is structured will facilitate this objective.

Communication must be based on mutual trust and respect and display a desire from both parties to work hand in hand. I am very confident this can happen.

In summary and conclusion, let me state that from this Government's viewpoint, the tourism industry is a vital industry in expanding Western Australia's economic base. It is, under the present economic environment, one of few industry sectors experiencing rapid and beneficial growth. It is an area of growth which has the capacity to broaden our economic base, while making a useful contribution to eradicating our greatest social evil—unemployment.

Because of the labour-intensive nature of tourism, and the fact that the silicon chip will have limited impact on the industry, we can create employment—permanent employment—both now and in the years ahead.

This Bill proposes the establishment of an organisation which will be well equipped to work in

co-operation with the private sector. It will have powers commensurate with its responsibilities. It can realistically address its objectives. The management structure will enable the commission to comprehend and support the industry according to the best and most imaginative commercial practice.

I cannot overstate the importance of Government working in co-operation with the private sector, and feel confident that the new tourism commission will provide an environment in which this may occur.

As I have said, the tourism industry is a billion-dollar industry. It is experiencing real growth and has enormous potential to improve our standard of living and enhance the quality of our daily lives.

We all have, therefore, a very real responsibility to discharge.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Laurance.

DOG AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Grill, (Minister for Transport), and passed.

PRISONERS (INTERSTATE TRANSFER) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 20 October.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)(2.55 p.m.): This is an important and complex piece of legislation which needs some consideration, particularly in Committee, but I will try to summarise the position as I see it and ask the Minister for confirmation that my assessment of it is correct and to explain one or two points.

Basically the Bill seeks to provide for the transfer of prisoners from one State or Territory in the Commonwealth to another. As I understand it, Western Australia is the last State to enact legislation in this form so that the system can operate on an Australia-wide basis under the co-operative arrangements which have been agreed between the Governments of the States, the Territories, and the Commonwealth.

In form, the Bill represents a co-operative agreement and, in that respect, it is an example of the Federal system working as it should. An area

of exclusive State jurisdiction and responsibility has caused some difficulties to arise in administration in the placement of prisoners. Instead of that difficulty being resolved by an attempt by the Commonwealth to override the position of the States and introduce national legislation to create uniformity under a single Commonwealth law while at the same time interfering substantially with the independent sovereignty of the States in these areas, the path of co-operation and the spirit of federalism has been followed.

Over a period, the Attorneys General of the States and the Commonwealth and the Ministers for prisons of the States, by whatever title they bear, have worked through their respective ministerial councils to formulate provisions which are acceptable to all parties and those provisions are being translated into the laws of the respective States and Territories by means of legislation similar to that which is before the House now.

As the title implies, the effect of the legislation will be to permit the transfer of prisoners between States and Territories under arrangements prescribed in the Bill.

The motivation for this legislation was twofold: Firstly, there were humanitarian considerations relating to the placement of prisoners, especially long-term prisoners, closer to their families. Although there is a great deal of criticism of prison systems in Australia and undoubtedly some criticism of our own prison system, in fact all the Australian prison systems profess to have as one of their objectives the rehabilitation of prisoners and the preparation of prisoners for their return to civilian life on the expiration of their terms of incarceration.

Of course, the very objective of the preparation of prisoners for their return to civilian life is that they will then be capable of going back into society and moving with society rather than against it. In this respect, the work of the WA Prisons Department is notable, because it can be said with a great deal of confidence that it is as advanced as, if not more advanced than, any other prison system in Australia. Genuine efforts are made to help prisoners and those efforts are of a practical nature. There are extensive educational systems and they are tailored to the needs of particular groups of prisoners. For example, the educational systems provided for Aborigines are often different from those provided for other people because of particular needs. Also there is vocational training of various kinds, and in this respect prison industries are of considerable importance. There is training in the necessary tools of trade, if I may use that expression, for successful living. As welfare authorities and prison authorities

know, many people in our community have difficulty with the basic tasks of life, which we take for granted, such as the capacity to make and operate a home, the capacity to approach the services of the community which are available to give assistance, and the capacity to make use of those services when required.

Increasingly, welfare services and Governments have discovered that not only must services be provided, but also the recipients of those services must be provided with information as to the use of the services. In other words, the very people who most need the services are least able to approach them, are least able to understand that the services are available, or are least able to identify their own problems. All that may seem to be irrelevant to the interstate transfer of prisoners, but it is not. As I started out saying, one of the important objectives of our prison system and those of other States is rehabilitation, not in the sense that we will through any system be able to transform bad men into good men—all kinds of social scientists have discovered by experience that such a transformation is an impossible dream—but rather that we might, by training and example, be able to give people with disadvantages and disabilities the opportunity to take advantage of those services which are available, and thereby be relieved from the pressures which sometimes drive them to crime and violence.

In saying this, I am not overlooking the fact that some, and undoubtedly quite a significant proportion, of the prison population are offenders by nature and are quite capable of understanding what help is available, but simply do not want it. They are people who will be prisoners in one form or another for the rest of their lives, but not all are like that, and it is at those others that these objectives of rehabilitation are directed.

One of the important facets of rehabilitation is a continuing basis of contact with the non-institutionalised world; in other words, the outside. In that respect, one refers, in particular, to the families of prisoners. But there are many prisoners in Western Australia especially whose families are not here.

The first of the two principal objectives of this Bill is to allow prisoners to be moved back to the States where their families are situated so that the objective of rehabilitation can be pursued through the availability of social contact with families and, on occasions, with friends. As I say, it is an important objective although there are significant arguments from both experts and lay people as to the likelihood of its success. Whether any programme of rehabilitation is worthwhile, it would be a sad day for us and for our State if we were to

abandon all attempts at rehabilitation, even though we must recognise that in a high percentage of cases the best will in the world in this area may fail.

The second objective of the Bill is more practical. It is to facilitate the administration of justice; it is to allow prisoners who are convicted offenders in one State to be removed to another State or Territory to face charges which have not been finalised or brought to fruition by way of a conviction or acquittal.

With offences committed in different States, difficulties arise for both prisoners and law enforcement authorities. Prisoners sometimes find that after they have served a long sentence in one place, immediately upon the conclusion of the sentence, they are rearrested, removed to another State, and made to face another trial. Perhaps this will be years after the events which may have been contemporaneous in time, if not in intention, with the events for which the prisoner served a sentence of imprisonment in the original State. The other side of the problem relates to law enforcement authorities who when they bring the second prosecution, are unable to identify the witnesses involved because of the passage of time, or are unable to have the evidence held together. In those cases, a miscarriage of justice may occur in the sense that the community is not able to deal with offenders who are likely to be convicted simply because of the practical problems of producing the evidence and conducting the trial.

As I see the situation, they are the two basic objectives of the Bill, both of which are significant and important. I now refer to one or two issues I want to raise with the Minister as to the operation of the Bill. As I said at the outset, it is complex; it is not easy even as a lawyer to pick up precisely how the Bill will operate.

The general question I raise with the Minister is as to the application of the law and the provisions for release, parole, and remission, which may operate in the State or Territory to which a prisoner is transferred. As I understand the situation, when a prisoner is convicted in this State and transferred under this legislation to another State, he will be subject to the sentence passed in this State, and to the rules which apply in the other State in dealing with prisoners. Obviously the prisoner will be subject to the rules of the prison to which he is transferred, which would include the immediate rules of daily conduct and behaviour.

A broader question arises which relates to the substantive rules which will apply concerning a prisoner's release on the expiration of the sen-

tence, and how that is calculated. I am sure many members would be amazed to know just how complicated are many of the calculations of the actual term of a sentence handed down by a court. I have often had cause to wonder with some concern as to how many prisoners are, because of miscalculations, either kept in gaol too long, or let out of gaol too early.

As I have said, the apparently simple process of calculating the term of a sentence is not as simple as it appears and many practical difficulties arise. I can only assume that there are few challenges because the prisoners, like the authorities, have some difficulty in working out the precision of it and therefore are prepared to accept what has happened.

However, the question is not that at all; the question is the way in which that will be worked out when a prisoner is transferred.

The associated question of which remission will apply to the sentence and whether it will be worked out on a *pro rata* basis when part of the sentence has been completed in one State and the balance completed in another must be considered. Until recently, remission of sentences was one-quarter in Western Australia, but one-third in other places. It has now been increased to one-third in this State, but it may, nevertheless, vary from that which applies in other places.

I mention the question of early release, permits, and other provisions for a prisoner to be allowed out under the prisons system as distinct from parole. We know there has been some scandal in NSW relating to the early release system. A few years ago, there was no doubt in my mind that that system was abused in Western Australia. One of the objectives of the Prisons Act 1981 was to eliminate the abuse of the early release system in this State and to ensure it was duly regulated in accordance with requirements laid down by Parliament and not totally within the discretion of administrators and Ministers.

So I am interested to hear the Minister state to the House precisely how that will operate when a prisoner is transferred.

Also, of course, the questions of parole and the rules relating to it arise. Again I assume that the parole which is to apply will be the parole which applies in the State or Territory in which the person is prisoner.

Finally, I want to raise a very specific question with the Minister handling the Bill. It deals with the operation of strict security life imprisonment in the case of a prisoner being transferred interstate from this State. Western Australia, so far as I know, is the only State in the Common-

wealth which provides for strict security life imprisonment and that system was introduced as an intermediate step between the capital punishment which still applies under the law of this State, although it has not been in practice for a long time, and an ordinary life sentence which often means a sentence of a number of years which is on occasions considered in practice to be grossly insufficient. The strict security life imprisonment system which we introduced specifically provided a minimum term for prisoners sentenced to strict security life imprisonment and applied special rules as to parole and early release. Where it should happen that a strict security life prisoner is transferred to another State, what guarantee will the people in this State have that that strict security life prisoner will be kept in prison in accordance with the requirements of the rules relating to strict security life imprisonment? This is not an idle question because three of the people who have been sentenced to strict security life imprisonment are Mr Parre, Mr Edwards, and a man from Esperance whose name momentarily escapes me, but who committed heinous offences down there.

Mr Grill: In the hotel.

Mr HASSELL: I cannot remember his name. The Esperance killer.

Mr O'Connor: I know the fellow you mean.

Mr HASSELL: Parre, the American veteran, was convicted of killing a policeman; Edwards, a part-Aboriginal man, was convicted of most terrible crimes including wilful murder; and the man from Esperance was also convicted of murder. They were all convicted of wilful murder. On my recollection, Maloney was the man from Esperance. All three of those persons were sentenced to strict security life imprisonment under the rules that were formulated at the time they were dealt with by the Executive Council. They were sentenced to strict security life imprisonment because of a decision of the Executive Council, in substance—a decision of Cabinet, of course—so that was the only way in which they could be satisfactorily dealt with without actually being put to death. I am sure that any Western Australian who recalls any one of those cases would be horrified at the prospect of their being transferred to another State under this Bill and then not being subject to the same rules of release as apply to any person sentenced to strict security life imprisonment.

I am not saying the Bill is deficient. I am putting it to the Minister that I may have missed something in the Bill relating to this matter which

makes it clear. I want his answer, and I seek his assurance on that point.

The other question which I raise—and again I may have missed something in the Bill; it may be something I did not pick up—is the question of parliamentary reporting. One of the bases upon which the former Government approached the Prisons Act of 1981 was that protection would be given to the public against a determination which became too undisciplined in its attitude to early release or a Minister who became too lax in relation to early release, by way of requiring under the Act that certain reports be given to Parliament.

In those sections of the Prisons Act 1981 that relate to leave of absence, in one or two places restrictions are applied on early release and exceptions are permitted subject to a report being made to Parliament. That report, of course, provides a salutary control on any Minister in charge of a Government because he knows that if he exercises a discretion in a way which is out of kilter with community attitudes, it will be subject to immediate challenge as a result of the action being publicised in the Parliament by means of a report to Parliament. I do not believe any provision in this Bill stipulates that a report must be made to Parliament. Perhaps I have missed it. Again, I raise that question with the Minister. I know the present Government is not exclusively responsible for this Bill as it goes well back to the days of the former Government of this State and former Governments of other States. A lot of work has been done on the Bill over a long period. Nevertheless, I think these questions might be considered at this stage.

Subject to those remarks and perhaps to some of the questions arising in Committee, I indicate to the House and to the Minister responsible for the Bill that the Opposition supports the Bill. It also supports the idea that such a Bill is both warranted and desirable. We will certainly support the second reading.

The former Attorney General in another place (the Hon. Ian Medcalf) mentioned something which is more perhaps an unintended bonus which arises from the adoption of this Bill in Western Australia. It is a fact as I understand the situation, and have understood it for a long time, that many prisoners in Western Australia have come from other States and from New Zealand. In relation to those prisoners who come from other parts of Australia, under this Bill, we will have the opportunity of getting rid of them and they can go back to their home States and be supported by the taxpayers of those States.

I do not think that was the motivation for this legislation, but it certainly would be of benefit if it significantly reduced the number of prisoners in Western Australia. Subject to those points I have raised, and as I have already indicated, the Opposition supports the Bill.

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Transport) [3.21 p.m.]: I thank the member for Cottesloe and the Opposition he represents for their general support of the legislation.

The member for Cottesloe has raised a number of questions as to the effect of the Bill after the transfer of a prisoner. His questions relate to the application of the law basically to the various sentences passed on prisoners transferred from this State to another State and from another State into this State. No doubt, these particular questions which he has raised will be covered more adequately in the Committee stage.

Questions raised by the member for Cottesloe related to the application of law in regard to a sentence and whether it will be the law of the State to which the prisoner is transferred and as to whether, in respect of the questions of parole and remission, or early release, it will be the law of the sentencing State or the law of the receiving State that will apply. Further questions were raised in respect of the calculation of remissions and early release and a query which was of particular relevance to Western Australia concerned life imprisonment.

My understanding is that, under clauses 22 to 26 of the Bill, a prisoner who is transferred will, in respect of his sentence, be subject to the laws of the State to which he has been transferred. I know those questions will be dealt with further in the Committee stage. I thank members of the Opposition for their support of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Barnett) in the Chair; Mr Grill (Minister for Transport) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title—

Mr HASSELL: I was disappointed by the response by the Minister responsible for the Bill to the quite specific points which I raised in the second reading stage. He did say that he felt the points would be dealt with further in the Committee stage. I do not want to prolong the debate unnecessarily, but I ask him to tell me, by way of interjection, in what clauses he will deal with each of those points because, if he is going to deal with

them, I would like to know the specific clauses in order that I can call them at the appropriate time.

Mr GRILL: The particular provisions are under part V of the Act which deals with the transfer of prisoners. In this Bill it is covered under clause 22.

Mr HASSELL: I ask the Minister whether, under clause 22, he will be responding to those points I have raised.

Mr GRILL: If you raise them, I will answer them.

Mr HASSELL: I thought I had raised them in the second reading debate, but if the Minister wants me to raise them again, I will.

Mr GRILL: I dealt generally with the points you raised. It is a matter of which law will have effect on those sentences and that is your general point.

Mr HASSELL: I have the distinct impression that the Minister will not deal with the issues I have raised at length. I know that he is representing the Minister responsible for the Bill and I understand that, but I will have to raise the points and seek clarification on them.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 to 22 put and passed.

Clause 23: Transfer of sentence with prisoner—

Mr HASSELL: I go back to the points I raised in the second reading debate and ask the Minister whether he will respond. The most important question I have raised is: What will happen if a prisoner who is subjected to strict life imprisonment is transferred? I have raised the questions of reporting to the Parliament; of the way we would have no control whatsoever over the calculation of minimum terms; and of the way we would have no influence over early release programmes or over parole. I realise that all those points could be dealt with in a general sense by the Minister's saying that the law of the receiving State applies, but to what extent does the law apply and to what extent does the home law apply? If a prisoner is sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment with a minimum term of seven years, will the seven years still apply? It is not good enough for the Minister to respond by saying that the law of the receiving State will apply.

There is also the question as to what extent the law of the sending State will continue to apply, and I would ask the Minister to consider this point.

The most important aspect concerns the question of strict security life imprisonment because I believe that is an area where there would be grave public disquiet if it were seen as a possibility that a prisoner, subject to strict security life imprisonment—I cite the cases of Barry Edwards

and Maloney—could avoid the full impact of his sentence by his being transferred, under this Bill, to another State.

Mr GRILL: Clause 23 of the Bill in my view states quite clearly that the law of the receiving State would then apply. The question of provisions for release, parole, and remission would be dealt with in accordance with the law of the receiving State. I suspect that that would also apply in respect of the question of strict security life imprisonment. I do not think the matter can be taken any further at this stage.

Mr HASSELL: I am sure the Minister handling the Bill does not really mean to suggest that the matter is resolved by clause 23 of the Bill; it is much more likely to be resolved by clause 25. Under that clause, the strict security life imprisonment may or may not be upheld; it is not by any means clear. I wonder whether there are provisions in some other part of the Bill which I have not picked up relating to provisions for people convicted of a capital offence.

Mr GRILL: Clause 25 deals with the situation where a prisoner is brought into this State.

Mr HASSELL: Yes, I know; but we are assuming there is a provision in the Act in the other State similar to clause 25.

Mr GRILL: Yes, there would be.

Mr HASSELL: Where a prisoner goes from here to the other State, what will apply to him is not clause 23, except in so far as his sentence ceases to operate in this State, but clause 25 in the other State, or the equivalent of clause 25 in the other State.

Strict security life imprisonment was brought into law under very severe provisions, and it depends on an Act rather than an order relating to the sentence. It depends on the exercise of the Royal prerogative of mercy. As I recall, under the Criminal Code, a prisoner convicted of wilful murder is in the situation where the judge has no alternative but to order that the prisoner should be hanged by the neck until dead. Notice of the sentence is given to the Executive Council which advises His Excellency, the Governor, that the sentence should be commuted to one of life imprisonment. That used to be the only option available to the Executive Council. However, the provision for strict security life imprisonment came in and two options were then available—strict security life imprisonment or life imprisonment. I do not know whether that set of rules amounts to a direction or an order given or made by a court with respect to commencement of the sentence which would arise under clause 25B. That seems to be the only provision that

could perhaps apply, but I wonder whether another part of the Bill deals with that.

It is a complex Bill which must be gone through in the most minute detail to enable us to begin to understand the direction it takes. I say this even though I have worked on the legislation through the Ministerial Council. I thought perhaps the Minister might be able to enlighten members.

I refer to the cases of Parre, who killed a policeman; Edwards, who committed the most heinous and terrible wilful murders of innocent people; and Maloney, who bashed to death in a slow and brutal manner an old woman in a hotel in Esperance. If the public of Western Australia thought that any of those three could be transferred from this State and its laws to another State and thereby gain release, as theoretically appears to be possible, they would be most concerned.

This was the most important of all the points I raised.

Mr GRILL: I wish I could give a definitive answer on this point. I must admit I am not entirely certain as to which rules would apply in respect of the order of strict security life imprisonment. I suspect it is dealt with under clause 25B, but I could not definitely say so.

I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition whether he has any further points, because the question as to which law applies is a fairly clear one.

Mr HASSELL: The other question I asked related to reporting on those people who are sent away. I do not think there is provision in the Bill for a report to be made to Parliament. I think it is a pity that there is no such provision, but that is just an expression of my opinion.

Mr GRILL: I can see nothing in the Bill which indicates that, although I do not think it is a major impediment to the Bill.

The point raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is a matter of public concern, and I think I should obtain further advice on that and report later.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again at a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr Gordon Hill.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 26 October.

MR PETER JONES (Narrogin) [3.40 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this Bill, but it does so with very little enthusiasm. The main reason is that the Bill is little more than a collection of words.

In discussions with the various bodies concerned, the people who had some interest in seeing the achievement of the Government's ambitions and stated objectives were people in the business sector in general, and in small businesses in particular. The people who had some interest in seeing words turned into performance have expressed great disappointment, simply because this Bill is just words.

When one is confronted with a Bill that runs to 25 clauses, involving many functions and various other things, one must ask why we are to have a development corporation when we had the Small Business Advisory Service Ltd. that operated very well. On the Government's own admission, the service operated satisfactorily and provided a good service. One could ask why we are discussing the establishment of a statutory authority, despite the Government's policy and its stated intention of establishing the corporation.

We have two reasons for the Bill's being before us. One reason is the Government's promise that it would establish an independent small business development corporation—it used the word "independent", but we have one that will be subject to the general direction of the Minister—and the second reason is one of clarification.

The Bill clarifies the persons who will constitute the corporation—the people who will come together to comprise the service as it was, and the corporation as it now will be. I am aware that at one time the number of people on the board of the service was greater than the number of staff; and it was a little cumbersome. That is not meant to be disparaging of the people involved; but the nine persons on the board were an unnecessarily large number, even though that number satisfied the representation aspirations put forward by the bodies concerned to the previous Government. Apart from establishing an unnecessary corporation, the Bill provides the vehicle for a more finely-tuned board, and I will return to that point in a minute.

The Government needs to be reminded that it will not satisfy the people in small businesses, or in any form of business, in Western Australia,

simply by having a statutory authority. It will not address their needs by saying, "Whacko, we're doing things here. Look what we've done. We've established a small business development corporation!"

I am sure the Minister for Economic Development and Technology is already learning that from the comments made to him and requests made of him regarding when the Government will live up to its promises relating to small businesses. The people will not be satisfied with the establishment of the corporation, and they will not be satisfied with promises; they will be satisfied only with performance.

Despite what the Minister said in his second reading speech about what the Government has done so far, the performance still is not seen. The performance promised in relation to assistance for a range of things still has not reached anywhere near the expectation that the people in businesses were led to expect.

In a speech the Minister made to the Perth Chamber of Commerce (Inc.) last Friday, he referred to the criticisms that had been received and the aspirations being expressed, and he tried to justify the criticisms by indicating what the Government had done.

Mr Bryce: You were not there, so you had a good source of intelligence.

Mr PETER JONES: I have a copy of the Minister's speech. I mentioned that to him yesterday.

With reference to the Government's promises, we have the situation that the Minister, in his second reading speech, referred to several matters. Let me deal with them now. Firstly, he dealt with payroll tax. Without a doubt, payroll tax is one of the most insidious imposts upon the business sector, and no-one denies it. It has been the stated objective of the previous Government and this Government to phase out payroll tax over a period, and we are all working towards that goal. In the Budget that is still before the House, the Government has raised the ceiling to some \$160 000. It has not made so much of the fact that the revenue from payroll tax will increase in this fiscal year. The Government has not made much of the fact that it has removed the minimum payable from \$37 800 per annum, which was the minimum deduction. In answer to question 1619, it was indicated that some 1 800 employers will be affected by this; and apart from the money taken in at the top level, a further \$1.1 million will accrue because the minimum figure has been removed.

We then had the question of commercial tenancies. I am sure that the Government, and

particularly the Minister for Economic Development and Technology, are starting to understand how shallow were their promises in the last two years relating to shop and commercial tenancies, and the difficulties that people were experiencing in that regard. Despite the promise made by the Government prior to the election, something like eight months after the Government was elected it got around to appointing an inquiry into commercial tenancies. Whereas before the election the Government said that it knew all the answers and it knew what it had to do, and it was only frothing at the mouth waiting to get in there and do it, the moment it was elected, not only did it do nothing for a period of some months—

Mr Bryce: You have not got a copy of our policy?

Mr PETER JONES: —but also it set up an inquiry to find the answers that it said it already had. At least the Government should be credited with finally having come to the point of doing something; but it is too little and too late.

One thing the Government will learn about commercial tenancies—undoubtedly it has already—is that it is a difficult area, and Governments find it incredibly hard to legislate to protect people against themselves. We cannot legislate to protect people who sign various forms of tenancy agreements unless we seek to interpose Government in a very substantial way in the commercial tenancy process. Perhaps that is what the Government has in mind; perhaps it is seeking to have rent control.

Mr Bryce: It is not.

Mr PETER JONES: I am pleased the Deputy Premier advised me of that on a previous occasion, but if as he says the Government has no intention of introducing any form of rent control, that will make the Government's task all the harder. The Government should understand the difficulties of trying to legislate to protect people against themselves.

A third item referred to was the Government regulations review committee. That committee's report was available to the Government on the day it took office. Just two or three weeks ago, the Government made announcements about decisions it had made about the report. Perhaps the Deputy Premier can tell me exactly what the substance was of those decisions?

In this second reading speech, the Deputy Premier made it sound as though a large number of decisions had been made relative to that report, and I admit some decisions have been made, but most involve very little change at all, certainly little change that I can see. The Government has

commenced a review of the Factories and Shops Act. That is not such great activity.

Mr Bryce: It is.

Mr PETER JONES: Why did we have to wait nearly nine months for it to start? Again, I find it difficult to see what positive steps have been taken. The Deputy Premier said that he had been considering the report of the Government regulations review committee set up to examine the impact of red tape on small businesses and that he had already accepted many of the committee's recommendations. Perhaps he could identify some of those areas where he has taken action, because I have been told that his actions have not been felt by the business sector.

I would have thought that if the actions had been in any way positive or had had any substantial effect, the Deputy Premier would have been ready to trumpet about this and to mention these things in his speech. As I have indicated, nothing has occurred. He went on to say that action was already under way to implement those recommendations and that a detailed statement dealing with the process was made yesterday, which was the day before he made the speech.

Perhaps for the sake of the record, he may care to be more specific about what is happening to that report and the way it is benefiting small businesses as he has suggested it is; more particularly, he might mention when we will see some of the benefits being received. I am sure I am on safe ground in saying that nothing positive has happened, because I know small business has not felt any beneficial impact. If it had, I am sure we would have heard about it in the speech made last Friday and in his second reading speech.

Moving on to the actual aspirations, and again referring to the Deputy Premier's speech, I point out that he set out several objectives for the corporation which this Bill is designed to establish. First of all, he said that this would give the small business sector the status it deserved and required within the Government sector.

For the life of me, I cannot find out why we must have a corporation, as distinct from the present Small Business Advisory Service, for small business to be identified within the Government sector. How can it be improved? The bodies with which I have spoken believe this is all waffle.

Mr Bryce: Is it not a pity those bodies didn't tell me it was waffle? I got feedback from 100 people.

Mr PETER JONES: Only 58.

Mr Bryce: Hang on. We wrote to 200 and we got responses—

Mr PETER JONES: The Deputy Premier sent the Government's policy to 200 people. Perhaps I could tell him what he did. He then circulated the Bill and received 58 submissions.

Mr Bryce: Right.

Mr PETER JONES: I do not mind helping the Deputy Premier. On the information given to me, some people who made comment saw no reason to change the title of the Small Business Advisory Service. That advice was given to me and no doubt to the Deputy Premier's own officers. The 58 submissions he received resulted in virtually no change to the draft Bill; in fact, they resulted in only one or two technical changes.

Mr Bryce: A couple of good ones.

Mr PETER JONES: I can understand why some of the changes were not accepted. I am sure the Deputy Premier's officers will advise him that if some of those people who suggested changes had read all the Bill and not just some clauses in isolation, they would have seen that the points they made were already accommodated.

Secondly, submissions were received relating to the composition of the board. Undoubtedly there would have been aspirations held by some people about nominees to be kept on the board. I cannot support that. But I repeat that one of the main things that filtered through was the belief that the name "Small Business Advisory Service Ltd." should be retained.

On information given to me, two reasons were advanced by the Government for its not accepting that idea. Firstly, in the Labor Party's policy can be found a commitment to a "small business development corporation". Secondly, and this is the best of the lot, the Government had already inserted the name of the corporation in the telephone directory, and it appears on page 46. So, the Government could not allow the present name to be kept.

Mr Bryce: That is optimism at its best.

Mr PETER JONES: It is the height of arrogance. It is pre-empting the decision of this Parliament. The Government has put the new name in the telephone book when the corporation has not even been accepted by the Parliament! That is the principal reason the Government did not accept a change; that is why those who asked for a retention of the existing "Small Business Advisory Service Ltd.", the name they had become used to and were happy to retain because it reflected the service of that body, were refused their request. Even with its being changed to a statutory organisation, its functions will still fit perfectly with its present name, but the Government could not allow its present name to continue because it had

already showed the new name in the phone book. We are being governed by Telecom. In fact, we are being governed by Telecom in many ways.

Mr Bryce: Yes, they don't need to have people manually listening in to phone calls these days—high tech.

Mr PETER JONES: The second thing to be considered is that the Deputy Premier said the Government would provide some \$722 000 for the corporation in this year's Budget and that this would be a 225 per cent increase over the funds allocated to small business activities in 1982-83. Unless the question on today's Notice Paper has been answered, that \$722 000 has yet to be identified. On an examination of the Budget, it is possible to make a fairly educated guess and to say that the \$722 000 does not represent a 225 per cent increase in the total funds to be made available to small business activities this year.

It simply leads the way in the Budget papers. It is a regrouping of the funds that previously existed within the Department of Industrial, Regional and Commercial Development which are now to be set against the small business development corporation. Perhaps the Minister in his reply may start to identify how much it is in real terms over the previous year. I am prepared to accept that it is some, but just how much of that \$722 000 previously appeared in votes elsewhere within the department or departmental funds?

Mr Bryce: Can I tell you? None; it is all additional.

Mr PETER JONES: Why has the Minister not been prepared to identify the break-up of the funding which he has been asked to do?

Mr Bryce: Because the break-up of the funding may be quite variable. It may change.

Mr PETER JONES: The Minister has not been prepared to say that before.

Mr Bryce: There is a lump sum. It is additional money.

Mr MacKinnon: Why can't you give the break-up?

Mr Bryce: Because it may vary.

Mr MacKinnon: Is it not the same as the advisory service in the Budget?

Mr Bryce: Yes, and I will give you that in relation to the \$722 000.

Mr PETER JONES: When the Minister gets rid of those two items I have mentioned already dealing with status and money, he then starts to scratch because he gets around to taking about "offers the Government greater benefit of research and advice in the small business sector".

Perhaps he can tell us how this corporation will do that, unless he maintains it will have additional staff.

Mr Bryce: They will.

Mr PETER JONES: Let us define this. Where will that staff come from if they were not available before, or conversely, could not have been provided to the Small Business Advisory Service? Similarly, with the next one, the Minister says, "This will offer small business a much improved service from the Government". Again, we do not need this Bill to do that. The Government is offering additional funding, and now the Deputy Premier says he is offering additional staff, but he does not need a Statute to do that. He just has to provide them.

The last one says, "It will provide a high degree of independence". Independence from what? Again, how does that vary from the Small Business Advisory Service? In other words, we are still tied to this same situation; we are confronted with a Bill that is little better than words. It gives us nothing that could not have been provided under the arrangements which existed previously. It simply honours a Government commitment to provide a development corporation. As I have indicated, it does have the benefit of streamlining the board membership and I must say that in that regard I agree with what the Government has done. A move towards a four-person board, one of whom must be from the area of country business, is a very good one, but it will be fulfilled as a good move only if the Government goes about appointing those members in a very positive way.

I do not know how the Deputy Premier responded to the various submissions received, but some of them sought to maintain the nominee membership. Equally, others thought it should be rejected. Some sought reassurance regarding the appointment of members on the board in that they should be practising in the realm of business, small business in particular.

Mr Bryce: Quite right. That is my objection.

Mr PETER JONES: They should be persons not only who have had some direct experience and involvement in the field, but also who preferably are actively engaged and involved in the role of small business and who understand something about the traumas, difficulties, and problems associated with that sector of the economy.

I want the Deputy Premier to perhaps placate those who sought to retain nominee membership by being prepared at least to discuss representation with them when the Government comes round to making recommendations regarding

membership. I want to be quite clear that I am not suggesting that, merely because the Bill does not say that, and I am not seeking that it should say that. However, the Government should approach bodies like the Confederation of Western Australian Industry or the various chambers of commerce and start getting a panel of nominees, if it chooses to do so, to increase membership to three or four members. On that basis, it will work.

My point is that I do not believe the Government has any mandate, to use that overused word, to completely ignore enterprise.

Mr Bryce: I think that is a perfectly good idea and it is something I am quite happy to do.

Mr PETER JONES: We will deal with some of those aspects in a little more detail when we come to the Committee stage.

I want to make another comment regarding nominee membership. I am aware that in this body as it presently exists, which will be replaced, the Government may not be happy with, and would see some weakness in, the system, because it is in need of putting together a balanced board and adding the kind of expertise available to it that it wants and should have, and it might run the risk of not getting it in the nominee membership system. That does not mean it should not recognise the advice that could be made available to it. We will deal with that a little more in the Committee stage.

The last specific point I want to make concerns clause 25 and the requirement that the Minister should review the activity of the corporation after five years and issue a report. I do not quite know the purpose of that or whether it is sort of going halfway towards a sunset clause.

Mr Bryce: It is a sunset clause.

Mr PETER JONES: But it is going only halfway.

Mr Bryce: That is how you express a sunset clause.

Mr PETER JONES: If we are talking about a sunset clause, why not put the one in which exists in the ILDA Act which says straight out that the body will not continue past a certain time—I think it is 1990—and that there has to be a positive Act and positive action must be taken for it to continue its operation? Perhaps the Deputy Premier may care to enlarge upon this form of words which has been chosen and we can talk about it again in the Committee stage if necessary.

I have no doubt that other members will want to speak on this Bill. I repeat that it is only words; it is froth and bubble.

Mr Bryce: Hey, that is unkind.

Mr PETER JONES: As I have indicated in relation to the existing Small Business Advisory Service, the only positive things that I could find were one or two minor items in the functions which we will talk about in the Committee stage. I refer to such items as approved venture capital and the exact meaning of it. At this stage of the second reading, while it is supported on the basis that it offers nothing more than the Small Business Advisory Service offers so far as performance is concerned, it merely honours a promise the Government made.

Mr Bryce: Merely? That is important.

Mr O'Connor: It would be about the only one that is important.

Mr Bryce: You would have roasted us if we were not honouring it.

Mr PETER JONES: I guess the Deputy Premier is not aware—

Mr I. F. Taylor: You are damned if you do and damned if you don't.

Mr PETER JONES:—that the reason we are discussing this Bill is simply that the Government promised a small business development corporation and it is taking an already established body from within the Government service and changing its name.

Mr Bryce: No, it is more than that.

Mr PETER JONES: It is providing very little more, if anything, in performance, that could not have been done by the previous body. If the Government wants to give it more money to use and more staff—it says it will do this—that is fine, but the Government does not need to alter the coat that is worn by the body in order to change its functions and the job that it does. Performance counts and this is still to be seen.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch) [4.10 p.m.]: I would like to make some comments about the operations of the Small Business Advisory Service to date. As members would know, it has had a history of six years, or thereabouts. It started as a small section of the Department of Industrial Development, as it was known then, and was then transformed to its current operation as a limited company. Now it will be transformed into a corporation; in other words, a QANGO.

In all the time I was associated with the service as a Minister—it was for three years—I appreciated the work done by the various members of the board. During my time as a Minister, I found all the people associated with the service to be keen; they all wanted the service to carry on its proper function. The work of the staff of the service has been outstanding, particularly the work of Bruce

Ashworth who has gone forward to establish the credibility of the service throughout the community to the stage where it is now the recognised authority on the small business sector in this State.

The second point I wish to make is not so flattering. It seems passing strange to me that we have a Government which has spoken long and loudly about wanting to tackle QANGOs and Government waste, yet it is taking that step in the area of small business. Since the election, the Government's first move to assist small business is to create another QANGO. I think what we have already is quite sufficient to carry out the work of the Small Business Advisory Service.

As the service is currently structured, it can be considered to be a leader in Australia. It is recognised as such and I am sad we are taking a retrograde step by following the other States and setting up another QANGO which has the potential not to improve a service, but to hinder it.

When introducing this legislation, the Deputy Premier said—

The small business development corporation will be the principal vehicle through which these goals will be achieved and through which specific programmes and policies will be developed and implemented.

This comment was about the Government's programme and policy for small business.

I was fortunate to attend the Perth Chamber of Commerce Government familiarisation seminar at which the Deputy Premier spoke, and I must admit he spoke well.

Mr Barnett: He always does.

Mr MacKINNON: I give credit where it is due. The Deputy Premier said that the small business development corporation is a major plank of his Government's small business policy. I say to the Deputy Premier—and we often hear this type of comment from the Premier—that if that is the key plank to this small business policy, he will not be sitting in his present seat after the next election.

Small businesses in this State feel cheated and let down because of the payroll taxes which have been imposed. We said they would be imposed.

Mr Bryce: Just see the plank as a springboard.

Mr MacKINNON: Those were not my words; they were the words of the Deputy Premier, but he changes the central plank of his Government's small business policy and now it is a springboard. We have a fluid situation with the Deputy Premier. As my colleague the member for Karrinyup

has indicated, the Deputy Premier is even unable to answer questions asked of him in this House.

Let us analyse the second reading speech of the Deputy Premier and the reasons he says it is important that we have a corporation to carry out small business development. Let us also examine closely the purpose of the Small Business Advisory Service. The Deputy Premier said the establishment of this body under legislation will give the small business sector the status it deserves and requires within the Government sector.

Mr Bryce: Hear hear!

Mr MacKINNON: What a load of gobbledegook. The Deputy Premier gave that answer to a question asked at the Perth Chamber of Commerce function. One of the people attending that function told me he felt it was a load of gobbledegook and that he was not fooled by the Deputy Premier's answer.

Mr Bryce: Liberal Party people ask me that everywhere I go.

Mr MacKINNON: He was not a member of the Liberal Party. He was attending the function. I would like the Deputy Premier to explain to me how the Small Business Advisory Service needs this status in the Government sector. When I was Minister, I did not receive any complaint about dealings the service had with the Government sector. If I had, I would have gone to a ministerial colleague and sorted the problem out. I will be also able to show how the other four points in the second reading speech likewise fall down. The second point in the Deputy Premier's speech stated—

The establishment of this body under legislation—

... provides that body with significant backing in resources, both human and capital; a total of \$722 000 has been allocated for the corporation in this year's Budget—a 225 per cent increase over funds allocated to small business activities in 1982;

I would like to make two points in relation to that matter. Firstly, was it necessary to change the service into a corporation to ensure a 225 per cent increase in funds? The answer is, "No". The increase could have been made to the body in its present form. The second point I wish to make relates to question 1913 on today's Notice Paper, in which question I asked for a break-up of the expenditure of \$722 000 allocated to the Small Business Advisory Service Ltd. The Deputy Premier was fluid in his answers. He seems to flow in whichever direction the Opposition's wind blows him on this matter. The member for Narrogin referred to this aspect also.

In answer to the question, the Deputy Premier said it was not proper to provide a breakdown because the information was the subject of legislation which had yet to be proclaimed. What has that got to do with the price of eggs? Why cannot we have a breakdown of the \$722 000 allocated to the Small Business Advisory Service Ltd.? Is he saying that the small business corporation is different from all other Government departments and statutory authorities? Why cannot the Deputy Premier, as a responsible Minister, say that that amount was allocated to certain areas? All of a sudden, the Deputy Premier is speechless.

Mr Bryce: I can assure you it is not because of lack of thought.

Mr MacKINNON: The Deputy Premier has a responsibility to give the members of this House a breakdown of that sum of \$722 000. If he does not give us an answer to the question I asked, I condemn him for not having the gumption to give those figures to us. Is the Deputy Premier scared to stand up and face us?

Mr Bryce: I never have been.

Mr MacKINNON: Why should he hide the figure? The answer to question 1913 was absolutely ridiculous, as was his answer to the member for Narrogin. I ask the Deputy Premier when he responds to give us the breakdown of the figure. We have a Budget on which we are supposed to comment in the Committee stage; let us have the information so we can responsibly debate that particular piece of legislation.

Point two in the Deputy Premier's speech is no reason whatever for establishing a QANGO. The money could have been given to the service as it is. Point three states that the establishment of this body under legislation offers the Government a greater depth of research and advice on the small business sector. It may do so because of its increased funding, but it will not do so as a consequence of its establishment as a corporation. Point three is no reason for the company to be transferred into a corporation.

Point four says that the establishment of this body under legislation offers small business a much improved service from the Government. I sincerely hope that is so, but certainly it will not just be because it has been changed to a corporation. It may be because the staff will be much better these days, having gained some experience, and perhaps because there will be more of them. Who is to know? We are not to know how many staff it will have because the Government will not tell us. It does not need a corporation to offer a much improved service.

Point five in the Deputy Premier's speech says that the establishment of this body under legislation specifically provides for a high degree of independence. What difference is there, and how much more independent is a corporation under a Bill subject to ministerial control, when compared with a limited company? What is the difference between their degrees of independence? I cannot see any difference, so why have another piece of legislation on the Statute book to honour some election promise that was as hollow as it would appear in the Deputy Premier's head?

Mr Bryce: That was a very nasty remark, but I will overlook it and repeat on subsequent occasions that you do not really think the implementation of election undertakings is very important.

Mr MacKINNON: I never said that at all. I am saying that the central plank of the Government's small business policy at the election was nothing more than a hollow promise. It was a promise to change the name of what we already have—a service doing a perfectly good job, and one which the Deputy Premier has not criticised. The name will be changed and the service will do a good job under a different name with a bit more money. The Government made a pre-election commitment to increase the funding; it has done that, and it has changed the name, but it does not fool us or the small business community to which the Government has a responsibility to carry out its commitment.

Mr Bryce: Have you checked the functions?

Mr MacKINNON: The Deputy Premier then said in his speech that the drafting of the legislation was aimed at a simple broad approach, giving the corporation maximum flexibility to allow it to—

Be innovative and entrepreneurial in its approach;

React quickly and positively;

Implement Government small business policy;

Provide ongoing programmes aimed at the development of small business in this State;

Adequately advise Government on matters affecting small business.

They are all matters that the Small Business Advisory Service Ltd. is doing now. Nothing more than the Small Business Advisory Service is now doing will be achieved as a consequence of this piece of legislation.

Despite that, and as the member for Narrogin has indicated, we do not intend to oppose the Bill. Obviously, if it is the same service under a different name, we would be foolish to do so. We want

to point out to the Minister the hypocrisy of his approach to this issue and of a statement to any group of businessmen when he says this is the central plank of the Government's election commitment to small business.

Mr Bryce: A first-class springboard.

Mr MacKINNON: If it is a central plank and a springboard, the person about to dive off—the Deputy Premier—will go straight into the drink because white ants have eaten through the plank and springboard.

Mr Court: I hope there is plenty of water.

Mr MacKINNON: I do not think he can swim.

Further on in his speech, the Deputy Premier said—

There is no provision for the corporation to provide finance or financial assistance to small business, as the Government believes it is not appropriate for the corporation to duplicate existing and future avenues for Government finance.

I commend the Deputy Premier and the Government for making sure the Small Business Advisory Service is not encumbered with that particular problem of providing finance or financial assistance to small business. It is something we assiduously steered away from, and any other service in Australia that has that financial assistance role wants to get out of it. I am pleased that the Government received and accepted advice that it should steer clear of involving the corporation in this area.

I hope the Deputy Premier in his response will provide me with information about clause 24 which I will raise at the appropriate time. That clause refers to the regulation prescribing power of the Bill. I ask the Deputy Premier when he responds to indicate what regulations the Government is proposing to prescribe under this piece of legislation. I cannot think of a need to prescribe regulations; the Bill seems to cover it all. If that is the case, why have such a regulatory power in the Bill, other than that it is always in such a Bill? If it is not necessary, let us not proceed with it; if it is necessary, what are the regulations with which the Government intends to proceed?

I take up the point made by the member for Narrogin in relation to sunset clauses. During the time I have been a member of this House, the Deputy Premier has been a very strong proponent of sunset clauses and sunset legislation. Yet on the first opportunity he has to introduce legislation into this House, he brings in a sunset clause that has the clouds clearly over the sun. It is not a sunset clause at all. It states—

The Minister shall carry out a review of the operation of this Act five years after the commencement of this Act and in the course of such review—

It then goes on to list the matters the Minister shall consider and have regard to. Part (2) states—

The Minister shall prepare a report based on his review of the Act and shall, as soon as practicable after the preparation thereof, cause the report to be laid before each House of Parliament.

Hooray! That is not a sunset clause as I understand a sunset clause. As the Deputy Premier knows, I am also a supporter of sunset clauses in legislation. I happen to be the architect of the sunset clause in the Industrial Lands Development Authority legislation passed in this House in 1980. I will quote briefly from the sunset clause in that legislation. If the Deputy Premier is dinkum—and he sat in this chair next to me for several years saying he was dinkum in relation to sunset clauses—I ask him to seriously consider changing the clause in this Bill so that we insert a real sunset clause and not a clouded one. The sunset provision in the Industrial Lands Development Authority Act states—

This Act shall, subject to this section, continue in operation until 31 December 1990 and no longer.

It expires at that time. The rest of the clause then goes on to say what happens at the expiration of the Bill. Obviously, the Government of the day, and it will be one of our political colour at that time, will be aware of the clause and will take some steps either to renew or to amend the legislation in line with the then current practice in the industrial lands area as far as Government activities are concerned.

I conclude by saying again that I hope the Deputy Premier will address himself seriously to that matter when we come to the Committee stage of the Bill. I hope he will address himself properly to the whole question of a sunset clause and not just fob off the matter as he is wont to do and say that the Bill contains a sunset clause when clearly it contains nothing of the sort. It is a review clause which will have no impact whatsoever other than providing for the Minister of the day to lay a report before the Parliament. I believe the Bill should contain a sunset clause in the true sense of the phrase. With those thoughts I support the legislation.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Cowan.

COMMUNICATIONS: SATELLITES

Placement: Motion

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [4.30 p.m.]: I move—

- (1) This House expresses its concern to the Commonwealth Government about the intended placement of the Australian communications satellites and resultant disadvantage to Western Australia, bearing in mind that one of the essential purposes of the satellite was to service effectively the remote areas of Australia of which a significant proportion are situated in Western Australia.
- (2) The House also expresses on behalf of the people of Western Australia a desire that commercial television programming for Western Australia which is to be transmitted via the satellite, should emanate from those sources which determine programming for regular television and radio services already provided in this State.

At the outset I would like to say that the placement of communications satellites is probably more important to Western Australians than to people in any other part of Australia. Members need only consider the size of our State, and the remoteness of much of the population to appreciate that statement. The satellite is important, from the point of view not only of Western Australia's getting the best television reception possible, but also of local programmes being beamed to the satellite to advantage the radio and television network and the people of the State.

This motion will give Government and Opposition members in this place an opportunity to indicate very clearly that we wish to benefit Western Australia to the greatest possible degree. All too frequently we see the interests of this State abandoned to the interests of the Eastern States.

We witnessed what happened recently in regard to the uranium issue—Western Australia has been cast aside. We saw what happened in relation to the sugar industry. People from the Eastern States want us to abandon a very good sugar-growing area of the Ord River which can produce more and better sugar than any other part of Australia. We now see it happening again in relation to the satellite—the Eastern States want it positioned where it will not be to the best advantage of the people of WA.

Australia as a whole depends on exports, and Western Australia contributes a great deal to our export of raw materials. I believe we contribute

approximately \$3 billion-plus to the Australian export figure for raw materials. Look at WA's contribution to agriculture. This year our agricultural production will be worth a further \$2 billion.

We have many people living in remote areas, and these people are greatly disadvantaged. Obviously they need to receive some of the advantages of placing the satellite more centrally rather than placing it on the east coast or up near Papua-New Guinea. Quite clearly the people of this State suffer from more disadvantages than do people in other parts of Australia.

Tremendous distances must be covered in this State, so the people pay a great deal more in transport costs. Other commodities which come here from the Eastern States also cost more because of the transport costs. Also, because of distance, we have great lengths of roads to build and maintain.

When the communication satellite was first mentioned, we were told that it would be placed to effectively serve the remote areas of Australia. That is not the position today. If the satellite is positioned as presently intended, it will not service most effectively the remote parts of Western Australia.

This motion gives us all the opportunity to promote Western Australia's interests as far as we possibly can. It is vital that the Commonwealth's decision should be looked at in the very near future, and the State Government and the Opposition must give a lead in this matter. We ought to try to ensure that we benefit properly from the two domestic satellites that are being launched into orbit in August 1985, and the further satellite which will be launched 18 months later. We must make representations to the Commonwealth Government as quickly as we can. Without doubt pressure will be placed on the Commonwealth Government to give the national network the bulk of the facilities available from these satellites. If this occurs, it will be to the disadvantage of Western Australia.

I am quite sure that the Premier and the Minister support us in this matter and support us also in ensuring that the people of Western Australia receive some of the benefits of the satellites. The national network is chasing the bulk of the facilities, and if it receives that, there is no doubt that the regional networks will be threatened. Also, our market independence in this State will be threatened. There will be a contraction in our radio network, and a reduction in the local content of our programmes. While it is good to receive some news and other coverage from the Eastern States, we also want to know about local

issues. These issues are of importance, not only to the work force but also to the people generally. If the national network gets its way, the viewing benefits will be lost to Western Australia, and our employment situation will suffer also.

We in Western Australia—and I speak on behalf of the Opposition and I hope supported by the Government—desire that commercial television and radio programmes which are to be transmitted by satellite should emanate from within this State, from the regular services provided in Western Australia. Why should we depend on Eastern States news, sport, and information, when the people are hungry for local news, sport, and information? I say again that what we want and want very firmly is local input. In a moment some of my shadow Ministers will contribute to the debate; they are more aware of the detailed situation in our remote areas. They will support the case I am putting forward. We must plug this issue very strongly.

Some of the advantages of a better positioning of the satellite are programmes tailored to Western Australia's needs. Too often we are aware that the Eastern States forget all about us. If television and radio are provided on a regional basis, that creates regional employment for people with a wide range of skills and talents—a situation we want to promote as much as possible. These programmes would create a stimulus for the development of talent in the entertainment and advertising areas. We need only consider the Telethon and Appealathon programmes to realise the importance of local television and radio. The fostering of such talent will be of great benefit to the State generally.

It provides direct job opportunities in support industries such as public relations, advertising agencies, film making, etc. Recently there is no doubt the Federal Government has altered the direction it took previously in connection with the ownership of the satellite, with which broadcasters use the system, with the intent and nature of the broadcasts used, and with whether paid television should be introduced. The Commonwealth has confirmed that 49 per cent of available usage will be offered to the private sector. However, at the same time, it has diminished the representation of the private sector on the Aussat board. That does not make any sense. Why reduce the number of or eliminate private members of the board while being prepared to give the private sector 49 per cent of the availability of the service.

A further disadvantage is that if this satellite is controlled totally by Telecom, the operations of communications in this country will fall under the

total control of one union. That would be bad for the country, because it would give that union power to control all communication operations. Such a situation is certainly not to the advantage of Western Australia.

Indications are that the bulk of the access to the satellite will be given to national broadcasters. We in Western Australia must fight to ensure that does not occur. If the satellite is located away from central Australia the quality and clarity of reception in this State will be reduced. People in the outback who have helped to promote this State—the pioneers who have developed it—should receive the advantages of an improved communications service. They will not obtain the maximum advantages which could flow from the satellite if the Commonwealth proceeds on the basis it is suggesting now.

I have spoken already about maintenance, employment, and the use of local talent. The Government should join with the Opposition to ensure that Western Australia is not disadvantaged further in this area. Recently tremendous disadvantages have been experienced by this State which include the pressure from the Eastern States to preclude Western Australia from developing a sugar industry in the Ord. That move was supported by the Commonwealth Government, because the major centres of population do not occur in this State. We should have a sugar industry in the Ord, because it would help to develop some of the remote regions of the State. The uranium project at Yeelirrie should be allowed to proceed. I say that sincerely. However, what happens? We have been abandoned by the Commonwealth Government in this regard. Such a project not only would provide income to the State, but also would employ a number of people. Here we see a further disadvantage to Western Australia which has been imposed on us by the populace of the Eastern States. Our case should be represented strongly to the Commonwealth Government and we are prepared to do that. We seek the assistance of the Government so that we can jointly approach the Commonwealth for the benefit of Western Australia.

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [4.43 p.m.]: I second the motion and I have great pleasure in supporting it. For many years, I have had a deep interest in satellite communication, particularly as I represent a pastoral electorate in the north of the State, and also when I was Minister for the North West for a period of two years. During that time, the initial arrangements for the establishment of a domestic satellite in Australia were made.

At the time, the then State Government set up a State satellite advisory committee which produced

a report. Representatives on that committee included people from various areas representing the remote interests of Western Australia. This was the only State which took such a step to keep abreast with these developments and to work closely with the Federal Government of the day to ensure that Western Australia obtained the maximum benefits from this new technology.

Now as shadow Minister for Regional Development and the North West, I still take a very close interest in this matter on behalf of the people in my electorate and of other people in the north of the State.

The two biggest issues in the north are communications and transport. Historically Western Australia has had a very close association with the development of new breakthroughs in the communications field. I shall provide a little historical background to this matter.

In August 1917, a famous telegraph message was sent from the post office at Halls Creek where an injured stockman had been taken. The stockman was unconscious and badly injured, but there was no doctor in the area. The people there did not know how to treat the stockman and so the postmaster telegraphed a surgeon in Perth to find out what should be done.

This is quite a famous case in which the surgeon in Perth gave instructions by morse code over the telegraph system as to what to do with the patient. The postmaster operated on the stockman who survived for two days after the operation. During that time, the surgeon boarded a boat, travelled to Derby, and made his way to Halls Creek to try to provide post-operative care to the stockman.

However, by the time the surgeon arrived at Halls Creek about five days later, the stockman was dead. That highlighted the need for better communications in the outback and it had a very profound influence on people like John Flynn who helped to develop the Royal Flying Doctor Service in this country.

In 1920, the first patient was taken by plane to a doctor and that occurred in my home town of Carnarvon. At that time, Charles Kingsford Smith, who became known as the legendary "Smithy", was operating a trucking business in Carnarvon. He flew a young girl to the nearest hospital in Geraldton and it was the first time a patient had actually been taken by plane to the doctor.

I mentioned both those cases because they illustrate the marrying of communications and aerial transport which led to the Royal Flying Doctor Service being established in Australia. As

a result of that service, doctors could be flown to sick patients. However it was necessary, firstly, to have the means to fly the doctor to the patient and, secondly, to have the doctors know where the injured patients were and that meant some form of communication had to be provided.

Mr Blaikie: I can imagine if he operated a trucking business, with the state of the roads in those days, it would be safer to fly.

Mr LAURANCE: Charles Kingsford Smith went on to become famous in the field of aviation.

In 1929, an Adelaide electrician, Alfred Traeger, was responsible for the first breakthrough in simple, cheap, and effective radio communication when he developed the pedal radio. That radio has been used right across Australia ever since and people in the outback still refer to their radios as "pedal radios" even though they do not pedal them now to provide the power. Nor do they use morse code today; they generally use single side band radios which are the modern-day equivalent of pedal radios.

The development of the pedal radio in 1929 was a tremendous breakthrough in outback communications in Australia. Fifty years have elapsed since then and we are about to see the next major, dramatic breakthrough in communications in 1985 with the establishment of this satellite.

The original decision to have a domestic satellite for Australian use was made when Tony Staley was the Federal Minister for Communications. It was a very courageous decision and I pay tribute to that Minister who is no longer in Federal politics. That decision was a watershed in the history of communications in this country. In the interim period before an Australian domestic satellite could be launched, Tony Staley arranged for Australia to use the Intelsat system to at least provide television to a number of remote areas in the outback, particularly in the north of this State. Some of the areas which today receive television via Intelsat are Useless Loop, Shark Bay, and Exmouth in my electorate and Broome, Derby, Halls Creek, Kununurra, and Wyndham further north. They all receive their ABC television service via Intelsat on which we are leasing space until such time as we have our own domestic satellite.

Fitzroy Crossing in the northern part of the Kimberley does not have that service yet, but the people there are eagerly awaiting it. I took up that matter with the Minister for Regional Development and the North West on a previous occasion and I hope he has referred it to his Federal counterpart.

I congratulate the present Federal Government also for continuing the commitment to the establishment of the Australian domestic satellite. When the Hawke Government came to power in March of this year it could have easily walked away from the commitment given by the previous Federal Government, but it decided to stick with it, for which action I congratulate the Hawke Government.

Australia certainly will not be the first country to have a domestic satellite. Canada obtained one in 1973, the US in 1975, Indonesia in 1976, India in 1982, and Japan earlier this year. Many other countries have domestic satellites on order for the next few years. Australia's satellites will be launched in 1985; one in July, and the next in October, by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration using the space shuttle Columbia. The whole project will cost something like \$420 million. In addition to the two satellites launched, one will remain on the ground as a spare—three satellites will be purchased.

I wish to bring three aspects of this matter to the attention of the Government. The first was outlined at the beginning of this debate, which is the positioning of the satellites. They will be placed 156 degrees east longitude and 164 degrees east longitude, which is approximately over Lord Howe Island off the coast of Sydney. A space 160 degrees east longitude is reserved for the third satellite to be sent up 18 months to two years later. The positioning is a point of major concern for WA.

Contracts have been let for the delivery and launching of these satellites in what is called a geostationary orbit at that longitude. Originally these satellites were to be stationed directly above Wyndham, in the north-west of WA. Ever since the decision was made to change the position, we in this State have been concerned, and have taken our concern to the Commonwealth. The scientists involved in the Commonwealth decision-making have said that the present position would give better coverage to Western Australia because of the angle, but that point has been disputed by a scientist from this State; namely, Dr Brian O'Brien, who has held a number of senior positions in this State and who was a scientist with NASA. The difficulty for WA is that there could be rain attenuation, which means that heavy rain in cyclone areas of the State such as the monsoonal area of the Kimberley could affect the signal communicated from the satellite. This matter is in dispute, and we have not been able to prove to the satisfaction of the Commonwealth that our point is valid. Nevertheless, our concern must remain.

What we underline in this motion is the point that the State Government needs to maintain liaison with the Federal Government in order to ensure our interests are protected. We do not want to be locked into a situation where the satellite is over the east of Australia and cannot properly serve Western Australia.

We could be disadvantaged in two ways. One is that we would not receive a perfect signal. It may be intermittent, and it would not be an effective means of communication. Western Australia may need to have larger earth stations to receive the satellite communication. If that were so, Western Australians would be put to greater expense than other Australians in the provision of the receiving dish or earth station. I believe this motion highlights that concern. It requests the Government to make sure it liaises with scientists involved with this programme and with the Federal Government to ensure that this State is not disadvantaged.

The next aspect to which I refer is the capacity of the satellites and the use to which they will be put. On each satellite there will be 15 transponders. There will be four high-powered transponders each with a signal strength of 30 watts and there will be 11 low-powered transponders each with a signal strength of 12 watts. On each satellite one beam will be capable of national coverage and four spot beams will be capable of covering various Australian regions. One of the spot beams will cover Western Australia.

The term used is that WA will have its own footprint, which is important from the aspect of the second part of the motion, which asks from where the programmes will originate. It is important that programming for the footprint for WA will originate in this State. As the Leader of the Opposition said, it is important that our commercial radio and television stations have the capacity to provide programmes to go onto that footprint so that the content of the programmes for Western Australians will have originated from here, instead of being networked from the Eastern States. This question is of major concern and is one requiring a Federal Government decision.

I know that the Federal Department of Communications is discussing with the Federal Minister for Communications at this very time what should be done. The decision will affect Western Australia greatly. We need to be assured that we will not have a major national network of programmes enabling the Eastern States media moguls to determine the programmes to be watched in Western Australia.

However, it is important also that we have the opportunity to have a national link-up. As an example, I refer to the America's Cup celebrations of last Sunday week. They were taken up by the major commercial television stations around Australia. Other events will be appropriate for a national hook-up, and therefore it will be possible for the satellite to be used. Admittedly that is only for extraordinary occasions, and generally speaking the need will be for us to provide in this State our own programmes. This can be done, but it depends upon the decisions made at the Federal level. The Western Australian Government needs to be aware of the situation, and needs to work fairly closely with its Federal counterpart. It would do well to accept the offer made by the Leader of the Opposition that we work together on this project in the best interests of the people of Western Australia.

While talking about the capacity of the station, I must refer to who will use that capacity. The ABC will control one of the main beams, which will enable a single television programme and two radio programmes to be beamed to every part of Australia. This will include some 300 000 people who have not had adequate television or radio service to this time. It is believed that it will not be possible for those people to be able to be covered by the normal terrestrial system at any time in the future.

The next major user will be Telecom to enable it to provide STD and ISD dialling to every place in Australia, including places not already covered by the terrestrial system. The third important user group will be outback people under the homestead and community broadcasting system, which has a high priority in Western Australia because it enables distance education people to provide education services to all outback areas such as small communities, mining camps, station homesteads, and so on where children require correspondence education.

This will be a tremendous breakthrough in their education and communication. The HACBS scheme has a very high priority for Western Australia, which has the largest outback area of all the States in the nation. Other users will be mining companies, police emergency services, the defence forces, surveillance groups, and the aviation services of this country. These services will all have a very big use for the domestic satellite.

Something that will be of great benefit to the nation as a whole and particularly to the outback people will be the modern technology which will be used in making the satellite available when it is in operation.

While on the capacity of the satellite, I would like to refer to the ground units or the earth stations. The earth stations for small users—the outback stations—will consist of a small dish. The stronger the signal, the smaller the dish which will be required.

Scientists do not know how big or small that dish will be required to be in various parts of Australia. It is interesting that the Commonwealth Department of Communications is currently involved in exercises throughout the nation in three experimental sites. One is outside Port Hedland, another in Alice Springs, and the third at Innisfail, Queensland. In each of these centres, a range of dishes has been set up and a tower has been established to simulate the signal that will be received from the satellite. Information obtained from these experiments will be used to decide what sized dish will be required in all sorts of weather conditions—heavy rain, dust, dryness, and so on. By the time the domestic satellite flies in 1985, information will be available as to what type of dish is required in every part of Australia. This will make a big difference to the people in the outback because the bigger the dish, the greater will be the cost. It will be more difficult to transport the equipment to outback regions and to anchor it to the ground in cyclone-prone areas.

This Government needs to be involved in the decision-making process because the cost will be of prime importance to people in the outback.

Another area to which I will refer concerns the offset programmes. This is a field of high technology, and because a substantial project is to be undertaken, companies from overseas are involved. Generally, arrangements are entered into and offset programmes are given to Australian companies and, therefore, technology will be made available to our nation and hopefully to our State. I believe that this is an area in which the State Government should be active.

The contract for the satellite has already been let to Hughes Communication International Incorporated of the United States. The Australian content has been specified already and two contracts have been let by Hughes Communications International to two Australian companies. Unfortunately, both of these companies are based in the Eastern States, but nevertheless the programme has commenced.

At present, 10 scientists from Aussat are in the United States working with the Hughes company, which has sent one of its executives to Western Australia to look at high technology companies to ascertain whether they can provide any of the components required. It is interesting

to note that the contracts are expected to create in excess of 1 000 jobs throughout Australia. New technology, high technology, and the creation of jobs will be the result of the satellite programme. I am sure that the Deputy Premier will be interested in this programme because of his ministerial portfolio. He should be liaising with his colleague, the Minister for Regional Development and the North West, to ensure that any benefits that can be gained from that high technology area in Western Australia flow through to this State.

The Hughes company is committed to \$50 million of offsets in Australia and most of that work will go to Eastern States companies. The Hughes representative indicated to me that this is a high technology area and the State Government should be doing all in its power to attract to Western Australia as much of that high technology as it can.

While referring to the ground side of the business, I point out that there will be eight capital city earth stations around Australia, two of which will be major stations. One will be based at Sydney and the other will be based outside Perth in the suburb of Lockridge. These stations are called TTC and M stations. Therefore, Perth will have two of the major earth stations out of the eight to be constructed. The earth station at Lockridge is presently under construction and it is estimated that it will be completed in April 1984 at a cost of approximately \$18 million. It is a major project and it is associated with the satellite programme which has already been undertaken in Western Australia.

The message for the State Government is that this development means a great opportunity for this State, not only in services provided, but also in the technology to provide that programme. The State Government should be heavily involved in the decision-making as to who will provide the services in Western Australia, where the satellite will be positioned, who will do the work, and how many jobs will be created in the high technology area.

A further question for the Government to consider is one of ownership of the satellite. The previous Federal Government set up a small independent company called Aussat Pty. Ltd. It was arranged that 49 per cent of the company would be held in private hands and that the company would remain a small and independent organisation. In this country the greatest opponent of the satellite concept has been the ATEA—the Telecom union—which wants to own and control the satellite, and the people in remote areas are suspicious of the union's having that ambition.

Remote area organisations and interests met some months ago in Alice Springs for a satellite conference. I was fortunate enough to be able to represent the Western Australian Opposition at that conference and it was evident that remote area interests right across this country will oppose the satellite's being owned by Telecom. There is good reason for this.

The Telecom union originally vigorously opposed the proposition of a satellite, but then said that if there was to be a satellite, it wanted Telecom to own and control it. Members can see the reason for the concern of the people in the outback about an organisation which vehemently opposed the introduction of a satellite and then wanted to control it. The worry is that if Telecom owns and manages the terrestrial communications system and owns the satellite system, it will dictate which system it uses rather than put the satellite to its maximum use. The other problem raised concerned the fact that Telecom has 80 000 employees while, on the other hand, Aussat does not intend to ever have more than about 200 employees. Therefore, we have one small independent organisation which will be totally committed to the development of satellite technology in this country. It is, therefore, likely to do a better job. I am not criticising the ability of Telecom, but the philosophy of the concept. Aussat is more dedicated to this project than an organisation that has 80 000 employees. That is the concern of remote area interests.

The final point is the one referred to by the Leader of the Opposition. People are concerned about industrial disruption. At the Alice Springs conference, the Federal secretary was pressed to put his case, and although the ATEA is not a union known for industrial trouble, there is still concern that industrial disruption can affect Telecom and its operations much more than it can affect a smaller organisation. This concern was expressed by the Isolated Children's Parents Association and other outback organisations. It is an important matter in which the Western Australian Government should take an interest, to ensure that the outcome is in the best interests of the people of Western Australia.

This is an important motion before the Parliament. The satellite will have a tremendous impact on our lives. It is an area in regard to which the Government has a number of important obligations. The Opposition has taken a very close interest in this matter in the past when in Government and it continues to take a close interest in it on behalf of the people in the north of the State. The Opposition has offered to go hand in hand with the State Government to the Federal

Government on this important issue to ensure that this State gets the best possible deal. How this Government meets this obligation will determine whether the full benefits of the satellite system will be enjoyed by the people in this State.

I trust that the Government will support the motion of the Opposition and that it will work with the Opposition to ensure that decisions taken are in the best interests of the people of Western Australia.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch) [5.12 p.m.]: I support the motion by the Leader of the Opposition and with my colleague, the member for Gascoyne, I hope the Government will join with us in support of the motion.

Mr Blaikie: At least they should have replied by now.

Mr MacKINNON: I do not mind when they reply so long as the reply is a positive one. The motion has been deliberately framed in two parts. Firstly, it expresses our concern about the intended placement of the two satellites, which will in due course be three satellites, over eastern Australia; and, secondly, it expresses our concern about the likely control of commercial television programming from eastern Australia rather than from Western Australia.

I wish to recap on the history concerning the location of the satellite which relates to the first point expressed in the motion. Early in 1980, as the member for Gascoyne indicated, when the location of the satellite was first announced, we took an interest as a State, bearing in mind our concern for people in remote areas. At that time, the Federal Government announced that the satellite would be located above the equator, as all such satellites are, at 128 degrees east. The satellite was to be 36 000 kilometres above a point located near Wyndham along that latitude. In this case, as in the cases of Canada, the United States, and most other countries, the communication satellite would be at a central location. In our view, it was the best position for the satellite to be located. However, in May of that year, there was a change of heart—and there could be many reasons for the change of heart—and the location of the satellite was shifted along the equator further east to a point located at 164 degrees east. That is a point off the coast of eastern Australia. Naturally, a committee which had been appointed by the member for Gascoyne investigated this relocation as we were most concerned at the change in attitude. Through that advisory committee, we subsequently raised strenuous objections to the relocation. It was our view that the relocation of the satellite would cause a drop-off in the quality of the signals.

Firstly, the signals would have further to travel and, secondly, they would be coming in on a greater angle to the recipients. As the member for Gascoyne indicated, the most vocal opponent to that relocation was Dr Brian O'Brien, who was of the view, and voiced his concern through the committee, that because of the location of the satellite, its quality, due to attenuation problems, would be much poorer. As a result, people in the remoter areas, particularly in Western Australia as opposed to eastern Australia, would not be serviced as well as they should be from the satellite. Through this committee, we put our viewpoint strongly to the Federal authorities, but they, and particularly the Telecom authorities, rejected those approaches. In fact, so strong were the rebuttals that we felt all hope was lost and that perhaps they were right and Dr O'Brien was wrong.

In late 1981, Telecom published a report which indicated an admission that Dr O'Brien was right all the time and Telecom was wrong. In fact, the relocation of the satellite to the position of 164 degrees east from 128 degrees east would cause a lessening in the quality of the signal received. This would occur particularly in times of cyclonic conditions when there was much rain. In these circumstances, people in those areas could be blacked out from a communication point of view. This was the fear we had always had. We again expressed our concern to the Federal Government, but, unfortunately, it refused to change its decision.

The fact now remains that the people in the northern areas of Western Australia will be disadvantaged by the location of these two communication satellites, and in due course the number will be three satellites. Before members opposite remind me, I indicate that I am well aware that it was a Government of our political complexion in Canberra at the time. It pains me to have to say that it did not see the logic of our approach at that time and decided to locate those satellites in what we believe is the wrong position.

This is once again an example of the dominating influences of eastern Australia winning out. We on this side of the House are most concerned regarding the location and, more importantly, we are concerned because this is an area where the Government, by taking positive action, could have some influence in the programming of commercial television in this State.

We seriously call on the Government to take account of this motion, to support it, and, more importantly, to actively take up the cudgels with the Federal Government.

The satellites comprise 15 transponders, transmitters, or relayers—whatever one might

call them. Four are high-powered transponders and 11 are low-powered transponders. Four of the high-powered transponders, the ones about which we are most concerned, are to be used on television stations. On the first satellite, they have been allocated to the ABC and the signal will be transmitted to Western Australia in a spot beam. Therefore, the people in the remoter areas of Western Australia will be able to pick up the high quality signal because of the definition of its transmission.

The commercial television signal is the one about which we are most concerned. An article appeared in *The Australian Financial Review* on 20 October, which was about the time that we put this motion on the Notice Paper, and that article gives an idea of what led us to have grave concern about what might happen in this area. The article is headed "Caucus opposed to other vital features of domestic satellite". In the article, the subcommittee referred to is a Caucus subcommittee, and the article reads as follows—

As the subcommittee's recommendations stood late yesterday, they were understood to urge that the high-powered transponders on the satellite be allocated to Australia's three big metropolitan TV networks for a form of national networking.

If Cabinet adopts this approach, it will spark a massive backlash from regional television stations.

We say that would lead to a massive protest from the people of Western Australia, and we hope that protest would be led by the Government.

The alternative to the national transmission referred to in that article has not been addressed properly by the Federal Caucus subcommittee. During my time as the Minister for the North West, in conjunction with local commercial television interests we put together a proposal to the Federal Minister, Neil Brown, on behalf of the local companies. We asked him to give serious consideration to our proposal.

We were close to the point of receiving Federal approval for the submission, but unfortunately the Prime Minister called an early election, and we know the consequences of that. The question was put in the melting pot, and we find in October, 10 months to the day after I spoke to Neil Brown, that the decision still has not been made. We were told at the time that the decision was urgent, yet I have been told that the decision is still imminent.

I turn now to the establishment of the consortium. Channels 7 and 9, the two major commercial channels, agreed to co-operate to obtain access to one of the major transponders for the pur-

pose of transmitting their commercial message to the outback areas of Western Australia. They also agreed, in discussions with the regional television stations, that they would co-operate with them in transmitting messages to them and through them so that the regional stations, which had existing licences, either could record those programmes and retransmit them at a later date, or take out what is called an alternative licence—a second licence—and transmit the message automatically through their second channels in their own areas. That proposal would have overcome significant difficulties.

Firstly, the message would have emanated from Western Australia. Western Australians would be receiving their own message in their own time frame. That is important when we bear in mind that we have daylight saving this year, but last year we did not and, as a consequence, people in northern Australia would have received the 7 o'clock news at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I would hardly call that an acceptable service for the people in country areas.

As I indicated earlier, the regional stations which held licences would be protected. The Government has a responsibility to these stations which have made a large investment, in many cases, on the basis of a licence.

Of course, the costs involved for the individual people in these areas will be significantly less if we use what I would call the Western Australian Channel 7-9 regional concept, as opposed to the major national network concept. It would appear from the article in *The Australian Financial Review* that the Federal Government is about to reject that concept. We call upon the Federal Government to seriously reconsider making that final recommendation. We call on the Minister in this Parliament responsible for these matters to transmit our concern to the Federal Government about the implications of that decision.

Our concern, firstly, is for the impact on regional stations. Organisations like the Golden West Network in Bunbury may go completely out of business as a consequence of this decision. In areas in which licences have been issued—in the goldfields, for example, which is represented by the Minister responsible for this matter—the stations could go out of business as a consequence of this decision. From a personal point of view, the Minister should have a vital interest in this matter. If the organisations are put out of business, that situation will result in a devastating impact on the employment in those areas; and, of course, the community interest that is generated as a consequence of the existence of the local

stations would be lost. For that reason, the Government should be voicing its concern.

The second and perhaps the most important reason has been touched on already by my colleague, the member for Gascoyne. That relates to the cost of the reception of the signal. I am advised—and I discussed this as the Minister with Dr Brian O'Brien—it is a matter of significant concern. We understand that the cost of the receiver dish to receive the signal from the first satellite which will transmit the ABC message will be approximately \$1 000. That is not a high cost when one considers the remote nature of the areas involved. It is not a high cost to ensure constant contact with a high quality signal. That will ensure that the people receive high quality television messages.

What is of concern to the Opposition parties is the implication of the decision to allocate, in the words of *The Australian Financial Review*, to Australia's three big metropolitan TV networks the other three major transponders. It is our advice that, as a consequence of that decision, because the beam will be transmitted nationally and not just to Western Australia, the receivers will have to be approximately three metres across, as opposed to the one metre dishes, with the result that the reception cost is estimated to be \$6 000, as opposed to \$1 000. That is a significant price difference for an individual to pay. Even when one is considering communications in an isolated area, it is a significant cost. It must be borne in mind by the Federal Caucus subcommittee of the ALP and the Federal Government when they make the decision.

Mr Grill: How does the cost come about?

Mr MacKINNON: The first satellite will carry the ABC message, which will be transmitted on spot beams around Australia so that we will have a spot beam into Western Australia from the satellite. That will be a high quality signal. However, I am advised that the national communications message from the three interstate channels will be a national beam coming down once. Therefore, it will be one-third as strong, and people will need a receiver three times as powerful to pick up the message. Therefore, instead of the dish needing to be one metre in diameter, it will need to be three metres in diameter, and a greater cost will be involved. It will be an estimated cost of \$6 000 as against \$1 000, which was the cost at the time we were involved in discussions. I see no reason that the cost should have changed markedly since then. For that reason, we are concerned for the interests of the people in the remote regional areas.

Another concern in relation to the service emanating from the Eastern States is the time factor. The Government has been most concerned about the impact of cigarette advertising on young people in the community; but our concern is that children in remote areas of northern Australia, if they are to pick up the national beam, will be watching adult-rated programmes at 7 o'clock at night. When it is 7 o'clock in the old summer time in Western Australia it is 10 o'clock in eastern time. Therefore, the 10 o'clock transmission from Eastern Australia reaches here at 7 o'clock. Obviously, our young people should not be exposed to that sort of programming as a consequence of the time difference. As I indicated earlier, the Eastern States news will suffer from the same problem.

Leave to Continue Speech

Bearing in mind the time, I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of today's sitting.

Leave granted.

Debate thus adjourned.

[Continued on page 4282.]

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.01 to 7.15 p.m.

STATUTORY MARKETING AUTHORITIES

Accountability: Grievance

MR COWAN (Merredin) [7.15 p.m.]: At the outset, I indicate we have watched carefully the number of grievances taken this session. While we understand the operation of Standing Orders, we make it clear that we have a right to claim a place on the grievance list.

My grievance is directed at one of two Ministers and I will leave it to them to decide who should respond—the Premier or the Minister for Agriculture who has some responsibility for the Grain Pool of WA. The Premier made a statement to the Press in relation to the Grain Pool on 25 October in which he made it clear that the Government was giving consideration to making statutory marketing authorities more accountable to the Government and to primary producers. I question why it is that the Government should take such action. I question also the competence and authority of the Auditor General, who is the person who prompted that particular statement by the Premier. I question what qualifications he has to make recommendations in relation to the

Government's becoming more involved in independent statutory authorities.

As everybody knows, the Auditor General is an accountant; his responsibility under the Audit Act is to examine those accounts which this Parliament, through legislation, has determined should be audited by him. The Auditor General has no qualifications to enable him to interpret the law and yet, in the case of the Grain Pool of WA, he has made an interpretation that that body has not complied with Government policy in its activities.

Mr Bertram: Was his interpretation correct?

Mr COWAN: If the member can define Government policy I will be able to tell him that.

The Auditor General has no qualifications to determine whether independent statutory authorities should comply with Government policy. His responsibility is to act as Auditor General and to examine the accounts presented to him by those statutory authorities and determine whether they are up to scratch. I understand the Auditor General did say to the Grain Pool that its accounts and books were in order. He omitted to say that he had written to the Premier of the day and expressed some reservations about the activities of that statutory authority.

I submit to members of the Government that the Auditor General had no authority to do so. He is certainly not qualified to do anything other than to practise as Auditor General. He is not, for arguments sake, a member of the Crown Law Department, and he is not expected to give an interpretation of the law.

If one looks at the Act under which the Grain Pool operates it is clear that section 35 gives power for the auditing of accounts and the Grain Pool, in compliance with the Act, has submitted its accounts to the Auditor General. He has commented on them and I understand he has stated in writing that the accounts were in order. At the same time, without consulting the Grain Pool or having the courtesy to advise that body, he has written to the Premier expressing some reservation about a matter on which he is not authorised to act under a section of the Audit Act or under section 35 of the Act relating to the Grain Pool.

Part (2) of the Grain Marketing Act clearly establishes the powers of the board. The directors of the board have responsibility and are accountable for their actions.

They are accountable to growers and are clearly elected by popular vote from within specified zones of grain producing areas of Western Australia. Two of the directors are appointees of the Minister, but seven are direct representatives

of growers. If growers have any criticism of the board's activities in relation to salaries and allowances it is their responsibility to be critical of the board and to take action, if they want to, to get rid of those particular directors at a board election.

The Grain Marketing Act contains a section which provides that subject to the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1912 the board is responsible for determining what salaries and allowances are to be paid to the employees and officers of the Grain Pool. It is not the responsibility of Government and it is not the responsibility of the Auditor General. For that reason, I would like some response from the Government to explain where it sees its responsibilities.

It appears clear to me that this event was given publicity to make certain that the proposals for the Public Accounts Committee to widen its franchise have some justification. We all know who asked the question about this issue which made it public. We all know that last week a conference of members of Public Accounts Committees from all States of Australia was held in Western Australia, and in his concluding remarks, the Western Australian Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee made it very clear that he would be seeking to have the franchise of that committee broadened and brought under statutory powers, rather than under the powers conferred upon it by the Standing Orders. Under the powers of the Standing Orders, the Public Accounts Committee can investigate only those issues which are funded from the public account. It certainly has no power to investigate a body which does not receive any money from the Government, and which has the power to operate independently and to make decisions in a very competitive commercial marketplace.

This Government is claiming that it needs to place those independent statutory authorities under the scrutiny of Government. I have never known a Government contribution which has added to the capacity of any independent statutory authority, particularly for the marketing of agricultural produce. It has never added to an authority's expertise or assisted it. If the Government pursued this issue, either through legislation to have direct Government involvement or by way of giving to the Public Accounts Committee expanded powers by Statute, I expect it would meet with a great deal of resistance from those people who use the grain pool when they deliver grains for their harvest.

I refer also to Government assistance that may perhaps be issued to the Grain Pool. All the Government does is issue a guarantee for moneys.

There is no other Government involvement in the Grain Pool. Certainly this Parliament, by its power to legislate, has established the Grain Pool through the Grain Marketing Act, but the Government has no involvement, other than the Treasury giving guarantees each year. It has never had those guarantees exercised, and I suggest to the Minister for Agriculture that if this Government wants to maintain popularity in the country areas, if it ever had any, it will keep its hands off Western Australian independent statutory marketing authorities.

MR EVANS (Warren—Minister for Agriculture) [7.26 p.m.]: In responding to the member for Merredin, at the outset I refute one of his later remarks when he said he was unaware of assistance given by the Government to any marketing board or authority.

Mr Cowan: I said the Grain Pool.

Mr EVANS: In connection with this, I remind the member that Cabinet only recently made up a deficit of \$190 000 in relation to the trade division of Robb Jetty meat division.

Mr Cowan: I was talking about the Grain Pool.

Mr EVANS: The member said "the board" in a generalised way. The implication was that there had been a failure to appreciate marketing prospects and problems of rural industry. If the member looks at the track record of who set up most of these marketing authorities, he will find there are not many from the other side of the House.

Several members interjected.

Mr EVANS: Let us get the record straight. The member leapt at it when it came to the arrangement for wheat and wool and the floor price there, not to mention sundry others. It was the initiative of Labor Governments which achieved these things. Let us get things into perspective for a start.

I am unaware of a letter forwarded to the Premier. He has not forwarded such a letter to me and has not had the opportunity to discuss it if it were so. I am, therefore, unable to make any comment on that point.

I would point out there is involvement of Government, and a very large involvement, when it comes to underwriting the finances of the Grain Pool. Of course, this is something which goes back through the R & I Bank and requires Treasury approval to ensure that the funding of the Grain Pool is set in place as the harvest commences. To say that the Government has no direct responsibility is not quite right; it has a major one.

Perhaps the member for Merredin might care to refer to what transpired in Queensland not long ago, which may cause him to have a closer regard.

Mr Peter Jones: What is the basis of the Government's support for the first advance? The guarantee for that is total recourse to growers.

Mr EVANS: Of course, the underwriting to enable that finance to be produced comes from the Government and it is underwritten by the Government. It was total recourse in Queensland too, but it did not do quite so well. I refer to a Press release issued by the Premier, the first paragraph of which reads—

The State Government is giving urgent consideration to ways of making statutory marketing authorities more accountable to the Government and primary producers.

We agree that the Grain Marketing Act establishes the powers and establishes responsibility to growers, but to say that the Government and the Auditor General are not involved in such a matter is not quite telling the full story. That is the point to be made.

I am not quite sure of the terms of the Act under which the Auditor General operates or the powers or responsibilities he must necessarily assume, but I am aware of his comments and this was basic to the matter raised by the member for Merredin.

Mr Cowan: Before you start, will you just make sure you read the lot so that it cannot be taken out of context?

Mr EVANS: The Auditor General's comment reads as follows—

The Grain Marketing Act 1975 provides that the Grain Pool is not an agent or servant of the Crown and empowers it to administer the Act. The Board of Directors considers it is not bound by Government policies—

The member for Merredin appeared to make a very strong point there that the Auditor General was insisting that the Grain Pool carried out Government policies.

Mr Cowan: Are you saying it should?

Mr EVANS: The quote continues—

The Board of Directors considers it is not bound by government policies in relation to appointment of staff and conditions of service, travel arrangements and motor vehicles which are required to be observed by government departments and other statutory authorities. Given the provisions of the Act, proper authorisation of expenditure is obtained by Board approval. However, compliance also means acting in accord with

Government policies if it is intended that they should apply. Departures from policy have been noted on interstate and overseas travel and conditions of service for staff appointments. Without the assistance of guidelines it is difficult for me to determine what expenditures constitute a fair and reasonable charge to the various producer pools. Two further instances of expenditure were also noted for which, although properly authorised, I have reservations as to the propriety of the charge against Board funds.

- (a) An amount of \$17 139 paid from the Grain Pool Reserve Fund in respect of a trip for a retiring employee of a London based company and his wife in recognition of services provided in past years.
- (b) A lump sum gratuity consisting of six months pay and the waiver of the outstanding balance of \$15 999 for a housing loan, in addition to the normal annual leave and long service leave entitlements, for the General Manager on retirement prior to attaining age 60 years.

That is what transpired, and that is what motivated the Press release by the Premier. It motivated also the grievance here tonight by the member for Merredin.

It is not very easy for the shareholder members, the producers, to have ready access to ways of rectifying any defaults. They may never even get to know about a default, and for that reason the Auditor General has a valid role to play when a matter needs consideration. When the Auditor General makes such a comment, it would be irresponsible of a Government not to follow it up. The Premier's action on that occasion was most appropriate and fitting.

TOWN PLANNING

Cottesloe: Grievance

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [7.34 p.m.]: My grievance relates to a matter of policy in the planning area, and, of course, my remarks are directed to the Minister for Planning. The issue which I raise goes back very directly to the Minister's decision in relation to the Cottesloe hotel site redevelopment, but more particularly to the general issues arising from that.

It will be recalled that at the time of the election there remained outstanding an appeal related to a refusal of development approval by the Town of Cottesloe for the redevelopment of the Cottesloe hotel site. I want to make it clear that I

am not entering this grievance debate to discuss the issue directly of the Cottesloe hotel site, because for good or bad—and many people say for bad—the Minister has made his decision about the Cottesloe hotel site. I concede that the decision he had to make on that appeal was a difficult one. He made the decision and it has been criticised. It is beyond recall at this stage as a matter of law. In fairness to the man who took and won the appeal, he is entitled at this stage to take the benefit of the success of that appeal.

That was only the beginning of the matter; it is the subsequent and general issues I want to canvass in this grievance debate.

The Minister was approached subsequently by the Town of Cottesloe, which sought to amend its town planning scheme to put into legal effect what the Minister had said in the Cottesloe hotel site decision; namely, that it would not be a precedent and that it would not operate to allow further redevelopments of that nature in the area. So the Town of Cottesloe, not illogically, wanted to amend its town planning scheme to eliminate the possibility of such redevelopment proposals being put forward in the future and being allowed on appeal. Basically and simply, what the Town of Cottesloe wanted to do was to impose a height limitation. The Minister refused the request of the Town of Cottesloe. That was reported in the local newspaper, the *Mosman-Cottesloe Post* on 30 August, and I quote—

The Minister for Planning, Mr Parker, has denied a request by the Cottesloe Council to impose a height limit on the waterfront development area.

Mr Parker rejected the request on the advice of the Town Planning Board.

The application was made following Mr Parker's approval for the proposed 12-storey Cottesloe Hotel redevelopment.

The article goes on to quote the Minister and to refer to the new scheme to be admitted. It says—

The council was seeking a limit of the order of three storeys over that section of Marine Parade and surrounding street zoned Foreshore Development.

The minister said that the idea of restricting developments would be contrary to the intent of the Foreshore Development Zone.

"It is improper to set a three storey height restriction in isolation to the overall town planning scheme for Cottesloe.

"It would eliminate the incentive and inducement to developers to produce develop-

ment concepts which would upgrade and improve the area.

The position was made clear by the Minister. He allowed the appeal. That is finished; it is done. The decision was criticised—it is not popular in the area. The decision was made lawfully, and it cannot now be challenged or changed. I emphasise that I do not want the Minister to reply to me and to start talking about that decision because that is not the issue I raise. I am simply giving the background.

Mr Parker: I will talk about what I want to.

Mr HASSELL: Except that I am trying to define the issue. I am not trying to tell the Minister what to talk about. The issue is no longer the issue of the Cottesloe hotel site because, as the Minister knows, that decision cannot be changed. The Minister has told the protesters and the town council that he cannot change the decision even if he wanted to. That is the law, as I understand it. The point is that the Town of Cottesloe very legitimately said, "We had a scheme which permitted that kind of development and we rejected an application. The Minister allowed the appeal, and therefore the development will go ahead. Now let us look at the future; let us put in a provision that says we cannot have that type of development in the future because we will put in a height limitation".

Whether one agrees with height and development limitations or the restriction of town planning is beside the point. The town council was seeking to go about what it perceived to be the proper protection of the Cottesloe area in the future by amending the town planning scheme to impose a height limitation. The Minister said, as I have already quoted, that it was improper to set a three-storey height limitation in isolation to the overall town planning scheme for Cottesloe. "Improper" was the word used by the Minister.

However, that became a very dramatically unmoderated statement a few weeks later when the Minister moved the focus of his attention to a different area—not in my electorate but in the Scarborough electorate—where the Stirling City Council proposed to allow a beachfront development of quite a number of storeys.

The Minister did not think that was a good idea so we then had a dramatic headline in the *Daily News* of 25 October 1983.

Mr Parker: You are not blaming me for the headline, are you?

Mr HASSELL: The headline reads, "Government steps in on beach high rise". The article commences—

The WA Government will override Stirling City Council and impose a height limit on future beach front developments at Scarborough—partly because of ratepayer pressure

Of course the ratepayer pressure at Scarborough was no different from the ratepayer pressure at Cottesloe, but it had a dramatically different effect on the Minister. The article continues—

It will insert in Stirling's proposed town plan a clause limiting to 12 metres—about four storeys high—beachfront developments in the eight-hectare zone.

Now the City of Stirling has a zone related to beachfront development exactly as does the Town of Cottesloe and yet, in the case of Cottesloe, the Minister says, "You cannot consider that zone in isolation". In the case of the City of Stirling, not only is he saying that it can be considered in isolation, but also he insists that it be considered in isolation. The report continues—

The Minister for Planning, Mr Parker, said today the 12-metre height limit in the 8ha special beach development zone at Scarborough also would provide an exclusion for taller buildings if there were exceptional reasons.

Mr Parker said today he had decided to insert a height limit at Scarborough after an approach from ratepayers and despite Stirling Council's disapproval.

The one consistent thing in the Minister's attitude to these matters is his disregard for the views of the local authorities concerned. In the one case he will not allow the council to have a height limitation when it wants one, and in the other case he forces the council to have a height limitation when it does not want it. In one case he says, "You cannot have a height limitation in respect of an isolated beachfront area", and in the other case he says, "You must have a height limitation in respect of an isolated beachfront area". In one case he has no regard whatsoever for the views of ratepayers expressed to him, and in the other case he is responding to the views of ratepayers.

Surely there must be something completely unexplained which motivates the Minister. I submit to the House that the Minister has been totally and monumentally inconsistent in dealing with these two problems. Any type of technical explanation that can be dreamed up will not alter the fact that in one case he has done one thing and in the other case he has treated the ratepayers and the local authorities with contempt and set their views aside simply to carry out what he perceived to be the right course of action. There is a whole

area of argument about the control a Minister should have over local authorities, but at least if he has a policy he should be consistent.

Mr Court: What does Fremantle have—15 storeys, isn't it?

Mr HASSELL: Yes, it has gone up today.

Mr Court: The mayor said there would be no high rise in Fremantle and on the television tonight he said there would be 15 storeys.

MR PARKER (Fremantle—Minister for Planning) [7.45 p.m.]: In reply to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I do not want to talk about the decision I made in regard to the Cottesloe Hotel to any great extent, because I expect we want to move on from that question, except in this respect: It has become abundantly clear from the statements of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition both in the Press and in the House that he does not understand the dual role of the Minister in charge of the Town Planning and Development Act in this State.

Mr Hassell: Did you say "dual" or "duplicious"?

Mr PARKER: I said "dual". The Minister has two completely different roles in that area. The first is what could be described as a quasi-judicial role and the Minister in this State is the only Minister in Australia who has that role; that is, the vast bulk of appeals against planning decisions by the various levels of planning authorities—that is local authorities, the MRPA, and the Town Planning Board—are taken to the Minister rather than to some quasi-judicial body. In that light, the Minister, whoever he or she may be, must adopt a quasi-judicial role and make decisions based on the current zoning of the land in question and other planning considerations which are relevant to decisions of that type. The Minister must not determine matters on the basis of policy, other considerations, or, indeed, on the views of the people involved, even if they represent the views of 100 per cent of the ratepayers. It is simply a decision which needs to be made based on the legal position.

Only recently in this House I heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition say that he took the view that a landowner as a matter of right should be able to develop his land up to the maximum amount allowed in the zoning for the land without his having to go through the planning process or without believing he might be stopped for doing that.

Mr Hassell: Yes, but the rules had to be laid down and you are talking about discretion now.

Mr PARKER: There are two separate roles. The first is the quasi-judicial role and the second is the decision-making role and that is envisaged by the Town Planning and Development Act.

Subsequent to my appeal decision on the Cottesloe Hotel site, the Cottesloe Town Council at its next council meeting rushed through a proposal to amend its scheme which was out of date and in need of review anyway. The amendment related to the establishment of an arbitrary height limit of three storeys in its special beach development zone. It was not a well-thought-out amendment. I think the Cottesloe Town Council would recognise it was simply a response to some ratepayers who were concerned about the decision I had made.

The advice of the Town Planning Board which I accepted—I am perfectly happy to provide the Deputy Leader of the Opposition with a copy of the full letter sent to the Cottesloe Town Council and the recommendations made to me by the Town Planning Board on the matter should he so desire—was that the scheme was out of date and it was too difficult simply to insert, in an out-of-date scheme which did not envisage tight controls or limitations of any sort, without a generalised review of the whole concept of the beach development zone and the way in which the Cottesloe scheme was structured, any sort of height limitation either there or anywhere else in Cottesloe as a result of the very flimsy recommendations made by the Town of Cottesloe.

That point was made very clear to me and it was also made abundantly clear to the Town of Cottesloe in the letter sent to it. Perhaps I should say I think that is the case, because I do not actually send out the letters of advice; they are sent by the board. However, my instructions were that it should be made clear to the council in the letter that I would consider favourably in the course of its general review of the scheme some attempt to impose a form of limitation or advisory limitation with respect to height on the Cottesloe beachfront. I indicated that if the council were to review its scheme in that way and request as part of the review such a limit or advisory limit, I would certainly be disposed towards giving that favourable consideration in some form or other.

I understand that the Cottesloe Town Council has advised my department it is in the process of reviewing its scheme and it expects the preliminary stages of the review to be undertaken early next year. In the course of that review and in the course of the board's consideration and my consideration of that review no doubt there will be an opportunity to consider some of the points which

the Deputy Leader of the Opposition raised and the points raised in the Stirling case.

Mr Hassell: Were your amendments in that case well thought out?

Mr PARKER: This is where the Deputy Leader of the Opposition again fails to understand the situation, because in the Stirling case we have a situation where the City of Stirling town planning scheme No. 2 has been under review for several years—from memory I believe the review began in 1977 or 1978. It has been proceeding for a very long period. In the context of that review substantial consideration has been given to height limitations or advisory height limitations in the overall structure of the scheme. In making my determination in relation to the City of Stirling town planning scheme No. 2, I was in a position to say, "This is my determination in relation to what will be your planning scheme which will operate in your municipality, given amendments and so on, for the next five years at least and it provides an opportunity, in the course of that review and the new scheme coming into operation, to insert into the scheme the sorts of concerns expressed".

In this case, because the scheme, as with all schemes, had been out for public submission—I do not want to go into the detail I went into earlier this afternoon in answer to the member for Clontarf about the way these things operate; suffice to say it is virtually the same in this case as the situation which operated in that case—and during that period many public submissions were made; as with the Melville scheme, I was required to make a determination with respect to each of those submissions.

In the course of the review of that scheme and during that period a large number of submissions were made which suggested that a mandatory height limitation should be placed on the Scarborough beach development zone of the City of Stirling.

Mr Hassell: Are you saying there was no support for a height limitation on the Cottesloe town planning scheme?

Mr PARKER: There was, but the scheme was not up for review. No submissions had been made in relation to it.

Mr Hassell: An amendment was put forward.

Mr PARKER: Yes, but not in the context of a general review of the scheme. It was simply to put a pimple on something which was there already, whereas the Stirling scheme review was a review of every aspect of the whole body and shape of the planning of the City of Stirling for the next five years. That is the major difference.

Mr Hassell: They are both in the policy area and you made conflicting decisions.

Mr PARKER: I made a decision in relation to the City of Stirling scheme which was in line with a number of the submissions put forward and on which I was required to determine either one way or the other.

In my consideration of those submissions I had to make a determination either for or against. I made the decision that the City of Stirling scheme should not incorporate a mandatory height limit of three storeys which was what was requested by the Town of Cottesloe and some of the ratepayers in Scarborough as well, but rather an advisory height limit of 12 metres, which is approximately four storeys. That was the decision there and the wording of it was prepared by the department based on existing wording which had been inserted after considerable discussion in the East Fremantle scheme a couple of years ago by my predecessor, Mrs Craig. The wording indicated that, under normal circumstances, the limit in the case of the City of Stirling was 12 metres and 12 metres would apply, but under various exceptional circumstances the City of Stirling could exercise its absolute authority and discretion as to whether it wished to waive that limit.

The aim of an advisory height limit is to allow land developers who come into an area, purchase land, and want to develop to know, under normal circumstances, the limits to which they will be allowed to go; and if they want to go in excess of that limit, they can try to, but it is not something they can do as of right; they will have to make out a good case to the local authority concerned as to why they should do it.

That was not the case in the Cottesloe situation and one of the reasons the appeal decision had to be made in respect of Cottesloe was that there was no such advice to the developers and indeed the contrary advice was given. There are no inconsistencies in each of those two approaches; indeed, they are absolutely consistent.

HEALTH: ASBESTOS

Point Samson: Grievance

MRS BUCHANAN (Pilbara) [7.55 p.m.]: My grievance is directed to the Minister for Health who is one of the Ministers involved in this issue which concerns the small town of Point Samson in my electorate. I shall give some background of the town. Point Samson is one of the most delightful recreation spots one could wish to find along the north-west coast and is, therefore, a very popular place where local residents and tourists go quite

regularly to swim, to fish, and also to eat the delicious rock oysters which are found there. There is an excellent restaurant on the beach front and this also attracts many visitors.

The jetty at Point Samson has been closed, because it has fallen into a state of disrepair. At one time it was quite a busy little port with Stateships and various other vessels moving in and out daily.

As a matter of interest in relation to the history of the port, the first sample shipment of iron ore for the Robe River company was exported to Japan from that very small Point Samson wharf. At the time people marvelled at the size of the vessel which arrived to take away the ore. Of course, one would not even look twice at that size vessel today when one sees the real giants berthing at Cape Lambert. However, at the time this was of considerable interest to the local people.

I remember the ship very well partly because it marked an historic event, namely the first sample of iron ore to be shipped out of the State, and also because, despite the grand name of the ship "Richard de Laranga", it was an atrocious, old rust bucket and was known internationally as the "Dirty Dick", and that stuck in my mind over the years.

Unfortunately, the history of the port also includes the shipment of raw asbestos which came out of the Wittenoom mine. The effects on the health of the people who handled that asbestos in those days are, of course, all too well known now. I am aware of quite a number of people who have since contracted asbestos-related diseases and some of them have died as a result of their employment in the transport side of the industry.

During the life of the Wittenoom mine asbestos was crushed, the fibre was extracted, and it was packed in hessian bags and then transported some 200 miles by road from the mine site. It was offloaded and went on to the wharf train. It was then offloaded again at the end of the jetty and put into the Stateships. At times the asbestos was stored in the goods sheds at Point Samson.

In the process of all this storage, loading, and unloading many bags must have split open and spilt part of their contents of raw asbestos around the train loading yards, in the goods sheds, and on the jetty. I clearly remember seeing a great deal of the blue fibre when my family and I went fishing off the jetty.

With the closure of the port a few years ago the wharf area and the goods sheds were abandoned. They are no longer in use and the jetty has reached a stage where it will probably be blown away in the next cyclone.

Some years ago there was debate as to whether it was worthwhile keeping the jetty as a tourist attraction, but it was decided the cost of maintaining it was not justified.

There is an excellent beach at Point Samson adjacent to the old jetty. It is a very safe beach and an ideal place for children to swim. Many families go there at weekends and during the holidays.

For those reasons and because groups of children from some of the inland areas in the Pilbara—for instance, Marble Bar—are already using Point Samson as a school holiday resort, the Education Department decided to purchase some second-hand transportable accommodation units and set up a camp school in the area where the trains were once loaded with asbestos.

In the course of the installation of these buildings, the amount of raw asbestos fibre lying around the area was noticed and it was very quickly decided to call a halt to this work until investigations had been made to ascertain the extent of the contamination of the area.

I commend the officers of the Public Works Department and of the Education Department for the very great concern they have shown and also for the actions taken to ensure the children are not exposed to that hazard.

It is indeed fortunate the asbestos was discovered before the work on the camp school was completed and the camp was put into operation. The information from the departmental officers is that as long as the asbestos remains in the area the camp school should be relocated altogether away from Point Samson. While that is most disappointing in view of the otherwise great suitability of the location, it is probably the wisest course of action in the circumstances.

It is felt that even if the camp school were to be set up at another site in Point Samson there would still be a danger to the children as they walked or played in the area. The spillages that must have occurred over a number of years are located to a large extent in loose beach sand, which poses problems so far as the complete removal of the asbestos is concerned.

The problem is not as great as that which exists in the town of Wittenoom, but nonetheless a possible health hazard is involved in that area of Point Samson. I am concerned about it, and a number of people have approached me asking what will be done to clean up the area. The tourist potential of the area is considerable. Land has been earmarked for a caravan park, and I understand one developer is interested in building it. It would be a great pity if this potential cannot be realised and,

indeed, people are deterred from using this excellent recreation area because of the fear of being exposed to asbestos fibres. For those reasons, and for the sake of the people who reside permanently at Point Samson—the people who are probably at most risk—I ask the Minister for Health whether an investigation can be carried out to determine the necessary action to remedy this problem.

MR HODGE (Melville—Minister for Health) [8.03 p.m.]: Technically the responsibility for the Point Samson sheds, jetty, etc., rests with the Department of Marine and Harbours, which is within the portfolio of my colleague, the Minister for Transport. As the member for Pilbara has spoken from the point of view of a possible health hazard to members of the public, I thought I should comment on the matters she raised. It was in July of this year that the Public Health Department became aware that the Education Department proposed to construct a camp school at Point Sampson, and it became obvious to the parties involved at that time that there was asbestos contamination of the site. A small working party made up of representatives from the Education Department, the Department of Marine and Harbours, the Public Works Department, and the Public Health Department, was formed to examine the problem, and the problem was found to be quite serious.

Quite widespread contamination with blue asbestos was found in the area where it was proposed to build the camp school. After considerable thought and investigation the working party decided it was not possible to clean up the area sufficiently to build the camp school. The decision was made to abandon the construction of the school at that site, and to reconstruct it at another site.

A considerable amount of work will have to be done in the area to try to render it safe. I am told there is fairly heavy contamination around the old storage sheds and where the blue asbestos was railed out onto the jetty. There are plans to demolish those sheds and to clean up the area, but it will be a difficult and expensive task.

We felt that no matter how thoroughly the area was cleaned it would not be able to be cleaned completely in order to guarantee that children would not be subject to asbestos fibres. That is the reason the decision was reluctantly made not to proceed with the camp school at that site. I am told there probably is not any serious hazard on the beach to members of the public but the area will be examined by the working party I mentioned, and it will be cleaned up where necessary. In some areas it is impossible to clean up the asbestos sufficiently and those areas may have to be

fenced off so the public cannot get to them. We do not believe there is any danger to any particular person. I am advised no-one actually lives in the vicinity of the heavy contamination. Nevertheless, the area must be cleaned up. The Government is aware of that fact and is working on the problem.

The member for Pilbara referred to the Trawlers seafood restaurant. I am told no contamination is near that restaurant but that some asbestos had been spilt on the verges of an adjacent road. That problem will be attended to in due course.

The asbestos contaminating the area is the worst type—blue asbestos. It is much more hazardous to human health than white asbestos. It is important the matter is attended to and the area is cleaned up as much as it can be. It is almost impossible to completely eradicate the whole area of blue asbestos fibres. As I said, the area is heavily contaminated and asbestos fibres can be caught up in the sand, and with the action of the wind the fibres can be loosened from the sand and blown around again. The working party has considered trying to bulldoze areas of bush and then dump clean fill on those areas, but that method has been tried in other areas, particularly at Wittenoom, without great success. We are pessimistic about the chances of success of that method.

The right decision was made not to proceed with the school in the area, regrettable as that decision was. But when we come to the safety of children we cannot be too cautious. The heavily contaminated areas around the sheds will be cleaned and the sheds will be demolished. We will clean the area as well as we can and the public will enjoy access to most of the area, but in some areas we cannot guarantee complete eradication of the blue asbestos, and those areas will probably have to be fenced off.

I assure the member for Pilbara I am well aware of the public health problem as is the Commissioner of Public Health, and we will do all we can to ensure the area is rendered safe. As I said at the outset, the area is not primarily my responsibility and I am advised that the Minister for Transport would be primarily responsible for the cleaning up of the area. However, the PHD is ready and willing to give and is currently giving expert advice on how the area can be cleaned and the buildings demolished so that there is no risk to the people working at the site or to the public. The Government is well aware of the position at Point Samson and is taking the appropriate action.

POLICE

Mitchell Electorate: Grievance

MR D. L. SMITH (Mitchell) [8.11 p.m.]: I will speak briefly on a matter relevant to the portfolio of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. I refer to no police officer being stationed at Capel, Boyanup or Dardanup. As members know, I am the member for Mitchell, a new electorate which embraces the outer areas of Bunbury, and the shires of Capel and Dardanup. The seat ranks about third highest in the number of voters compared with other country electorates. It is surrounded by the electorates of Bunbury, Collic, Vasse and Murray-Wellington. Although it has approximately 10 000 electors it does not have one police officer stationed anywhere in it. Obviously the electors who are outer residents of Bunbury are adequately serviced from the central station of Bunbury, but it has been felt for a long time that a need exists for a policeman to be stationed at Capel. In my view one should be based at Boyanup and also one at Dardanup.

Capel is approximately equidistant between Busselton and Bunbury. It is some 20-odd kilometres from Bunbury and it is a similar distance from Bunbury to Brunswick Junction, where there is a police station. If one considers the adjacent electorate of Murray-Wellington one realises that police are stationed at Brunswick, Harvey, Waroona, and Pinjarra. Similarly, in the adjoining electorate of Vasse, there are police stationed at Nannup, Busselton, and Margaret River.

The Capel area involves not only the residents of the town, but also residents of a number of subdivisions in the shire who regard Capel as their home base. The population of the area is growing. In that regard I refer particularly to Peppermint Grove Beach, which is a coastal subdivision about 10 kilometres from Capel.

I have raised this matter tonight because, as everyone is aware, an increase in the number of policemen of approximately 100 State-wide was provided for in the last Budget. On my calculations eight per cent of Western Australia's population resides in the south-west statistical area, which means the area should be entitled to eight of those extra policemen. I see no good reason for two of those policemen not being stationed at Capel.

The role of police officers in areas like Capel is one of supervision, liaison, and gaining local knowledge. The role of supervision helps in the prevention and detection of crime. The role of liaison provides a much better understanding between the public and the police, and enables young people to grow up with a police officer

whom they know as the local officer. The young people are likely to be more law abiding. If the officer is resident in the area he will have local knowledge and will know local personalities and their habits. This helps in the solution of crimes when they occur. Quite obviously in areas like Capel, where the Bussel Highway runs through the town, the police office could have an active role in traffic control.

The Parliament may not be aware that in the document "Bunbury 2000" the Government gave an undertaking that a policeman would be stationed at Capel. After my election I reminded the Minister of that fact. He quite rightly pointed out it is not his role to direct the commissioner as to how he should deploy his police officers.

Mr Blaikie: But it was part of your election promise that officers be placed at Capel, Boyanup and Dardanup.

Mr D. L. SMITH: The Minister rightly agreed that those undertakings were given, and he said he would do whatever he could to achieve those objectives, but that is with the reservation that the ultimate deployment of police must rest with the commissioner because he is the one best placed to decide how the duties of the police are best carried out.

Having seen the Minister, I went to the local superintendent of police and discussed the matter with him. He said he was aware of the undertaking the Government had made and he was keeping the incidents of reportable offences at Capel under observation so he would know whether there was a demand there. Having seen the local superintendent, I then arranged to see the Commissioner of Police, who also made it clear that he was aware of the Government undertaking. However he also pointed out that the development in the northern areas of Perth and other country areas meant there was a problem in relation to numbers. He hoped that there would be an increase in the number of police officers in the new Budget and that perhaps in six months' time he might be in a position to decide whether a station could be arranged at Capel and if so where it ranked in priority to other demands.

I raise the matter tonight because there has been an increase of 100 police officers provided for in the Budget. Bearing in mind the fact that the south-west has eight per cent of the population of the State, I hope the commissioner will advert to the meeting he had with me and initiate action to fulfil the Government's undertaking. He should have eight of these new policemen added to the south-west force.

In my discussions with the commissioner, he said the reason Capel might not be able to be accommodated was the cost of establishing stations. He said that in the south-west the rebuilding of the Nannup station and the rebuilding of the Mandurah station were priorities. I said that there would not be a need for an expensive station at Capel. We could utilise an ordinary house and use the lock-up facility at Bunbury if the necessity arose.

In terms of the number of police to be stationed there, two only would be required. It would leave one period of the day without an officer on duty, but at least the people of Capel would know that a police officer was on duty for some time in the day.

Another reason the commissioner gave for not stationing officers at Capel was that there were not enough reportable offences committed in the area. I pointed out that if people have to go to too much trouble in order to report an offence—for example, if they have to travel some distance to the station—they do not report minor offences. Recently I was asked to investigate the removal of a “stop” sign in the Capel townsite. When I went to the Main Roads Department I was told it had been removed because of the lack of reportable incidents at the intersection. When I was visiting Capel on Monday, I met a lady who lives on the corner near the area in question and she told me that an accident occurs at that intersection almost every month, but as people must travel to Bunbury to report it or must wait for a policeman to come from Bunbury or Busselton, they do not bother. The only accidents that are reported are those which involve ambulances being called to the scene.

I would not like the Minister to think that I will let him or the commissioner forget the Government's undertaking. I hope the Minister will remind the commissioner and that these police stations will be established soon.

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [8.19 p.m.]: I acknowledge the problems the member for Mitchell has quite rightly outlined. At election time, the areas of Capel, Dardanup, and Boyanup were each promised a police station and police officers. Bunbury is obviously set to grow during the years ahead and there is no doubt that any growth will have a considerable impact on the whole of that region and the towns of Capel, Dardanup, and Boyanup. I have no doubt that the needs of those three towns will increase also during the years ahead.

The submission made by the member for Mitchell is one of a great number of requests

made to me by members on both sides of the House. Perhaps not so many are made so vigorously and eloquently as the request made by the member for Mitchell. Only tonight the member for Scarborough had the situation in his electorate of problems with young people driving on the Scarborough beachfront; this was reported on the front page of the first edition of the *Daily News*.

Several members interjected.

Mr CARR: I am not standing in my place to take tenders or bids from people who would like to employ policemen. I make the point that a large number of requests have been made by people throughout the community for policemen to be employed. For a whole range of reasons some people are keen to criticise police officers for the way they perform their tasks. It is interesting that many of those people who are keen to have policemen allocated in their areas are also keen to criticise policemen. I am not suggesting that the member for Mitchell is one who criticises the police, but it is interesting to view this dichotomy because, on the one side, people want more policemen and, on the other, they criticise them.

Mr Court: The criticism is in Roebourne.

Mr CARR: People in many other places are voicing criticisms which they probably should not voice.

Mr Blaikie: I certainly do not criticise the Police Force.

Mr CARR: The member for Mitchell quite rightly pointed to the deployment of police officers being the responsibility of the Commissioner of Police. I make it clear, as I have in the past, that I do not intend to intervene to the point of directing the commissioner as to where he should locate his police officers. I can only forward to him the submissions that are made to me, and certainly the statement made by the member for Mitchell will be forwarded to the commissioner. I will be discussing the matter with him at a convenient time.

The commissioner does have a difficult job in terms of the deployment of his police officers.

Mr Old: You have the power of direction.

Mr CARR: It is generally believed to be not appropriate to direct the commissioner in respect of operational matters at least.

Mr Old: Fair enough.

Mr CARR: The attitude that the commissioner would express and has expressed on many occasions is that he favours a mobile force which would allow for an extra couple of policemen in a car patrol, linked by radio to a major centre.

Mr Blaikie: You also mentioned dual patrols?

Mr CARR: That was not the main point I was making. I was saying that the commissioner does have difficulty with the deployment of police officers and prefers a mobile force which includes patrolmen, be it one-man or two-man patrols, rather than to concentrate police officers in fixed points around the community.

The member for Mitchell has made a valid point that it is of considerable advantage to have a policeman stationed in the community in that such a situation he is a positive influence on that community in a crime-prevention sense. The community responds in a positive way to having a policeman they can get to know well, to respect, and to trust.

Reference has been made to the 100 extra police officers. A training school is being held at the academy at the moment with 75 officers graduating in January, so that will help to provide a greater number of police officers.

As to the suggestion that a region of the State that has eight per cent of the population should get eight per cent—two—of the extra policemen, it is not easy to give a firm undertaking. Perhaps the question of whether there is eight per cent of the crime in the south-west may be a relevant one to ask in that context.

One hundred extra policemen have been provided for in the Budget and a commitment has been made for a further 100 to be provided in next year's Budget as part of a three-year arrangement initiated by the previous Government. This will increase the options available to the commissioner as to which locations he can deploy his forces in.

I note the member for Mitchell's assurance that he will not let me, the commissioner, or the Government forget this matter.

Mr Cowan: If you let Bunbury Public Works Department build a police station perhaps they will get their police officers.

Mr CARR: If the member can suggest where the money will come from to build the station, we will all be much happier.

I conclude by saying that I hope we will be able to do something to help the member for Mitchell during the course of this Government's regime.

The SPEAKER: Grievances noted.

ROAD TRAFFIC AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [8.27 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The intention of this Bill is to broaden the interpretation of agricultural implements to include a trailed firefighting unit.

Members will appreciate the dangers, difficulties, and costs both to life and to property caused by bushfires. Not many years ago a farmer's principal means of fighting these outbreaks consisted of knapsack sprays and/or wet bags. Today, however, many farmers have equipped themselves with firefighting outfits. It is generally a trailed unit consisting of a water tank with a capacity of 1 000 to 1 500 litres and a petrol-driven pump, together with several hoses—units which give the farmer greatly enhanced firefighting capacity.

Being community minded, farmers are quite prepared to take this equipment to assist other members in the community in any fire outbreak which may occur. One difficulty is that these units are not defined as agricultural implements and therefore can be used legally on the roads only if fully licensed.

This is an unnecessary expense when in the main the sole need for such a licence would be to assist other people in the district to combat a fire. The cost of the licence is bad enough, but in order to obtain a licence, the unit would have to meet the vehicle regulations which stipulate flashing lights and brakes—both of which require considerable capital outlay. Few people would commit themselves to this expenditure in order to occasionally take the outfit on the road in order to protect someone else's property. I believe I have said enough to indicate that while farmers have this equipment, they will not, nor should they be expected to, go to the expense necessary to take it legally on the road.

As the Act stands we could very easily have a situation in which serious damage to property and even loss of life could occur in a district because insufficient firefighting equipment is available at the scene of a fire—equipment that is available within the district, but is unable to be moved because of the present Act. The position is made even more galling when it is realised a boom spray is classed as an agricultural implement and can be taken onto the road without a licence. For those who are not farmers, I explain that a boom spray is essentially the same as firefighting units described earlier. It consists of a bulk water tank, a pump and a boom spray which is raised for transport and lowered for spraying in paddocks.

Members representing country electorates would be aware of considerable concern in rural areas at the current restrictions on the use of trailed firefighting units. The problem has a very simple solution—it is the one proposed by this

Bill. The interpretation of "agricultural implement" is broadened in section 5 (1) of the Act by adding after the word "operation" the words "including fire fighting". It is a very simple amendment and I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Carr (Minister for Police and Emergency Services).

COMMUNICATIONS: SATELLITES

Placement: Motion

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch) [8.32 p.m.]: I rise to conclude briefly the remarks I was making prior to the dinner suspension. I want to make two points, the first of which relates to the location of these satellites which is probably a foregone issue. We still wish, however, to ensure that our protests and disappointment at the location are recorded. The second point relates to the second part of the motion which matter we want the Government to take up. I refer to the question of the allocation of the high-powered transponders and their location. We want one allocated to a Western Australian consortium. We would like to think the Government would join us, or we would join the Government, in a joint approach to the Federal Government in the interests of all Western Australians, and in particular residents in remote locations in this State.

Mr Grill: You do not say in the motion you want one of the transponders controlled in Western Australia.

MR MacKINNON: The second part of the motion states that the House also expresses on behalf of the people of Western Australia a desire that commercial television programming for Western Australia which is to be transmitted via the satellite should emanate from those sources which determine programming for regular television and radio services already provided in this State. That does not mean a national programme emanating from eastern Australia, but one emanating from television programmes provided in this State—the commercial channels already operating here.

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Regional Development and the North West) [8.35 p.m.]: The motion contains two resolutions neither of which is supported completely by the Government. I indicate we oppose the motion as it now stands. We are sympathetic towards the general sentiments contained in the motion, but we do not consider the present wording to be appropriate. I will be moving at a later stage to amend substantially this motion.

The Opposition is being hypocritical in bringing forward at this stage the first resolution contained in the motion. The Opposition had many opportunities in the past to criticise the Federal Government in respect of this decision.

Mr Laurance: That was done.

Mr Peter Jones: We brought criticism to an art form.

Mr GRILL: No such motion was moved in this House.

Mr Laurance: We had the ability then to make direct contact with the Federal Government; this motion is to ensure you do too.

Mr Hassell: We produced a major written submission.

Mr GRILL: I have no doubt about that; in fact, I think I have seen it. There is a clear distinction between moving a motion which amounts to a motion of censure on the Federal Government and publicly expressing those sentiments, and quietly taking the subject across to Canberra and putting a case.

Mr Hassell: This is not a censure motion.

Mr GRILL: The latter of those two alternatives was followed by the Opposition when in Government. It smacks of hypocrisy that the Opposition wants to go public on the matter at this stage, and wants to move motions which amount to a censure of the Federal Government.

Mr Hassell: It does not.

Mr Peter Jones: You have misunderstood it.

Mr Hassell: It is deliberately framed not to be a censure but to help you.

Mr Evans: You are all heart, that is your trouble.

Mr Old: Don't try to tell the House we did not publicly criticise the Commonwealth Government when we were in Government.

Mr Peter Jones: This is to strengthen your arm.

Mr GRILL: I thank members opposite, I am delighted.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Burkett): Order!

Mr GRILL: The germane point is that when the decision was in the process of being made and when publicly expressed criticism and concern might have had some effect and might have helped, it was not made.

Mr Laurance: Yes, it was.

Mr GRILL: If it was made, I ask members opposite to point to it.

Mr Laurance: We sent people to the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth people sent people here to negotiate with Dr O'Brien and to explain the matter.

Mr GRILL: I think the member missed the point: No public expression of concern was made at the vital time. I can imagine a motion of this sort would have been appropriate if the Government at the time had wanted to put public pressure on the Federal Government.

Mr Hassell: This motion is important to Western Australia and it was not framed to embarrass you or the Federal Government; it was framed to strengthen the hand of this State in getting what it desperately needs. There is nothing provocative in this motion and you cannot read it as a censure.

Mr Laurance: We have not been criticising you; it has been a constructive debate.

Mr GRILL: One of the major elements of the member's speech and of some of his colleagues' speeches was that the Opposition considered the Government had not been tough enough in expressing concern and disappointment at certain actions of the Federal Government.

Mr Laurance: No.

Mr GRILL: That was the tenor of the member's remarks. If this sort of motion was to be moved and expressed publicly in a Chamber of this type, it should have been done when it would have had some effect. We know and Opposition members know the time for affecting that decision has long passed.

Mr Hassell: It has not.

Mr GRILL: That has been conceded by speakers on the Opposition side tonight; it was conceded a few moments ago by the member for Murdoch in his summing up.

Mr Peter Jones: In the same way the Premier conceded Yeelirrie, is it?

Mr GRILL: There has been no concession on Yeelirrie.

Mr Hassell: Tell us what sort of amendments you are going to move; if they are directed towards the objective we may be happy with them, but if you turn around politically you will be defeating a very important move on behalf of this State.

Mr GRILL: We are not going to do that; there is no political stunt in what we intend to do. We intend to take up the point made by the member for Murdoch in his summation when I questioned him across the Chamber as to his intent and he indicated it was his opinion, and I presume he was speaking for the Opposition, that Western Aus-

tralia should take up one of the transponders on the second satellite.

If he was speaking for the Opposition, we agree with that view, and in that respect we intend to amend the motion to make it much more direct. We do not consider, however, that the first part of the motion which expresses concern is appropriate. The time for expressing concern has come and gone.

Mr Hassell: Are you saying the placement of the satellite cannot be altered technically?

Mr GRILL: I am saying exactly that. It can be altered; anything is technically possible; but the advice we have—and I believe it was given to the Opposition some time ago, and that the member for Nedlands' father received the same advice when he went across to Canberra to discuss this matter—is that once this decision was made and the contracts let—and some have been let—it could not be changed without going right back to the drawing boards and delaying the project for a considerable period of time, and none of us wants to do that.

Mr Hassell: Contracts can be changed and it has since been conceded the technical choices were wrong.

Mr GRILL: It has not been conceded. I wish the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would not make remarks when he does not have the technical competence to do so. He was not involved in the debate and I do not think he has had a look at the technical papers.

Mr Court: You understand the technical side, do you?

Mr GRILL: I do not make any claims to technical expertise, but I do understand technical advice that I have received from people respected in this area. It is that the vital decisions in respect of the placement of the satellites have been made.

Mr Hassell: Have you received no advice that the decision as to the placement was wrong? Are you saying it is correct?

Mr GRILL: That is a separate question. I would concede we have received some advice that the satellite may perhaps be better placed at a different longitude.

Mr Hassell: That is on the public record and it is different from the basis on which the decision was made to place it where it is going to be.

Mr GRILL: I will discuss that in a minute.

I do not think technical evidence exists to contradict this point, and I would like to hear it if it does. At this stage no possibility exists of influencing the decision already made in respect of the placement of those satellites. It is too late

now in a technical sense without delaying the project for some considerable time. The Federal Government can decide to cancel the contracts; it has that option. However, going back to the drawing board and reducing it to a different longitude would put it back a considerable time.

Mr Laurance: The point you made highlights what I have been saying about the need for the motion. We are saying that technological changes have made a difference. We put our argument before and we lost. They tried to convince us and they could not convince us. We are saying to keep trying, because there could be a change.

Mr Court: In *The Australian Financial Review* this morning, it explained that new satellites are coming in 1985.

Mr GRILL: Unless the Opposition can point to technical evidence which suggests that that would not delay the project for some considerable time by changing the longitude of the satellites—

Mr Laurance: Do not close your mind to that, because it is a chance.

Mr GRILL: That is not our advice. Some of the advice came from the same people who gave it to the previous Government. That advice is clear and direct. What the Opposition suggests in this motion would delay the satellites for a considerable time. None of us wants that.

Mr Laurance: That is not in the motion.

Mr GRILL: I will deal with the history of this matter. In April 1980, a decision was made for the placement of the satellites. As I understand it, that was to be at 128 degrees east, somewhere about the longitude of Kimberley. The latitude was zero degrees, because the satellites were to be placed over the equator. The height above the earth was to be 36 000 kilometres.

In May 1980, the decision was made that the satellites should be moved further east. As the member for Gascoyne has indicated, the selected longitude at that stage was about 160 degrees east. The selected longitude of the two Aussat satellites was about 156 degrees east and 164 degrees east. The decision in May 1980 was made on the basis that the signal to Western Australia would be strengthened, and the basis for that view was that if it was moved further east, a smaller, wedge-shaped beam would be obtained, and the geometric shape of the beam would actually increase the strength of the signal—that is, the spot beam to Western Australia—by about 35 per cent. It would also increase the national beam—that is, the beam that takes in the whole of Australia from one of the transponders—by 17 per cent.

The advice of the consultant in Western Australia at that stage was that some improvement would be achieved, with the proviso that where the signal had to pass through rain, it would be attenuated by that rain, and there was the possibility that the signal could be significantly weakened and distorted. As I understand it, that view was put by the previous Government to the Federal Government. In fact, the Premier of the day went to the east and put that view, without success.

Mr Laurance: Several visits were made.

Mr GRILL: I do not doubt that there was more than one visit. The advice that was given at that stage—I understand we are still receiving that advice—is that the signals would not be significantly attenuated by heavy rain and that the advice we received from the consultant in Western Australia was technically wrong and out of date.

I have since put the same proposition to the Federal Minister for Communications, and I have received the same advice.

Mr MacKinnon: If I were you, I would double check that with Brian O'Brien.

Mr GRILL: It is no secret that Dr Brian O'Brien was the consultant to the previous Government through the satellite advisory committee. He has been retained as an adviser to that same committee, which continues in an extended form.

Mr MacKinnon: I suggest you check that fact with him.

Mr GRILL: There is a clear contradiction between the technical advice we are receiving from Dr Brian O'Brien and the technical advice that the Commonwealth is receiving from its advisers.

Mr Laurance: If you look down the map of Australia, the satellite will be off to one side; yet every other country that has a domestic satellite has placed the satellite somewhere over the middle of the country. That just seems to add to our argument. It is difficult to know exactly what is right.

Mr Pearce: A lot of other countries have a more even spread of population than we do.

Mr GRILL: I concede that many satellites cover the geographical centre of the countries involved. Nevertheless, that is the technical advice that has been received. It has been checked and rechecked.

Even as late as 1982, further credence was given to Dr Brian O'Brien's remarks. The previous Government was unable to take the matter any further, and I do not think we are keen, at this stage, to take the argument any further. It is

simply a lost cause, and I believe it was lost in 1980. Arguments were advanced in favour of Western Australia during 1980, 1981, and 1982; but in fact the arguments from Western Australia dried up during most of 1982.

That is the situation as I understand it. We will proceed with action on the first part of the motion, and we do not disagree violently with the sentiments expressed in the two parts of the motion.

I make one further statement in respect of the signal strength and longitude: The signals received in Kimberley towns like Broome and Derby—I am not sure about the others—from Intelsat during fairly heavy rainstorms during the last wet season have not been attenuated by the rain. As I understand it, Intelsat is even further to the east than the satellites that are proposed. We seem to have some practical evidence on the side of the technical advice from the Federal Government.

Mr Court: You might be able to answer a technical question. It covers the ocean going out to the west. Will oil rigs and the like be able to use the system?

Mr GRILL: Yes. They will have no problem.

Mr Court: On the map, it seems to go for about 300 miles. Is there a limit?

Mr GRILL: I would have to find that out. Obviously there is a limit.

Mr Court: It is important to the North-West Shelf and the oil exploration companies. One of the purposes of this is for them to use modern communications.

Mr GRILL: That is one of the weaknesses, as I understand it, of the Landsat satellite. That satellite is over the centre of the continent, and it does not do much of a job on the western fringes. As I understand it, the oil rigs off Western Australia would be covered, but there is a limit.

Mr Court: Jabiru must be on the edge.

Mr GRILL: It is a technical question, and I could not say.

The most important arguments raised by the Opposition are in respect of the use of the high-powered transponders on the second satellite. As most people know, each satellite has four 30-watt transponders and a number of 12-watt transponders. I think they have 11. The 30-watt transponders are important, and they are the subject of the debate so far tonight. The four 30-watt transponders on the first satellite will go to the ABC, and they will be used by way of spot beams to various parts of Australia. The country will be divided into various areas which will be covered

by the spot beams. One of them will cover Western Australia, one will cover the Northern Territory and South Australia, another will cover Queensland, and the last one will cover New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania.

Recommendation 5 of the State satellite advisory committee is as follows—

That all national television programmes and medium wave radio programmes beamed to Western Australia via satellite be programmed and transmitted from licensed stations in Western Australia.

That recommendation was supported by the previous Government and it was transmitted to the Federal Government by that Government. It is supported also by the present Government of Western Australia. Some concern has been expressed amongst the community of Western Australia that that recommendation will not be met by the Federal Government. I can understand that concern and, therefore, I can understand the second part of the motion.

As I mentioned, the first satellite has four 30-watt transponders which will be operated by the ABC to serve the homestead and community broadcasting satellite system. They should be quite effective, and they should be able to transmit to a small dish of about one metre in circumference. However, because the national beams have weaker signals, they will not be able to transmit to the smaller dishes, and dishes of a considerably larger size will be needed.

It has been mentioned that the smaller-sized dishes would cost about \$1 000. I do not know how that figure is calculated, and there is considerable doubt about whether it will be \$1 000.

Mr Court: Cheaper or dearer?

Mr GRILL: Possibly dearer. Certainly we can say that the larger dishes will be considerably more expensive, and that rules out transmission to homesteads.

It is in that respect and in other respects that if the four or even three of the transponders on the second satellite go to the big three commercial stations in the Eastern States, we will lose control of the transmission of television communication to a large part of the State.

Mr Old: Which part of the State would you envisage would lose it? Do you mean the south-eastern part of the State.

Mr GRILL: I do not think many people will be able to afford the large dishes.

Mr Old: You talked about the north-west and the one-metre dish, but what about areas like the

lakes district and Ravensthorpe? How will they go?

Mr GRILL: Unless they could afford the larger dish, they would not receive the signal.

Mr Old: That is really what this is all about.

Mr GRILL: The other point I am making is that, finally, if that were the case—and I think there is some agreement here—we would find that television transmissions from stations within Western Australia would take over a very secondary role in respect of the nationwide transmissions.

Mr Old: But if they cannot get television transmissions within the State—the areas I am talking about—they will be in exactly the same situation as they are in now—or is there some way they can be given a reasonable transmission? Can you get a larger dish and put it on a larger translator?

Mr Pearce: The signal would come from the big three stations as a coded signal so that individual people could not decode it, and it would come down to the regional station on that big dish with a decoding device. What you would get is a signal from Sydney.

Mr GRILL: That is probably the most likely scenario.

Mr Court: I think we are getting a bit over our depths with this technical stuff.

Mr GRILL: I think we have hit the nail on the head. From my discussions with my Federal colleague, it does appear that, yes, there is some danger that the three big stations in the east will receive the use of the transponders and, yes, they will use them in a way that will necessitate them—in fact it will probably be a condition of the licence—sending a coded signal. If that is the case, it probably would not be a great worry to Western Australians, because that coded signal would be picked up by a local station and then retransmitted. In that event, it is not a great worry at all.

Mr Old: We are no better off except for the remote areas of the north, which are very important. It seems that the position of the satellite is aimed to provide a continuous television service to the eastern seaboard with scant regard given to our State.

Mr GRILL: I do not think the member is understanding what I am saying.

Mr Old: Probably not.

Mr GRILL: The big three want to transmit nationwide, but it is unlikely they will be allowed to transmit directly to individual homes nationwide. They will be allowed to transmit nationwide

with a coded signal and that will mean the signal will be picked up by stations here and then retransmitted.

Mr Old: So the remote areas of the north-west, irrespective of the fact they could pick it up with a one-metre disc, will not pick it up. So it is not worth a crumplet.

Mr GRILL: It will be picked up by local stations and then retransmitted.

Mr MacKinnon: But most programmes they pick up already will have been transmitted here, anyway.

Mr GRILL: Programming is something else again. If that is followed, it is not necessarily any threat to Western Australia.

The other question is whether Western Australia takes up one of those transponders itself. We believe the Government and the community of Western Australia should direct themselves to that aspect. A proposal has been made in the past—a joint proposal by Channel 7 and Channel 9—to take over control of the 30-watt transponder. That proposal would receive some support from this Government. However, we do not believe that proposal addresses itself to the entire question, because other areas of communication need to be taken into account. Some of those areas are education, emergency services, public works, public medical needs, and some simple needs of mining companies in the outback and isolated communities in the outback—a whole host of needs and wants. We do not think they necessarily will be catered for by a commercial television station taking over that fourth transponder and operating it by some means of a spot beam into WA.

We believe this Government, hopefully with the support of the Opposition, should be looking at the possibility of leasing that transponder and using it for some of the purposes I have mentioned.

Mr MacKinnon: The Government should?

Mr GRILL: Or a Government agency, and leasing back part of the time—

Mr MacKinnon: Northern Mining or the development corporation? You mob absolutely stagger me.

Mr GRILL: That might be a difference in philosophy there. At least we would agree, I think, that a Western Australian agency of some sort should endeavour to obtain the use of that fourth transponder on the second satellite. Whether we disagree over the question of whether it should be a private enterprise facility—

Mr MacKinnon: That would then enable you to transmit television messages to remote areas.

Mr Court: You could send Press releases.

Mr Pearce: The ABC is a Government television station, but do you see Press releases on that? You don't even see news these days.

Mr GRILL: I do not think members of the Opposition, or at least the more facetious of them, appreciate that there are other needs for this satellite than simply the need to send out the normal day-to-day programmes that are transmitted by our normal stations. There are other needs and purposes to be found. We are saying that it is worthwhile to consider the Western Australian Government's leasing the use of one of those transponders and leasing back some of that time to the commercial stations.

Mr MacKinnon: You won't get our support.

Amendments to Motion

Mr GRILL: With those ideas in mind, I move the following amendment—

That all words in the first line after the word "House" be deleted with a view to substituting the following—

supports the notion that the Government should examine the feasibility of obtaining one transponder on Aussat for transmission of programmes for such things as the School of the Air and other educational purposes, State Emergency Service, Public Works and Government Medical Needs and other vital purposes and that, at the same time, ensure that commercial television programmes as far as planning, management and transmission are concerned remain within the State.

Mr Peter Jones: That is pretty soft. Instead of supporting the notion, you should say that you want it to be done. How soft can you be?

MR PEARCE (Armadale—Minister for Education) [9.09 p.m.]: I am pleased to second the amendment. It seems to me the Opposition in its motion is missing some of the more important aspects of the potential for Western Australia of this satellite. The Opposition appears not to be greatly familiar with the notion the Minister for Transport has just outlined to the House. It is more than a philosophical difference, because the effect it will have on Western Australians will be quite intense.

At the same time as we are saying it is very much in the interests of Western Australians for Western Australia to have control of at least one

of the transponders on the second satellite, the counter argument the Opposition seems to be supporting is that put forward by the big networks in the Eastern States, and of course they want the capacity to broadcast advertisements nationally.

Mr Peter Jones: What a load of rubbish.

Mr MacKinnon: Who wants to broadcast advertisements nationally?

Mr PEARCE: If members opposite do not understand that the big networks in the east are breaking their necks to have a nationwide coverage with a single beam—

Mr Peter Jones: Are you suggesting we support that?

Mr PEARCE: I thought members opposite were decrying the suggestion that there should be some Government control of the transponder and that they were looking at the case for private enterprise to control the whole business. The reason private enterprise is looking for control is that it can make a lot of money from transmitting advertisements across Australia.

Mr Peter Jones: Your Federal party has said that 50 per cent will go out to private enterprise.

Mr PEARCE: The mix between Government and private enterprise which we favour, and which the Labor Government in Canberra supports, is well known, but decried by members opposite.

Mr Peter Jones: It is not.

Mr PEARCE: It has been decried by the member in, for example, our five per cent purchase in the acquisition of an asset for the State.

Mr MacKinnon: Which we will sell when we are in Government.

Mr PEARCE: It will have made a lot of money before the member is in office again, which will not be for a long time.

Mr Peter Jones: Never mind that rubbish. We are talking about this initiative. You said we are supporting the beaming of a system which will give the stations the opportunity to advertise over here. That is rubbish. The motion is a good and positive attempt to try to get a good strong message across, and you are now trying to fragment it.

Mr PEARCE: The member means it is a good and positive move if we support the motion, but not our amendment.

Mr Peter Jones: Your amendment is not positive.

Mr PEARCE: The member expressed concern about what is effectively the failure of his previous Government to do something about the placement of that satellite. Secondly, the motion

says that the House expresses a desire on behalf of the people of Western Australia, but members opposite criticised the Minister for Transport for dealing with a notion. Members opposite want to substitute a desire that a commercial television programme in WA should emanate from those sources which determine programming for regular television and radio services already provided in this State. Members opposite are saying that, in so far as there should be a Western Australian interest in this satellite—and they really mean the second satellite—that interest should be in the control of those people who already control those kinds of transmissions through the more traditional methods in Western Australia. That fails to be an imaginative policy in the sense that the Minister has outlined an imaginative policy.

Mr MacKinnon: The only trouble with his imagination is that the School of the Air is already covered by the satellite and you do not need a major transponder to do it.

Mr PEARCE: The member has demonstrated his ignorance of the desire of the educational community in this State for this satellite.

Mr Grill: If you dash their hopes in the way you are suggesting, you won't be popular.

Mr MacKinnon: You are saying that we need that fourth transponder to communicate signals to the remote areas.

Mr PEARCE: No. It seems the member does not understand what is meant when commas and "ands" are all strung together.

Mr MacKinnon: That is a reflection on your Leader of the House, who was my teacher.

Mr PEARCE: It is a reflection on the member.

The Minister pointed to the fact that if there is to be a Western Australian interest in the satellite, it should be much wider than the country areas of television programming inside WA. This is what the motion calls for. What members opposite are saying is that if there is to be a Western Australian interest in the satellite, it should be in the hands of Channel 7 and Channel 9.

Mr MacKinnon: That is not what we are saying.

Mr PEARCE: That is what the motion says. Members opposite should read the motion. The first part is only to do with where the satellite is put in space; it is an argument which the previous Government lost very badly with the Commonwealth Government two years ago; and now the contracts have been let, so it is too late to reverse the decision. It is the fault of members opposite, not our policy.

The second part of the motion says that the House expresses on behalf of the people of Western Australia a desire that commercial television programming for Western Australia—

Mr Laurance: That is the point; stop there.

Mr PEARCE: —which is to be transmitted via the satellite, should emanate from those sources which determine programming for regular television and radio services already provided in this State.

Mr Laurance: We are talking about the commercial aspects. You are trying to mix it up with other things like police and aviation.

Mr MacKinnon: They are already covered by other parts of the satellite.

Mr PEARCE: They are not already covered by other parts of the satellite.

Mr Court: They are so.

Mr MacKinnon: It shows your ignorance.

Mr PEARCE: It does not show my ignorance at all. In fact, I had the opportunity this afternoon, quite coincidentally, because I was unaware that the Opposition was going to persist with this motion, when it did seem to me that the Opposition had rather more significant matters on the Notice Paper to which to give priority, to have a lengthy briefing session on the educational implications of the Federal Government's satellite policy. One of the very clear things that needs to be said is that the initial aim of the satellite, at least in many people's eyes, is to provide a much greater access for educational purposes to remote areas of the State where there is not an availability of educational institutions and that the commercial aspects of the satellite are in many ways complementary and in some ways secondary to that view.

What has happened since then is that the commercial aspects, because there is a lot of money in this, are becoming much greater; the pressure is on over the powerful transponders which are going to the large commercial interests in the Eastern States. So there remains only very weak transponders which can, if we like, actually communicate with the remote areas of the State in a much more restricted way. Surely, from these additional beams, and if the really powerful transponders will go to the commercial interests, the ability of the education system at every level in WA, particularly the tertiary educational level as well as the School of the Air and other important educational communication networks we currently have, and the possibility of imaginative expansion, are considerably lessened.

Mr Grill: He is absolutely right.

Mr PEARCE: What the Opposition is concerned about is not the lessening of that educational impact; it is not in any way concerned in this motion about any of the detriments which may be suffered by people in the remote areas. All it is concerned about is seeing that Channel 7 and Channel 9 get hold of the programming of the satellite for commercial areas of Western Australia, and that seems to me to be an incredibly narrow view of the importance of the satellite.

Mr MacKinnon: That is not the point we are making at all.

Mr PEARCE: I think the Minister very succinctly demonstrated in his speech the way in which, for example, a Western Australian interest will be very necessary if the control by the three networks in the Eastern States continues, because if we cannot control the distribution of that material across Western Australia, we will see the complete wipeout of all the small commercial stations which we currently have—the Golden West Network Ltd. in the south-west, the VEW Colour Network in the Kalgoorlie-Esperance area and other small television stations. All of them will disappear as individual networks and will simply be replaced by nationalised networking with nationalised advertising coming down and blanketing the whole of the nation because that is what the Eastern States networks are seeking; that is to say, blanket coverage of the whole of Australia with one of the really powerful transponders of each of the three networks. So there will be no local content and no local control, but simply one national network with national advertising and the destruction, in many ways, of the local stations. The Government is very concerned about that one aspect. The Opposition cannot be said to be addressing itself to that problem.

Mr Court: That is the second part of the motion we put up about the programme.

Mr PEARCE: Yes, but what kind of mechanisms is the Opposition suggesting to the Government or to the Federal Government in the support that it says it is offering us in overcoming the difficulties to which it says it is now pointing? No mechanism is suggested by the Opposition. All it is saying is that it wishes to express a desire that there be some local control of what comes down from the satellite.

Mr MacKinnon: I received a proposal put up by the commercial channels.

Mr PEARCE: That is like saying motherhood is nice or that apple pie is good.

Mr MacKinnon: No, it is not.

Mr PEARCE: No-one is going to object to those kinds of statements, but they are not very helpful in terms of making progress with the attitudes which this Government must adopt.

Mr Court: Can I ask you a question about education?

Mr PEARCE: Sure.

Mr Court: Could not this programme come through on the community broadcast satellite which is already in service?

Mr PEARCE: Does the member mean through the satellite?

Mr Court: Yes.

Mr PEARCE: Four channels are intended. I think it has been pretty well decided to spot beam to the four regions of Australia. Basically, we will have a national ABC programme. The member for Katanning-Roe, when suggesting there was no benefit for Western Australian remote areas, was wrong because areas that do not currently enjoy the ABC network would have it with probably a better picture, more shows would reach those areas, and areas which currently do not have television would receive it with the first satellite. No educational capacity is here except by the normal ABC education programmes which now appear on Channel 2 and are broadcast around part of the State in the normal way. People, particularly in our tertiary education institutions, have developed very imaginative ways of two-way communication via the satellite which would put, for example, a student in a remote area effectively in direct contact with a tutor in any educational institution in Western Australia.

Mr Court: They can now do that in the medical fields. People can carry out an operation in the country or the outback by obtaining advice from a hospital, but a channel will be provided for this purpose.

Mr PEARCE: Only if the channels are reserved and are powerful enough to cover all centres around the State. A number of weaker channels may be used for some of these purposes.

Mr Grill: If you are going to use those channels, you have to grab the big fish and that is the thing you do not want. You have already told us that.

Mr MacKinnon: That is exactly what we do not want.

Mr PEARCE: The signals become weaker and work must be done in a larger group arrangement; that is the point. The individual does not have that level of contact. The member for Nedlands is very ignorant of the very disappointed noises which have been made by the Western Australian

educational community because of the potential loss of these very innovative and effective educational programmes for people in remote areas. A lot of work has been done inside the Education Department on this matter.

Mr COURT: So you are now saying you do not want commercial TV to go to those areas?

Mr PEARCE: No, that is not what is being said at all. The Minister has said that if Western Australia can, in the second satellite, have control of a powerful transponder which puts programmes out for Western Australia, it can combine a level of commercial programming which can be in the hands of Channel 7, Channel 9, or whichever channel gets the commercial interest in the Western Australian Government transponder. Extra side bands can be added to the main carry wave. I am not conversant with the technological terms, but fundamentally we could use a single signal with extra carrying waves for additional purposes on top of general commercial broadcasting.

Mr MacKinnon: Why can't that be done by the transponder that is beaming the ABC throughout Western Australia?

Mr PEARCE: Because the ABC programme will not be emanating from Western Australia. It will be emanating from the Eastern States and broadcast nationally. I thought that point was understood by all.

Mr MacKinnon: But it is a powerful beam.

Mr PEARCE: It is a powerful beam, but it cannot operate in that way.

Mr MacKinnon: I think it could operate in this way.

Mr PEARCE: Perhaps the member thinks that. I say to the Minister that the most useful thing he could do on this whole matter is to provide a briefing for members of the Opposition and, indeed, for those members on the Government side who have an interest in this matter.

Mr COURT: Hang on; include the Minister.

Mr PEARCE: I included those members on the Government side who have an interest in this matter because it is a very complicated technical question and I think it does have importance to Western Australia and we all ought to know about these things.

I very strongly support the amendment moved by the Minister. I believe his proposal for a Western Australian share in the satellite through Western Australian Government ownership or leasing of one of the transponders on the second satellite will cover many of the needs of people in remote areas. I would be astounded indeed if the

Opposition were, because of its pride of ownership of the weak motion coming before the House, prepared to vote against the Government's amendment to this motion—

Mr Grill: Do so at your own risk.

Mr PEARCE: —because it is proposing a very imaginative thing which will be of considerable benefit to people in remote areas, and some of these people are represented by members of the Opposition.

MR COURT (Nedlands) [9.25 p.m.]: I am opposed to this amendment. I think we are all well aware of the benefits that will be received with the introduction of this new era of satellite communication. I do not profess to be a technical expert on it, but I think members opposite are very confused about just what the capabilities of the system are. I would like to ask the Minister a question. Where is he?

Mr MacKinnon: He is not here.

Mr Pearce: The Minister has gone out to take a phone call.

Mr COURT: I was just going to ask him if he has had discussions with local television stations about the whole satellite system. I just want to comment on the fact that communications is one area of technology in which there have been many advances in recent times. Certainly one of the advantages of the satellite system will be its benefit to the education system and, as I interjected, in the medical field. People in some of the more remote regions are very excited about the idea of having this direct communication with major hospitals and being able to obtain expert advice immediately instead of having to risk transporting the patient to Perth.

One of the problems we have had with communications in this country is the fact that Government departments have had the controlling interest in them. They have had too great a role to play. Telecom is a classic example. If we start comparing our communication systems in Australia with those of the United States and Canada, for example, we fall way behind.

Mr Troy: Are you really sure? You have done a close examination of all States, country and metropolitan, to make that assessment, have you? I am sure you have not done so, from the comment you made.

Mr COURT: What, in Canada or the United States?

Mr Troy: Either one.

Mr COURT: In the United States I have had quite a bit of experience. I lived there for a year and experienced their communications systems. I

must say it is certainly years ahead as far as technology goes and light years ahead as far as services go. The same applies to Canada.

Mr Troy: That is in the city. What about the country spots?

Mr COURT: It was not in a city. No doubt the member saw the programme on "Four Corners" in which the Canadian system was compared with our own.

Mr Troy: You know who produced that—the network that wanted to buy Telecom out.

Mr COURT: Good luck to it. What was said is very true. In America very good service is provided. The services which Telecom provides in Australia are not the same as those provided in America.

Mr Troy: I agree with you.

Mr COURT: I am glad the member said that. One of the big problems we face in Western Australia is that it is a large State in metropolitan terms and we have a great deal of our people living in remote areas. That is the reason this system is very important to us and the reason this motion was brought forward. Concern was expressed about the placement of the satellite.

The Minister seems to give adequate reasons why the placement could be all right. The Minister should keep a very open mind about the technical questions involved. *The Australian Financial Review* of today's date mentions that in 1985 some more powerful satellites will go up. We are talking about 30 watt transponders here and they are talking about 200 watt transponders. The article reads as follows—

The higher powered satellites provide for a much better quality, more reliable reception and allow the broadcasts to be received with much smaller two-foot dishes.

I am quite sure that many advances will be made in this area of satellite communications. The Minister should keep an open mind about it because in the next few years, when this satellite goes up in a space shuttle, many advances will be made.

The question of programming is very important. It is very important for Western Australia that programming is controlled by us. Again, that was the reason for the second part of our motion. The Eastern States have the numbers and financial strength and we do not want to be forced to accept this national network of television if we want to encourage local television, which I am sure we do.

I do not have a lot of technical information about this subject. The Minister for Regional Development and the North West and the Minister for Education made it clear that they are not well

briefed on the technical side of this subject. I would attend a briefing if one were held. However, the Minister should tell us if he has discussed this matter with the local television people, because they are the experts in the State. He should tell us their reaction to the system.

We know that the State Government wants to become involved in the third television station which is proposed and now it wants to go further and become involved in the control of broadcasting transponders.

I am opposed to the amendment introduced by the Government and I believe that the Minister for Education has even less understanding of what is involved than I have on this subject. The facilities are available for the School of the Air and other services he has mentioned to use the satellite system and I believe the amendment certainly goes against what we are trying to say in the motion we introduced.

I am opposed to the amendment.

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [9.32 p.m.]: I oppose this amendment because it goes right against the points in the motion we have brought to this House. I am disappointed with the Government and the two Ministers who have spoken. This motion was brought forward in good faith and with no criticism of the Government, but the Ministers have acted in a strange manner.

The Minister for Education criticised the way we tried to condemn the Government, but we should not have been criticised. We are not criticising the Government, and the motion is just a point of concern which we are bringing to the attention of the Government and of this House. I am surprised at the Government's reaction and believe that it is being oversensitive. The Government felt it had to remove the motion and substitute its own.

Mr Grill: What we are saying is that your motion is irrelevant and it is critical to be moving it at this stage.

Mr LAURANCE: I disagree with the Minister. When the Leader of the Opposition moved this motion, he said that we would like to join with the Government in its approaches to the Commonwealth on this issue. It is of importance to all of us and we should not be divided along party lines.

Mr Pearce: Did you ask the Opposition when you were in Government to give strength on this argument?

Mr LAURANCE: No, I did not, and the Opposition at that time did not offer it.

Mr Grill: Nor did we move a motion of this nature.

Mr LAURANCE: When we were in Government, we went to Canberra on this issue and members of the Government know that we gave the Federal Government a bad time.

Mr Evans: Not publicly.

Mr LAURANCE: Yes, we did.

Mr Evans: The Opposition at the time did offer assistance, but it was not accepted.

Mr LAURANCE: I do not think that that should cloud the Government's judgment on every issue that we bring to this House. This motion is brought forward in good faith, but it is not taken by the Government in good faith and we are disappointed.

The Minister for Regional Development and the North-West said that it was irrelevant to accept the first part of the Opposition's motion. We disagree, not because we are trying to blame the Government or the Minister, because the Minister cannot be blamed for any lack of action in the time he has occupied that portfolio. We are not blaming anyone. It is something that should be argued in the halls of science and not in the halls of politics. Decisions have been made and we assume they are right although technology changes. We are asking the Government to take our motion on board because it cannot afford to forget it. The arguments may still be valid even though the situation may change between now and 1985. The Opposition's request is reasonable. The Opposition said that it would go along with the Government in that request, but new information may come to light which will be of benefit to Australia. We are not convinced about this and the Minister said that he had doubts in his own mind about this.

We on this side of the House can only believe that the scientists who have made the decisions are acting in the best interests of Australia geographically as well as in the interests of the huge population centres of Melbourne and Sydney. It is a big worry and let us hope that they are worrying about the people in the Minister's electorate and the people in my electorate as well as the people in Sydney.

Mr Grill: You cannot carp at those sort of sentiments. We agree with that.

Mr LAURANCE: That is what we are seeking in our motion. We want to support the Government, but it has overreacted. We do not agree with the Government's amendment because it seeks to wipe out the first part of our motion.

Mr Cowan: If the Government is really concerned about the situation, it should have moved an addendum to the motion that had already been moved.

Mr Grill: Expressing concern at this very belated stage really changes nothing and is not appropriate. It is irrelevant, and concern should have been expressed when the decisions were made.

Mr Hassell: It was, and since then new information of a technical nature has come forward and it illustrates how the Commonwealth decision was wrong.

Mr Grill: Do you know when it came forward?

Mr Hassell: I do not know.

Mr Grill: It came forward during the period when you were in Government and you did nothing about it.

Mr Hassell: That is not accurate.

Mr LAURANCE: Let me cut across the interjections. That is the crunch point: Whether there will be breakthroughs in the future, we do not know at this stage and that is why the first part of the Minister's amendment is irrelevant. We want to join with the Government if new information comes to light. The Government would be using the same advisers we used and if new information comes to light, we will have to convince the Commonwealth scientists. I cannot be critical of that because the Government is trying to do its best for the State in the same way that I did and that my colleague, the member for Murdoch, did when we held that portfolio.

The Government cannot get the message that it is a matter of continued concern.

I now refer to the second point and we seem to be arguing at cross-purposes in this regard. The second part of the Opposition's motion was brought to this House in a spirit of goodwill. I think it is important on behalf of this State and it is something with which the Government can go to the Commonwealth. This matter has continued for a long time and members have probably lost count of the number of Ministers for Communications in the Federal scene with whom we have been dealing. I am sure that the current Minister for Communications will not be holding that portfolio when the satellite is launched.

When I was Minister, I dealt with three or four Federal Ministers for Communications. The first one with whom I dealt and the one from whom I received the most satisfaction was Tony Staley. It is quite likely that the new Minister will not be holding that portfolio in the future, not necessarily because he will be defeated, but because he could be given another portfolio. It would help if the Government and the Opposition took a common stance on this matter. The Government has decided it will not accept the second part of the

Opposition's motion and has sought to amend it and has done so on the wrong premise.

I said earlier that we take for granted the important services like the School of the Air, the Police Emergency Service, surveillance, aviation, mining camps, exploration camps, and the North-West Shelf, but they must be taken care of. They are important to Western Australia.

Mr Grill: How can they be effectively taken care of by the use of one of the 30-watt transponders?

Mr LAURANCE: The system should take care of the School of the Air without the use of another transponder. This is something that the Government should be pushing.

Aviation will be looked after by the Commonwealth Government, and this Government will not have to lease space for it. Perhaps this will have to be combined with other areas. The member for Merredin was correct when he said the Government should have moved an addendum to the Opposition's motion. However, the Government wants to confuse the motion before the House by moving an amendment which has a different content. If it wanted to add something to the Opposition's motion, it would be a different matter.

I do not want to argue as to who should own the transponder. Everyone should take an interest in how it is done, what it takes to do it, and who will own it, and these are issues in which the Government will be involved and in which the Opposition will be interested. If we do not like the outcome, we will argue about it in the future.

We believe that "networking" is an issue completely different from the School of the Air, etc. The Government should consider the question of "networking" in respect of commercial stations because we believe that Western Australia should have the right to produce and project its own programmes of a commercial nature. The Minister obviously agrees with me because he indicated this in his remarks. We do not want a network which will receive programmes from the Eastern States. This happens in other parts of the world and there is a danger of its happening in Canada because of the United States. As members would be aware, Canada has difficulties in getting the transmission of its own programmes.

Mr Grill: The problem is it is limited to the commercial sphere and it does not suggest any positive mechanism for achieving that end. Our amendment suggests a mechanism which is positive. There might be some disagreement between your philosophy and our philosophy as to who leases it, not owns it, because Aussat will own it. I know that is only a point of difference.

Mr LAURANCE: I do not want to get into that area because there are a number of things which the Minister and I have not discussed and one of those things about ownership is the cost. It will cost a lot to do that. It may mean that private enterprise and Government must get together in some combined arrangement. There will be no political philosophy involved in that; it will be purely a question of dollars and cents.

Mr Grill: Our motion in that regard was the same.

Mr LAURANCE: If the Minister would like to add to this motion, we would be happy to accept that. We would like the Government to accept point one. Point two deals with the commercial aspects of the network. An additional point three could relate to adequate arrangements being made for police, emergency services, and so on.

We did not add that point because if one looks at the report of the State satellite advisory committee, one finds that it includes seven or eight very lengthy recommendations. The Minister must surely have looked at this report. The Minister's motion follows one of those recommendations of which the Opposition was aware. However, the Minister has raised only one of those recommendations and we could have provided a long list of additional recommendations. If the Government thinks our motion is deficient, we will be glad to add to that motion.

Mr Grill: At least our motion takes us in a certain direction. The motion of the Opposition gives some general idea of some philosophy.

Mr LAURANCE: Our motion covers two areas of concern about which we felt the Government would also feel concern. However, if the Government wishes to add a third point, we will be happy with that. It is most unfortunate that the Government has decided to amend our motion in an unsatisfactory way, which gives the Opposition no alternative but to oppose it.

The Opposition did not want to differ with the Government on this point and it could be that the Minister could change the amendment so that the Opposition could accept it. However, the Minister overreacted to the motion; he was oversensitive and jumped on the Opposition members with his big boots. The Minister has put forward an amendment that is deficient and only confuses the issue. It may well be that there must be some combination of those points for technical or commercial reasons, but there is no need for us to decide on that at this stage.

Mr Grill: I am asking you to support the amendment.

Mr LAURANCE: We appeal to the Minister to go back to the original motion and add to it the first part of his amendment which refers to the School of the Air and other circumstances which we believe can be adequately catered for. If the Minister is prepared to do that, the Opposition would be happy to support his addition to our motion and then we could proceed. However, because the motion was put forward by the Opposition the Minister decided to react and to say, "No," and he decided that the Government would not support it. The Minister has brought in a note of carping criticism on an issue that we did not bring forward for this purpose.

Mr Grill: I do not think you can remember some of the comments made by you, the Leader of the Opposition, and the member for Murdoch.

Mr LAURANCE: This motion has been brought forward in good faith; it is something the Minister agrees with and which he can support. If the motion is agreed to, it means that the Parliament can then proceed to the Commonwealth in a combined effort. However, the Minister decided not to accept any part of the motion and he has put forward an amendment which confuses the issues and which we think is most deficient. I ask the Minister to go back to the motion and accept the points we have made. I believe the Government would win out by taking this action.

This Government has not done all the things it said it would do, and it is just like the previous Government. I am very disappointed in the Minister and in the Minister for Education for taking this attitude to this worthwhile motion. The Minister gives me no option but to oppose his amendment.

MR TROY (Mundaring) [9.50 p.m.]: Perhaps I can ask whether this speech constitutes my maiden speech, the second in six months.

Another point of clarification I would like to make is that despite my technical background, I am not claiming to be a communications expert in this field. I have listened to the member for Gascoyne attempting to explain that his earlier speech did not have any political motivation, and that the Opposition was seeking a combined effort of both parties to go to the Australian Government on this matter. I refer to the comments he made and I acknowledge that he mentioned longitudinal problems, transponders, beams and so forth, earth stations, Aussat programmes, encouragement of work achieved from that, facilities being established across Australia, including Lockridge, and also the question of Aussat and industrial organisations. He mentioned ATEA and

its wish to own and control the satellite. I would like documentary proof of that, because it is news to me. Is the member talking about the promise of industrial control of the satellite in terms of members operating on it?

Mr Laurance: I did not want to confuse the two. ATEA wants Telecom to own that control.

Mr TROY: I refer to the longitudinal placement. Despite the divided technical opinions about the advantages and disadvantages of whether it should be at 128 degrees or 164 degrees in longitudinal form, those technical arguments which have been raised have yet to be proved. One must bear in mind the continued technical change and development in that area which can be substantial in terms of the technical ability of amplifiers used, which can offset some of the disadvantages.

Mr MacKinnon: Telecom admitted that Dr O'Brien's argument on attenuation was correct.

Mr TROY: Telecom did not dispute it completely; it recognised that the argument possibly had some merit. However, it is not an argument which has been proved. It is subject to official determination. I think it is now no longer possible to amend the contract and change the positioning of the physical structure of the satellite under construction without some consensus of technical opinion as to whether it is warranted. I think there is no possibility of that, and the option is no longer available.

The Opposition has now moved at this belated stage and to expect this Government to achieve the alteration is nothing short of political humbug in my view. The Opposition has admitted that it failed to achieve an alteration at the very time when those decisions should have been adjusted. Tonight the speakers supporting the Opposition acknowledged that point, and it needs to be set aside. There is only one relevant point; that is, the Western Australian-originated programmes.

Mr Laurance: You have mentioned technological progress. The situation could be changed tomorrow.

Mr TROY: Not in terms of the adjustment of the longitudinal position. The only initiative that can be taken at this stage relates to the question of retaining the best technical option for Western Australian-originated programmes. I believe all members may not fully appreciate that the only area that can be influenced relative to this is on the second satellite and it revolves around three or four points. The first is the interconnection of transponders to various antenna positions. There are 15 transponders, four with a 30-watt capacity and 11 with a 12-watt capacity. They will feed

into footprints, as the member for Gascoyne said, one with national coverage and other spot beams with geographical coverage. The first relates to Western Australia; the second to the Northern Territory and South Australia; the third to Queensland; and the fourth to New South Wales, and then the lower to Victoria and parts of New South Wales.

Inter-coupling options permit a number of transponders to be connected to a particular spot beam. In fact, this point has been raised by commercial television stations. They can secure one of those for each of their separate programmes and hook it into a particular beam when they choose to do so, whether or not it is a national one, although that is the most likely choice. The amendment by the Minister advances what is best for Western Australia. A 30-watt transponder reserved for Western Australian-originated programmes can be used for education purposes and will not be in conflict with the School of the Air. I think the reference to the School of the Air was an unnecessary criticism. We are looking at the whole subject of programmes—whether they be for education, State Emergency Service, or public works, it does not matter. It is the services we are seeking to get. The crucial point is to extend commercial television programmes and those which originate, are planned, and are developed in Western Australia.

The most important factor relating to the allocation of transponders to particular beams is that of cost of the remote service facility on a home-stead. That is a crucial question and it has been overlooked in the debate. In those remote services HACBAS will be substantially advantaged by using a configuration which allows 30-watt transponders to be used. That is an important point to bear in mind. We can get that reservation for them. Not only will they have the Western Australian spot on 30-watt transponders of satellite 1, but also they will have a similar capability on satellite 2. I think that is what the Minister's amendment is directed towards.

Mr MacKinnon: Why do we need two?

Mr TROY: I think it offers an option and a wider range of services.

Mr MacKinnon: Is the School of the Air already accommodated on the first satellite?

Mr TROY: The dangers involved in the Eastern States television proposal are highlighted by an article in *The Bulletin* of 26 July 1983 which stated—

If the commercial networks have access to a 30-watt transponder each every regional television station will be able to receive and

retransmit whatever programs are available in the cities. With two supplementary licences in each non-metropolitan television area there will be three commercial television choices available. Instead of being able to have, at most one live program, country viewers will have a choice of three.

Mr Cowan: What about those outback areas which have no television service at all?

Mr TROY: That is exactly the point to which I am referring. In fact, the Eastern States television networks have proposed this. I am not agreeing with it, but I am pointing out the situation. They will be giving a wider range of major television network-originated programmes. But not local content; that is all it really does. I would like to continue to quote from the article which appeared in *The Bulletin* of 26 July. This next part is really interesting as it gives the background of the whole satellite situation. It reads as follows—

Some proposals have been made to provide a special outback service using the satellite. This is a crazy proposition. First it will provide Outback Australians with only one additional television channel instead of four.

Just how confusing is that statement compared with the other statement? It is quite unbelievable that something like that would be printed, because it contravenes the original intent of the whole advantage of Aussat. The article continues—

Second it will provide program material that no one else wants. Rights are not available to the programs broadcast on the national networks.

So *The Bulletin* is simply saying that if programmes are produced for the remote areas, no-one else would be interested in them. Then the beam and the transponder time is gobbled up, and it is not available to anyone else. That again conflicts with the original intention. To continue—

Third it is not sensible economically.

This is an interesting one, and it goes on as follows—

The half a million Outback Australians are not a saleable market.

That is an argument advanced by the area in terms of economics. I am not suggesting that I agree with that argument either, but it was a condition glossed over throughout the satellite debate. The fourth point is—

Fourth, why segregate Outback dwellers any more than they are already? It's hard enough living in remote inland Australia without being given a television service in-

ferior to that available elsewhere. If networking can work between the big cities why shouldn't it work for the Outback too?

So *The Bulletin* is conveniently jumping on the band wagon. There is really no argument about it. I believe that journal clearly reveals the real threat to Western Australian television in our remote areas, and I completely reject its arguments. In so doing, I support the amendment moved by the Minister for Transport.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [10.02 p.m.]: Very briefly, the National Party supports the proposition moved by the Leader of the Opposition, but it acknowledges also the merit of the amendment. As was indicated by the member for Merredin by way of interjection, it is most unfortunate that the Government did not seek to move this amendment as an addendum. Had it done so, it would have only strengthened the motion before the House; as it is at the moment, I believe it detracts from the total motion.

Mr Barnett: The Government's motion has better odds—it is 10 to 1. You had better get on that one.

Mr STEPHENS: I would just like to remind the interjector and the Government as a whole of the words used by the Premier at the beginning of this session of Parliament on Tuesday, 26 July. This appears at page 277 of *Hansard*. The Premier concluded his statement by saying—

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.

Mr Tonkin: That attitude has been borne out.

Mr STEPHENS: To continue—

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.

Mr Barnett: I did not say we were going to win it—I said we had better odds.

Mr STEPHENS: I hope the Minister for Transport will reflect for a moment on the words of the Premier and put them into operation. While I was reading that quote the Leader of the Government said by way of interjection that to an extent it has been carried out. I want to acknowledge that the Government has at times accepted amendments.

Mr Tonkin: Of course at times. You cannot expect us to accept every amendment.

Mr STEPHENS: I do not expect the Government to accept every amendment, but we in the National Party are saying that this is an occasion on which the Government would enhance its prestige, and would bear out the words of the Premier, by including the amendment as an addendum. It would strengthen the original motion. To delete all the words and replace them with the words proposed by the Minister does not strengthen the motion at all.

By way of interjection, in referring to the first part of the Opposition's motion, the Minister said, "Well, it is too late; a decision has been made already". Perhaps a decision has been made, but that should not stop this House from expressing its opinion. Something could happen so that a change could take place. At least the Federal Government would know the opinion of members, and hopefully members of both sides, of the Parliament of Western Australia. If our Federal representatives in the House of Representatives and in the Senate have been pushing the case for Western Australians—and I sometimes doubt this; they seem to push the party's case instead—this motion in its entirety will help the overall situation. I hope the Government is prepared to have a second look at it, to withdraw its amendment, and to replace it with a third part to the motion. Certain words would then be unnecessary because they appear already in the original motion.

Both the original motion and the amendment are worthwhile. To acknowledge that one has been hasty or wrong is not a sign of weakness but a sign of strength. I would like to see the Minister come out a little more strongly on this matter.

MR BRIDGE (Kimberley) [10.08 p.m.]: As far back as I can recall, the debate on the satellite has been clouded with confusion. No matter where one goes, people are confused about its ultimate benefits. It is sad to think that confusion has intruded into this debate tonight.

When the satellite was first discussed here tonight I took a great deal of interest in it because

I fully appreciate the value of this service to rural Australia. Probably Kimberley would be the area of Australia which would benefit the most from the service, and here is an opportunity for us to collectively argue the point of view with the Federal Government, and express those areas of concern which we all share. In a constructive way, we ought to be able to advance our concern to ensure that when the service is available to the people in rural Australia, we will have played a part in ensuring that it is the best service available. I had hoped that we would all take that view.

An Opposition member: That is why we moved the motion.

Mr BRIDGE: As I see it, that is the central point of the debate.

Mr Crane: Of course it is.

Mr BRIDGE: We ought not to be concerned about political bargaining and jockeying. We are here to represent the people who do not have the capacity to argue their case. They are relying on us to express the concern which they have.

Communication is one of the most important services we can provide to people in rural Australia. These people are disadvantaged simply because of their geographic situation. Communication is not an important issue to people in the metropolitan area or in the other more populated areas of Australia. It is easy for the people in these areas to keep in touch with each other, but that is not the case for people living in rural Australia.

The lack of communication has always worried the people in the Kimberley. Earlier in the debate the member for Gascoyne referred to an incident which occurred in Halls Creek many years ago. The situation as described by the member is quite correct. The late James D'arcy was involved in the incident which illustrated the need for improvement in communications in that remote part of Australia. It was after that incident that positive steps were taken to bring about a change, although we had to wait many years. It is only this year really that the residents in the Kimberley have communication facilities comparable with those in other parts of Australia. It is now 1983, yet the incident referred to earlier in the debate took place before I was born.

Because the matter of communication is of such concern to the people in the remote areas, we ought to see that any new system brings with it the maximum benefits. If we have some concern about aspects of this domestic satellite service, we should express that concern in no uncertain terms. I for one would always argue a position of

strength for Western Australia in the control of this system.

There is a great deal of cause for concern if the system is controlled from the Eastern States and I would like to refer to a classic example in regard to the non-televising of the FA Cup this year. The ABC in Western Australia was in full support of the proposal to provide a direct telecast of the FA Cup to the Pilbara and the Kimberley, but those in the east made the decision that it would not be televised. An enormous amount of representation was made about this matter, from the Premier down to the local members of Parliament. Many other people attempted to get those in control of the ABC in Sydney to change the decision but it was as though we were talking to a wounded buffalo. We had as much chance of gaining the attention of these people as we had of jumping the moon sideways.

If we believe that the measure of control we will have over the satellite is less than that which is desirable, let us express that point of view in no uncertain terms. After all, we are talking about the provision of communications to a group of people in rural Australia who need that service. The people in the Kimberley and the Pilbara are looking with great expectation to the advent of the satellite system so that communications can be extended beyond those existing at present. I hope that we, as the people charged with the responsibility of deliberating that particular matter in this Chamber, will advance the situation here tonight collectively to ensure that our position is made known to the Federal Government.

That is not a criticism of the Federal Government. I do not think we are reflecting on anyone. I would not have thought that would be the basis of our debate here tonight, but rather that, in a spirit of compromise, we could acknowledge the need to debate the areas of concern which we all have and on which we are entitled to comment.

I do not intend to refer to the technicalities which have been advanced tonight. Words of wisdom have flowed throughout the Chamber this evening as to how the domestic satellite will work in the Kimberley, the Pilbara, etc. However, if climatic conditions have a bearing on the efficiency of that service and if the location of the satellite might create a problem in that it may weaken the signal or the ability of the people in remote parts of Australia to view certain programmes, let us examine the matter, because there is no doubt that climatic conditions in those areas of Australia are a major factor. We do have seasonal situations where heavy rain, cloud, etc., are experienced.

If it can be argued that, as a result of the climatic conditions in rural Australia, concern exists about the efficiency of the satellite when it is ultimately located, let us look at that and see whether a change can be made, if necessary.

The Opposition has expressed its views on the control of the satellite and has indicated in whose hands that should lie. Having experienced the attitude of the ABC this year in that it did not televise the FA Cup, I hope whoever is in charge of this satellite is answerable to the Parliament in some way. I found it was hopeless to go to people in the ABC, because they were simply not interested and disregarded approaches made to them, because they were not controlled by the Parliament and they had that escape.

I do not know whether Telecom would be the ideal body to deal with this. However, I was disappointed in the reaction of people at the ABC and in the way in which they handled their responsibility to the viewing public of Western Australia. They did not care a damn about the people of the Pilbara or the Kimberley and, furthermore, they did not care a damn about what the politicians of that region had to say about the matter.

The Sydney-based chiefs of the ABC took it upon themselves to make a decision and they knew there was little or nothing we, as politicians, could do to change it and they played on it.

I hope the same situation does not occur in respect of the satellite. I hope that system does not become totally immune, because the people who control it are not answerable to the Parliament.

Communications are vital to the people of rural Australia. It has been suggested tonight that the location of the satellite will not be in the interests of those people. Therefore, we should indicate that to the Federal Government if that is the case. However, if the proposed amendment advanced by the Government covers that aspect of our concern, there is little reason we should jostle for position in this Chamber tonight on a matter which is vitally important to the people in rural Australia.

I agree with those who have recognised the commitment of the Federal Government in proceeding with the installation of a domestic satellite which will benefit the people of rural Australia. In itself that is commendable, because the Federal Government could easily have decided to let that matter remain in abeyance. It has not done so; in fact, it has moved very quickly.

It is always possible for people in this State to express their concern about the way in which the system is being established. It is important that we question the decisions made by people in the Eastern States because, in the main, I do not

think they could care less about how the service which will affect the people in the Kimberley and the Pilbara is set up. Those people are so far removed from that area that they have little regard for rural interests. These decisions are made predominantly by the city chiefs who take metropolitan interests into account and I am sure members agree that is not an acceptable situation.

Let us proceed tonight in our final judgment on this matter, bearing in mind that we have a responsibility to conclude debate and decide on the value of the communications satellite to rural people of Western Australia—people who live in the Kimberley, the Pilbara, and other areas of the State and who are not able to make decisions in this regard. We are the ones who have that opportunity—we, as members of Parliament, discussing on a basis of consensus a matter which directly affects those people.

My position is very simple: I am not interested in the political realities. I am interested in ensuring that this satellite offers the maximum service to rural people and is ultimately established on the basis that those people will derive the type of service to which they are entitled and which they expect. Let us proceed on that basis.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch) [10.22 p.m.]: Basically, I support the comments just made by the member for Kimberley. We on this side of the House are of the same view as he; that is, as quickly as possible we want to see this satellite service implemented to the highest standard.

I shall make a couple of points in relation to the Government's proposed amendment to indicate how it differs from the motion. I understand the Minister has had discussions with members on this side of the House and he is likely to accept some changes to his amendment. However, firstly, I point out why we believe the first part of the motion is important. The Government's amendment seeks to delete that part of the motion and it is important it be included. As the member for Mundaring indicated, we are only too well aware that we have tried to do this and have failed. It is important that we keep reinforcing that message to the people of the Eastern States. I am not critical of the Minister, but, as he knows well, people in eastern Australia barely know we exist and unless we keep reinforcing the first point of the motion and our displeasure at some of these decisions, they will never get the message.

Mr Hassell: What about the new manager of the ABC who thinks that Australia consists of the Pacific basin?

Mr MacKINNON: I believe he got the message from our Leader that it consists of a little more than that.

It is a matter of concern that we do not have time to examine the feasibility of this. If it is to proceed, the feasibility examination should be undertaken as a matter of extreme urgency. As I indicated in my earlier remarks, an article in *The Australian Financial Review* of 20 October referred to the setting up of the Federal Caucus infrastructure committee and the fact that it was due to meet "last night"; that is, 19 October. At that time it was to conclude its recommendations for Federal Cabinet.

The decision is imminent and it is too late to talk about examining the feasibility. Therefore, we should be proceeding in a positive manner very promptly perhaps, as indicated by the members for Gascoyne and Stirling, by means of a motion. However, it is important that the sentiments expressed in our original motion are in some way incorporated with the Government's desires so that we can go ahead, as indicated by the member for Kimberley, on a joint basis to the Federal Government in order that it is aware of our concern on behalf of the people of Western Australia in respect of this issue.

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Transport) [10.27 p.m.]: In a spirit of compromise as suggested by the member for Stirling, on the basis that we have some common ground, and bearing in mind the Premier's words during the Opening of Parliament, I have spoken to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Gascoyne and I believe we can produce a motion tonight which will serve the purpose of Western Australia and to which all parties can agree. For that reason, I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr GRILL: As part of that compromise I move—

That the word "resultant" in line 4 of paragraph (1) be deleted and the word "possible" be substituted.

Mr Wilson: I second the amendment.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.28 p.m.]: It is really a good thing that the Minister has come to recognise the basis upon which the motion was put forward by the Opposition. It is an expression of a real and genuine concern that we have now and have had for several years about the direction this matter is taking and the fact that it may well not achieve or do what was set out to be achieved in the whole concept of a satellite.

I understand that if the Minister's amendment is passed, he will move to add the substance of what he originally moved as a substitute for paragraph (1) as a new paragraph (3). If the Minister does that, we may well have a motion which represents the view of this House of Parliament, a view which should carry significant weight with the Federal Government.

We very much appreciate the Minister and the Government withdrawing the proposal to delete paragraph (1), because we regard that as being very important and that even at this late stage—indeed, it is a late stage in the whole process and it is not that it has not been pressed before repeatedly by us both publicly and privately—it is very important that the Federal Government, even if some cost or delay is involved, should seek to ensure that the satellite service does what it was intended to do which is, in particular, to service the remote areas of the whole of Australia of which Western Australia has the greatest proportion. Therefore, the importance is there, and I think we can carry this forward from the Minister's move to achieve a very good result.

Amendment put and passed.

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Transport) [10.31 p.m.]: I move an amendment—

That the following paragraph (3) be added—

(3) That this House supports the notion that the Government should examine the feasibility of obtaining one transponder on Aussat for transmission of programmes for such things as the School of the Air and other educational purposes, State Emergency Service, Public Works and Government Medical Needs and other vital purposes.

I have not included the final three lines I foreshadowed earlier because they are reflected in paragraph (2) of the motion.

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [10.33 p.m.]: I am pleased the Minister has decided to move this amendment, because it rounds off the motion. The important point is that the motion represents the common view of this Parliament to go forward to the Commonwealth. It is wonderful that the Parliament can come to agreement on an issue. I pointed out earlier that there is no need for any political issue to be evident in this matter. When one considers the contributions made to this debate by a wide range of speakers from both sides of the Chamber, one realises contributions have been made in good spirit and with a great deal of unanimity. We are pleased that the motion in-

initially moved has been accepted by the House and will be added to by this amendment. Instead of arguing about where we should be going, we have reached agreement, and this will serve the people of this State well in the future. I thank the Minister for taking this attitude.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [10.35 p.m.]: I commend the Minister for accepting the recommendations made to him. It seems that this is one of those rare occasions when the House has seen fit to co-operate in a matter that affects all Western Australians. The last time I saw this Parliament make an independent decision rather than a decision imposed upon it by the Government was in 1976 when a motion was put by you, Mr Speaker, and the Parliament reached its decision on an amendment to it by requiring eight divisions in half an hour. On that day a democratic decision was made. In this instance, we have reached that position by co-operation from both sides of the House. All I can say is this: Life is full of surprises.

Amendment put and passed.

Question (motion, as amended) put and passed.

BUSINESS NAMES AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr Grill (Minister for Transport), read a first time.

Second Reading

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Transport) [10.37 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The State Budget provides for increased fees and charges in a number of areas.

A review of the necessary formalities has shown that many increases can be implemented by regulation, but that others still require an amendment to the parent Act. The latter procedure is cumbersome, costly, and a wasteful use of the Parliament's time.

With a view to a more rational and uniform approach, it is therefore proposed to amend a number of Acts to permit fees and charges in future to be amended by regulation. This continues a sensible trend which has gradually developed in recent years.

Needless to say, Parliament will retain its control of the level of all relevant charges through its power to disallow regulations.

The necessary extension of the regulation-making power is the first purpose of this Bill.

A further amendment is proposed relating to finance brokers. Section 26 of the Business Names Act prohibits a person from referring to a business name in connection with an invitation to lend money where that invitation is made by advertisement to the public. Licensed finance brokers are being inhibited in their normal operations by this restriction, and the amendment will allow the exemption by regulation of certain persons, or class of invitations, from the operation of section 26.

Finance brokers are, of course, now controlled by the Finance Brokers Control Act and this amendment will permit them to advertise in conformity with section 45 of that Act.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr MacKinnon.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr Grill (Minister for Transport), read a first time.

Second Reading

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Transport) [10.39 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to permit future amendments to the level of fees to be prescribed by regulation. The reasons are the same as indicated in the second reading speech on the Business Names Amendment Bill.

Attention is drawn to the fact that fees under the Limited Partnerships Act have not been amended since 1909. The use made of this Act varies greatly from year to year and the revenue varies accordingly. Nonetheless, the Government believes that the fees, set over 70 years ago, are now so far out of date that they should not be permitted to continue unchanged.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Old.

BILLS OF SALE AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr Grill (Minister for Transport), read a first time.

Second Reading

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Transport) [10.40 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

As with the two previous Bills, the purpose of this amendment is to permit fees under the Act to be prescribed by regulation in future.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr MacKinnon.

House adjourned at 10.41 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

COMPUTERS

Software

1774. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) Is the Government currently discussing computer software with IBM Aust. Ltd.?
- (2) Is it intended to provide IBM software within the Government system?
- (3) What other systems have been or are being considered?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) There are a number of IBM computer installations in Government departments and authorities. IBM software runs on these computers and there is continuous discussion between these departments and authorities and IBM on software.
- (2) Appropriate IBM software is used on IBM computers and will continue to be provided. Software from other sources is also run on Government IBM computers.
- (3) Government has a wide range of computer suppliers other than IBM and the various manufacturers' software runs on these machines. Considerable use is also made of packages provided by independent software companies. The choice of software packages is made on merit.

BUSINESSES

Grants and Subsidies

1835. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) How much money was allocated for grants and subsidies to industry in 1982-83?
- (2) (a) Which businesses received the grants or subsidies; and
(b) how much?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) \$872 000 allocated in 1982-83 CRF Budget.
- (2) (a) and (b) \$533 172 was paid in grants and subsidies during 1982-83 but details of which firms received grants is considered confidential by the parties concerned.

HEALTH: INSURANCE

Medicare: Starting Date

1836. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) With the introduction of Medicare in 1984, what is the proposed starting date?
- (2) What will be the arrangements for hospitals such as the Murray District Hospital and Harvey District Hospital regarding doctors and hospitals for outpatients, for emergency patients and for Medicare patients?
- (3) Does the hospital charge the Medicare patients?
- (4) Does the doctor charge the Medicare patient?
- (5) Does the hospital pay the doctor and charge the patient?
- (6) Are there any guidelines laid down for the hospitals for the above or any other circumstances that may arise with the introduction of Medicare?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) 1 February 1984.
- (2) These will be negotiated at both hospitals. Medical services may be provided by practitioners either by a contract of service or by a contract for service.
- (3) No, except where there is an agreed arrangement between the hospital and medical practitioners for the provision of prescribed services.
- (4) and (5) No.
- (6) Administrative guidelines will be promulgated when full details are known and when a formal agreement between State and Commonwealth Governments has been concluded.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Mr and Mrs Colin Jarrett

1839. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Youth and Community Services:

Has he or his department been approached by Mr and Mrs Colin Jarrett concerning their financial difficulties in relation to their home?

Mr WILSON replied:

It is not considered appropriate to respond to questions which may impose on

the confidentiality of persons approaching the department for assistance.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Wagin Shire Council: Visits and Meetings

1867. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Housing:

When is he intending to arrange the visits and meetings he promised the Wagin Shire Council deputation which met with him on 31 May 1983?

Mr WILSON replied:

At the meeting held with the Wagin Shire Council on 31 May 1983 an undertaking was given that I would visit Wagin and meet the council if requested. However, the shire indicated at the same meeting that it would seek to make contact with the local Aboriginal progress association and I have had no indication whether or not such contact has been made.

More recently, following contact from the shire clerk and others, action has been initiated to deal with the main source of problems raised at my earlier meeting with shire representatives.

1877 and 1878. *These questions were postponed.*

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Grants

1879. Mr BATEMAN, to the Treasurer:

Would he please supply me with a detailed synopsis of all those departments that will be in receipt of grants together with the specific purposes for which those grants are intended, for the year ending 30 June 1984?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

In view of the considerable work involved I am reluctant to commit staff to extract and compile all the information requested.

However, should the member have something specific in mind which he wants to pursue then he should provide me with further details and I will arrange for the necessary information to be supplied.

DAIRYING: MILK

Goats: Pasteurisation

1880. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he been made aware of a letter dated 21 October from the Manager of Anchor Foods Pty. Ltd. addressed to the President, Goat Breeders Society of Australia (WA Branch), which in its opening paragraph states: "It was with interest that our company learnt of the new regulation, that will be enforced in eighteen months time, which will require all goats' milk to be pasteurised before it can be sold to the public, either from retail outlets or the farm"?
- (2) Will he inform the House whether the information concerning pasteurisation of goats' milk, as presented in the first sentence of the letter, is correct?
- (3) Is he aware that members of the Goat Breeders Society had no prior knowledge of this new regulation until they were informed in the unofficial letter?
- (4) (a) Is it the case that the writer of the letter is a member of the food and drug advisory committee which recommended this new regulation;
(b) if so, did this member declare an interest in the subject and refrain from influencing the decision of the committee?
- (5) Is he aware that compulsory pasteurisation of goats' milk sold to the public will—
 - (a) deprive many families of their source of raw goats' milk, which is essential for the treatment of certain health conditions which are not aided by the use of milk which has been pasteurised;
 - (b) have a detrimental effect on many small farmers;
 - (c) be impossible to enforce universally and therefore be unfair to those more easily policed?
- (6) Has he considered the fact that under a regulation prohibiting the sale of unpasteurised milk the owners of dairy goats will still be permitted to drink unpasteurised milk produced on their own property, thus creating a form of discrimination within the community?
- (7) Will he instruct the officers of his department to consider an alternative

system in which producers have the option to pasteurise their goats' milk and consumers have the choice of drinking raw goats' milk if they desire or if their health requires it, subject to a set of standards being made available for the guidance of local health authorities?

- (8) Will he inform the Parliament of what action has been taken in regard to the final two recommendations of the 1982 Honorary Royal Commission into Dairy Products, i.e.—

that goats' milk should be available direct from goat dairies in a non-pasteurised form under licence from the Public Health Department.

that the claim that the nutritional value of goats milk is reduced by pasteurisation be further investigated before any move towards pasteurisation of all goats milk is considered?

- (9) Will he defer any decision on pasteurisation of goats' milk pending a further examination of the comments of the Honorary Royal Commission on pages 134-136 of its report which led to the recommendations referred to in (8) of this question?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) No.
- (4) (a) Yes;
(b) no.
- (5) to (9) I am unable to comment on a proposal which has not yet been presented to me.

AGRICULTURE

Grasshoppers: Control

1881. Mr TUBBY, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the amount of subsidy on chemicals for grasshopper control on private property in the agricultural areas?
- (2) What is the extent of subsidy for application costs of chemicals used for grasshopper control in agricultural areas?
- (3) (a) Have either subsidies been recently adjusted;
(b) if so, would he please give details?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) 50 per cent subsidy on insecticide for the control of small plague grasshoppers and Australian plague locusts.
- (2) Nil.
- (3) (a) and (b) The policy on subsidies has applied since 1982. A special Government grant was made on a once-only basis in 1982-83 to supply insecticide free of charge.

AGRICULTURE

Protection Board: Doggers

1882. Mr TUBBY, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it a fact that because of Government cutbacks in staff, one of the Agriculture Protection Board doggers has been removed from the South-West Land Division?
- (2) Will this mean that only one dogger will be available from the Northampton Shire in the north to the Albany Shire in the south?
- (3) Does he believe that one dogger for this vast area will give satisfactory control?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) Two doggers are available in the area designated stationed at Moora and Southern Cross. They will service southern areas as required with the assistance of local field staff.

HOSPITAL

North Midlands District: Board

1883. Mr TUBBY, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he received a request from the North Midlands District Hospital Board to reconsider his direction that the board members be reduced from 12 to 9?
- (2) Would he please give reasons for this reduction?
- (3) Would he please give details of costs claimed by each member in fulfilling his/her duties as a board member?
- (4) What would be the anticipated savings by the department with the reduction of members?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) The decision to limit the number of board members was made in order to regulate the maximum number of members comprising country non-teaching hospital boards.

It is considered a hospital board of nine persons chosen on the basis of management ability and appropriate attributes is an adequate number to effectively and efficiently manage a country non-teaching hospital. Large metropolitan teaching hospitals are effectively managed with boards of only 10 members.

It is recognised as sound management practice in that boards and committees are most effective when composed of the minimum number of persons with appropriate management skills and attributes to perform the functions and responsibilities assigned to them.

Having a greater number of members than is necessary tends to detract from the effectiveness of the committee in the exercise of its management function.

- (3) The decision was not based on cost considerations.
- (4) Not applicable.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: RATES

System: Review

1884. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Does he have any intention of reviewing the rating system which is causing concern to a large number of ratepayers?
- (2) Does he have a solution to the inequities in the rating system?
- (3) If not, when can the ratepayers expect a change in the rating system?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) to (3) A good deal of work has been done already in reviewing the rating system with a view to improving the existing system.

I am expecting a departmental report in the next few weeks considering such matters as—

the maximum level of the minimum rate;
rating adequately for vacant land under GRV;
rating adequately for units and flats under UCV;

mechanism to facilitate the change from UCV to GRV for urban land; and
urban farmland rating.

Amendments arising from this report are anticipated to be introduced in the autumn session of 1984.

In addition, I have today announced the composition of the Government's differential rating pilot study group. The aim of the pilot study is to assess the practicability of a system of differential rating as an alternative system of rating for WA councils.

As previously announced, Mundaring MLA Gavan Troy will chair the study group.

Members will include representatives from the Stirling, Canning, Mundaring, Swan and Augusta-Margaret River Councils, along with officers from my office, the Local Government Department and the associations of local government.

Phase 1 of the study will involve the preparation of computer models based on the practice of changing different rates in the dollar for different types of land use.

I have asked for an interim report by February with a view to introducing legislation to allow these councils to actually implement a pilot programme next year.

The study has been structured so that some other councils with compatible computer facilities may take part if they wish.

WATER RESOURCES: IRRIGATION

Rates: Increases

1885. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What have been the percentage increases in irrigation rates for the Waroona, Harvey and Roelands area for the last ten years?
- (2) What is the departmental cost comparisons of the irrigation offices, including the district offices and the administration offices, both country and city, over the last 10 years?

(3) Do the irrigation rates in the south-west region cover the cost of providing the service?

(4) Has anything been done to attempt to hold the increases such as the last increase?

Mr TONKIN replied:

(1) 1974-75—Nil and 21.4 per cent*

1975-76—Nil

1976-77—Nil

1977-78—34.4 per cent

1978-79—Nil

1979-80—40 per cent

1980-81—20 per cent

1981-82—25 per cent

1982-83—12.4 per cent

1983-84—18.9 per cent

(2) It is not clear what information the member is seeking. On clarification, the detail required, if available, will be provided.

(3) No.

(4) Recognising the critical nature of the State's financial position, every effort has been made to reduce expenditure and thereby restrict the increase in rates to the minimum.

* Note: Prior to 1974-75 Collie sub-area 2 was rated at a level above the remainder of the south-west irrigation districts and the 21.4 per cent increase brought the rating of all south-west irrigation districts to the same level.

MEAT

Western Australian Meat Commission: Livestock Purchases

1886. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Does the Western Australian Meat Commission buy livestock?

(2) If so, on what basis?

(3) If so, what percentage is purchased privately compared with the auction system, in the last two years?

(4) Do meat commission representatives attend all auction sales of livestock?

Mr EVANS replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) At auction, by private treaty and by direct consignment on a weight and grade basis.

(3)

	1981-82 Per cent	1982-83 Per cent
Cattle:		
Auction	71.1	63.2
Private*	28.9	36.8
Sheep:		
Auction	77.8	78.3
Private*	22.2	21.7

Goats:

All goats are purchased by private treaty.

(4) No; currently the WA Meat Commission employs two livestock buyers who attend as many auction sales as possible. A third livestock buyer is expected to be engaged in the near future. This will enable a wider coverage of auction sales.

* Includes direct consignment.

RAILWAYS

Bowelling-Wagin: Reopening

1887. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

Adverting to question 1869 of 1983 relating to the Wagin-Bowelling railway, from whom were the submissions received, referred to in part (3) of the answer?

Mr GRILL replied:

Mr A. P. Shaw—Carey Park, Bunbury.
Mrs R. M. Whitaker—"Lakeside", Duranillin.

Mr C. C. Nalder—Wagin.

Mr I. G. Rutherford—"Deep Pool", Duranillin.

Mr & Mrs M. & S. Scott—"Paper Daisy", Duranillin.

Hon. T. Knight, MLC for South Province.

Hon. A. A. Lewis, MLC for Lower Central Province.

Hon. H. D. Evans, MLA—Minister for Agriculture.

Hon. W. M. Piesse, MLC for Lower Central Province.

Hon. P. V. Jones, MLA for Narrogin.

Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia (Bunbury Branch) central south regional development committee.

1888. *This question was postponed.*

MINERAL SANDS*Industry: Shutdown*

1889. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware of a report titled "Mineral Sands Scandal" collated by Dr John Troy, currently being circulated with the intention of closing down the mineral sands industry?
- (2) Does the Government support the claims made within the report, which allege high radioactive levels within the industry, and associated with the Laporte Australia Ltd. plant?
- (3) As this report erodes stability within the industry, and greatly increases uncertainty and loss of confidence by workers and their families in their own futures, will the Government publicly dissociate itself from this report, and condemn it as a misleading and mischievous document?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) to (3) Yes, I am aware of newspaper reports of this publication. I have already initiated a comprehensive inquiry into the mineral sands industry and it would be inappropriate for me to comment further until this report is received and studied. The committee has asked for submissions and if Dr Troy wishes to submit his report for consideration by the committee, he should do so.

WATER RESOURCES*Metropolitan Water Authority: Depreciation*

1890. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has the method of calculating and reporting depreciation by the Metropolitan Water Authority for 1983-84 being decided yet?
- (2) If so, is it based, as in the recent past and as recommended by Binnie & Partners Pty. Ltd., on the current value of assets or on the rather ancient method of historical values?
- (3) What is the percentage of depreciation for 1983-84?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) to (3) The method of calculating and reporting depreciation is the subject of a current comprehensive study which in-

cludes expert advice from external sources and a review of practices in other countries.

It is expected that a decision on future practice will be available before the date when the board of the authority normally determines the amount of depreciation for the current financial year.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION*Premiums: Metropolitan Water Authority*

1891. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

What was the total amount of workers' compensation premium paid by the Metropolitan Water Authority to the State Government Insurance Office covering the financial year 1982-83?

Mr TONKIN replied:

\$1 159 584.

WATER RESOURCES*Utility Consumption Subsidy*

1892. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

How many eligible persons have so far—

- (a) applied for;
- (b) been granted,

the \$50 utility consumption subsidy with the Metropolitan Water Authority and the country areas water undertakings, respectively?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (a) The \$50 utility consumption subsidy is administered by the Minister for Community Welfare and the number of applications made is not known.
- (b) 166 Metropolitan Water Authority consumers and 154 country water supply consumers have been granted the subsidy.

SEWERAGE*Rates: Country Towns*

1893. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Could he please table the various rate increases for 1983-84 regarding the country towns sewerage schemes and show the increase in valuation and the

reduction of Government subsidies with each one?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The collation and preparation of the data requested will take some time to complete and I will supply the member with the information as soon as possible.

WATER RESOURCES: UNDERGROUND

Bores: Consumption

1894. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

What was the estimated draw of ground water in million cubic metres by private bores in the area of the Metropolitan Water Authority for one year either 1982 or 1982-83—

- (a) in areas where restrictions and/or licensing applies, detailing the volume in different areas;
- (b) in non-licenced areas?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The estimated draws in the year ending June 1983 were—

- (a) Public water supply areas proclaimed under the MWA Act—
Mirrabooka—1.7 million cubic metres
Gwelup—2.7 million cubic metres
Wanneroo—0.1 million cubic metres
Jandakot—6.7 million cubic metres
Groundwater areas proclaimed under the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act—
Wanneroo—10.4 million cubic metres;
- (b) non-licenced areas—165 million cubic metres.

WATER RESOURCES: UNDERGROUND

Bores: Licensing

1895. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) How many licences for private bores are presently valid in the Wanneroo area which has been declared previously as public water supply area under the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act and later under the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act?

(2) How many applications were received during the period 1 January 1983 to 30 June 1983 for private bores in this area?

(3) How many were recommended to be granted by the advisory committee?

(4) How many were granted?

Mr TONKIN replied:

(1) Valid licences.....	235
(2) Applications received	150
(3) Applications recommended to be granted.....	139
(4) Licences granted.....	139

MINING: IRON ORE

Developments: Hancock and Wright

1896. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

Have the Government's policies changed to that of virtually all its predecessors regarding consideration to iron ore mining and port developments sponsored by Hancock and Wright?

Mr BRYCE replied:

The member will be more familiar than I with the policies of the previous Government regarding Mr Hancock's iron ore development proposals.

This Government is happy to consider specific development proposals put forward by Mr Hancock.

BOATS

Power: Registrations

1897. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the number of registered power boats in the State?
- (2) If details are available, how many of these are registered—
(a) as pleasure craft of whatever size;
(b) as vessels used by commercial fishermen;
(c) any other categories?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) "Registered power boats" relates to private pleasure craft, of which there are currently 49 824 active registrations.
- (2) (a) 49 824;
(b) 1 676;
(c) 465.

COURTS: LAW*Building: Drinking Fountains*

1898. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

Will the Minister see that drinking water fountains in the Law Court buildings in St. George's Terrace are supplied with disposable drinking cups instead of the unhygienic single glass presently available at some of these fountains?

Mr GRILL replied:

The type of drinking fountains installed in the Central Law Courts do not require cups to be provided. The glasses to which the member refers have been removed.

PUBLIC SERVICE*Public Servants: Number*

1899. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

(1) Subject to the definitions of the Public Service Act, how many—

(a) permanent;

(b) temporary,

officers are there currently employed under the Public Service Board?

(2) What were the comparative figures at the end of each preceding month to 1 January 1983?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) Statistics are collated at the end of each month. The latest figures available are as at 30 September 1983. These are—

(a) Permanent—15 104;

(b) temporary—614.

(2)

		Permanent	Temporary
As at	31/1/83	15 014	520
	28/2/83	15 085	518
	31/3/83	15 104	499
	30/4/83	15 152	546
	31/5/83	15 177	588
	30/6/83	15 125	522
	31/7/83	15 118	558
	31/8/83	15 099	578

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES*Staff: Temporary Assistants*

1900. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

(1) In regard to the Consolidated Revenue Fund Estimates of Revenue, what are the distinguishing elements of establishment items listed as "temporary assistants"?

(2) How many persons categorised as temporary assistants are currently employed in—

(a) Department of Premier and Cabinet;

(b) Public Service Board;

(c) Treasury;

(d) Government Computing Services;

(e) Superannuation Board;

(f) Government Stores;

(g) Audit Department;

(h) Taxation Department;

(i) Valuer General's Department?

(3) How many persons similarly categorised were employed in each at 1 January 1983?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) It is pointed out that there are two categories of temporary employee; these are—

(a) temporary officers who occupy temporary office positions which are approved establishment positions; and

(b) temporary relief officers who are engaged for limited periods to relieve in positions which have been temporarily vacated.

(2) Officers employed in the above categories as at 30 September 1983 are as follows—

	Temporary Office	Temporary Relief
(a) Department of the Premier and Cabinet	2	16
(b) Public Service Board	0	2
(c) Treasury		
(d) Government Computing Services	0	28
(e) Superannuation Board		
(f) Government Stores	0	14
(g) Audit Department	0	2
(h) Taxation Department		
(i) Valuer General's Department	0	14

(3) Officers employed in the above categories as at 31 December 1982 are as follows—

		Temporary Office	Temporary Relief
(a)	Premier's Department	2	7
(b)	Public Service Board	0	2
(c)	Treasury		
(d)	Government Computing Services	0	11
(e)	Superannuation Board		
(f)	Government Stores	0	11
(g)	Audit Department	0	0
(h)	Taxation Department		
(i)	Valuer General's Depart- ment	0	13

LAND

South Perth

1901. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is it a fact that State Housing Commission land at Ranelagh Crescent, South Perth has been sold?
- (2) If so—
 - (a) how much land is involved in the sale;
 - (b) for how much was the land sold;
 - (c) to whom was the land sold;
 - (d) if a private company is the purchaser, is the company Australian owned;
 - (e) was the land sold consequent upon a Cabinet decision;
 - (f) if the answer to (e) is "No", on whose authority was the land sold;
 - (g) was the South Perth City Council consulted before a decision was made to sell the land;
 - (h) if the answer to (g) is "No", why was the council not consulted;
 - (i) is it a fact that the purchaser plans to establish a Mayo clinic-style cancer centre on part of the site;
 - (j) did this influence the decision to sell the land to the purchaser;
 - (k) is the Government aware that—
 - (i) the residential land involved would have to be rezoned before a cancer clinic could be built at the site;
 - (ii) South Perth residents have in the past resolutely opposed development, other than residential, on the site in question?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) and (2) Public tenders were initially invited for the sale of this land with no conditions on 26 February 1983. No acceptable offers were received and the

land was subsequently offered for sale by public tender with development conditions on 24 May 1983. The responses to this offer were not acceptable to the commission and the land has since been open to negotiation.

The offer which was made by Lucky Bay Holding on 28 October 1983 was for \$2 million for the freehold of the land with development proposals for, in the first stage, a medical clinic with diagnostic facilities and a second stage to provide residential accommodation. Approval to the use of the land is the responsibility of the developers.

HOSPITALS

Expenditure: 1983

1902. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Premier:

What was the total gross Government expenditure inclusive of such amounts as hospital revenue, for the year ended 30 June 1983?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

If the member refers to gross expenditure by all departments or authorities which might be described as the State Government sector, no consolidation of all that information is available. It would involve an inordinate amount of research, particularly in view of the large number of statutory authorities concerned.

However, I have had a figure calculated of the gross expenditure which includes the expenditure of those authorities which depend upon the Consolidated Revenue Fund for support, e.g. MTT for losses. Gross Government expenditure on that basis was \$2 582.7 million in 1982-83.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL

Willetton: Administration Centre

1903. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will any improvements be made in the 1983-84 financial year to the administration centre at Willetton primary school?
- (2) If not, when can the school expect that the project will be given consideration?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) and (2) The minor works proposed to alter the administration and staff areas

at this school are to be considered by the south-west metropolitan regional minor works committee following receipt of requests from schools in this region for funding of such projects during 1984.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Lynwood: Capital Works

1904. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How much has been spent at Lynwood Senior High School on capital works in each of the following years—
 - (a) 1980-81;
 - (b) 1981-82;
 - (c) 1982-83?
- (2) What was this expenditure for?
- (3) What is proposed to be spent at Lynwood Senior High School on capital works in 1983-84?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) and (2) (a) Nil.
- (b) and (c) \$75 363 as one project for science improvements, conversion of locker area for dance/drama and miscellaneous alterations.

As well, two science and one home economics transportable rooms at an estimated cost of \$180 000 have been added to the school.

- (3) \$15 000 as final payments on the science and conversion project.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Lynwood: Classrooms

1905. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many transportable classrooms are currently located at Lynwood Senior High School?
- (2) How many transportable classrooms will be located at Lynwood Senior High School during 1984?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) As well as 48 equivalent full teaching areas the Lynwood Senior High School has five general purpose relocatable classrooms, two science transportable rooms and one home economics transportable room.

- (2) There will be a review in February 1984 to determine whether the school requires additional general purpose rooms additional to the above.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Lynwood: Enrolment

1906. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the current enrolment at Lynwood Senior High School?
- (2) What is the predicted enrolment for 1984 at Lynwood Senior High School?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) 1 251 at 1 July 1983.
- (2) The projected enrolment ranges between 1 330-1 380 with enrolments at year 8 not finalized and the actual retention between years 10 and 11 not certain until February 1984.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Kalgoorlie: Studies

1907. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) What environmental studies are currently under way in Kalgoorlie which involve his department?
- (2) What is the purpose of these studies?

Mr DAVIES replied:

- (1) The Department of Conservation and Environment is currently involved in the study of air quality at Kalgoorlie. The monitoring of sulphur dioxide levels in the town and the measurement of important meteorological parameters have been undertaken in collaboration with the Public Health Department since July 1982.
- (2) The department is currently evaluating the significance of the sulphur dioxide levels at Kalgoorlie and will develop mathematical models over the next 12 months to predict air pollution events. Such models will aid in the development of strategies to minimise the impact of air pollution and can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of any pollution control measures proposed. Model information can also be used to incorporate air pollution constraints in land-use planning.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACT

Water Well Drilling Rig

1908. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has tender No. 453A for a water well drilling rig been let by the Public Works Department?
- (2) If so, to whom was it let?
- (3) What was the Western Australian content of the tender?
- (4) What other tenders contained a greater Western Australian content?
- (5) Why were they not considered for the contract?

Mr McIVER replied:

- (1) to (5) This question relates to a Tender Board contract for a drilling rig to be used by the Public Works Department. Currently, the Public Works Department is reviewing its original recommendation and further advice is being sought on the Western Australian content of the tenders received.

MINING: PROSPECTING

Licences: Applications

1909. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) How many prospecting licences were applied for during the year ended 30 June 1983?
- (2) How many of these were single applications for 10 hectares or less?
- (3) How much did it cost the Mines Department to process each application?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) to (3) The information the member has requested is being collated and will be forwarded by letter as due course.

MINING: MINES DEPARTMENT

Operations: Review

1910. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Is there to be, or is there currently, a review being made of the internal operations of any section of the Mines Department?
- (2) If so, which sections?
- (3) What is the purpose of the review?
- (4) Who is conducting the review?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) There is to be a review.
- (2) Those sections involved in the processing of mining tenements.
- (3) To see whether there are any areas where more efficient procedures can be adopted particularly in view of the move towards computerisation.
- (4) A consultant has yet to be selected.

1911. *This question was postponed.*

LIQUOR: DISTILLERY

Swan Valley: Government Assistance

1912. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) Did Cabinet approve financial assistance for the establishment of a distillery in the Swan Valley on 20 July 1983?
- (2) If so, on what basis was that approval made?
- (3) Have the negotiations to determine the nature of this development yet been completed?
- (4) Is it anticipated that they will conclude in sufficient time to enable the distillery to be in use for this season's crop?
- (5) If not, when is it anticipated that the negotiations will conclude and the project commence?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) On 18 July, Cabinet gave approval in principle for financial assistance for the establishment of a distillery to service the needs of Swan Valley grape growers. The most appropriate form of the assistance has yet to be determined.
- (2) The approval was on the basis of further discussions between the Treasurer, the Under Treasurer and the Minister for Economic Development and Technology.
- (3) No.
- (4) The Government is considering offering interim assistance to enable distillation of surplus fruit from the 1984 harvest.
- (5) It is anticipated that negotiations will have been concluded and the distillery in operation in time for the 1985 vintage.

BUSINESSES: SMALL

Small Business Advisory Service Ltd.: Budget Allocation

1913. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

Referring to question 1565 of 18 October 1983, now that the Small Business Development Corporation Bill has been presented to the Parliament, will he provide me with a break-up of the expenditure of \$722 000 allocated to the Small Business Advisory Service Ltd., in the 1983-84 Budget papers?

Mr BRYCE replied:

No, it is not appropriate to provide this detailed breakdown because this information is the subject of legislation which is yet to be proclaimed.

FUEL AND ENERGY

Utility Consumption Subsidy

1914. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

Why is any of the \$1.8 million utility consumption subsidy to be paid to the State Energy Commission during the year ended 30 June 1984, when in his Press statement announcing the subsidy in June it was stated that "the SEC concession is being financed by one per cent of the 15 per cent increase in SEC charges"?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The member appears to be confusing the utility consumption subsidy, administered by the Department for Community Welfare, with the supply charge rebate scheme operated by the State Energy Commission.

The utility consumption subsidy is available to eligible cardholders to be applied to meet electricity, gas or water consumption charges. If these persons choose to apply it to electricity consumption charges, then part will be paid to the State Energy Commission.

The supply charge rebate scheme is funded by 1 per cent of the 15 per cent increase in SEC charges and provides for a rebate of the daily fixed charge.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX AND PAY-ROLL TAX

Increase

1915. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) By how much does the Government expect the CPI to increase in Western Australia for the year ending 30 June 1984?
- (2) By how much, in percentage terms, is payroll tax expected to increase for the year ending 30 June 1984?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) A number of uncertainties are involved with forecasting and the Government has not produced estimates. However, estimates used by Treasury for budgetary and other purposes are as follows—

For the year 1983-84 compared to the year 1982-83—7.5 per cent;

for the June quarter 1984 compared to the June quarter 1983—6 per cent.

- (2) For the year 1983-84 compared to the year 1982-83—7.3 per cent.

MINING: ACT

Amendment: Revenue

1916. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister ensure that I receive the information requested in question 1818 of 27 October 1983 before the proposed amendments to the Mining Act are presented to the Legislative Assembly for approval?

Mr BRYCE replied:

Yes.

MINING

Tenements: Rentals

1917. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister ensure that I receive the information requested in question 1817 of 27 October 1983 prior to the announcement of the increase in mining tenement rentals?

Mr BRYCE replied:

Yes.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Hyden and Varley: Classrooms

1918. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has a decision been made by the department in relation to the demountable classrooms at—
 - (a) Hyden; and
 - (b) Varley primary schools?
- (2) If the classrooms are to be moved, what provision has been made to ensure adequate alternative facilities are provided?
- (3) Are there plans to provide new or permanent library/resource buildings at either of these schools?
- (4) In what year are they expected to be built?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) (a) The accommodation requirements at Hyden are to be reviewed in February 1984.
- (b) During 1983 the demountable has been left at the Varley Primary School because of a claim that enrolments would rise. For 1984 there is to be a further decline to 43 pupils, including pre-primary students. Retention of this building, intended for a school with excess of numbers, can no longer be justified.
- (2) In 1983 the Varley Primary School was instructed not to use the demountable in a way which would hinder its relocation and therefore alternative facilities are not required.
- (3) A school the size of Varley does not have a separate library-resource centre provided and the future needs of Hyden are being assessed in relation to future enrolments.
- (4) Not applicable.

WATER RESOURCES: IRRIGATION

Rates: Amount

1919. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What is the rate per hectare paid by property owners in farmland areas who have access to reticulated water?
- (2) What is the minimum rate charged?

- (3) What is the fixed charge for each water service after the first service supplied by the Country Areas Water Supply?
- (4) Are any maintenance or service costs met by revenue gained from the fixed charge?
- (5) In the Country Areas Water Supply what revenue was obtained in the last financial year from item 9—cost of service or repairs to service and/or meter?
- (6) If this revenue was charged to each service other than a first service as part of the fixed charge, what would be the increase in that charge?
- (7) Has any estimate been made of the cost to the department of compiling job sheets and other necessary items to accurately determine the charges maintaining individual services or meters?
- (8) If "Yes", what is the average cost for each service?
- (9) If first services were no longer provided free, what would be the fixed charge if the same estimate of revenue was to be gained?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) 6.5c per hectare.
- (2) \$56 per annum.
- (3) \$78 per annum for each additional service.
- (4) No.
- (5) Not available—under the existing manual system revenue from item 9, cost of service or repairs to service and/or meter, is amalgamated with all other reimbursement revenue.
- (6) Refer answer (5)—information not available.
- (7) No.
- (8) Not applicable.
- (9) Assuming the member refers to the estimate of total revenue from rates and additional service charges the charge in 1983-84 would be \$89 per annum per service.

AGRICULTURE

Protection Board: Doggers

1920. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many experienced doggers are employed by the Agriculture Protection

Board to control wild dogs in the South-West Land Division?

- (2) Where are they stationed?
- (3) Is he aware a wild dog problem exists in the East Hyden and Holt Rock-Lake Varley districts?
- (4) Can funds be made available for the employment in these districts, of an experienced dogger for such time as is necessary to bring the wild dogs under control?
- (5) Can funds be made available to repair and maintain the rabbit proof fence to a standard suitable to deter the migration of wild dogs into the above-mentioned districts?
- (6) If not, what alternative policy will be adopted by the Agriculture Protection Board to ensure wild dogs do not remain a problem?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) Two doggers are employed to control wild dogs on or coming from Crown land. Contract work can also be done for landholders as required. Both have recently been engaged following the retirement and resignation of previous doggers.
- (2) Moora and Southern Cross.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) A person has been engaged for a four-week period.
- (5) Funds are available to maintain the barrier fence and work is being done progressively.
- (6) Not applicable.

FERTILISERS

Road Transport

1921. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What are the boundaries of the Lakes District region in which farmers are permitted to have superphosphate and other fertilisers transported by road haulage contractors?
- (2) What is the current contract price for transporting fertiliser into this region?
- (3) How does this price compare with that of Westrail to Hyden or Pingaring sidings?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) The lakes area may generally be considered, for ease of definition to be bounded on the west by the eastern boundary of the Jerramungup Shire and 35 kilometre radii of the Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd facilities at Mt. Madden, Lake King, Lake Varley and Holt Rock; on the north by a 35 km radius of Holt Rock, on the east by the vermin proof fence; and the south by the Southern Ocean.
- (2) New rates for the lakes area have been approved from 1 November 1983 as follows—
Lakes district—\$4.7c per tonne-kilometre
Ravensthorpe-Hopetoun area — 6.07c per tonne-kilometre.
- (3) The Westrail rate for fertiliser to Hyden is \$17.68 per tonne and to Pingaring \$17.08 per tonne (based on Kwinana). These rates are subject to 10 per cent discount for cartage in the period July to December.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Grants Commission: Membership

1922. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Who are the members and staff of the Western Australian Local Government Grants Commission who hold the following positions—
(a) chairman;
(b) commissioner;
(c) deputy commissioner;
(d) executive officer;
(e) research officers;
(f) secretary?
- (2) Which members and staff have been appointed during the last six months?
- (3) What experience and qualification have members and staff listed in (2), to undertake the new appointment?
- (4) From what task or responsibility were members and staff mentioned in (2) transferred and/or appointed?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) (a) Chairman—Dr M. C. Wood;
(b) Commissioners—Mr P. E. Ryan, Mr M. R. Finlayson, Mr M. J. Harding, Mr J. O. O'Dwyer;

- (c) Deputy Commissioners—Mr G. H. Park, Mr G. L. Kilpatrick, Mr F. H. Cavanough, Mr F. J. O'Reilly;
- (d) Executive Officer—Mr S. M. Cole;
- (e) The executive officer acts as principal research officer. However, other officers of the Department of Local Government provide research assistance as required;
- (f) Secretary—Mr L. Coles.
- (2) Those listed at 1(a),(b) and (c), with effect from 1 November 1983.
- (3) *Dr Wood*—is an honours graduate in economics with additional qualifications in the arts and political sciences and is a lecturer in politics at the University of Western Australia. His experience includes 14 years on research or as a consultant in matters of local government finance and management.
- Mr Ryan*—Councillor of the Town of Armadale; previously serviced on the Western Australian Local Government Grants Commission (WALGGC) as a deputy member for the period 28 February 1983 to 31 October 1983.
- Mr Finlayson*—Mayor of the Town of Kalgoorlie; held the position of deputy member on the WALGGC from 1 November 1978 to 31 October 1983. During this period he acted as member for the period 30 September 1980 to 24 January 1981.
- Mr Harding*—Deputy Secretary of the Department of Local Government. Mr Harding has been a member of the commission since 3 September 1982.
- Mr O'Dwyer*—officer of the Treasury Department of the State. Mr O'Dwyer has been a member of the commission since 21 June 1983.
- Mr Park*—Councillor of the Shire of Swan.
- Mr Kilpatrick*—Councillor of the Shire of Beverley; member of the WALGGC for the period 24 January 1981 to 31 October 1983.
- Mr Cavanough*—officer of the Department of Local Government. Mr Cavanough has been a deputy member of the commission since 21 June 1983.
- Mr O'Reilly*—officer of the State Treasury Department. He has been a

deputy member of the commission since 21 June 1983.

(4) Answered by (3).

RAILWAYS

Capital Works: Commonwealth Funding

1923. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What Commonwealth funding for rail capital works has been made available to Western Australia for each of the past five financial years?
- (2) What amount is expected to be received from the Commonwealth for this purpose in 1983-84?

Mr GRILL replied:

	\$
(1) 1978-79	Nil
1979-80	335 330
1980-81	2 257 791
1981-82	3 564 964
1982-83	487 895

- (2) The National Railway (Financial Assistance) Act 1979 Agreement has expired and has not been replaced by any other legislation providing for Federal funding to the States for railway capital works.

A programme of projects for upgrading the national railway system including \$70.7 million for Western Australia, was submitted to the Federal Government but it has indicated that no funds will be available in 1983-86.

Our Government will continue to take every opportunity to press Western Australia's case for Federal funding towards railway projects.

RAILWAYS: WESTRAIL

Staff: Budget Allocation

1924. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What staff establishment has been budgeted for in the Estimates of Expenditure for 1983-84 for the Western Australian Government Railways Commission under each of the following headings (other salaries and wages staff) for—
- (2) (a) Railways Commission and secretariat;
- (b) accounts and audit;
- (c) traffic transportation;

- (d) refreshment services;
- (e) mechanical—motive power;
- (f) civil engineering;
- (g) signals and communications;
- (h) supply;
- (i) road services;
- (j) marketing;
- (k) management services;
- (l) mechanical—workshops?

- (2) How does the total staff establishment under these heading compare with the same figure for the 1982-83 financial year?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) (a)	132
(b)	156
(c)	2 651
(d)	87
(e)	789
(f)	1 124
(g)	420
(h)	191
(i)	180
(j)	54
(k)	91
(l)	2 109

Total 7 984

- (2) The comparable figure for 1982-83 is 8 130.

HOUSING

Industrial and Commercial Employees' Housing Authority: Houses Constructed

1925. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many new homes have been constructed in each of the last five financial years by the Industrial and Commercial Employees' Housing Authority?
- (2) How many of these homes, for each of the last five financial years were built in—
 - (a) the south of the State;
 - (b) the north-west?
- (3) What is the anticipated building programme for the authority in 1983-84?

Mr WILSON replied:

(1) Year	No. of Dwellings
1978-79	19
1979-80	49
1980-81	24
1982-83	34
1982-83	64

(2) (a) and (b) Year	No.: North-west	No.: South
1978-79	14	5
1979-80	46	3
1980-81	20	4
1981-82	25	9
1982-83	37	27

(3) Building Programme: 1983-84

No.: North	No.: South
10	10

HOUSING

Rural Housing Authority: Loans

1926. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Since the Rural Housing Authority extended its charter to include assistance to pastoralists, how many loans to pastoralists have actually been approved?
- (2) Will he indicate the areas to which these loans have gone?
- (3) How many applications from pastoral areas are currently before the authority?
- (4) Have the loans approved been for new homesteads or for additions to existing dwellings?
- (5) What form has the assistance taken in the cases that have already been approved for pastoral areas?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Six.
- (2) West Kimberley—1
Halls Creek—1
Upper Gascoyne—2
Murchison—2.
- (3) Nil.
- (4) New homesteads.
- (5) Direct advances from Rural Housing Authority funds.

RAILWAYS

Narrogin

1927. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How many Westrail staff, and in what categories, are stationed in Narrogin?
- (2) What numbers of personnel are involved as train crews?
- (3) Are there any plans to further reduce Westrail staff in Narrogin?
- (4) Is it intended to reduce train crew personnel?
- (5) If so, what timing is involved, and what discussions are involved?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1)		
	District administration	22
	(including six station relief officers)	
	Station administration	7
	Head shunters	3
	Shunters	3
	Signalmen	3
	Porters	3
	Barracks caretaker	1
	Junior station assistants	2
	Motor truck drivers	2
	Guards	23
	Drivers	28
	Firemen	26
	Trainee enginemn	6
	TOTAL	129

(2) 83

- (3) to (5) Westrail is currently reviewing all train operations and developing a future operational plan which will result in the relocation of staff in some areas. Changes such as the proposed introduction of two man crews and the introduction of unit grain trains are initiatives to enable economies to be achieved in the operation of trains.

Resulting from these continuing studies, it is planned to progressively reduce manning levels at Narrogin over the next five to seven years. Reductions will include train crew personnel.

The railway unions are involved in discussions on these proposals.

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

Mailing List

1928. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

Will he give a commitment that when people write to the Government on an issue or answer a coupon to a Government advertisement (as with the recent tobacco advertising Bill)—

- (a) their names will not be filed on a computer storage system for future access;
- (b) the Government will not pass these names to the Australian Labor Party to establish a mailing list?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (a) and (b) It is not possible for the Government to make a commitment which would exclude the use of modern office technology to respond to representations on matters of interest. The lists of thousands of names of people who have sent mail to the Premier supporting the Government's anti-tobacco legislation have not been passed to the Australian Labor Party and it is not intended to do so.

1929. *This question was postponed.*

EDUCATION

Aborigines: Scholarship Fund

1930. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Youth and Community Services with Special Responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs:

- (1) Is he aware that funds are available in a special scholarship fund for Aboriginal students at the University of Western Australia?
- (2) If "Yes", what steps are being taken to ensure Aboriginal students from Western Australia are aware and fully prepared and in a position to accept these scholarships?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I am informed that school guidance officers are responsible for passing on to all students information about scholarships and grants for which they may be eligible. In addition, the Aboriginal education section of the Commonwealth Department of Education gives special emphasis to the distribution of information to eligible Aboriginal students on the

availability of school and study grants that are aimed specifically at encouraging Aboriginal participation in tertiary education.

MINING: DIAMONDS

Equity Purchase: Reports and Projections

1931. Mr PETER JONES, to the Premier:

Adverting to his answer to part (1) of question 1873 of 1983 relating to the equity in the Argyle diamond project, am I correct in assuming from the answer that no specific advice was prepared or investigations undertaken by the Government or its consultants but that it relied on reports and material available from the project managers, and also from consultants to the Manager of the European Banking Corporation?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

No.

PUBLIC WORKS: DEPARTMENT

Country Areas Water Supplies: Water Boards

1932. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Does the Government have a committee reviewing services of the local water boards including Harvey, Busselton, Bunbury?
- (2) Who are the members of the committee and when were they appointed?
- (3) What are the committee's terms of reference?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) Not applicable.

WATER RESOURCES: METROPOLITAN WATER BOARD AND COUNTRY AREAS WATER SUPPLIES

Amalgamation: Steering Committee

1933. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Who are the members of the single water authority steering committee?
- (2) When were they appointed, what fees and expenses have been paid to date?

- (3) When is it expected the committee's report will be concluded?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) The members of the steering committee and the dates on which they were appointed to the committee are as follows—

Appointed March 1983—

Hon. A. R. Tonkin, MLA, Minister for Water Resources, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform, and Leader of the House

Hon. K. F. McIver, MLA, Minister for Works, and Minister for Lands and Surveys

Dr D. W. Zink—Chairman, MWA

Mr H. J. Glover—Managing Director, MWA

Mr K. J. Kelsall—Director of Engineering, MWA

Mr F. Pinczuk—Director of Finance & Admin., MWA

Mr K. T. Cadec—Under Secretary, PWD

Mr R. M. Hillman—Director of Engineering, PWD

Mr R. A. Gregory—Director of Finance & Accounting, PWD

Mr W. E. M. Bateman—Principal Architect, PWD

Mr K. M. McKenna—Chairman, Public Service Board

Mr Les McCarrey—Under Treasurer.

Appointed June 1983—

Mr G. Bathgate—Councillor, CSA

Mr V. J. Keenan—Representing Australian Workers' Union

Mr N. Marlborough—Representing Hospital, Service and Miscellaneous Workers' Union.

Appointed July 1983—

Mr W. S. Shelton—Acting Director of Engineering, PWD.

- (2) No fees or expenses are paid to members. For details of the cost of the steering committee and the project group, see question 1500.
- (3) The committee reports progressively to Cabinet, through its chairman the Hon. A. R. Tonkin. Its primary task is to recommend to the Government the

course to be taken to achieve the objective of establishing a State water authority by 1 July 1985.

LAND

Gravel Reserve 30204

1934. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Lands and Surveys:

- (1) Has the department received a request for gravel reserve 30204 to be made available for selection?
- (2) (a) How many applications have been received;
- (b) when were they lodged; and
- (c) by whom?
- (3) Has the local shire made comment on the release of the land and would he give details?
- (4) Are there any other Government departments that are opposed to the above land release and, if so, what are their reasons?

Mr McIVER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) to (c) Several inquiries have been received over a number of years for alienation of this land.
- (3) The Shire of Augusta-Margaret River has no objection to land release.
- (4) Yes. The Mines Department is opposed to alienation due to existence of a coal mining lease.

1935. *This question was postponed.*

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT: LESCHENAULT INLET

Laporte Australia Ltd.: Effluent

1936. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) What is the Government's policy on effluent disposal from the Laporte factory at Australind?
- (2) Has the Government made any determination on whether it is proposing to continue with disposal of effluent into the dunes adjacent to Leschenault Inlet?

Mr DAVIES replied:

- (1) While the responsibility for this matter rests with the Minister for Economic Development and Technology, I understand that a report is still awaited from

the Laporte factory agreement review committee.

(2) No.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT: LESCHENAULT INLET

Laporte Australia Ltd.: Effluent

1937. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) What is the Government's policy on effluent disposal from the Laporte Australia Ltd. factory at Australind?
- (2) Has the Government made any determination on whether it is proposing to continue with the disposal of effluent into the dunes adjacent to Leschenault Inlet?

Mr McIVER replied:

- (1) The Government objective is to achieve disposal of the Laporte effluent in a manner which is both environmentally acceptable and can be achieved at reasonable cost.

(2) No.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MINING: URANIUM

Yeelirrie: Employees

469. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services:

- (1) Approximately what number of employees would have been required to operate the Yeelirrie uranium mine had the necessary approvals been granted?
- (2) What project has the Minister in mind to introduce to employ those people who could have been employed at Yeelirrie?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) and (2) I had absolutely no notice of this question and I am afraid I have no idea what the answers would be, certainly to the first part of the question. In order that the Leader of the Opposition might have a considered reply, I suggest that he put the question on the Notice Paper.

POLICE

Burglary: West Perth

470. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

I direct my question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and I regret not having had an opportunity to give notice of the question.

- (1) Is he aware of a recent case which occurred in West Perth where a man entered a house and, brandishing what appeared to be a .45 magnum revolver, sought to force a woman to get out of bed where she was asleep with her husband and subsequently the husband woke and gave chase to the man?
- (2) Is he aware that the man was arrested by the police and appeared in court where it was learnt that the gun was a replica?
- (3) Is he aware that in the view of the police it was likely that the man would have committed rape if he had succeeded with his plan but that when he appeared in court, although he was charged with burglary with intent, he was released until 17 December on his own surety?
- (4) Is he concerned that this type of case should occur, particularly in view of the fact that the man charged is a potential rapist in the view of the police, comes from the Eastern States, has no job and no fixed place of residence, and continues to give concern to the people who were the subject of the attack?
- (5) Is he prepared to have the matter investigated?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (5) I have no knowledge of any of the details provided to the Parliament by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. During the question the Minister for Police and Emergency Services came into the Chamber and he told me he had no knowledge of the incident either. I am sure the Minister will look into the matter. But what I would say is that members of this House should be very careful about calling people potential rapists and branding them in that way, especially when the court case is still con-

tinuing, although as I said I have no knowledge of the details.

Mr Hassell: I was very careful not to identify any of the people concerned. I asked about a general concern.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I accept that, but the detail given by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition makes the name slightly irrelevant. It seems to me we should all be very careful about prejudicing a fair trial of anyone before the courts. I simply sound that word of warning.

Mr Hassell: I am aware of it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The member should be. Again, no doubt the Minister for Police and Emergency Services will look into this matter.

WATER RESOURCES: RATES

Pensioners: Concession

471. Mr I. F. TAYLOR, to the Premier:

Will he give details of the Government's recently announced water consumption concession for pensioners?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

Country pensioners in Western Australia with average water consumption will have their charges halved from next month.

The scheme will apply to pensioners who are served by the Public Works Department country water supply branch.

It will be available to those holding pensioner health benefit cards, or a rates concession card issued by the Department for Community Welfare.

To qualify, a pensioner must occupy his or her own home, or be responsible for payment of water consumption charges for a home which he or she rents or occupies.

Concessions of up to \$48 a year will be granted to pensioners in the south of the State, and up to \$72 a year in the north.

Mr Blaikie: Does that apply to the country water boards as well?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It will apply to pensioners served by the Public Works Department country water supply branch.

Mr Blaikie: And country water supplies?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: My understanding is that that is not the case.

Mr Blaikie: That is grossly unfair.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I will check on it.

It will be applied first during the next cycle of country water supply accounts due for mailing from early December.

The concession will apply to consumption of up to 400 kilolitres a year in the south of the State and 600 kilolitres in the north.

Pensioners with consumption rates exceeding these amounts would continue to pay for the balance of their water at the normal price.

The new concession will not apply to pensioners living in areas served by the Metropolitan Water Authority, or in areas served by the Busselton, Bunbury, or Harvey Water Boards.

Mr Blaikie: Absolutely disgraceful!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I suppose it may be possible to negotiate with those boards. If they are prepared to arrange their finances to accommodate this, it can probably be done. But we are not responsible, of course.

Residents in these areas already enjoy an allowance, or rebate, in return for rates, whereas other country residents are on a full "pay for use" scheme.

The new concession will apply until the end of the 1983-84 consumption year at which time its operation will be reviewed by State Cabinet.

To qualify for the concession, pensioners should apply at a country water supply office and pay the balance of their consumption accounts within four months of the date of issue.

MINING: URANIUM

Yeelirrie: Approaches to Federal Government

472. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

In the House yesterday he referred to several approaches having been made to the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister concerning development of the Yeelirrie uranium deposit. I ask—

Will he give the House details of when these approaches were made and table all relevant letters, telexes or other documents.

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

It was not the practice or the policy of the previous Government to divulge confidential communications between the Premier and the Prime Minister, and we see no reason to depart from the policy of the previous Government. However, I inform the Leader of the Opposition that on at least one occasion it was publicised at a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister in Sydney. Public knowledge was abroad of the discussion surrounding the uranium issue. That is not a confidential communication; that is a matter of public record. However, in answer to the Leader of the Opposition's question, we intend to abide by what was his Government's policy when in office, which was not to promote the release of confidential communications between the Premier and the Prime Minister.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT: ELECTORATE OFFICES

Aboriginal Trainees

473. Mr BARNETT, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact that the previous State Government did not allow the employment of NESA—national employment strategy for aborigines—trainees in parliamentary electorate offices?
- (2) Is it a fact that the present Government has reversed this situation and is encouraging the employment of suitable Aboriginal trainees in these offices?
- (3) Is he aware that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition announced that he would participate in the programme?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) Yes, in fact the previous Government did not allow the employment of these NESA trainees in parliamentary electorate offices, despite repeated representations from the then Opposition.
- (2) Yes, this Government is presently employing these young Aboriginal people in order for them to gain valuable experience of the kinds of tasks involved in the daily running of an electorate office.

I wish to emphasize that this worthwhile opportunity is offered at no expense to the State, as it is fully subsidised by the Commonwealth Government—perhaps with the exception of some small items of furniture—and that situation has pre-

vailed since the inception of the NESA scheme. Further, it is important for members to realise that each application for participation in the programme is assessed independently, based on the quality of the training experience offered.

- (3) Yes, I am aware of the announcement and I am pleased that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition appears to have changed his mind about the value of this programme.

Mr Hassell: Just to put the record straight, I did not announce it. It was reported.

Mr BRYCE: I understand, however, that despite making his announcement approximately six weeks ago, he is yet to place a trainee in his office.

LAND

South Perth

474. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Housing:

My question arises out of an answer given by the Minister for Housing to a question on notice today in which he said that the offer which was made by Lucky Bay Holdings on 28 October 1983 was for \$2 million for the freehold of the land with development proposals for, in the first stage, a medical clinic with diagnostic facilities and a second stage to provide residential accommodation. I therefore ask the Minister—

- (1) Did the development proposals to construct a medical clinic with diagnostic facilities and a second stage to provide residential accommodation, have a bearing on the decision to sell the land? In other words, was the Government influenced by the medical clinic proposal?
- (2) How detailed were the proposals?
- (3) Will the Minister table details of the development proposals involved?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) to (3) No, the proposal had no bearing on acceptance of the offer. I responded to the member's questions on notice, in the manner in which I did because the view is taken that the details relating to the development proposals are a matter between the developer and the local

authority. I feel that if the member is interested in obtaining more detail about that development proposal, he would be better advised to approach the developer and obtain those proposals from him or to subsequently obtain that information from the local authority concerned.

HEALTH

Dental: Marble Bar

475. Mr BRIDGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) In view of the difficulties experienced by members of my electorate in obtaining access to health services, can the Minister advise if there are any plans to increase the availability of dental services to the residents of Marble Bar?

- (2) If so, what arrangements have been made?

Mr O'Connor: Answer to question (1), "Yes".

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes. I am pleased to advise that plans for increased availability of dental services in Marble Bar will be implemented shortly.

The Public Health Department has conducted a visiting service to Marble Bar for many years. The prime responsibility of this service has been to school children and indigent persons.

I am pleased to announce that the Public Health Department is now to be joined in this service by a private dental practitioner from South Hedland. The private practitioner plans to visit Marble Bar fortnightly, on Friday afternoons and Saturdays.

The Public Health Department in co-operation with the Department of Hospital and Allied Services will provide the necessary surgery space and provide certain dental equipment for use by the practitioners.

Appropriate liaison between the public health personnel and the practitioners will ensure that there is no overlap of the clinic times.

This arrangement will effectively increase the accessibility of dental services to the residents of Marble Bar.

TOWN PLANNING

Melville

476. Mr WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Planning:

It is reported in *The West Australian* dated 9 November 1983, concerning the Melville City Council's latest town planning scheme that the Minister wishes to reduce the zoned office space in the city centre from 25 000 square metres to 12 000 square metres which is approximately the area of office space already constructed or under construction.

The SPEAKER: Ask the question!

Mr WILLIAMS: I ask—

- (1) Is this decision based on recommendations from his town planning department?
- (2) Is he aware that several thousand square metres are already gazetted under the old town planning scheme?
- (3) Is he aware that compensation will have to be paid to developers if the Minister persists with his policy of reducing the zoning for office space?
- (4) Is this an attempt to give the City of Fremantle an advantage in the creation of office space?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) to (4) I am very pleased to have been asked this question by the member for Clontarf because it enables me to clarify the situation that was reported in this morning's newspaper. The current position is that the City of Melville town planning scheme has been under review for some years. Like a lot of other things, decisions are now being made that perhaps should have been made a long time ago to bring these matters to finality. The Melville town planning scheme is one of those things which has been brought to finality. As part of that process, as Minister for Planning, I have considered the submissions that have been made by ratepayers and others as is required by the Act under the Melville town planning scheme before granting that scheme final approval. Those submissions are required to be made at first instance by the personnel concerned to the City of Melville which then makes recommendations which are transmitted

to the Town Planning Board which in turn makes recommendations to me.

Quite an interesting history is associated with the so-called city centre or Booragoon centre proposals. It is very interesting to note that the decision which was made some 18 or so months ago by the then Government to go ahead with various developments in the city centre of the City of Melville, in particular, various office buildings and other commercial and retail developments in the area was made in opposition to advice from the Town Planning Department, and indeed, from the Commissioner for Town Planning who consistently voted against the proposals on the MRPA, because it has been the policy of successive Governments in this State to endorse the corridor plan and the various elements of the corridor plan which involve bolstering and stimulating subregional centres, and involves other matters which means that other areas need to recognise that they may not be considered as subregional centres.

In this case, last year Mrs Craig, my predecessor, approved a guided development plan for the Melville City Centre or the Booragoon centre. The plan that had been put before her and signed by her and by the Chairman of the Town Planning Board at the time was for approximately 19 000 square metres, as I recall, of net-leasable area including approximately 3 000 square metres of net leasable area which was attributable to the Melville Civic Centre itself. The figures I have quoted are approximate; I do not have them in front of me. That was approved, and I must say I disagreed with it at the time, as did the Town Planning Commission, because it was against the corridor plan.

Mr Hassell: Is this a Dorothy Dix question?

Mr PARKER: I think it might be, actually.

Mr Old: You made it into a Dorothy Dix answer, anyway.

Mr PARKER: I am trying to ensure the member for Clontarf is properly informed. I have not repeated a thing yet.

Mr Williams: Carry on. Ignore the interjections.

Mr PARKER: The scheme was approved on that basis. I was astonished when I got back the final draft for the new Melville

town planning scheme which would supersede that guided development scheme, to find that the Melville City Council had in fact approved—

Mr Court: Had included a casino in the plan!

Mr PARKER: No. The Melville City Council is one of those authorities which has actually said it does not want a casino in its area.

Mr O'Connor: You might have completed the casino before this.

Mr PARKER: It was one of only about four or five authorities in the State which said that. I must say the more local authorities say that, the happier I am; it makes the decision a lot easier.

I was surprised to find that they had in fact approved some 30 000 square metres of net leasable space despite the guided development plan which had been approved by my predecessor. In fact, they may have had an entitlement to do that under the scheme, legally speaking, and found some loophole to do it.

I do not know how many ratepayers of the City of Melville or the residents of the Booragoon area know that the council plans to construct, on the hill at Booragoon, a 12-storied office tower overlooking the residential areas.

Mr Bryce: You have an astonishing portfolio.

Mr PARKER: I do; it is a very interesting one.

Mr Brian Burke: And an excellent grasp of it.

Mr PARKER: I do not know whether the residents of the electorate of the member for Clontarf have any idea of those plans of the Melville City Council.

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKinnon: Where is it?

Mr PARKER: To the south-east of the Civic Centre. I do not know whether the residents have any knowledge of that. The Town Planning Department did not previously know about that. So my decision, when considering all the submissions which had been made by a large number of people including many ratepayers of the City of Melville, was to analyse the amount of net leasable area in terms of office and commercial development that already existed in the centre, including the proposed Alcoa building which is

under construction at the moment, and to restrict office development in the centre to that level.

My advice is there will be no basis for compensation because they still have areas zoned for various other forms of development and, as I say, the net leasable area concerned conforms more closely to the amount which had been approved by my predecessor, and of course, it is in substantial accord with the corridor plan for Perth.

EDUCATION

Children's Crossings

477. Mrs BEGGS, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Following the recent Press release of the Hon. Peter Wells alleging significant cuts to the Government schools crossing programme, can the Minister indicate whether those allegations are true and provide the House with the details of the current position in regard to those crossings?

Mr CARR replied:

The short answer to the question is that there are no cuts in the number of school crossing attendants. The number authorised in the current Budget is 305, the number in place at the end of the financial year to 30 June 1983 was 305, and the number in place 12 months earlier was also 305, so it can be seen that there has been no cutback in the number of crossing attendants.

I might say in respect of the comments made by the Hon. Peter Wells, and approaches that have been made to me by other members, that it is true when one compares the CRF document for 1982-83 with the current CRF document that it appears there has been a cutback. The 1982-83 document showed 331 crossing attendants compared, with the 305 in this year's document.

I caused an inquiry to be made as to how this has occurred and the simple answer was that last year's figure of 331 in fact was an error. It appears the number of 331 was provided by the Police Department, the Treasury and the best I can obtain in terms of how this came about is that it appears that 26 relief crossing attendants were added

to the 305 to make a figure of 331. The actual significant figure was 305 places at which crossing attendants were present.

We now have 51 relief wardens who are registered for relief work should they be required so I suppose if one wished one could say that there has been an increase this year. However, in fact, the honest figure shows that there is no increase. I should perhaps qualify that by saying that since 30 June this year there have been two places at which crossing attendants have been removed.

They have been removed not in terms of financial cutbacks but in terms of the need having been reduced. The first was at Birralee School in Odin Road, Innaloo which ceased to be manned on 26 August because of an alteration to the road structure which was converted into a cul-de-sac with the opening of the new extensions to the Mitchell Freeway which resulted in a big decrease in the volume of traffic in the area of the school. The second was at St Brigid's Catholic School in Cambridge Street, Wembley which ceased to operate on 23 September with the closure of the school. That means the actual number of crossing attendants in place is 303 but in view of the number of applications that are coming in I have no doubt the authorised number of 305 will very soon be filled.

SHOPPING: CENTRE

Northgate: Saturday Afternoon Trading

478. Mr THOMPSON, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

(1) Is he aware that the Premier has received a letter from the Western Australian Regional Manager of Target Australia Pty. Ltd. following the Government's decision not to renew the resort clause applied for by the Geraldton Town Council thus preventing Saturday afternoon trading and that in the letter the following points were made—

(a) 97 per cent of Geraldton people using the shopping facilities of the Northgate shopping complex want Saturday afternoon trading.

Mr Brian Burke: I do not appear to have received this letter. I am interested to know how you received the letter.

Mr THOMPSON: I am simply asking whether the Minister is aware. To continue—

(b) in a town where unemployment is high the sum of \$75 000 normally paid in wages to staff employed on Saturday afternoon will now not be injected into the economy of that town.

(2) Will the Government reverse the decision and so—

(a) accede to the wishes of the majority of the Geraldton residents;

(b) satisfy the request of the Geraldton Town Council;

(c) boost the incomes of the shop assistants involved; and

(d) provide economic relief in a town which has been hard hit by unemployment?

Mr TONKIN replied:

(1) (a) and (b) I am not aware of any such letter and that is probably because the Premier has not received one.

(2) (a) to (d) I will certainly investigate the claims made by the member for Kalamunda.

HOUSING: INTEREST RATES

Reduction: Government Attitude

479. Mr TROY, to the Premier:

(1) Is the Premier aware that private banks have so far refused to reduce interest rates following the Commonwealth's decision to lower the rate of the Australian Savings Bond?

(2) Has the Government expressed its attitude on this matter?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) and (2) I think all members of this Parliament should be concerned at the failure of the private banks to join with the Commonwealth Trading Bank in reducing interest rates as the Commonwealth Trading Bank has found it possible to do.

I can appreciate the forecasts that are provoking the private banks, which believe there is a short-term period of tight liquidity to be endured. However, it is strange that only a few weeks ago when

calling for a reduction in the Australian Savings Bond rate, banks were saying that such a reduction would facilitate a decrease in interest rates.

Now, if this economy is to be fuelled up to a persistent and enduring recovery it is going to require private banks to make decisions that are in line with the need for cheaper finance across the economy and certainly decisions that do not fly in the face of the established ones made by the Commonwealth Trading Bank.

The Commonwealth Trading Bank is not known to be irresponsible or reckless. The Commonwealth Trading Bank is not known to be as profitable as are some of its private competitors and it is the State Government's clear view that private banks do have the capacity to reduce interest rates in the manner they were reduced by the Commonwealth Trading Bank.

We have publicly called on the private trading banks to review the decision they made not to reduce interest rates.

It is interesting to note too that building societies have in some cases already found the capacity to reduce rates, and although the reductions are not as great as the Minister for Housing was seeking the societies to make, the reductions are welcomed and are significant.

If the private banks, making wrong decisions, stand out against the reduction of interest rates that are generally believed to be justified at this time, it will militate against any recovery than can be maintained or fuelled up by the decrease that we believe is justified in interest rates.

EDUCATION

Schools: Vandalism.

480. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Early this year in the Premier's policy speech he promised to set up a school security task force to combat theft and

vandalism in Government schools. Has this been done?

- (2) He will be aware that a specialist committee was set up last year to try to solve this vexatious matter. I note from the Press that schools are still being vandalised. With Christmas holidays approaching, which is the high period for such vandalism, what system is now in operation to overcome the serious problem? Is it virtually the same as it was before he became Minister?

Mr PEARCE replied,

- (1) and (2) There has been a fair continuity of approach to school security matters. The member will recall that last year when that policy was promulgated he claimed the committee he established constituted a task force of the kind we were promising. When I became Minister and reviewed that situation I was retrospectively inclined to agree with the member in regard to that attitude.

He will recall a move was begun last year in his time towards the establishment of a centralised security system with headquarters in a Perth suburb, and a significant sum of money was allocated in the 1983-84 Estimates for that purpose. During the coming school holidays a significant number of metropolitan schools in high risk areas will be connected to a centralised, 24-hour monitoring system which will detect break-ins and ensure that security officers or police are on site rapidly.

Additional arrangements have been made to have private security officers tour schools in high risk areas and a number of people have been apprehended in recent weeks as a result. I am confident that as a result of the new super technological system that has been installed a much greater level of apprehension will occur and consequently there will be a greater level of security in schools. It is not the Government's intention, for obvious reasons to announce the list of schools to be connected to the system.